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Stress and burnout: A pervasive sense of unbelonging, to one's self and to one's world, and its relevance to the lives of teachers and children

Wilhite, Elizabeth Frazier, Ed.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1991

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STRESS AND BURNOUT: A PERVASIVE SENSE OF UNBELONGING, TO ONE'S SELF AND TO ONE'S WORLD, AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE LIVES OF TEACHERS AND CHILDREN

by

Elizabeth Frazier Wilhite

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
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Jo Alice Leeds
Dissertation Adviser

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This dissertation is a descriptive study of stress and burnout. Its purpose is to offer a broad view of the nature and resolution of stress and burnout. A wide range of literature on stress and burnout is reviewed, and contemporary theories are critiqued. The dissertation puts forward the "Theory of Balance" and ends with an alternative and expanded frame of reference.

This dissertation concludes that problematic stress and burnout result from insufficient meaning and purpose, in both the psyche and the spiritual levels of being. Without this, a pervasive sense of unbelonging, to one's self and to one's world, results. This conclusion is based on the theory, the thesis, that an intrinsic need for balance exists in both the psyche and the spirit of humankind, activated by meaning and purpose in each sphere.

The antithesis of this condition is stress and burnout: to the psyche's biological-physiological functions; the psyche's psychological aspects (ego needs, including thoughts, feelings, and sensations); and/or in the spiritual domain, which is independent of, but interactive with, individuals. Synthesis occurs when each sphere has meaning and purpose restored to it, which satisfies the intrinsic need for balance. When this is achieved, the human experience is one of belonging--to one's self and hence one's world--which transcends stress and burnout.

The problem this dissertation addresses is insufficiency of the literature's language for understanding the essential factors of stress and burnout, as described by the dissertation's thesis. This dissertation offers an expanded frame of reference, through an "integral language," for understanding

humankind, its nature, meaning and purpose, and transcending ego consciousness. It suggests that a process involving work on being, consciousness, and presence enables participation in higher and more objective levels of consciousness, which tends to satisfy the human organism's intrinsic need for balance. This alternative proposes that spiritual transformation, through conscious acts of attention, enable one to fight the forces of illusion. This suggests that spiritual meaning and purpose, through a methodology for transformation of being, consciousness, and presence, can foster a sense of belonging--to one's self and one's world.

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Dissertation Adviser [signature]

Committee Members [signatures]

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I am especially grateful to my husband Bob whose continuous support, help, and friendship during my academic years and the writing of this dissertation was extraordinary. His encouragement and confidence in me was indeed the intellectual and emotional reinforcement that helped made this dissertation possible. As well, our conversations and applications of the principles gleaned from this study enabled verification of their value.

To my four children--Lisa, Scott, Barrie, and Natalie--I am grateful for their encouragement and interest during the long hours of this dissertation's creation. Their support and interest was indeed exceptional.

There are many in academia whom I wish to acknowledge. Above all, I am grateful for the encouragement and confidence from Dr. David Purpel as chairman of my committee. From the beginning of my graduate studies, Dr. Purpel's intuitive perceptions awarded me valuable guidance and directed me toward thought provoking reflections. His extraordinary abilities as an insightful and sensitive educator have inspired my own search.

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I am grateful to Dr. Fritz Mengert's contributions that enhanced and stimulated my philosophical interest, intellectual growth, and the foundations for this dissertation. Above all, Dr. Mengert's acceptance and acknowledgement of my ideas served to encourage me to uncover and develop my own thoughts and the support to express them.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Stress and Burnout: Meaning and Purpose, and the "Theory of Balance"

This dissertation examines the phenomena of problematic stress and burnout from a psychological and spiritual point of view, with particular regard for the issues of educators and children. It arises from my concern over the fact that problematic stress and burnout are phenomena experienced in the lives of many people today.

In the long history of humankind, stress has not been as common a topic as it is today. While human life in the past has been more difficult, more full of starvation, trauma from animals, natural disasters, and warfare than our time, the ancient writers did not leave a record of stress as a widespread disease. Their literature typically deals with the causes of stress and what was done to remedy the situation. Homer, for example, describes the assaults and defenses of the Trojan War, not Priam's nerves, nor Odysseus' personal tensions. The primary "burnout" case in Greek literature is Icarus, who flew too near the Sun. Perhaps there is something in that image for us, but it will be dealt with later in this dissertation. Despite our society's relative freedom from traditional sources of difficulty--starvation, physical trauma, natural disasters, and warfare--we suffer from stress nonetheless, and have even created a body of literature regarding it. Clearly, our modern-day stress is a new phenomenon, caused by factors not found in earlier times, which affects even our children.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines stress as "Mental or emotional pressure" (1985, p. 673). It defines burnout as "Physical or emotional exhaustion from long-term stress. One who is burned out" (1985, p. 93).

The term "stress," probably creates in the reader's mind a familiar image: the forehead may be furrowed; the mouth slightly open, the eyes furtive, or cast to the side; the shoulders are high and narrow; the body overall appears to be "pinched," and tense, as if in pain.

The term "burnout," also suggests familiar images: a facial expression of resignation, failure, uncertainty, and images of retiring movements directed downward, as if gravity were grown somehow stronger. "Burnout" suggests limpness in the body, and a curling over, signifying exhaustion and withdrawal.

Anthony Cedoline illustrates stress and burnout by saying:

> Stress becomes a problem when it ceases to be a healthy stimulus, but instead creates a burden the individual cannot handle without harmful effect. . ."distress."
>
> Job burnout is both an occupational hazard and a phenomenon induced by distress. It is generally characterized by (1) some degree of physical and emotional exhaustion; (2) socially dysfunctional behavior, particularly a distancing and insulation from individuals with whom one is working; (3) psychological impairment--especially strong, negative feelings towards the self; and (4) organizational inefficiency through decreased output and poor morale (Cedoline, 1982, pp. 1, 17).

Is Cedoline not describing the pervasive sense of unbelonging, characterized by a lack of humankind's inner equilibrium?

This dissertation examines stress and burnout from historical, medical, psychological, and psychosocial perspectives in a survey of published scholarly literature. The theories are critiqued from the perspective of my "Theory of

Balance," with regard to their possibilities and limitations as truly effective models which support stress remedial efforts. Following, the dissertation offers an expanded frame of reference, which stands as an alternative to more conventional points of view for examining the essence of stress and burnout.

Although this dissertation recognizes that stress* (distress) and burnout are problematic phenomena witnessed throughout contemporary society, at the heart of this dissertation the concern is problematic stress and burnout in regard to teachers and children. The reference to children is offered to illuminate the horrifying extent to which distress and burnout are manifesting in our society and affecting the lives of our youth. The concern for teachers exists because they stand at a pivotal place in society: it is through them that the future passes. By this, I mean that the past gives way to the future every time a child is shaped or affected by his or her school experiences. In this way, teachers define the new world's realities for their students. A teacher's inner balance, world view, attitudes, demeanor, and values create the school context against which the new player must gauge herself or himself, and make the early moves down the lines of emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual development he or she will follow. The responsibility for creating a new world cannot be said to rest entirely with teachers, yet they do act as encouragers or critics of behavior and attitudes which help inform the unique rising spirit which animates each new

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* When the word "stress" is used in this dissertation as a "general" term, out of technical context, it refers to a problematic phenomena, meaning distress, unless otherwise stated. Technically, this dissertation defines stress as wear and tear in the body as a result of the body's response to any demand. The demand, stimuli or stressor, can be unpleasant (distress) or pleasant (eustress), depending on the individual's interpretation. However, others' theories are reviewed later in the dissertation.

generation. As early guides in the work toward individuation* and transformation,** their potential capacity to inspire nobility and discourage mechanicality is perhaps more profound than that of any other group. It is in school that the parent's product--the individual arising from a family context--meets the world beyond the home, and must adapt itself to its realities, in order to be able to fully express itself in a manner meaningful to itself and others.

It is a tragedy for a single teacher to become a victim of stress. In the process of socialization, it represents twenty or thirty student-days missed--each and every day--when an educator fails to role model engagement with life. As stress gives way to burnout, the tragedy assumes the proportion of scandal: is there no connection, for example, between the epidemic of stress and burnout among educators and the recent rise in the incidence of suicide among teenagers? I believe there is.

Alice Miller speaks to this by suggesting the need to foster children's search for their True Self. Her concern is that we live in a culture that encourages humankind not to take seriously or to delve deeply into one's own suffering. The consequence she suggests is that these feelings get repressed; this keeps a child, and adults as well, from learning the truth about themselves and their position. Miller says: "the true self remains deeply and thoroughly hidden unless creative channels are opened to facilitate the truth breaking

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* By "individuation," I refer herein to an integration, at the level of conscious awareness, of one's unconscious aspects; also, C.G. Jung's definition (1976) that individuation is a process of differentiation (development and separation of differences, as a being distinct from the general, collective psychology) for the development of the individual personality.

** By "transformation," I refer to the process of spiritualization by which an individual changes their level of Being, for purposes beyond ego gratification and personality fulfillment. Transformation herein implies coming to know who and what one is in a new way, a way that involves a change of consciousness itself.

through" (Miller, 1990, p. 167). Miller sees the lack of concern for a child's True Self as an important social issue with wide-reaching repercussions. She says:

> For some years now there has been proof that the devastating effects of the traumatization of children take their inevitable toll on society. This knowledge concerns every single one of us, and--if disseminated widely enough--should lead to fundamental changes in society. . .(Miller, 1990, p. 167).

Joseph Chilton Pearce advocates the need to rediscover the astonishing capacity for creative intelligence built into the human genes. He postulates:

> The mid-brain is designed for astonishing capacities, but its development is based on the infant and child constructing a knowledge of the world as it actually is. Children are unable to construct this foundation because we unknowingly inflict on them an anxiety-conditioned view of the world. . .if the child were allowed to develop this natural world view, logical maturation would develop a utility, value, and ability almost beyond our imagination (Pearce, 1977, xi).

Miller and Pearce point the way in which society's attitudes and its view of reality are restricting and distorting the healthy mental and emotional growth of children. This situation has negative implications for the future of our society, for education, and most certainly for the children themselves.

This dissertation speaks to the underlying patterns of human experience which I believe portray the essential core of stress and burnout, as well as the traumatization of children, and the consequences for individuals and society that arise when we as humankind, adults and children alike, are unable to pursue and encourage, as Alice Miller says, a search for our True Self.

My concern rises after reviewing the literature's prescriptions for stress and burnout. I conclude that the writers reviewed do not offer an integral

language* of sufficient depth with which to address the profound psychological and spiritual issues, which I believe form the essential core of stress and burnout. Further, their curative offerings do not address preventions beyond ego consciousness. As a result of this insufficient means to address the essence of the phenomena, in my opinion, the individual and social implications include the perpetuation of stress and burnout. With these problems in mind, I will try to make the connections between the psychological and the spiritual dimensions by offering an alternative way of looking at them.

I propose that stress and burnout are the natural, even organic consequences of a life lived without a sufficient regard for spiritual purpose. By "purpose," I mean a meaningful objective in the search for Being. Purposelessness, I believe, results in a pervasive sense of unbelonging, to one's Self and one's world. To activate a meaningful objective and bring purpose into one's life, I believe requires work on Being, which in turn provides the basis for transcending stress. "Being" refers to intelligent substance beyond the visible, such as is referred to in the traditional saying "that which survives a shipwreck." Being describes "the mode of existence of an organism. . .the extent to which it is an integrated whole and can be said to have integrated experience" (Bennett, 1954, p. 107).

In response to my concern over what I consider to be an incomplete knowledge for understanding and resolving stress and burnout, resulting in limitations on the part of the theories and practices offered in contemporary writings, this dissertation puts forth an expanded theory of stress and burnout: The "Theory of Balance." This theory proposes that stress and burnout are a

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* See Appendix C for definition.

consequence of a lack of unity in, or between, either the psyche's biological-physiological functions; or in the psychological domain of ego needs, including thoughts, feelings, and sensations; or in the spiritual realm, which is independent of, but interactive with, individuals. The theory holds that unity occurs when each sphere is pursuing meaning through a purpose appropriate to it. This balance of purposes provides a coherent equilibrium that satisfies the human mechanism's intrinsic need for safety, creative expression, and being-growth. When this is achieved, human experience is one of belonging--to one's self and hence one's world--which transcends stress and burnout.

