

THE SHIFTING CONSCIOUSNESS UTILIZING THE THOUGHT OF HENRI BERGSON AND WILLIAM JAMES

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The question is would it be possible to display consciousness in a way which maintains the continuity and flow of experience? Much of what is presented is grounded in the thought of Henri Bergson and William James. We move with their thought yet take it up in my own way. In this work, then, is presented our view of consciousness, called the *working self*, *intuiting self* and *thinking self*.

To begin this presentation a description of consciousness from James seems appropriate:

Consciousness, then, does not appear to itself chopped up in bits. Such words as 'chain' or 'train' do not describe it fitly as it presents itself in the first instance. It is nothing jointed; it flows. A 'river' or a 'stream' are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. *In talking of it hereafter, let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life.*¹

First and foremost, says James, "*some kind of consciousness is always going on.*"² James goes on to discuss what he calls five characters in the process of thought:

1) Every thought tends to be part of a personal consciousness. 2) Within each personal consciousness thought is always changing. 3) Within each personal consciousness thought is sensibly continuous. 4) It always appears to deal with objects independent of itself. 5) It is interested in some parts of these objects to the exclusion of others, and welcomes or rejects—*chooses* from among them, in a word—all the while.³

Consciousness is personal. It is constantly changing, in that, no two states are ever identical. It is continuous, in that, there are no breaks in it. It can focus on objects other than itself while it knows that it knows it. And it is selective, in that, it is interested in one object more than another.

Consciousness, then, is *personal, constantly changing, continuous and selective, as experienced* by a particular person. We experience something, are conscious of something, which is intentionality from a phenomenological view, that is, being directed toward something other than oneself. Although directed toward an object independent of itself this object known is the object of the world which is an object *as experienced* intrinsically. For James:

My experience is what I agree to attend to. Only those items which I notice shape my mind—without selective interest, experience is an utter chaos. Interest alone gives accent and emphasis, light and shade, background and foreground—intelligible perspective, in a word.⁴

Although consciousness is selective, says Bergson, “In the effort of attention, the mind is always concerned in its entirety, but it simplifies or complicates itself according to . . . [that] which it chooses to go to work.”⁵ Bergson also says that:

There are then, in short, divers *tones* of mental life . . . our psychic life may be lived at different heights, now nearer to action, now further removed from it, according to the degree of our *attention to life* . . . the starting point of our enquiry.⁶

Bergson says that the tones of mental life can be near to or far from action according to the degree of our *attention à la vie*. For James, “*What holds attention determines action.*”⁷ James also goes on to say that:

. . . our concrete states of consciousness all these different classes of ingredients are found simultaneously present to some degree, though the relative proportion they bear to one another is very shifting.⁸

To further deepen this we turn to Bergson who speaks of the states which can and cannot be distinguished:

Thus in consciousness we find states which succeed, without being distinguished from one another; and in space simultaneities which, without succeeding, are distinguished from one another, in the sense that one has ceased to exist when the other appears. Outside us, mutual externality without succession; within us, succession without mutual externality.⁹

What Bergson is saying is that which is within cannot be distinguished from one another into “states.” A state, in consciousness, is a snapshot of the inner mobility. An isolated state is only a sketch from the whole personality. Bergson says:

Every feeling, however simple it may be, contains virtually within it the whole past and present of the being experiencing it, and, consequently, can only be separated and constituted into a “state” by an effort of abstraction or of analysis.¹⁰

With this short introduction utilizing the thought of Bergson and James I would like to begin to present a view of how all of this would work. The inner mobility (inner *durée*) is a succession which we are attempting to display, which is, then, situated in time and space. Central to this

presentation is what we call the *working self*, *intuiting self* and *thinking self*, (WIT):