A great deal of the literature I reviewed discusses the psychosocial aspects of stress and burnout, critiquing the problematic conditions in the work place and in society for many people. I agree that there are serious social problems facing humankind today. However, it is my opinion that unless we as a society expand our psychological, sociological, and spiritual perspectives, and change our view of humankind as seen only through ego consciousness, then there is no hope of transcending the fundamental causal factor which, in my view, creates stress and burnout, i.e. the condition of spiritually purposeless existence.

This dissertation proposes that George Gurdjieff and his students have developed an integrated language which addresses the psychological, social and spiritual needs, in theory and in practice, and which helps individuals restore balance. This language describes a profound spiritual psychology and cosmology, which address the deeper questions of man's existence. It is George Gurdjieff's body of knowledge that is integrated into my "Theory of Balance," and helps inform this dissertation's expanded frame of reference.

Gurdjieff offers a basis for understanding humankind's limitations, as well as its potential for unity. He offers a purpose, beyond ego gratification, for psychological change, and addresses social issues in ways which minimize greed and ego as the factors which drive change and influence our sense of meaning and purpose.

To select the literature for this dissertation, I first surveyed the field's stress titled books and journal articles. I then selected literature on stress from medical, holistic, psychosocial, psychological, and educational fields of inquiry, along with writings on children and stress. I chose this broad spectrum of literature in order to examine the phenomena from as many points of view as possible. The final selection criteria included: authors from varying disciplines; authors I concluded to most represent their field of inquiry, as well as those whose perspective offered a different point of view; authors most quoted by others; and authors who proposed more extensive theories. In regard to children, I selected authors who wrote from the varying perspectives. My final selection was from a behavioristic, psychosocial, and whole-child perspective. I also selected authors who offered spiritual insight regarding children, although not necessarily from the perspective of stress. The criteria I used for selecting the burnout literature I reviewed was to choose authors who wrote from different educational points of view and addressed burnout in regard to teachers. In order to offer a wider perspective on burnout, I chose to include selections that link mid-life crisis and burnout, although indirectly,* from a psychological and spiritual perspective

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* Brewi and Brennan refer to the mid-life crisis as anxiety-provoking (1989, p.25) . Burnout is connected with distress, as noted above in Cedoline's writings. Distress and stress are used

My literature search revealed that a vast selection of literature, both in book and journal form, is available on stress, but less on burnout. After reading, I concluded this difference seems to stem from the relatively recent (1974) introduction of the concept of "burnout." In fact, I found that early literature on burnout describes it by using definitions of stress, i.e. Steven Truch's book Teacher Burnout and What To Do About It (1980). I also concluded that burnout is not independent of stress but is an advanced stage of problematic stress. I base my opinion on the fact that, unlike stress, burnout is characterized by exhaustion, dysfunctional behavior, and psychological impairment (Cedoline, 1982, p. 17). Willard McGuire and The Council for Exceptional Children further illuminate this point by saying that "teacher burnout [is] a condition that results from stress. . ." (McGuire, 1979), and "The term [burnout] has become the catchall phrase for stress related problems" (CEC). Cedoline also makes the connection between stress and burnout by saying that "stress becomes a problem when. . .the individual cannot handle without harmful effect. . . "distress." He goes on to say that "Job burnout is both an occupational hazard and a phenomenon induced by distress" (Cedoline, 1982, p. 1,17). I sensed that other authors I reviewed, who wrote on burnout, did so either assuming or referring to it in relationship to stress. However, most of the burnout literature I reviewed depict burnout as a job related phenomena. The exception I found was in the mid-life literature, from the writings of Jung and Brewi and Brennan. They describe a link between failure to make mid-life transitions and what can be described as burnout.

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together in many references (King, Stanley & Burrows, 1987, p.4). Hence the correlation between anxiety and burnout.

With reference to burnout as stress related, I think that most authors I reviewed ignored the element of human processing that enters into the human experience of burnout. By this I mean that, in my opinion, one cannot dismiss the human interpretation factor, which I believe internalizes the stressor and causes burnout. It is my view that all responsibility for externally stressful conditions cannot be placed entirely on job conditions. Most authors I reviewed conclude that problematic stress is due to an individual's negative interpretation of a stressor. Further, the literature I reviewed does not account for the individuals who create stressful environments. In order to examine the human condition and the meanings attached to human relationships, I believe, requires a spiritual meaning and purpose for human life.

I concluded from my research that the literature on stress has links that go back centuries. Later, in the 1930's, Hans Selye, was the first to report on stress as a specific phenomenon. I found that most authors I reviewed quote, mention, or referred to Selye's theories, for example: Humphrey and Humphrey; Melendez and de Guzman; Cedoline; William Miller; King, Stanley, and Burrows; Sethi, and Joseph Chilton Pearce. Because I found that Selye's theories are widely relied upon, my review of literature addresses Selye's theories first and offers an extensive analysis of his views to form the foundation of my study.

After reviewing a significant body of literature on stress and burnout, I reached the conclusion that most authors writing on the subject suggest, directly or indirectly, a psychological connection or resolution, with little connection between the psychological and spiritual domain of human needs. The problem I

see is that the psychological perspective alone is limited because it does not address the question of life's *meaning* sufficiently.

CHAPTER II

ORIGINS AND HISTORY OF THE CONCEPTS STRESS AND BURNOUT

In this chapter, the etymologies of "stress," and "burnout," are presented, and a history of the concepts is offered. Together they help form a foundation for understanding stress and burnout.

Origin of Terms

The etymological examination of stress and burnout is offered to analyze the meanings of the present terms' historical roots.

Stress

The earliest recorded occurrence of the term "stress" is traceable to Latin. Its transmission to English is derived through the word "strain," from the Latin derivative *distringere* and past participle *districtus*, meaning "separate"; thus comes the Low Latin homonym *districtis*, meaning "being torn asunder"; whence comes the Old French-Medieval French word *destrece*, and the French word *destresse*; whence comes the English word *distress*, all meaning "derivation," and the Old French-Medieval French word *destrecier*, which produces "*to distress*" and by aphesis (loss of the short unaccented vowel) comes *distress* , which becomes *stress* . (Partridge, 1983, p. 672).

Some sources suggest that the term stress is derived from the Latin word *stringere*, meaning "to bind tightly" (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1982, p. 2). Hence, when the the word "stress" is considered from the Latin root *distringere* the interpretations come to contemporary time as: "separate, being torn asunder,

derivation, distress, and stress." If the Latin base *stringere* is considered, the interpretations are: ""to draw tight, to contract, a constricting, constriction. Thus, the meaning depends upon which term is preferred.

Literature indicates that the *stringere* interpretation led contemporary researcher Hans Selye to consider stress in the human organism as "a constraining force or influence" meaning "the extent to which the body can withstand a given force or influence" (Humphrey and Humphrey, 1986). I contend both definitions are required to understand the full meaning of stress.

These words inform the mechanical aspect of stress (as in "The girder broke under the stress") from which psychological usage derived, in the twentieth century.

Burnout

The term *burnout* cannot be directly traced to early origins, as it is a term introduced in this century. In order to establish a basic understanding of the word, it is necessary to examine the words "burn" and "out" individually.

Burn is derived from the Middle English word *bernen* , meaning "to be, to cause to be, on fire;" and is akin to the Irish word *brenn*, meaning "to gush forth," and the Sanskrit word *bhurati*, meaning "quivers or flickers." (Partridge, 1983, p. 65). *Out* is derived from the Middle English words *out, oute, ut;* and the Sanskrit word *ud*, all meaning "outwards or "upwards."

When the roots of both *burn* and *out* are combined, *burnout* means: " to be or to cause to be on fire, to gush forth, quiver or flicker; out, upwards or outwards" (Partridge, 1983, p. 459).

Stress and burnout, taken together, then mean "to draw tight, to contract, a constricting," and "fire gushing forth and flickering out." A working paraphrase might be "tension," and "extinguishing."

The Evolution of the Concepts of Stress

Stress has existed in human experience since time immemorial. If we accept "constriction," as the root meaning of stress, then any reversal of man's expansion could be interpreted as stressful. There have of course, been many reversals. History is, in a sense, the long story of reversals. Each epoch and culture has told its story through whatever means available to it, with great sincerity and earnestness. Each has experienced constriction and stress; yet each, in its own language, tends to consider its own human experience the most stressful, although not always defining it as stress. For instance, contemporary findings refer to our time as the "age of stress," while failing to consider ancient man's world and its constrictions: epidemics, incursions of glaciers, and abundant carnivores, to name but a few. Clearly, our time has much to be said for it, as constricting as it is.

Early Recordings of Stress as an Unspecified Curative

Hans Selye, the forerunner of modern-day stress research, interpreted early records regarding medical treatments as the first references to stress. Early treatments were often intended to produce a body reaction or anxiety in the patient. Selye points to, for example, the case of primitive Aztec and Babylonian medicine, where disease was treated by incantations, dances, drugs, poultices, and painful bandages. These remedies were applied by witch doctors or priest-physicians for the purposes of frightening and expelling

demons or evil spirits thought to be responsible for disease. Selye sees that contemporary primitive practice is consistent with ancient primitive practice, as the rituals of terrifying patients through the use of movement, masks, and music continues in undeveloped areas throughout the world. It is a striking fact that "natural man" views generalized emotional and physical shock, implying stress, as a curative in and of itself. (Selye, 1978, pp. 7-14).

In ancient Greece, Hippocrates, considered to be the "father of medicine," recognized the existence of a *vis medicatrix naturae*, or healing power of nature, made up of bodily mechanisms which restored health after exposure to pathogens. Greek vases, made around 150 B.C., depict the process of bloodletting, or venesection (cutting into one's vein for the purpose of drawing blood). The purpose of bloodletting was primarily to vent gases thought to be corrupt, and secondarily, to create a stressful "crisis," for the patient, to achieve a curative emotional catharsis. These procedures remained common practice until the application of leeches was introduced in the Middle Ages. Around 100 A.D., the eminent Greek physician Rufus of Ephesus discovered strong fever to be the cure of many diseases. During this period, goat urine was utilized to produce fever. During the Middle Ages, literature depicts flogging as a means to drive out demons, or the devil itself, from those suffering from mental aberrations. Paracelsus, a famous sixteenth century Swiss physician, is cited as having used the cure of throwing persons with diseases into cold water. This treatment has been followed in the twentieth century by shock therapy for mental patients, using electric current or certain drugs like Metrazol or insulin. (Selye, 1978, p. 8).

The point is that medicine has used stress as a curative for thousands of years until quite recent scientific advances, such as the discovery of bacteria. In more recent times, science has drawn more clearly the relationships between the causes of disease and the specific treatments.

Twentieth-Century Concepts--Stress as a Specific Phenomenon

Contributors to the Concept of Stress as a Specific Phenomenon

Stress as a specific medical concept was introduced by Hans Selye in the 1930's. Selye credited C. Bernard, J. S. Haldane, E. Pfluger, L. Fredericq, and W. B. Cannon with fundamental contributions to his theories regarding the cause and effects of stress, by forwarding the conception of the body as residing in a self-created and self-maintained harmony. For example, Selye acknowledges the nineteenth-century French physiologist Bernard (1879) as having "enormously advanced the subject by pointing out that the internal environment of a living organism must remain fairly constant despite changes in the external environment" (Selye, 1982, p. 8). Further Selye says, Bernard's notions regarding the changes in the external environment as " the fixity of the *milieu interieur* which is the condition of free and independent life," laid the foundation for his idea of stress as a neutral factor. (Selye, 1982, p. 8).

The contribution of German physiologist Pfluger (1877), who stated that "the cause of every need of a living being is also the cause of the satisfaction of that need" (Selye,1982, p. 8), helped Selye formulate the relationship between active adaptation and the steady state. I interpret this to mean that the body's adaptation and balance is enhanced by satisfaction of a need.

Similar to Pfluger's ideas, Selye notes that Belgian physiologist Frederiq (1885) advances the idea that "The living being is an agency of such sort that

each disturbing influence induces by itself the calling forth of compensatory activity to neutralize or repair the disturbance" (Selye, 1982, p. 8).