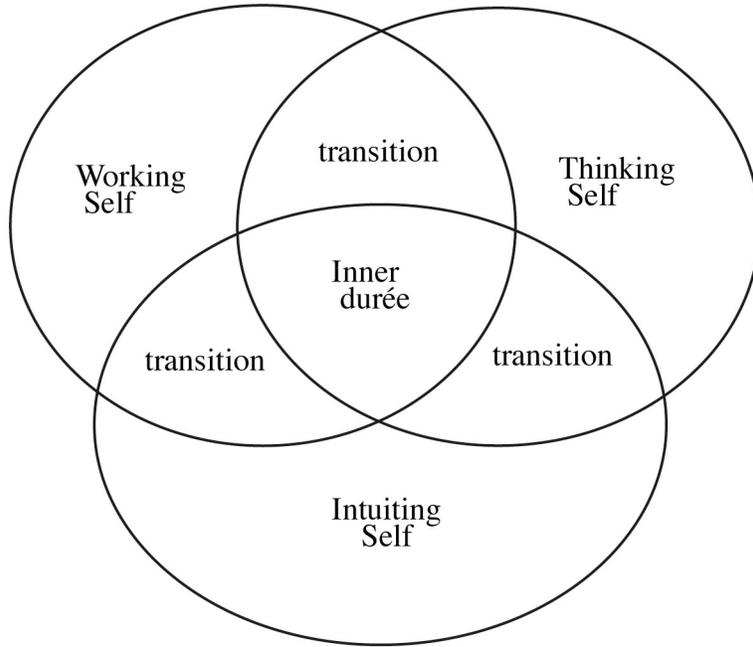


Figure 1a

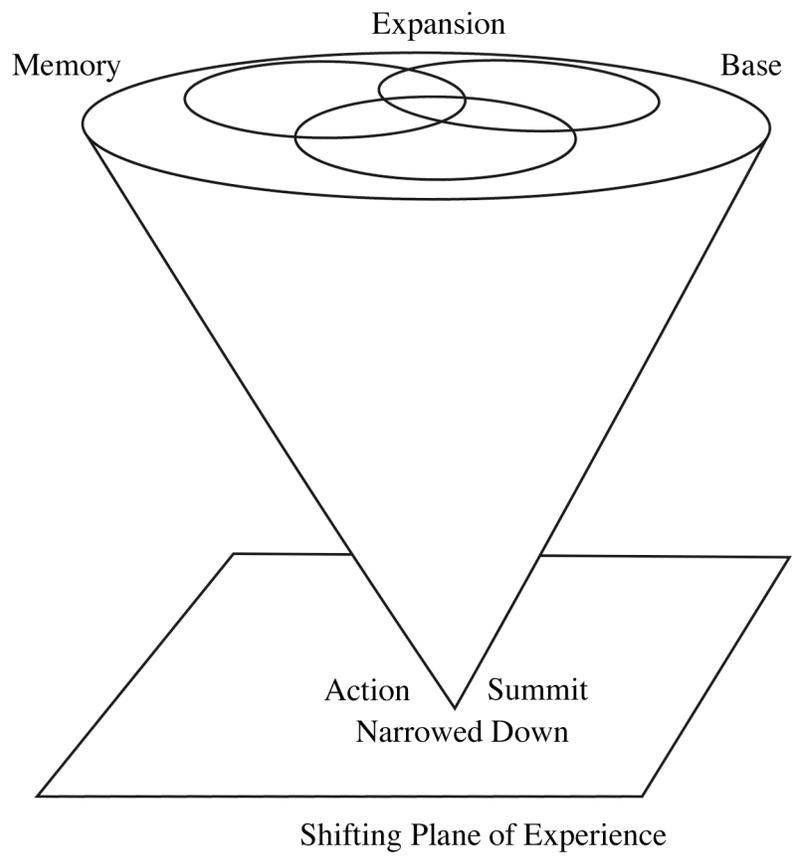


Figure 1b

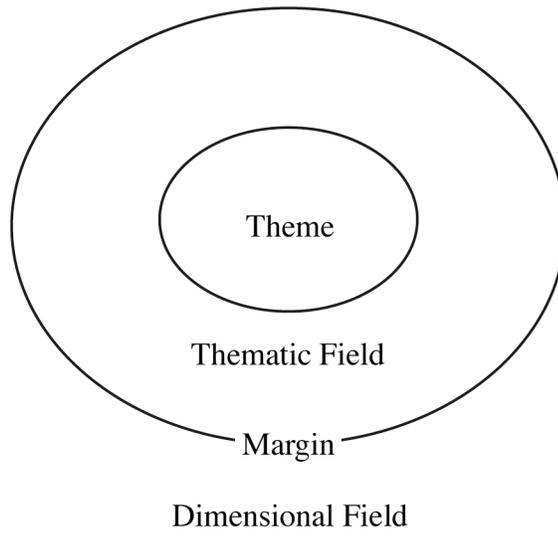


Figure 1c

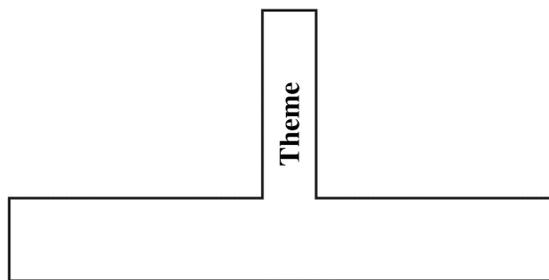


Figure 1d

Each displays an accent of reality (Figure 1a). For James, interest¹¹ gives accent, to that which we notice, “emphasis and selection seem to be the essence of the human mind.”¹² For Bergson, “effort of attention . . . is the very essence of life.”¹³ Whatever has an intimate and continuous connection with my life is a living reality of meaning. For Bergson:

Reality flows; we flow with it; and we call true any affirmation which, in guiding us through moving reality, gives us a grip upon it and places us under more favorable conditions for acting.¹⁴

The attempt, then, of this presentation, is to move with the flow of reality. It is through shifting¹⁵ that one moves from/to the *working self*, *intuiting self* and *thinking self*. This shifting, from one to another, is “a part of the *consciousness* as much as the joint is a part of the *bamboo*.”¹⁶ When this transition, says James, is slow we are aware of it, “in a comparatively restful and stable way. When rapid, we are aware of a passage, a relation, a transition *from* it, or *between* it and something else.”¹⁷ For Bergson, this shifting from one to another is without a loss of continuity:

Yet, between the idea and the action, some hardly perceptible intermediate processes come in, the whole mass of which takes for us a form *sui generis*, which is called the feeling of effort. And from the idea to the effort, from the effort to the act, the progress has been so continuous that we cannot say where the idea and the effort end, and where the act begins.¹⁸

A personal rhythm can develop in the way the shifting consciousness moves from one to another self. James gives two examples which display this ongoing alternation and emphasis:

Like a bird’s life, it seems to be made of an alternation of flights and perchings. The rhythm of language expresses this, where every thought is expressed in a sentence, and every sentence closed by a period.¹⁹

The mind (consciousness), says James, is a *theatre of possibilities*.²⁰ An example of this shifting I give from my own experience. As a child I would go to the movie theater. When I would hear the sound of the old curtain opening I would look up and as the curtain parted I was, then, shifting to the movie itself. Not being able to read the credits and such I would watch in awe but when I saw “Directed by,” I, then, knew to pay attention. I was, then, into the movie, “gone,” so to speak.

Although we spend most of our time in the *working self*,²¹ we are constantly shifting from one to another self. *Within* each of these finite streams²² there is a *consistent*²³ style. Each displays, says James, “different points of view.”²⁴ There is, then, no possibility of referring one to another

without shifting. When considering *the span of consciousness* James says:

But however numerous the things, they can only be known in a single pulse of consciousness for which they form one complex ‘object’, so that properly speaking there is before the mind at no time a plurality of *ideas*, properly so called.²⁵

A shifting or a modification of consciousness founded in a different *attention à la vie*, as Bergson would say, is that which a particular person passes through. For James, “Each world *whilst it is attended to* is real after its own fashion; only the reality lapses with the attention.”²⁶ Each displays (Figure 2) a view of consciousness and *within* each resides meaning with respect to a particular style:

particular style	working self	intuiting self	thinking self
tension of consciousness	awakeness	lessened	restricted
spontaneity	action	free-flowing	purposive
self-other expression	involved with others; actual reach	others present in imagination; potential reach	observer of self-other; calculative
temporality	intersection of lived time and clock time	instantaneous; immediate	planned time; mediate

Figure 2

Each of the above is not a separate state of life but is a distinct name for the shifting consciousness founded upon a degree of our *attention à la vie*. One is constantly shifting from/to, the *working self*, *intuiting self* and *thinking self*. The *working self*, which is pragmatic²⁷ moves into the outer world.

The pragmatic aspect of the *working self* is absent in the *intuiting self* and *thinking self*. The *working self* does not abandon (cease to exist *in*) consciousness except in sleeping and dreaming.²⁸ Regardless to the degree of consciousness, in the *intuiting self* or *thinking self*, there is a margin²⁹ of the *working self within* which the person is situated. As Bergson says, “immediate intuition and discursive thought are one in concrete reality.”³⁰ The *intuiting self*, does not move into the outer world, so to speak, it is a free-flowing state. A person in this state is not responsible until it is brought into action which would, then, be the *working self*. Intuiting is not action, until a shifting consciousness comes about.³¹ Imagination³² is located *within* the *intuiting self*. It too involves, then, a shifting to the *working self* implementing the intuitionable. The *thinking self* does not move into the outer world, so to speak, one can modify or cancel out thoughts without changing the world. Its aim is to observe and understand the world. Theoretical cogitation is not action. As soon as thought is brought into action, the person is, then, into the *working self*. As Bergson says, “The fundamental law of psychological life is the orientation of consciousness towards action.”³³ Put simply: consciousness is turned towards action.