The contribution of American physiologist Cannon (1939) was to put forth the term "homeostasis" (from the Greek *homoios*, meaning similar, and *stasis*, meaning position) for describing "the coordinated physiologic processes which maintain most of the steady states in the organism" (Selye, 1982, p. 8). In turn, Selye translates homeostasis as "staying power," and incorporates this concept into his theory as "The body's tendency to maintain a steady state despite external changes; physiologic stability" (Selye, 1978, p. 467).

The historical significance of the ideas of Bernard, Pfluger, Fredericq, Cannon, and Selye is that their theories describe the body as a maintainer of a self-creating harmony. Against this backdrop, Selye has formulated his theory that stress is the wear and tear on the body organs as the body strives to maintain its natural balance. (Selye, 1978). For Selye, stress in and of itself, is not problematic but necessary.

Dr. Hans Selye--Pioneer Stress Researcher

Brief Biography

The late Dr. Hans Selye, already quoted and relied upon in this dissertation, is regarded as the father of modern research on stress. (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1986). His theory of stress began in 1930 and his first publication on the stress syndrome appeared in 1936. Although Selye's notions on stress have been somewhat modified by recent researchers in all fields of inquiry, he is considered and cited by almost every stress researcher in all disciplines. Selye, born in Vienna in 1907, served beginning in 1945, as Professor and Director of the Institute of Experimental Medicine and Surgery at the University

of Montreal. He is the author of 32 books and over 1500 technical articles on stress. His doctoral degrees are in the fields of medicine, philosophy, and science. (Selye, 1978).

Selye's medical and scientific background, unlike that of the majority of other theoretical writers I reviewed, offers physiological, biological, and psychological perspectives which inform his theory. In addition he offers a philosophical perspective. This wide range of inquiry is unique in the literature I encountered on stress. His research is frequently quoted, elaborated upon, or modified by the authors I have read and reported on in this dissertation (even those who claim to disagree with Selye frequently quote him, i.e. King, Stanley & Burrows, 1987). It is his wide range of perspectives which I believe makes Selye a popular source: writers from many disciplines can find something pertinent to their field in Selye. For example, reference to Selye's work can be seen in works of the following writers reviewed in this dissertation: Humphrey and Humphrey worked together with Selye in developing a stress-reduction program for children. (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1984, p. 151). Cedoline contends that his view, like Selye's, is that one cannot avoid stress. Cedoline quotes Selye's notions on the "fight or flight" stress reaction, as the body's response to both pleasant and unpleasant kind of stress. (Cedoline, 1980, p. 94). Melendez and de Guzman say that Selye's philosophy of altruistic egoism is a necessary component in a prevention model. (Melendez 79 de Guzman, 1983, p. 63). William Miller also refers to Selye's philosophy of altruistic egoism as "vital" (Miller, 1979, p. 24). Joseph Chilton Pearce suggests reference to Selye's book Stress of Life. (Pearce, 1977, p. 244). Although King, Stanley, and Burrows seem to value Selye's work less than the others mentioned, they

do refer a lot to Selye, his scientific definition of stress, and his General Adaptation Syndrome. These authors say that "Selye's work had an important role to play" (King, Stanley & Burrows, 1987, p. 3). My point here is that Selye's writings and theories on stress offer a foundation for many writers that I have reviewed.

Selye's View of Stress * and the "General Adaptation Syndrome"

Selye defines stress as the effect of the body's power to maintain equilibrium. In this light, he says that "stress is essentially the rate of wear and tear in the body. . .the nonspecific response of the body to any demand" (Selye, 1978, p. 1). However, for Selye, the wear and tear are "only the result. . . [because] stress causes certain changes in the structure and chemical composition of the body" (Ibid, p. 1). Although Selye sees that "some of the changes are merely signs of damage" (Ibid.), the significant point of his theory is that the changes in the body's structure and chemical composition "are manifestations of the body's adaptive reactions, its mechanism of defense against stress" (Ibid).

Selye called the totality of the changes the stress syndrome, or the "General Adaptation Syndrome" which he refers to as the G.A.S. He used the term *general* because it is produced by agents which have only a general effect upon large portions of the body. He called it *adaptive* because he saw it stimulating defenses and thereby helping in the acquisition and maintenance of a stage of inurement. He coined the term *syndrome* because its individual manifestations are coordinated and dependent upon each other (Selye, 1978).

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* See Appendix A for additional definition of Selye's terms and theory descriptions.

Selye's observations led him to conclude that the G.A.S. develops in three stages: (1) the alarm reaction; (2) the stage of resistance; (3) the stage of exhaustion. These three stages he contends are "a chemical rallying of the body's defences" (Selye, 1983, p. 165). However, if the stressor (that which produces stress) continues, Selye does contend that "the defence system gradually wears down" (Ibid). Selye describes the G. A.S. process by saying:

> The *nervous system* and the *endocrine* (or *hormonal*) *system* play particular important parts in maintaining resistance during stress. They help to keep the structure and function of the body steady despite exposure to stress-producing or stressor agents, such as nervous tension, wounds, infections, poisons. This steady state is known as *homeostasis* (Selye, 1978, p. 2). *

In order to better understand the General Adaptation Syndrome, Selye points out what *stress is not* : It is not simply nervous tension; not an emergency discharge of hormones; not everything that causes a secretion by the adrenal cortex of its hormones, the corticoids; not always the nonspecific result of damage; not the same as a deviation from homeostasis; not anything that causes an alarm reaction (it is the stressor that does that, not stress itself); not identical with alarm reaction or the G.A.S. as a whole; not a specific reaction; (stress is not specific since it can be produced by virtually any agent); not necessarily something bad (it all depends on how you take it); and it cannot, and should not, be avoided because everybody is always under some degree of stress and stress can be avoided only by dying. (Selye, 1978).

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* All quotations in this dissertation are replicated in the exact style as put forth by the originating author, i.e. words in italic, bold print, quotations, etc.

Selye's view is that "stress is an inherent element of all disease" (Selye, 1978, p. 57); and the diseases of adaptation are "Maladies which are principally due to imperfections of the G.A.S" (Selye, 1978, p. 465). Thus, to understand more precisely what stress is and through what mechanisms it acts will enable science to understand more about the nature of disease itself. In this light, Selye views stress as "a condition, a state, and as such it is imponderable, but it manifests itself by measurable changes in the organs of the body" (Ibid, p. 58). By using these alterations as indicators of stress, Selye suggests that one can come closer to an understanding of stress itself. (Ibid, p. 60).

Selye's Views on the Causes of Stress and the Mechanism of Dis-ease

From Selye's perspective, stressors are "that which produce stress" (1978). He contends that the most frequent causes of stress are the *stressors* of daily life and "without hesitation the most important stressors are emotional, especially those causing distress" (Selye, 1978, p. 370). Further, he points out, that our body and the physical demands upon body tissues--like wound healing, fighting infections, etc.--are of great importance, but far less than the emotional stimuli and even somatic reactions evoked from nervous responses, such as fear, pain, or frustration. In this light, Selye suggests that the effects of stress, and its consequences, depend not on what we do or what happens to us but "on the way we take it" (1978, p. 370). However, Selye says:

> It is virtually impossible to distinguish between stressors and conditioning factors in human life. . .As a rule a problem arises because we are conditioned or predisposed to react in a certain way when meeting the stressors of daily life. . .According to our definition any demand upon the body, including those merely necessary to maintain life, act as stressors. . .(Selye, 1978, p. 370).

This points out the habitual predisposition of human life and how little in control we are of external stimuli and social conditioning. For Selye there is no distinction between stimuli, stressors. Although he has given special attention to what is termed "cultural stress" or "cross-cultural stress," in relation to the G.A.S., his investigations dealt with them as stressors.

The role of psychosomatic illness and its relationship to stress is significant for Selye. He says that "*Psychosomatic*. . .bodily (somatic) changes that come from a mental (psychic) attitude can produce illness" (Selye, 1978, p. 408). He adds that the "existence of physical and mental strain, the manifold interactions between somatic and psychic reactions, as well as the importance of defensive-adaptive responses had all been more or less clearly recognized since time immemorial. (Selye, 1978, p. 410).

According to Selye, all potential disease producers also cause some degree of stress, which modify the body's response by altering the internal forces of resistance and of submission. This defeats the body's self-healing mechanism "homeostasis." Hence, stress is an inherent element in all disease" (Selye, 1978, p. 57). Selye further illuminates the psychosomatic implications by saying:

> The most important *applications of the stress concept as regards purely somatic medicine* are derived from the discovery that the body can meet various aggressions with the same adaptive defensive mechanism. A dissection of this reaction teaches us how to combat disease by strengthening the body's own defenses against stress.
>
> This also has important *psychosomatic implications*. Bodily changes during stress act upon mentality and vice versa. Only by dissecting our troubles can we clearly distinguish the part played by the stressor from that of our own adaptive measures of defense

> and surrender. . .this helps us to handle ourselves during the stresses of everyday life, and in particular, how to tune down when we are wrought up, how to overcome insomnia, and how to get out of certain grooves of stereotyped behavior (Selye, 1978, p. 57).

Selye is pointing to the habitual predisposition of human existence and the relationship this plays to stress.

Selye's Views on the Philosophical Implications of Stress

Selye incorporates an ethical dimension into his research. He bases his philosophical insights on his observations of nature and society. His view is that "stress research also has far-reaching *philosophic implications*. . ." (Selye, 1978, p. 367).* From his perspective stress plays a role in such manifestations as "aging, the development of individuality, the need for self-expression, and the formulation of man's ultimate struggles. Stress is usually the outcome of a struggle for the self-preservation (the homeostasis) of parts within a whole" (Selye, 1978, p. 367). Selye's philosophical conclusion rests in the premise that "human beings cannot think only of future safety; we want more immediate rewards" (Ibid.). For Selye the rewards are "a need for self-expression. . .to enjoy the pleasures our senses can bring. . .and equanimity which come from reverently contemplating the great wonders of Creation" (Ibid).

Selye's Philosophical Prescriptions for Stress

For Selye, the prevention and cure of disease resides in man's ability to devise a natural and healthy philosophy of life which "maximizes eustress and minimizes distress in our lives" (Selye, 1978, xix). To do this, Selye holds that

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* See Appendix A for Selye's expanded philosophical theory.

the innate vitality and creative purpose in each and every individual must find an outlet. He says:

> In practice, when it comes to guiding human conduct, it seems that we must all bow to the great law which says that what is in us must express itself; in fact it must express itself at a speed and in directions predetermined by our own inherited structure. . . in this dictum rests my whole philosophy of conduct. . .
>
> When a human being is born--unless he wants to kill himself--he cannot stop either, before he has completed his mission on earth. Yet he too can do much, through voluntary choice of conduct, to get as far as possible with a given bodily structure and supply of adaptation energy, under given social conditions. . .The two great limiting factors--which are fixed once a man is born--are: his supply of adaptation energy and the wear and tear that the weakest vital part of his body can tolerate (Selye, 1978, pp. 435-439).

Extending this position further, Selye points to the expression of the "ultimate aims of man," as a "fundamental need," which he says philosophers, psychologists, and mystics have argued over since time immemorial. Thus for Selye, the answer and solution to stress is to change one's "attitude toward stress in life." Selye says that this can be accomplished through "*the philosophy of altruistic egoism* " (Selye, 1978, p. 439) and "*to know thyself* " (Selye, 1978, p. 405). He states:

> The great art is to express our vitality through the particular channels and at the particular speed which Nature foresaw for us.
>
> This is never very easy, but here again, intelligent self-analysis helps. . .There are various ways of self-expression. The one I have found most consistent with biologic laws and most effective in practice. . .[is] "altruistic egoism" (Selye, 1978, p. 478).