Intuiting and thinking enhance one another. For James, “There are two ways of knowing things, knowing them immediately or intuitively, and knowing them conceptually or representatively.”³⁴ Knowledge of acquaintance is direct and immediate. Knowledge about is indirect and mediate. Each is a way of obtaining knowledge. Knowledge of acquaintance is through experience. Knowledge about is through experience, it can come about either through one’s reflection upon that which is seen or through reflection upon the meaning of another’s experience. The *intuiting self* is direct and the *thinking self* is indirect, in that one thinks *on*³⁵ and through something. Each enhances the other with a different tension.

The degree of our *attention à la vie* is a function of interest and attention which displays what is meaningful for us.³⁶ Interest and attention are intertwined with memory. This is a unity of self (Figure 1b). The unity of an apex of a summit which is narrowed by an effort of attention (effort and tension), for Bergson, is the very essence of life. To pass from this apex of a summit to the base one finds memories of all the moments of the past scattered and distinct. Memories are there, although not perceived, which can reappear in consciousness. This is a unity-of-direction whether narrowed down or wide. As Bergson says:

That which is usually held to be a greater complexity of the psychical state appears to us, from our point of view, to be a greater *dilatation* of the whole personality, which, normally narrowed down by action, expands with the unscrewing of the vice in which it has allowed itself to be squeezed, and, always whole and undivided, spreads itself over a wider and wider surface.³⁷ (Italics for emphasis.)

Now, if we choose to deepen this, presentation consideration should be given to the focus and margin of attention. James presents the theory of fringes in both *The Principles of Psychology* and in *Talks to Teachers*, fringe is called margin. In the former work:

Relation, then, to our topic or interest is constantly felt in the fringe, and particularly the relation of harmony and discord, of furtherance or hindrance of the topic.³⁸

In the latter work, focus and margin are shifting with interest and attention:

Sometimes the focus remains but little changed, while the margin alters rapidly. Sometimes the focus alters, and the margin stays. Sometimes focus and margin change places. Sometimes, again, abrupt alterations of the whole field occur. There can seldom be a sharp description.³⁹

The focus and margin are constantly shifting. This is, for James, “the shifting play of interest.”⁴⁰ In this work we choose to utilize margin rather than fringe. Aron Gurwitsch presents a critique of the theory of fringes which seems appropriate. Put simply: what about that which is *in* consciousness but not related to that which is in focus?

If we consider a focus as a theme and utilize margin in a different way it is possible to display consciousness (Figure 1c). A *theme* is that which is occupying consciousness of the experiencing person. It is that which is the focus of attention. A *thematic field* is that which is co-present with the theme, says Gurwitsch, “experienced as materially relevant or pertinent to the theme and form the background or horizon out of which the theme emerges as the center.”⁴¹ *Margin* is that which is co-present with yet has “no relevancy to”⁴² the theme. *Total field* is that which is, “the totality of items co-present with the given theme.”⁴³ Out of the thematic field emerges a theme which is not related to the margin yet all of this is *within* the total field. A *theme is that which stands out* (Figure 1d). From a Hermeneutic view total field is a misinterpretation of consciousness rather a *Dimensional Field* displays the possible shifts in meaning. With a *Dimensional Field* (Cf. Appendix V “Hermeneutic Phenomenology”) what makes sense in one dimension does not necessarily make sense in another.

The attempt of this presentation was to display consciousness in a way which maintains the continuity and flow of experience. Utilizing the thought of Bergson and James, we found that both present a fundamental ground which gives rise to not only sustaining but expanding while maintaining the unity of the thought. What was further found is that within this flow new aspects emerge giving other connections.

The shifting consciousness is founded upon a degree of our *attention à la vie*. Attention to life is consciousness. The degree of consciousness, which is a shifting plane of experience, is narrowed down by action and expands when further removed from it. The shifting consciousness moves from one to another self (WIT), each of which can be displayed by a particular style: tension of consciousness; spontaneity; self-other expression; temporality. Consciousness is dynamic. The shifting consciousness is not only founded upon a shifting plane of experience but there is a shifting play of interest within each self. We not only can speak of the direction of consciousness but according to the tension⁴⁴ which it adopts and the heights which it moves in the shifting play of interest.

Within say a very short time, the shifting consciousness moves from one to another self founded in a different *attention à la vie*.⁴⁵ This dynamic process can be brought to clarity through literary example:

The situation is as such: your time has come. You have been called to another dimension. Before you can enter you have been asked to do a specific task, it is thus: upon your return to earth you are to explain to a young girl, named Sara, who at the present time is 10 years old, the dynamic aspects of consciousness in 15 minutes. Sara knows that information is coming toward her and is open to what you have to say:

Sara, as you are sitting there and listening to me, if you are paying attention to what I am saying, you are into your *working self*. This is an accent of reality. You are actively listening to me and with your body you are using your senses, your eyes and ears to attend to what I am saying. We are talking with each other, so it's a social time. Our discussion is happening now and here and we would say we are sharing a certain time and space.

Now, if you were to get really bored with all this, you might start daydreaming, then, if you started daydreaming about your boy friend and tuned me out, you would be in a different reality. This would be imagination located *within* your *intuiting self*. You wouldn't be using your eyes or your ears any more because everything that would be happening in your head would just stay in your head and take away all your attention. You would be in what we would call another accent of reality. You could be anywhere, be doing anything, to or with anybody.

Of course a lot of these things that go on just in your imagination would only happen there because some things you just couldn't tell anybody because they would have to think you were nuts, right? If you just stayed in one accent of reality all the time and never went into the other ones, well you would be nuts.

Now, there is one more accent of reality. It's the *thinking self* and it's a lot like the *intuiting self*, except that you are really working something out instead of just daydreaming. But it's not like the *working self*, because you are just concentrating so hard that you don't use your eyes or ears, you just think.

Now, with all of these you go back and forth, shifting, all the time. Say you are playing tennis. The ball is coming your way and you run toward it, you see it, you feel it when you hit it and you watch it hit the net. You have been in your *working self*, reality. You are angry because you missed. Suddenly, the ball goes over to the other side while you are daydreaming about being a star tennis player. For an instant you are in your *intuiting self*. You don't really pay much attention to what is going on and don't really see the play. Then, suddenly the ball is coming at you again and you quickly calculate the correct way to hold the racket, in relation to the angle of its approach and the position of your opponent. Your *thinking self* is there for just a moment, the ball gets closer and your *intuiting self* sees you hitting it over the net and out of reach but within the court, then, the ball is there and you are shifting into your *working self* and you put your racket forth and smash the ball over the net.

Sara, this happens all the time in daily life. You go from one accent of reality to another, moment to moment, in a flash. It can happen so fast that you may find yourself in a reality you did not realize you were in, like I just was.

Notes

- 1) William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, I (New York: Dover Publications, 1950), p. 239.
- 2) William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1958), p. 28.
- 3) James, *The Principles of Psychology*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 225.
- 4) *Ibid.*, p. 402.
- 5) Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1911), p. 129.
- 6) *Ibid.*, p. xviii. Divers is correct.
- 7) William James, *Psychology: Briefer Course* (New York: Collier Books, 1972), p. 444.
- 8) James, *Talks to Teachers*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- 9) Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, fourth edition, trans. F. L. Pogson (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1921), p. 227. Simultaneity, says Bergson, is the intersection of time and space. (*Ibid.*, p. 110.)
- 10) Henri Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. T. E. Hulme (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912), p. 25. In another work Bergson says: "We then set it out in space in its turn, and in place of an organism which develops, in place of changes which permeate one another, we perceive one and the same sensation stretching itself out lengthwise, so to speak, and setting itself in juxtaposition to itself without limit." (Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, *op. cit.*, p. 106.)
- 11) For education interest and attention are integral. Considering memory James says, "The *attention* which we lend to an experience is proportional to its vivid or interesting character; and it is a notorious fact that what interests us most vividly at the time is, other things equal, what we remember best." (James, *The Principles of Psychology*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 670.)
- 12) James, *Psychology: Briefer Course*, *op. cit.*, 1972, p. 358.