Selye advocates that the fundamental human need is to work for reward, to judge, and to enjoy our success, which he incorporates in his "*philosophy of altruistic egoism*." * He contends it incorporates applied science, but ventures "into pure philosophy" (Selye, 1979, p. 440). He advises that "in an age so largely governed by intellect as ours," it is gratifying to learn that much of "what religions and philosophies have taught as doctrines to guide our conduct is based on scientifically-understandable biologic truths" (Selye, 1978, p. 440). Selye recognizes the biological law that man, like all the lower animals, has to fight and work for some goal he considers worthwhile. To accomplish this Selye offers his philosophy and principles. He says:

> Man must use his innate capacities to enjoy the eustress of fulfillment. Only through effort, often aggressive egoistic effort, can he maintain his fitness and assure his homeostatic equilibrium with the surrounding society and the inanimate world. To achieve this state, his activities must earn lasting results; the fruits of his work must be cumulative and must provide a capital gain to meet future need. To succeed, we have to accept the scientifically-established fact that man has an inescapable, natural urge to work egoistically for things that can be stored to strengthen his homeostasis in unpredictable situations with which life may face him. These are not instincts we should combat or be ashamed of. We can do nothing about having been built to work and work primarily for our own good. . .
>
> the basic concepts and guidelines for a philosophy of altruistic egoism) are:
>
> 1. Find your own natural stress level. . .
> 2. Altruistic egoism. . .
> 3. EARN thy neighbor's love. . .
>
> These three main principles are derived from observations on the basic mechanisms that maintain homeostasis in cells, people, and entire societies, and that help them to face the stressors encountered in their constant fight for survival, security,

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* See Appendix A for the basic concepts of Selye's *Philosophy of Altruistic Egoism*.

> and well-being. They have developed into instincts during evolution but evolution has not yet reached its final completion; it is still in progress. In the meantime we can best use this principle by conscious understanding and voluntary control (Selye, 1978, p. 449-453).

Selye's philosophy points out that in the human evolutionary process, humankind is presently at the level of egoism. In order for humankind to achieve homeostatic equilibrium, at this stage of their evolution, they must fulfill their urge to work egoistically and not to be ashamed of these human instincts.

Selye's Psychological Prescriptions for Stress

At the core of Selye's philosophical remedy is the dictum "to know thyself and be thyself" (Selye, 1978, p. 404). Selye, like ancient Greek philosophers, recognizes that:

> With regard to human conduct, the most important, but perhaps also the most difficult, thing is "to know thyself." It takes great courage even just to attempt this honestly. For--as Logan Pearsall Smith said--"How awful to reflect that what people say of us is true!" Yet it is well worth the effort and humiliation, because most of our tensions and frustrations stem from compulsive needs to act the role of someone we are not. Only he who knows himself can profit. . .(Selye, 1978, p. 405).

To facilitate the philosophical prerequisite, "know thyself" Selye suggests psychoanalysis as a method for examining behavior by retrospectively reviewing past emotional experiences. Psychoanalysis is a term used in reference to a system of psychology conceived by Sigmund Freud which seeks the roots of human behavior in unconscious motivation and conflict. All psychoanalysts following Freud are not in agreement as to the mechanisms of development or other aspects of psychoanalysis, but the technique of

psychoanalysis has remained more or less unchanged since it was developed by Freud. (Dictionary of Psychology, 1983, p. 416). Although Selye refers to Freud in his writings, Selye does not suggest reference to a strictly Freudian psychoanalysis, but more a process of integrating unconscious contents to the ego's level of consciousness. Selye defines psychoanalysis by saying:

> Psychoanalysis. [is] The method of analyzing an abnormal mental state by having the patient review his past emotional experiences and relating them to his present mental life. The technique furnishes hints for psychotherapeutic procedures (Selye, 1978, p. 470).

Selye points out the value of psychoanalysis by saying: "*knowing what hurts you has an inherent curative value* for which psychoanalysis demonstrates the soundness of this principle" (Selye, 1978, p. 406). In the curing process of psychoanalysis, Selye says:

> The psychoanalyst helps you to understand how previous experiences. . .can continue almost indefinitely to cause mental or even physical disease. But once you realize the mechanism of your mental conflicts, they cease to bother you. . .Psychoanalysis cures because it helps us to adapt ourselves to what has happened (Selye, 1978, p. 406).

For Selye, the above described curing process represents only one part of the human body, the mental domain, which he suggests is not the only aspect necessary for knowing oneself. He contends that "to know thyself" also "includes knowing the body" (Selye, 1978, p. 419). When one knows the body and the mind, Selye says psychosomatic illness is prevented. Selye also considers relaxation of the mind to be an important aspect of stress reduction. He says that "Man must work, but to do it most efficiently he also has to relax

periodically. . .It cannot be handled either by deviation or by more stress; the great remedy here is to learn to relax as quickly and completely as possible" (Selye, 1978, p. 419). Selye does not consider relaxation to be as easily done as said, but he suggests that "a number of techniques have been developed which help us to diminish both mental and physical activity to the absolute minimum still compatible with survival" (Ibid.). He concludes that the efficacy of a technique can be "judged by a variety of highly objective physiologic indexes, such as pulse rate, blood pressure, respiration, the electroencphalogram, and the basal metabolic rate" (Ibid.). In addition to psychoanalysis, Selye suggests the following:

> Among the methods of achieving self-induced states of altered consciousness are: Transcendental Meditation (TM--the alleged basis of the Science of Creative Intelligence, or SCI), Yoga, Zen, Subud. . .all of them are strongly enforced by following certain traditions or mystic rites which help to induce a state of altered consciousness in which total relaxation is accompanied by increased mental alertness (Selye, 1978, p. 419).

Selye concludes that his stress research is relevant not only to disease but human activity. He says:

> *The significance of this kind of research is not limited to fighting this or that disease. It has a bearing upon all diseases and indeed upon all human activities*, because it furnishes knowledge about the essence of THE STRESS OF LIFE. . .(Selye, 1978, p. 460).

Selye concludes that "to develop and disseminate a code of conduct based upon natural laws. . .strikes me as the greatest contribution that research on stress could make to humanity" (Selye, 1978, pp. 460-461).

Following Selye's foundation research on stress, current theories elaborate on the concept of stress. Recent literature is reviewed in the following chapter.

Historical Development and Evolution of the Burnout Concept

The phenomena of burnout, in the literature I reviewed, is described as a twentieth-century concept, a study "still in its infancy" (Kitch 1984, p. 175).

The term first appeared in 1974 when Herbert J. Freudenberger identified burnout as a separate entity. The first empirical study on burnout was published by Maslach in 1976. In regard to the infancy of the concept "burnout," Kitch says:

> . . .up to 1980, only fifty references to burnout were found in a comprehensive review of stress-related literature. Because study of it is in its infancy, the burnout phenomenon has yet to be operationally defined and adequately researched (1984, p. 175).

Freudenberger introduced the concept of burnout in the context of human-service occupations. (Freudenberger, 1975). Many authors I reviewed contend that, following Freudenberger's introduction of the term in the service-occupation context, debate began as to whether or not burnout is solely a human-service occupational hazard or has consequences for all occupations. (Garden, 1987). Maslach justifies this conflict due to the infancy of the term. (Maslach, 1982b). Anna-Marie Garden (1987) contends that although Freudenberger's original research describes a phenomenon peculiar to the human services professions, he does however point out the need to further widen our perspective in order "to prevent premature closure in our thinking. . .It is far too easy to reify our definitions of burnout and close ourselves off to

potentially useful ideas from other professionals and other fields" (Freudenberger, 1983, p. 24; Garden, Ibid.).

Regardless of the profession, burnout is being considered by many authors I reviewed as a rapidly growing problem. For example, teacher burnout is portrayed as a rising-problematic phenomena in much of the literature I assessed. Walsh, for example, points out that "The problem [burnout] could be reaching epidemic proportions" (1979); and McGurie suggests that the recent phenomenon of burnout is "A major new malady. . .[afflicting] the teaching profession and threatens to reach epidemic proportions" (McGuire, 1979).

Frequent reference in the literature I examined, particularly that focusing on teachers, identifies stress as a related factor to burnout , or that burnout is a continuation of stress. For example: Melendez and de Guzman contend that "burnout is thus specifically viewed as a phenomenon related to job stress" (1983, p. 16); in describing teacher burnout, Shaw, Bensky, and Dixon say that "stress as a force. . .can effect us both physically and psychologically" (1981). McGuire illuminates this point by saying that "teacher burnout [is] a condition that results from stress" (1979); The Council for Exceptional Children, says that burnout "has become the catchall phrase for stress related problems" (CEO); "Burnout. . .implies stress related problems" (NJEA Review, March, 1981); Walsh says that causes of teacher burnout are stressors(1979); and Farber also says that teacher burnout is the result of stressors. (Farber, 1984). It is interesting to note that these authors do not discuss the process that an individual undergoes to internalize stressors. Perhaps it is because the concept is new, or perhaps it is a failure on the part of the writers. In Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation, we see yet a different dimension of stress and

burnout in his conclusion that "when people's needs are unsatisfied, there is burnout" (Maslow in McDaniel, 1979).

We've seen that for these authors burnout is a stress induced phenomenon. Turning to the causes of stress which results in burnout, various authors I reviewed suggest the major factors are caused by lack of administrative support and student discipline problems. For example: McGuire, Bardo, Walsh, Farber, and Cedoline illuminate this point by saying that "two of the horrendous problems that plague teachers [are]. . .violence and vandalism" (McGuire, 1979); "managing disruptive children and incompetent administrators, lack of administrative support" (NYSUT, 1979); "student misbehavior. . .loss of classroom control" (Bardo, 1979); "harassment by the administration, assaults by students, paperwork pressure, and isolation" (Walsh, 1979); "student discipline problems, student apathy, overcrowded classrooms and shortages of available support staff, excessive paperwork, excessive testing, involuntary transfers. . .lack of administrative support, role conflict and role ambiguity, and public criticism of teachers" (Farber, et. al., 1984). Cedoline adds that "Job burnout is both an occupational hazard and a phenomenon induced by distress. . .generally characterized by . . .emotional exhaustion. . . socially dysfunctional behavior. . .negative feelings" (1982). From Cedoline, we note that these stress induced causes that lead to teachers' burnout can be for some a debilitating physical or psychological consequence.

In examining how various authors define burnout, it is interesting to note that for a number of the writers I reviewed, their definition of burnout is a description of the symptom, i.e. dysfunction. For example, Kitch defines burnout as "a specific dysfunction among helping professionals believed to be the result

of excessive demands made upon their energy, strength, and resources" (Kitch, 1984); and Melendez and de Guzman say that burnout is "the result of negatively perceived, work-related events or conditions that produce a level of persistent stress resulting in chronic frustration. . .and/or dysfunction in one's work" (1983, p. 16). Thus, burnout may be generally defined as an extreme manifestation of unrelieved stress resulting in dysfunctional behavior.

The signs of burnout are many and varied. Kitch defines the symptoms and physical or psychological consequences of burnout, as "dysfunction among helping professionals believed to be the result of excessive demands made upon their energy, strength, and resources" (Kitch, 1984). Others measure burnout by an index of the most generally agreed symptoms. Garden reports that in one particular study the most generally agreed upon symptoms of burnout were the depletion of energy, chronic exhaustion, or fatigue, which she narrows down to energy depletion: "Energy depletion is the dimension of the burnout experience for which there is most definitional agreement" (Garden, 1987, p. 550). Garden notes that Freudenberger (1980), Pines (et. al., 1981) and Maslach (1982b) also suggest "exhaustion/depletion as a *key* component" of burnout. In examining other fields outside the human services, Garden suggests that energy depletion is a key indicator for describing and measuring individual burnout in any occupation. In distinguishing the type of energy depletion associated with burnout from other forms of fatigue; Garden says that researchers note that temporary "acute" fatigue is different from the energy depletion of burnout. "The energy depletion of burnout is distinctive; first, because it is chronic, and second, because of the difficulty in renewing one's energy. . .the *nonrenewal* aspect of depletion of energy seems to be the main

way of distinguishing burnout from other forms of tiredness" (Garden, 1987, p. 551).

I observed a wide range of definitions and descriptions on burnout in the literature I reviewed. While I noticed a number of the authors in agreement that dysfunctional behavior is a factor of burnout, I also found a number of authors--for example: Pines, Aronson, and Kafry (1981), Cherniss (1980), and Maslach (1982a)--who characterize part of the burnout experience in terms of dehumanization or depersonalization. Maslach describes depersonalization as a "detached, callous, and even dehumanized response. . .[occurring when] the armour of detachment is so thick that no feeling gets through" (Maslach, 1982a, pp. 3-4). For teachers who are burned out, this poses a problem in their relationship with their students, and likewise for clinicians and their relationship with their clients. Maslach's comment in this regard is that "With increasing detachment comes an attitude of cold indifference to others' needs and a callous disregard for their feelings. . .or fail [failure] to provide the appropriate help, care or service" (Ibid., p. 3). Garden points out that Cherniss' description of "dehumanization" is similar to Maslach's description of depersonalization. because it "includes the joint notions of withdrawal from, hostility, and indifference toward others" (Garden, 1987, p. 548). Depersonalization is precisely interpreted as "negative reactions to people in general, including hostility, indifference, detachment, and not caring about others" (Garden, 1987, p. 549). Like with dehumanization, a person suffering from burnout and manifesting symptoms of depersonalization causes problems for those under his or her care or guidance. I liken the idea of depersonalization and dehumanization to one who experiences a pervasive sense of unbelonging, to

one's self and one's world. If we assume that professionals in the helping professions are experiencing significant burnout, then it strikes me as ironic that the very people who are attempting to make helping connections, including teachers, are the ones growing dysfunctional, negative, and indifferent.

In addition to the above depictions of burnout, other writers I reviewed link what could be described as burnout with a "mid-life crisis," and regard it as the need to renew inner light. As noted in the etymological trace of the term burnout, the word comes to us meaning "the fire is flickering." M. Lauderdale uses this metaphor by illustrating the image of light from a candle, to suggest that new sources of meaning and animation must be found in life: "When the fire on the candle goes out, the essence is used up. It is no longer useful for its intended purposes. A new fire must be started" (Lauderdale, 1982, p. 27). The work of C. G. Jung and Janice Brewi and Anne Brennan (whose ideas will be further discussed, but not as a review of "mid-life theory") suggest that at the mid-point in one's life "a new fire must be started" (Jung, 1933, p. 108 and Brewi & Brennan, 1989, p. 28).

Chapter Summary

Summary of Literature on Stress

The term "stress" comes to modern-day English from Latin roots meaning "separate, being torn asunder, derivation, distress;" or "to draw tight, to contract, a constricting, constriction" (Partridge, 1983). We have seen in the literature reviewed a continuation of these root meanings, to describe problematic stress in human experience, for example: being torn asunder from distress.

The history of stress as a concept reveals that it was first implied in early or primitive medical treatments as a curative component of medical treatments,

such as blood-letting, which involve shock. The curative mechanism postulated is that emotional catharsis causes the body to restore its homeostasis and thereby defeat disease. The "non-specific" response of the body was theorized in the nineteenth century by C. Bernard and others, and was built upon by Hans Selye in the mid-twentieth century.

Hans Selye is noted here as the pioneer of stress research because of his fundamental contributions to the field. His work forms the basis of contemporary research and reflection on the definitions, causes, consequences, and cures or preventions of stress. Selye is credited with the development of the General Adaptation Syndrome, based upon earlier notions of homeostasis, or internal balance. He believes that stressors arise from all parts of life, but that emotional stressors are the most important. Selye holds that stressors are not necessarily bad, but our interpretations can make them cause distress. The same stressors have different effects upon different people, and as we have seen, stress is the key component in the G.A.S. alarm reaction. However, Selye defines distress as "unpleasant or disease-producing stress" (Selye, 1978, p. 77). The most frequent causes of problematic stress for Selye are the stressors of daily life, and "without hesitation the most important stressors are emotional, especially those causing distress" (Selye, 1978, p. 370). For Selye, the issue is not so much what happens to us or what we do, but "on the way we take it" (Selye, 1978, p. 370).

Selye's cures and prevention center around three remedies: first, to improve one's "attitude toward stress in life" (Selye, 1978, p. 439); second, "*to know thyself*" (Selye, 1978, p. 405); and third, to practice his "*philosophy of altruistic egoism*," which "maximizes eustress and minimizes distress in our

lives" (Selye, 1978, xix). Selye offers his philosophy of altruistic egoism as a code to facilitate individual expression and good social relations, thereby minimizing distress. To implement these preventions he suggests two approaches. One avenue for prevention is psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis, Selye says, can help an individual "to understand how previous experiences--which may have led to subconscious conflicts, sometimes very early in childhood--can continue almost indefinitely to cause mental or even physical disease" (Selye, 1978, p. 406). The significance, he says, is that "once you realize the mechanism of your mental conflicts, they cease to bother you" (Selye, 1978, p. 406).

Selye's second prescription, to rid oneself of stress, is to practice "many techniques whose value in improving the quality of life has been established beyond doubt by purely empirical observations" (Selye, 1978, p. 452). Some of these include muscular exercise, hot baths, saunas, relaxation, and techniques such as of Transcendental Meditation, Yoga, Subud, or Zen. (Selye, 1978, p. 453). He makes the point that Transcendental Meditation, Yoga, Zen, and Subud "are strongly enforced by following certain traditions or mystic rites which help to induce a state of altered consciousness in which total relaxation is accompanied by increased mental alertness" (Selye, 1978, p. 421).

Many theories have evolved from Selye's research on stress. In the following chapter, I review subsequent literature on stress, followed by a review (Chapter IV) of stress from the perspective of teachers and children.

Summary of the Literature on Burnout

By combining the root meanings of the words burn and out, the essence of the term "burnout" comes to modern-day English meaning "to be or to cause

to be on fire, to gush forth, quiver or flicker; out, upwards, or outward" (Partridge, 1983).

Early findings on the concept of "burnout" suggest that burnout is related to stress, and that the stress from negative aspects of one's occupation can lead to dysfunctional, dehumanizing, and depersonalized behavior. It is noted that these consequences are particularly problematic for helping professionals in their relationships with their students or clients.

We have seen that the concept of burnout does not have as lengthy a history as stress. The term "burnout," introduced in 1974 as a separate entity by Herbert Freudenberger (1975), was first described in the context of human service occupations. Freudenberger did note the need to expand future research to include other professions. Most literature reviewed herein considers burnout in the context of the work place. However, it is noted that a connection can be made to burnout by authors (to be reviewed later) who consider the rite of passage at mid-life.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE ON STRESS AND BURNOUT

This chapter expands my previous review of stress. It examines a selection of theories that have evolved since the foundational research on stress, laid by Hans Selye in the 1930's. The chapter concludes with a review that links possible burnout with failure to make mid-life transitions.

My intent is to examine a broad range of thought regarding stress and burnout. My criteria for choosing the literature on stress used in this chapter is to review writings that represent research addressed to the general adult population from holistic, psychological, psychosocial, and spiritual perspectives.* As I found no contemporary research directly focusing on adult stress from a spiritual perspective; I try to make connections in this chapter that my later critique and expanded frame of reference addresses, between failure to have spiritual meaning and purpose in one's life with stress and burnout.

There is a vast body of literature concerning theories and perspectives on the phenomena of stress. For example, Hans Selye alone has published 32 books and over 1500 articles on the concept of stress. Following Selye's pioneering research, numerous theories and articles have evolved in almost every discipline and field of inquiry. I personally reviewed over 140 books and journal articles on stress and burnout, leaving many volumes still in the library. In the literature I have reviewed, however, it is my opinion that Selye's original framework has not been significantly altered. I believe that it is also relevant to

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* Chapter I describes my method and process for selecting authors used in this dissertation.

note that most contemporary authors examine stress primarily from a singular aspect of the phenomena, whereas Selye's medical and scientific background offers physiological, biological, and psychological perspectives which inform his theory. In addition Selye offers a philosophical perspective.

In the following chapter (Chapter IV), the literature I review expands this study of stress and burnout in regard to teachers and children.

Holistic and Psychosocial Theories of Stress From A. S. Sethi

Psychosocial considerations of stress linked to holistic perspectives are described in the work of A. S. Sethi (1983). Sethi is not concerned with how stress is defined, but with its consequences, including symptoms of occupational ill-health, and psychosomatic diseases. In assessing the nature of stress, he points to multiple factors in the workplace that cause stress, e.g. one's role in an organization, career development, work relationships, structure and climate of the organization. These variables can be improved, Sethi says, "through self-understanding and an improved processing of perceptual data" (1983, p. 167).

Sethi, like Selye, emphasizes that all stress is not bad. For Sethi the key component is learning how to live with stress by using one's adaptational energy productively, and thus "distinguish between bad stress--distress--and good stress--eustress" (Selye, 1974 & Sethi, 1983, p. 167). For Sethi, like Selye, "individual response" is the significant factor. In this light Sethi, says:

> The response to stress and stressors depends on the mediation of some appraising, perceiving, or interpreting mechanism on part of the individual. . .(Sethi, 1983, p. 167).

Sethi notes that individuals' appraising, perceiving, and interpreting mechanisms can be described as following from two different personality profiles: Type A Personality Behavior Pattern and Type B Personality Behavior Pattern. In regard to personality types, Sethi suggests that individuals with aggressive and competitive personality profiles (Type A) are more prone to coronary disease and stress than those who are not so preoccupied with achievement and are less competitive (Type B).

Sethi uses Van Digl's description of a Type A person's awareness pattern to elaborate on this position:

> (a) An intense sustained achievement orientation to self-directed but usually ill-defined objectives. The person is involved in a "chronic, incessant struggle to achieve more and more in less and less time,"
> (b) Strong tendency to compete,
> (c) Continuous desire for recognition and status enhancement,
> (d) Persistent involvement in multiple and diverse functions, following her "polyphasic thinking,"
> (e) Tendency to think and work at diverse physical and mental functions,
> (f) A tendency to focus on awareness employed to meet the goals of achievement rather than enjoying in the bliss of "being"
>
> The individual's perceptual apparatus will be affected by his/her level of anxiety, and tolerance for ambiguity, his/her level of expectation, and the gap between expectation and perception (Van Digl, 1975, p. 101-109).

Sethi proposes that the intellectual operations accompanying interactions between human beings are perceptions of situations and expectations. In this regard, he points out:

> Significant differences between these intellectual activities are generally recognized as the basis of psychological conflicts. I propose that the state of interaction between perceptions and

> expectations comprises the fundamental operational mechanism underlying both states of well-being and states of stress (Brown, 1980; & Sethi, 1983, p. 168).

Sethi divides coping strategies into two categories: personal coping strategies and organizational coping strategies. He recommends a combination of strategies as the most effective approach to personal coping (stress reduction) such as--fitness, diet, and life-style changes, biofeedback, gestalt therapy, and transactional analysis. But meditation, he contends, is the major prescription. He suggests that although "external causes at first glance seem to be outside the influence of meditation, they are not and can be transformed through consciousness by meditation" (Sethi, 1983, p. 167). Sethi says:

> Most of these (external) variables appear at first glance outside the influence of meditation, but on closer examination it would appear that organizational members can improve their role understanding through self-understanding and an improved processing of perceptual data. I will argue that such a self-awareness by the individual organizational members can be helped by meditation, through a transformation of his or her consciousness (Sethi, 1983, p. 167 & Battista, 1978, pp. 55-80).

Sethi describes various kinds of meditations for personal stress reduction. He suggests meditation on inner power, meditation on problems, meditation on decisions, and meditations on the self.* Sethi offers as well a method for meditation, which he suggests can take the participant to a state where "you will understand the state of your consciousness, and will be able to realize the egoless (zero) state in no time" (Sethi, 1983, p. 174). It is Sethi's position that meditation offers a strategy for coping with stress. He says:

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* See Appendix B for Sethi's description and method for these meditations.

> Meditation can be used as a coping strategy. . .Meditation helps toward increasing the individual's awareness of his or her streams of consciousness. . .Basically meditation implies clarifying one's perceptions about one's stream of consciousness so that the individual tackles his or her problems in a renewed and clearer perspective (Sethi, 1983, p. 170).

Sethi addresses personal awareness, perceptions, and expectations in individual human experience and organizations. From his perspective, the environment can be changed by an individual's awareness. (Ibid.). His prescription for stress is meditation.

Psychological Theories of Stress from Michael King, Gordon Stanley and Graham Burrows

Michael King, Gordon Stanley, and Graham Burrows provide an example of researchers who approach stress from the psychological and psychiatric perspectives. They emphasize the individual's perception and interpretation of life events. Collectively they have authored eight books. Their psychological inquiries are centered on understanding how an emotional state like stress can affect the entire organism of the human being--the mind and body. Their definition of the phenomenon is that "stress is a negative emotional experience which results from negative thoughts about our environment" (King, Stanley & Burrows, 1987, p. 3). Unlike Selye, these authors do not consider the positive or necessary aspect of stress. Instead, their position is that "the term 'stress' should be reserved for a relatively disruptive level of this negative mood" (Ibid.). They suggest that interpreting stress as a "necessary fact of life" is meaningless, because "all people face challenges of some type every day. . .but not all people suffer from stress" (Ibid.).