- 13) Ralph Barton Perry, *The Thought and Character of William James* (New York: George Braziller, 1954), p. 344. This is a quote from a letter to James from Bergson, 25 March 1903.
- 14) Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, trans. Mabelle L. Andison (New York: Philosophical Library, 1946), p. 255. For Bergson the way to move with living reality is, “The cinematographical method is therefore the only practical method, since it consists in making the general character of knowledge form itself on that of action, while expecting that the detail of each act should depend in its turn on that of knowledge.” Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1911), pp. 306–307.
- 15) Although Alfred Schutz speaks on multiple realities we find that a return to Bergson and James helps resound the original ideas. Especially, since Schutz does not emphasize intuition as well as the deliberate avoidance of an unconscious. Also the avoidance of the phenomenon of existence itself. We would like though to acknowledge the influence of Schutz’s works which are extensive of that pertaining to the world of daily life.
- 16) James, *The Principles of Psychology*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 240. James gives an example which also acknowledges Brentano’s influence, “Into the awareness of the thunder itself the awareness of the previous silence creeps and continues; for what we hear when the thunder crashes is not thunder *pure*, but thunder-breaking-upon-silence-and-contrasting-with-it.” (*Ibid.*, p. 240.)
- 17) *Ibid.*, p. 243.
- 18) Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, *op. cit.*, p. 211.
- 19) James, *The Principles of Psychology*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 243.
- 20) *Ibid.*, p. 288. (Italics for emphasis.)
- 21) An implication for developmental psychology is the expanse of the growth and change of each self.
- 22) James, *The Principles of Psychology*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 367.
- 23) An implication for therapy is becoming inconsistent, within one or another, rather than the shifting consciousness itself. To be stuck *in* one or another of the three will also be an implication for therapy, again, rather than the shifting. James was attuned to this, “Any man becomes, as we say, *inconsistent* with himself if he forgets his

- engagements, pledges, knowledges, and habits; and it is merely a question of degree at what point we shall say that his personality is changed.” (James, *The Principles of Psychology*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 379.)
- 24) William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, II (New York: Dover Publications, 1950), p. 293.
- 25) James, *The Principles of Psychology*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 405.
- 26) James, *The Principles of Psychology*, II, *op. cit.*, p. 293.
- 27) “*Pragmatic method* asserts that what a concept *means* is its consequences.” (Perry, *The Thought and Character of William James*, *op. cit.*, p. 295.) This is a quote from an unpublished lecture on metaphysics by James.
- 28) The emphasis of this presentation is on consciousness, attention to life. Dreams are a turning away from life, a diffuse psychical life. For Bergson, “there is no consciousness without a certain attention to life.” Henri Bergson, *Mind-Energy: Lectures and Essays*, trans. H. Wildon Carr (London: Macmillan and Co., 1920), p. 5. “The dream-self is a distraught self, a self which has let itself go.” *Ibid.*, p. 107. Bergson presents a further example, “To be awake means to will. Cease to will, detach yourself from life, disinterest yourself, and by that mere abstention you pass from the awake-self to the dream-self.” (*Ibid.*, p. 126.) Bergson asks a specific question which can be opened even wider, “What is then the essential difference between being in a dream and being awake? I will sum it up by saying that the same faculties are being exercised whether we are awake or dreaming, but they are in tension in the one case, and relaxed in the other. The dream is the entire mental life, minus the effort of concentration. We still perceive, still remember, still reason. Perceptions, memories, reasonings may abound in a dreamer, for abundance, in the mental domain, does not mean effort. What requires effort is the *precision of adjustment*.” (*Ibid.*, p. 103.) This effort is *attention à la vie*. Constant precision of adjustment requires effort. Bergson says, “Bring the interpretative memory to a state of tension, let it pay attention to life, let it, in short, get out of its dream.” (*Ibid.*, p. 106.) Without effort, then, apperception is not possible. Apperception is a spontaneous interpretation of sensory perception with past experiences including knowledge of that which is perceived. This presentation displays the shifting consciousness with the focus on the *working self*, *intuiting self* and *thinking self*. At this time, although we have proceeded to consciousness, we suggest that an unconscious would be descriptive but not-yet topographic. One can be aware whether conscious or unconscious.