King, Stanley, and Burrows contend that their work expands Selye's research conclusions. These authors believe Selye's scientific definition of stress and his notion that the response to unpleasant stimuli are inadequate. Their say that "in humans the stress response is also strongly dependent on the mediating role of each person's interpretation and appraisal of the situation" (Ibid., p. 4). They contend to have made advances in Selye's notions on how a stressor becomes problematic, saying that "The animal studies appeared to support the idea that stress is caused by any stimulus or any demand, whereas the understanding of stress in humans must take account of the highly developed human evaluation procedure" (Ibid., p. 4). King, Stanley, and Burrows suggest that their psychological perspective "diverges from the initiating work of Selye" (Ibid.), at this point. Although these authors suggest their theory diverges from Selye, I do not agree that they differ. After reading Selye, I believe that these writer's assumptions of Selye's notions on human interpretation of a stressor are incorrect. Selye says that "the stressor effects depend. . .on the way we take it" (Selye, 1978, p. 370). In my opinion King, Stanley, and Burrow's word "interpreting" means the same thing as Selye's words "the way we take it." My point is that "interpretation" and "appraisal" mean the the same thing as "the way we take it."

When King, Stanley, and Burrows suggest that the cause of "stress in humans depends upon how we interpret the environment" (Ibid.),* they consider the difference between arousal and stress. Their distinction is that "arousal

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* It is noteworthy here to point out that some might consider the individuals' interpretational relationship to stressors describe a phenomenological approach, because phenomenology speaks to aspects of the "person-environment relationship through qualitative description and interpretation" (Seamon,1987). However, authors I review herein do not describe their work as phenomenological.

refers to some aspect of the waking state, and when it is correctly used to describe a mood it applies to feelings of physical or mental activation. . .arousal is a non-specific response to a great many different influences" (Ibid., p. 6). Their point is that arousal refers to a mood and the quality of attention allocated to an immediate situation, whereas stress involves interpreting the stressor. Arousal, they say, "is an altogether different state" (Ibid., p. 9). In short, for these authors, human stress "is a psychological problem which requires psychological understanding" (Ibid.). Their concern is with the confusion of defining stress as a term "to mean any and all changes in a person's attitudes or emotions (a position supported by Hans Selye). . ." (Ibid., p. 13).

King, Stanley, and Burrows are concerned over attempts to understand how humans think and feel through instrumental measurements. Specifically, they argue against the trend of using "instruments" that purport to measure human stress. Their contention is "the way humans think and feel cannot be fully measured by an instrument. . .and is inappropriate" (King, Stanley & Burrows, 1987, p. 36). Although they suggest that results of animal studies and stress-measuring devices have provided important clues to understanding, they do not tell the "whole human story."

These authors suggest that to appraise and measure stress, it is necessary first to understand the changes that stress produces. They hold that the ambiguity in understanding what stress is comes from defining stress as a physiological phenomenon and regarding the psychological issues as only of secondary importance. They say, "The way we humans interpret our environment plays an important part in the development of stress" (p. 37). Putting aside the appraisal process, they examine reactions, which they say

point to various physiological changes that occur when a person experiences stress. But they say if one wants to know the "total effect of stress upon performance, then it is necessary to have an understanding of all the effects of stress upon both mind and body" (p. 37). The basis of their approach to human stress lies in the way humans interpret their environment, and that "the process of perception and interpretation of demands is part of the key to the understanding of the human stress response" (Ibid., p. 40). They say that evidence supports the notion that changes in body chemistry occur, but that it does "not always mean that a person is stressed" (Ibid., p. 41). Their point is not that the physiological measures have no value, but that the changes depend upon the way a person is thinking, and upon the person's mood. Their position is that scientific experimentation does not "relate to real world experiences, and therefore the results can add little if anything to our understanding of how stress develops and how it affects our performance" (Ibid.).

In measuring a psychological mood, King, Stanley, and Burrows contend that such measurement must in the end be related to psychological manifestations. These authors hold that instruments for measuring human stress provide only second-hand data, but they do see two reasons for measuring levels of stress. The first relates to helping the clinician evaluate and develop a stress management program, and the second aids the clinician in studying the effects of stress upon performance and to decide exactly what is wrong with a patient (Ibid., p. 57). Examples * they suggest for measuring stress for clinical purposes are: The State/Trait Anxiety Scale, developed by C.D. Spielberger (1970), which distinguishes between the two aspects of stress, trait

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* Refer to Appendix B for more details of these measurement scales.

anxiety and state anxiety; Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory Trait Anxiety Scales; the Leeds Scales; and the Stress/Arousal Check List Measure of Stress and Arousal.

These authors are interested in the "fact that stress affects performance" (1987, p. 72). They seek to answer the question "how we can alter the effects of the stress response in our lives" (Ibid.). From their perspective, the underlying causes of stress are: "forces which have eroded the patients' defences, and the current conflicts which provide a focus for irrational thoughts" (1987, p. 76). They examine several controls or cures for revealing defences and the thoughts people have about themselves and their environment. The first method they suggest for preventing and overcoming causes of stress is psychoanalysis * because it is a method, they suggest, to "reveal these aspects of the human mind, both in conscious awareness and the subconscious mind" (p. 73). King, Stanley and Burrows suggest, in addition to psychoanalysis, various other approaches and methods:** hypnosis/relaxation, talking therapies, exercise, and diet "to overcome the negative thinking processes which convince the patient that he or she cannot 'cope'. . . " (p. 77).

In short, King, Stanley and Burrows contend that stress is a psychological problem created by how an individual interprets the environment. The core of what produces human stress, they suggest, is negative thinking.

The Psychological and Social Theory of John French

Psychologist John French provides an example of a theorist who links psychological and sociological dimensions by considering the "individual's own

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* Refer to Appendix B for these authors' critique of psychoanalysis.

** Refer to Appendix B for descriptions of these methods.

responses in dealing with a taxing situation" (Stotland, 1987, p. 1085). The causes of stress, as formulated by French, have to do with "fit" between a person and his or her environment. His theory* is based on the notion of "*adjustment* as the goodness of fit between the characteristics of the person and the properties of his environment" (Stotland, 1987, p. 1085). French distinguishes between the objective and subjective meanings of both the person and the environment. In this regard, he says:

> Two meanings of "environment" must be distinguished as it pertains to our model: (1) the *objective environment* that exists independently of the person's perception of it; and (2) the *subjective environment* as it is perceived and reported by the person. A parallel distinction can be made between the *objective person* as he really is and the *subjective person*, or self concept (French et. al., 1974, p. 316).

French contends that a person's self-identify does not always correspond to who and what they objectively are. Because of the distinction implicit in this perspective, French contends there are at least two conceptions of adjustment: "the objective fit between the objective person and the objective environment, and the subjective fit between the subjective person and the subjective environment" (Ibid.). Optimum mental health, according to French, results from a good objective and subjective person-environment fit and when the person is in objective contact with reality. A poor fit for French is, for example, when a situation demands too much of an individual, and so creates a "state of stress because of the discrepancy between these demands and his or her own abilities" (Stotland, 1987, p. 1085).

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* See Appendix B for more details of French's theory of person-environment "fit."

In order to achieve a person environment fit, which French refers to as P-E, he distinguishes between demands and supplies. In order to differentiate between the demands and supplies, French considers the "motives of the person as demands that must be met by environmental supplies" (Ibid., p. 317). However, French sees another type of demand in the environment, instead of the person, which consists of "role requirements and requests emanating from other people" (Ibid.).

In regard to prevention or cure, French suggests that the deprivation of a need "Induces motivational forces on the person in the direction of satisfying the motive" (Ibid.). However, French contends that "The strength of these forces will depend on the magnitude of the prevention (how poor the P-E fit), the importance of the dimension on which the deprivation occurs, and the person's expectations for the future" (French et al., 1974, p. 330). In short, from French's perspective, deprivation allows an individual to evaluate the "magnitude, importance, immediacy, and duration of his deprivations. . .[but] in the case of value deprivations the person will suffer both guilt and shame" (Ibid).

French's approach, a formula equating need with "demands" and "supplies," is a mechanical theory. His approach appears callous, but I believe he may be on to something, and that is that people must see meaning in a situation, in some form which relates to their inner purposes.

Psychosocial Theory of C. M. Zimring and A. Baum

C. M. Zimring and A. Baum* (1977, 1981) provide an example of theorists who write from a psychosocial view on stress. Although their theory is similar to that of John French; they suggest that stress is a result of a "misfit" in

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* See Appendix B for further discussion of Zimring's notions regarding "misfit."

interactions between a person and his or her environment. For Zimring and Baum, the misfit derives from two sources, the individual's goals and the environment. Zimring and Baum see the stress process developing when an individual begins to perceive a misfit between their own social, cognitive, and behavioral goals and stressors in the environment. When a person perceives the misfit, Zimring suggests that two strategies may be adopted: "Changing his or her needs through intrapersonal means, or changing the situation" (Ibid).

My concern is that these authors see stress as the result of a mechanical person-environment fit which dehumanizes both the person and the environment. They also describe the "overall design of the physical environment" somewhat optimistically as an entity that can be changed at will.

Current Theories on Mid-Life Transitions

The Swiss psychiatrist C. G. Jung links what can be described as burnout with a failure to create new meaning at the "mid-life" transition. Janice Brewi and Anne Brennan are examples of people who use a Jungian frame of reference to enhance their "ministry of personal and spiritual growth for adults at the mid-point of their life" (Brewi & Brennan, 1989). I chose these authors because I believe their point of view broadens this study's perspective on burnout, although they do not directly use the concept of burnout. The human life cycle, from the perspective of Jung, (and also Brewi and Brennan) may be described as two halves of life, the first and second. The distinction they make between the two are differences in orientation.* The first half of life, they suggest, evolves around a process of adaptation to the "outer world." This

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* See Appendix B for further description.

adaptation occurs during childhood through middle adulthood. They describe the second half of life as beginning at the mid-point and extending into old age. This period of life, they contend, requires an orientation to the "inner world." Jung offers the following insights regarding mid-life using the image of sunlight. He says:

> But there is something sunlike within us; and to speak of the morning and spring, of the evening and autumn of life is not mere sentimental jargon. . .
>
> (in the second half of life) After having lavished its light upon the world, the sun withdraws its rays in order to illumine itself. . .
>
> But we cannot live the afternoon of life according to the programme of life's morning--for what was great in the morning will be little at evening, and what in the morning was true will at evening have become a lie (Jung, 1969, par. 783).

For Jung the light must change directions at mid-life. Otherwise, the innate human mechanism's struggle for wholeness--"the 'I am'--to become more our own true selves" (Brewi & Brennan, 1989, p. 27) becomes frustrated and becomes "the mid-life crisis."

In their book, Mid-Life: Psychological and Spiritual Perspectives, Brewi and Brennan contend that at the mid-point in one's life, the focus needs to shift from the outer to the inner. Brewi and Brennan predict a mid-life spiritual crisis if one fails to discover the inner path leading to the illumination of the Self. The term "mid-life crisis" is referred to by Brewi and Brennan as when one reaches the mid-point of their life, around the age of 35-40, and are unable to locate or identify "the whole development of personality that begins in mid-life" (1989, p. 26). For Jung, as well as Brewi and Brennan, embarking upon the second half

of life means that one is "oriented primarily to adaptation to the inner world" (Brewi & Brennan, 1989, p. 1; Jung, 1981, p. 193), otherwise a crisis occurs and one's light goes out--in short you could say they burn out. For these authors, burnout implies a *spiritual* burning out, meaning for them that one's inner light either has gone out or needs to be lit. They contend that "Never before in the history of the human race have so many people approached this anxiety-provoking gap in the life cycle" (Brewi & Brennan, 1989, p. 27).