- 29) For Gurwitsch, “we always retain a more or less indistinct, inarticulate, penumbral, and marginal awareness of the world of daily life within which we are situated.” Aron Gurwitsch, *The Field of Consciousness* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1964), p. 397.
- 30) Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, *op. cit.*, p. 237.
- 31) Implications for therapy appear in the imagination, which is located *within* the *intuiting self*, in that, one’s consciousness is loosened which allows for the possibility to see a way out of the reality in which one resides. Imagination itself, does not transform the outer world. Imagination is, then, implemented, that is, shifting to the *working self*.
- 32) For Bergson, “No image can replace the intuition of duration, but many diverse images, borrowed from very different orders of things, may, by the convergence of their action, direct consciousness to the precise point where there is a certain intuition to be seized.” (Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, *op. cit.*, p. 16.) For James: “The imagination is called ‘reproductive’ when the copies are literal; ‘productive’ when . . . different originals are recombined so as to make new wholes.” (James, *Psychology: Briefer Course*, *op. cit.*, p. 308.) Whether imagination is reproductive (literal) or productive (recombined) both are upon originals once felt. When freely combined and reproducing no combination exactly this is imagination, for James, properly so called. This would be, for the present writers, that which produces the original once felt. In this work we choose to display imagination *within* the *intuiting self*. Langan presents a clear description of imagination. Ontic imagination reproduces images of things previously intuited. Ontological imagination produces the intuitionable. This is a seeing of the unity through intuition. Cf. Thomas Langan, *The Meaning of Heidegger: A Critical Study of an Existentialist Phenomenology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), pp. 75–76. The unitive intuition (*prajna-karuna*) is the integration. Written communication from George Chih-Hsin Sun, 1 March 1986.
- 33) Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, *op. cit.*, p. 233. (This quotation comes from a bold print indentation within a paragraph.)
- 34) William James, *The Meaning of Truth: A Sequel to ‘Pragmatism’* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1914), p. 43. For Bergson, “For intuition the essential is change: as for the thing, as intelligence understands it, it is a cutting which has been made out of the becoming and set up by our mind as a substitute for the whole. Thought ordinarily pictures to itself the new as a new arrangement of pre-existing elements; nothing is ever lost for it, nothing is ever

- created. Intuition, bound up to a duration which is growth, perceives in it an uninterrupted continuity of unforeseeable novelty; it sees, it knows that the mind draws from itself more than it has.” (Bergson, *The Creative Mind, op. cit.*, p. 39.) When considering intuition, James gives a vivid example which describes it, “The paper is in the mind and the mind is around the paper, because paper and mind are only two names that are given later to the one experience, when, taken in a larger world of which it forms a part, its connections are traced in different directions. *To know immediately, then, or intuitively, is for mental content and object to be identical.*” (James, *The Meaning of Truth, op. cit.*, pp. 49–50.)
- 35) The Writing Caruso, “Phenomenological Koan: I cannot teach you to think I can give you something to think on.”
- 36) When considering passing of time and interest James says, “*In general, a time filled with varied and interesting experiences seems short in passing, but long as we look back. On the other hand, a tract of time empty of experiences seems long in passing, but in retrospect short.*” (James, *Psychology: Briefer Course, op. cit.*, p. 290.)
- 37) Bergson, *Matter and Memory, op. cit.*, p. xviii. *Dilatation* is correct.
- 38) James, *The Principles of Psychology, I, op. cit.*, p. 259.
- 39) James, *Talks to Teachers, op. cit.*, p. 30. In education focus and margin are constantly shifting, “some object of thought, some distant image, may have become the focus of your mental attention even while I am speaking,—your mind, in short, may have wandered from the lecture; and, in that case, the sensations of my face and voice, although not absolutely vanishing from your conscious field, may have taken up there a very faint and marginal place.” (*Ibid.*, p. 30.)
- 40) *Ibid.*, p. 70.
- 41) Gurwitsch, *The Field of Consciousness, op. cit.*, p. 4.
- 42) *Ibid.*, p. 4. Gurwitsch opens this further, “Marginal consciousness does not deserve attention on account of the eventual occurrence of irrelevant thoughts. It is of interest and importance because, whatever our theme, our mental activity is always accompanied by an awareness of . . . 1. *The stream of our conscious life*; 2. *our embodied existence*; 3. *the perceptual world*. If our theme belongs to none of these orders of existence, as when our attention is engrossed by a scientific theorem, the awareness of all three orders of existence assumes the form of marginal consciousness.” (*Ibid.*, p. 415.) This

allows us not only to speak of the meaning of our experience but to move into the ontological.

43) *Ibid.*, p. 320.

44) Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, *op. cit.*, p. xviii.

45) The Writing Caruso, "Where interest is there attention will be."