Brewi and Brennan point out Jung's view that mid-life transitions can offer potential and challenge instead of crisis; their point is "Will we or will we not negotiate the profound changes presaged in the withdrawal of energy from the structure we have built for some forty years--the "I am"--to become more our own true selves?" (Jung, 1960, par. 783; and Brewi & Brennan, 1989, pp. 27). They consider the first forty years of life ego development, but mid-life demands a turning inward and "a whole new myth and story for me to live out of, a whole new meaning and way of being" (Brewi & Brennan, 1989, p. 30).

Brewi and Brennan suggest a need at mid-life to clarify and live one's own values.* They suggest this process is the mid-life transition--"moving toward clarifying and owning one's value and one's values through growing awareness within and without" (Ibid., p. 98).

These authors who write about mid-life transitions address the life process itself, especially inner life, and the need for psychological and spiritual transformation. Their views are not offered as discussion on "mid-life theory," but to portray the potential for burnout at the mid-point in one's life. These authors do not address the environment *per se*, except to say that at mid-life,

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* See Appendix B for further explanation of Brewi and Brennan's ideas on values.

one needs to withdraw from the typical preoccupation with the outer environment, in order to deepen and reevaluate the value of life in relationship to one's deepest (or deeper) sense of who one is. These authors address psychological and spiritual wholeness as integration and individuation that occur at the level of ego consciousness. "By consciousness I understand the relation of psychic contents to the ego" (Jung, 1976, par. 700). Although I do not contend that this level of consciousness is adequate for fulfilling one's spiritual meaning and purpose, I will try to enhance their basic notion in my frame of reference.

Chapter Summary

Summary of Contemporary Theories on Stress

Following Selye's pioneering research on stress, numerous theories have emerged which elaborate upon his basic positions. This review of the literature--from holistic, psychosocial, and psychological perspectives--reveals that many authors believe that problematic stress results from negative interpretations of a stressor. Most contemporary theories of stress reviewed contend that the degree to which an individual interprets the stressor, negative or positive, determines the outcome of the stress. In this regard Michael King, Gordon Stanley and Graham Burrows take the position that "stress in humans depends upon how we interpret the environment" (1987, p. 3). Their position is that stress is a negative emotional experience based on "negative thought about our environment" (Ibid.). Although these authors contend that social environmental demands have some impact on stress, they hold to the notion that an individual's response to these demands is largely dependent on "each person's interpretation and appraisal of the situation" (Ibid.). In short, these

theorists contend that stress is a psychological problem, and that the key to understanding a person's stress response is to understand the process of perception and interpretation. King, Stanley, and Burrows suggest psychoanalysis, hypnosis, relaxation, talking therapies, exercise, and diet for the resolution of stress.

The holistic and psychosocial position of Sethi--like that of King, Stanley, and Burrows--is that a person's response to stress and stressors "depends on the mediation of some appraising, perceiving, or interpreting mechanism" (1983, p. 167). Sethi sees meditation as a means to resolve stress.

We have seen differences of opinion as to the domain in which distress truly originates. For example, some of the authors--like King, Stanley, and Burrows--suggest that because interpretation comes from an individual's perception, it is psychological. Others suggest that inherent environmental or social factors play a significant part, or are the major source, of problematic stress.

John French, linking psychological and social dimensions with stress, suggests that stress is caused by "a poor fit between an individual's resources and the demands of one's environment" (Stotland, 1987, p. 1085). Similarly, C. M. Zimring and others suggest the cause of stress is a misfit between the individual and the environment. They suggest that "When a misfit is perceived (the) individual adopts a coping strategy that is influenced by the qualities of the situation, by past experience. . ." but they add that the "physical environment affects the fit between person and environment both directly and indirectly" (Knight, Zimring, and Kent, 1977).

Summary of Theories on Mid-Life

All literature that I have reviewed on burnout, either directly using the term burnout or by suggesting a possible link to it, does not describe the phenomena as a function of the work place. We have seen in this review a body of literature that suggests a possible link between burnout with a failure to regenerate meaning during the mid-life transition. This perspective uses the metaphor of fire or "light going out" to describe what they say occurs in human experience when one fails to renew meaning during the mid-life transition. M. Lauderdale suggests that "When the fire on the candle goes out, the essence is used up. It is no longer useful for its intended purpose. A new fire must be started" (1982, p. 27). The point that Jung and Brewi and Brennan make in this review is that one's "light" must change directions at mid-life, and illuminate the inner world. When this need is ignored, they contend, the inner light begins to flicker and a crisis results. These perspectives suggest that the role of psychological and spiritual factors aid in preventing a "crisis," or what might be called burnout. The spiritual dimension is not common in most approaches to the subject of burnout or stress.

CHAPTER IV

CURRENT LITERATURE ON STRESS AND BURNOUT EMPHASIZING CHILDREN AND TEACHERS

This chapter is a review of literature on stress and burnout, with particular regard for the issues of teachers, children, and the educational environment.

Stress and Teachers

The lack of vitality in our public-educational system has unfortunate consequences for those caught in it. This section reviews teaching's occupational hazards, as they relate to teachers themselves.

Statistics reveal the epidemic proportions of illness and dis-ease resulting from problematic stress in the lives of teachers. A research project on teacher stress, conducted by the Chicago Teachers Union (1989), involved a survey of over 22,000 certified Chicago teachers. It found:

> - 56% had suffered a physical illness that they related to stress on the job,
> -26% attributed a mental illness to stress on the job.
>
> The analysis of the job-related stress factors for these teachers showed that concerns for psychological well-being and physical safety superseded pedagogical issues.
>
> The top five stressors were involuntary transferral, managing disruptive children, notice of unsatisfactory performance, threats of personal injury, and overcrowded classrooms.
>
> The Chicago teachers perceived themselves as suffering the ill effects of stress. . .(Sparks and Hammond, 1981, p. 2).

A similar study, conducted in 1979 by the New York State United Teachers (an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers), identified causes of stress among teachers. Some of their findings include:

> -Teachers report the two most stress-producing factors in schools today are managing "disruptive" children and incompetent administrators - lack of administrative support.
>
> -Urban elementary and urban high school teachers report higher stress than any other respondent groups in the study.
>
> -The 31 to 40 year old teachers appear to be under greatest stress, with the 41 to 50 year old teachers reporting only half as many items as stressful, and teachers over 50 reporting even fewer items (NYSUT Teacher Stress Survey, Information Bulletin, 1979).

William Miller's Theories on Teacher Stress

School superintendent, author and consultant William Miller contends that in our educational environment educators are under tension; and they are unable to meet their "own personal standards," leading to "individual dissatisfaction with self" (Miller, 1979, p. 7). Miller defines stress by saying:

> What is stress? Stress begins with anxiety--a disturbance arising from some kind of imbalance within us. All of us, each day, experience some kind of threatening condition or disharmony. This anxiety leads to tension. Tension is a physical reaction to the anxiety. When we are tense, nervous impulses cause changes in our body. When tension reaches a degree of intensity that has an adverse effect on the body, we are under stress. Perhaps it is more accurate to say we suffer distress (Miller, 1979, p. 8).

The causes of teacher stress, Miller suggests, come from "two sources of stress--self-imposed and situational" (Miller, 1979, p. 9). *Self-imposed stress* results from "unrealistic expectations on ourselves. . .a lack of recognition,

especially true in education with so many students who need help; and where pressures, responsibilities, and expectations are so high." (Miller, 1979, pp. 9-10). Miller advises that stress coming from outside ourselves--*situational stress* --attacks deeply held values and beliefs, which is threatening. "Thus, major distress can occur in a situation where there are conflicting values" (Miller, 1979, p. 10). He concludes that "Stress can come about through self-imposed factors or through the situation in which we find ourselves--usually, when there are significant changes in our lives" (Miller, 1979, p. 12). Like Selye, who says "total freedom from stress is death!," Miller argues that our aim should not be to eliminate stress. His point is that "we need stimulation to work at our fullest potential. . .if you are the type who needs and enjoys stress and it does not have an adverse physical effect on you, then the stress is not excessive--it is not distress" (Miller, 1979, p. 13).

The consequences of stress, Miller says, are that:

> . . .teachers'. . .more and more often turn to the price of Excedrin rather than to how to help students, because educator stress is becoming a major headache. The pressures in today's schools are causing emotional and physical distress. The body's fight -or-flight mechanism causes sizable changes in bodily functions. Sometimes the body has to mobilize to respond to emergencies or challenges. . .certain levels of stress are normal, desirable, and aid functioning. However, if the body is under stress too often, important organs are injured, causing illness. . .
>
> Once a person has summoned it (the finite supply of life energy) up and burned it, it is gone. . .Under continuous stress--either physical or mental--some vital body part gives way, leading to a variety of illnesses, and eventually to death. If the individual is in a high stress career, he spends his portion of life energy fast and ages early (Miller, 1979, p. 16-17).

Handling and preventing excessive stress is important for teachers. Miller points out that previous beliefs held that a body involuntarily reacts to stress, but more recent findings suggest the important role the brain plays in this process through conscious actions*. In this light Miller says that findings show that "a person can consciously control his mind and, in turn, that the mind controls the central nervous system and bodily functions" (Ibid., p. 8). His point is that a person cannot be divided without consequences that eventually lead to stress and illness. He contends that controlling the mind is essential to recover illness and hence stress.

Miller's prescription for stress is to control the mind and regulate the body's organs though such methods as "biofeedback, autogenic training, progressive relaxation, Zen, yoga, and various meditative techniques being taught as a means of reducing and preventing stress" (Ibid., p. 22).

In regard to stress and teachers, Miller suggests that failure to meet the challenge of preventing stress in our schools "can have a detrimental effect. [and] the effectiveness of the education we provide" (Ibid., p. 29).

Taking these points as the foundation for prevention of problematic stress, Miller offers the following steps for prevention: "Look to your life style; look to your job; look to yourself; develop a stress reduction plan" (Ibid.). Another important action he suggests to reduce stress is involving fellow educators to help improve the school climate: "Creating a mutually supportive environment will be more helpful for students, teachers, and administrators" (Miller 1979, p. 28).

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* See Appendix B for more details on Miller's suggestions regarding the brain and its role.

Theories of Joy Humphrey and James Humphrey on Teacher Stress

Joy Humphrey and James Humphrey combine behavior modification with self-understanding to modify stress. They offer numerous contributions to the literature on stress in education. They see the cause of teacher stress are:

> (a) self-concerns which induce stress, (b) general working conditions, (c) actions of administrators, (d) actions of colleagues, (e) actions of parents, and (f) behaviors of students (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1986, pp. 2, 17).

Humphrey and Humphrey view the phenomena of stress in a similar way to Hans Selye. They suggest two broad classifications of stress--physiological and behavioral, with the following components: (a) undesirable, (b) desirable, (c) physical, (d) psychological, (e) emotional, (f) social, (g) occupational, and (h) environmental.*

Humphrey and Humphrey point out two facts regarding the perception of stress by teachers. They say:

> In summarizing the responses of teachers regarding their concepts of stress, two rather interesting bits of information emerged. First, relatively few teachers saw any aspect of stress as positive. That is, the responses were predominantly of a nature that conceived stress as always being undesirable with little or no positive effects. Second, in a large percent of cases, teachers' concepts of stress tended to focus upon the stressor rather than the condition of stress itself. This would appear to be natural since it has been only in relatively recent years that literature describing what stress is and how it affects the human organism has become more plentiful (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1986, p. 9).

Reduction or preventing stress means to Humphrey and Humphrey to control the stress. In their opinion, this requires: "behavior modification;"

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* See Appendix B for further explanation of these classifications of stress.

"understanding yourself;" "self systematic desensitization;" "progressive relaxation;" "meditation;" and/or "biofeedback." (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1980, pp. 19-119). Regarding "behavior modification," they consider "behavior" anything an organism does as a result of stimulation; and "modification" as "change in the organism caused by environmental factors" (Ibid.). They do not however, suggest clinical psychological or psychiatric behavior-modification techniques for altering behavior. Instead, their recommendation for modification of behavior is confined to its "possibilities as a means for teachers themselves to produce more effective teaching, and thus, helping to reduce certain stress-related factors involved in the teaching process" (1980, p. 79). For Humphrey and Humphrey, "understanding yourself," refers to self-structure and self-concept--using the notions of Hugh Perkins (1974). Perkins suggests that self-structure is the framework of a particular individual's complex of motives, perceptions, cognitions, feelings and values--the product of developmental processes. Humphrey and Humphrey consider "self-concept" the totality of one's self-percepts, organized in some sort of order. These authors also consider self-concept significant in their work with children under stress (reviewed herein). Regarding relaxation and meditation, Humphrey and Humphrey suggest that there are many procedures, and the individual should choose the one best suited for them. They point out that biofeedback is a complex and complicated subject with varying opinions on its precise meaning, and if one wants to participate in it, they should seek the services of one trained in this area.

Theories on Teacher Burnout

This section includes a representative sample of contemporary theories on teacher burnout. The purpose is to enhance our understanding of the phenomena of burnout and its relationship to stress in the lives of teachers.

Anthony Cedoline's Theories on Teacher Burnout

Anthony Cedoline, an author who writes on stress and burnout in education, focuses his attention on the relationship between the stressors of one's occupation and one's reaction to them. He points out that job burnout is a "human malfunction resulting from responses to various forms of occupational distress. Job distress can be either physically or psychologically induced." (Cedoline, 1982, p. x). He places emphasis not on physical distressors, but instead "upon those factors that affect one's psyche. . .the force killing us from inside" (p. x). He emphasizes the need to focus on health, not illness, and the organization's benefits, instead of its problems. The subtle implications in this regard, for him, lie in one's attitudes toward the stressors. Cedoline sees the consequence of stress as distress, which in turn precipitates burnout. He defines the relation between stress and burnout as:

> Stress becomes a problem when it ceases to be a healthy stimulus, but instead creates a burden the individual cannot handle without harmful effect. . ."distress." Events do not in themselves produce distress reactions. Instead, it is one's perception of events that makes them distressful. Distress, then, is any perceived threat or discomfort that alerts the person and activates psychological and physiological responses. The harmful effects of distress can be prevented or reduced by modifying the individual's environment, perception, or state of arousal.
>
> Job burnout is both an occupational hazard and a phenomenon induced by distress. It is generally characterized by: (1) some degree of physical and emotional exhaustion; (2) socially

> dysfunctional behavior, particularly a distancing and insulation from individuals with whom one is working; (3) psychological impairment--especially strong, negative feelings towards the self; and (4) organizational inefficiency through decreased output and poor morale (Cedoline, 1982, pp. 1, 17).

Cedoline categorizes burnout research in two areas: (1) helping professions--counselors, teachers, social workers, school administrators, psychologist, etc. and (2) public employees--police, air traffic controllers, appointed officials, public health workers, etc. He expands Herbert Freudenberger's reference to burnout among the helping professionals "who wear themselves out in pursuit of an impossible goal. . .the effects of burnout in these workers is cynicism, negativism, and a tendency to be inflexible and almost rigid in thinking" (Cedoline, 1980, pp. 18-19).

Cedoline says statistical data indicates that teachers are abandoning the profession as a result of burnout. He cites William McGuire (1979), president of the National Education Association as saying: "Stress is leading to teacher burnout and the problems threaten to reach hurricane force if it isn't checked soon" (Cedoline, 1980, p. 94). In this regard, Cedoline refers to a 1979 NEA resolution by saying:

> The National Education Association believes that the dynamics of our society and increased public demands on education have produced adverse and stressful classroom and school conditions. These conditions have led to increased emotional and physical disabilities among teachers and other school personnel.
>
> The Association urges its local affiliates, in cooperation with local school authorities, to develop stress management programs that will facilitate the recognition, prevention, and treatment of stress-related problems.

> The Association further urges that the harmful effects of stress on teachers and other school personnel *be recognized*, and it demands procedures that will ensure confidentiality and treatment without personal jeopardy (Cedoline, 1980, pp. 94-95).

Cedoline approaches the prevention of distress by first dealing with learned responses. He suggests that coping can be learned or relearned, like learned maladaptive responses to distress. His point is that appropriate responses to crises can be learned, and can be effective stress reducers. However, Cedoline does point out that coping processes are inevitably affected by an individual's perception of the stress. The differences in perception, according to Cedoline, are related to an individual's personality, their previous experiences, their knowledge and awareness, their degree of control, and how important they perceive the event to be. (Ibid., p. 94). Because Cedoline considers stress a perception, he views successful stress management to be a process whereby an individual converts the perception from negativity to positivity--by converting the "negative energy of an enemy into the positive energy of an ally" (Ibid.).

The most effective means of preventing or ameliorating occupational stress, for Cedoline, is social support. The techniques he suggests for stress management are: meditation, progressive relaxation, desensitization, yoga, deep muscle relaxation, autogenic training, relaxation, and self-talk. (Ibid.). His conclusion is that mastery of distress requires one to manage future stress before it becomes distressful.

Like Selye and others, Cedoline says one cannot avoid stress, as life without it is either death or immortality. As our bodies respond to both pleasant and unpleasant kinds of stress, any event prepares the body for a common

stress reaction: "fight or flight." The important factor for him is the individual's perception of a stressful situation. Like Selye's dual nature of responsiveness, Cedoline points out the double meaning of the term stress in Chinese. He notes in ancient China, the symbol for stress included two written characters--one for danger and one for opportunity. He holds that this ancient symbol supports the notion that the *danger* of stress is represented by possible harm to the body; however the other side of the same coin is *opportunity*, or the positive, motivational or developmental effects of stress.

Theories of Stan Shaw, Jeffrey Bensky, and Benjamin Dixon on Teacher Burnout

Stan Shaw, Jeffrey Bensky, and Benjamin Dixon are professionals in the field of education. They have collaborated in national presentations and co-authored numerous contributions to the literature on stress and burnout in the field of education. They write from an educational perspective while addressing environmental, physical, and psychological stressors. They say the consequence of destructive stress is burnout. They discuss:

> . . .stress as a force that tends to deform a body and act as a mentally disruptive influence--distress. . .it can effect us both physically and psychologically. . .Stressors can be defined in three broad categories: environmental, physical, and psychological. . . Stress reaction can be viewed as a mental, physical, and emotional response to environmental (school) and personal demands. . .
>
> Job burnout. . .for the professional educator. . .excessive exposure to ambiguous, inconsistent, and/or uncontrollable school system demands. Basically, burnout occurs when individuals reach their adaptability limit. . .Job burnout creates a reaction whereby the individual can no longer effectively cope or adapt to the situation or stressors. . .(Shaw, Bensky, & Dixon, 1981, pp. 1-2).

Regarding causes and consequences, they say:

> The problems of our society have had a dramatic effect on our schools--lack of respect for authority and institutions, the disintegration of traditional family structures, and economic problems including recession, inflation, and limited resources directly impinge on the functioning of the schools. The resulting pressures on school personnel, including school violence, low salaries, changing school populations, and vandalism, can easily be seen to have a major impact on the mental health of educators (Shaw, Bensky, & Dixon, 1981, p. ix).

Shaw, Bensky and Dixon prescribe a general model of intervention through "inservice" strategies for solving teacher burnout. The models they suggest are: A *seminar*, whereby a consultant/trainer trains others to deliver an intervention program in the school system. *Consultation* from a person outside the system helps to provide expertise on health promotion. It is these thinker's belief that stress management and burnout prevention interventions together promote preventive health related behaviors and skills. They further suggest seminars on "personal empowerment"--a synonym for enabling the individual: "to make able; to give one strength; give one strength or authority sufficient for the purpose" (Shaw, Bensky & Dixon, 1981, p. 56). They point out that the Department of Health Promotion (St. Louis University Medical Center, 1980) found empowerment seminars useful for motivating school staffs to participate in other improvement activities, in addition to providing their expected health benefits.

Theories of W. A. Melendez and R. de Guzman on Teacher Burnout

Winifred Albizu Melendez, a professor in the humanities, and co-author Rafael de Guzman, professor of psychiatry, write on burnout from an

educational perspective. Their interest is to minimize or eliminate the effect of burnout. They say that attention to this will help a school to preserve its very foundation. These authors' focus on the psychological and physiological results of stress as well as the person-environment relationship. They say that although burnout is a faddish concept in today's work place, it is truly "a disease reaching the level of an epidemic" (Melendez & de Guzman, 1983, p. 1). They suggest a correlation between stress and burnout. The definition, causes and consequences, they say are:

> Stress resides in all individuals, but burnout is a distinctive kind of work-related stress. . .caused by the continuous interpersonal relationship between professional and client that causes emotional exhaustion, creates stress, and finally changes an individual's behavior. . .Burnout is thus specifically viewed as a phenomenon related to job stress. . .Burnout is not just a malaise or indisposition; rather. . .it has advanced into an unwholesome state or condition that can bring highly unpleasant feelings and reactions, including overt and covert "dis-ease," and can threaten one's job status. . .*burnout in academe is the result of negatively perceived, work-related events or conditions that produce a level of persistent stress resulting in chronic frustration, tireless or exhaustion, adverse behavior, and inefficiency and/or dysfunction in one's work* (Melendez & de Guzman, 1983, pp. 5 &16).

Melendez and de Guzman suggest particular relevance to the stress theory of the "Person-Environment Fit or Congruence Model" (Campbell 1974, Caplan 1972, French and Kahn 1962, French, Rogers, and Cobb 1974; House 1972; Pinneau 1976; Van Harrison 1976). This model, they say, is based on Lewin's and Murray's descriptions of motivational processes. Melendez and de Guzman utilize this model for understanding the subtle implications between how a person fits with herself or himself, and how he or she fits with their environment. This theory describes two kinds of fit--between the person (P) and

the environment (E): (1) the objective P-E fit, which is the matching between the work environment and the individual, independent of perceptions; and (2) the subjective P-E fit, which is the matching between the individual and his own perception (the "subjective person"), and the work environment and his perception of it (the "subjective environment"). They offer two additional factors for describing the degree of compatibility (or fit), between the characteristics of the environment and those of the individual. They say:

> *The individual's* contact with reality *is defined as the discrepancy between the objective environment and the individual's perception of it. The individual's* accuracy of self-assessment *is defined as the discrepancy between the objective person and the individual's subjective perception of self. . .Each of the four discrepancies. . . represents an important measure of mental health. Good mental health is represented by no discrepancy or low discrepancy for each of the four comparisons* (Van Harrison 1978, pp. 177-78, in Melendez & de Guzman, 1983, p. 19).

In prescribing cures, Melendez and de Guzman suggest both personal and organizational remedies for enabling a change or modification. In regard to personal prescriptions, they agree with Selye's philosophy of changing *distress* to *eustress* by following a code based upon the laws of Nature. They say this code of behavior lessens stress and burnout by establishing guidelines. (Ibid., p. 63). They further contend that Selye's "philosophy of altruistic egoism," in other words "be good to yourself," is a necessary component in a prevention model. (Ibid., p. 66). In light of causes and cures, they quote others and paraphrase Selye:

> . . .*causes* of stress can be found within the person and within the work environment and that the *effects* of stress can be found in the

> person and in the organization. Controlling stress therefore requires major changes in the person or the environment (Melendez & de Guzman, 1983, p. 63).

Melendez and de Guzman address the question of burnout prevention in an organizational context by quoting Carroll and White:

> *Organizational prescriptions*
> Organizations should also be involved in the treatment of individuals suffering from burnout. Because burnout typically occurs "whenever a person with inadequate stress-management and need-gratifying skills must work in a stressful and need-frustrating work environment" (Carroll and White 1982, p. 42 in Melendez & de Guzman, 1983, p. 71).

Theories on Stress and Children or Young Adults

Stress is moving steadily into the younger age groups. According to Erik Erikson, a noted psychoanalyst, "The most deadly of all sins is the mutilation of a child's spirit" (Erikson in McGuire, 1979). In this light, it is no wonder that stress in childhood is a growing concern of parents, teachers, educators, and stress researchers. Several approaches to understanding the causes, prevention and/or cure of stress in children are reviewed below.

James Humphrey and Joy Humphrey: Children and Stress

James Humphrey and Joy Humphrey, a father-daughter writing team, are significant contributors to stress literature. Joy Humphrey, a former elementary school teacher and stress management consultant, is co-author of several books and articles on stress in education and childhood. James Humphrey is a professor and editor of the AMS series Stress in Modern Society and is author or co-author of over 40 books and 200 articles on stress. Joy Humphrey and James Humphrey collaborated with the late Hans Selye on certain aspects of

stress research. (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1986). These authors characterize a behavioral psychology approach.

Humphrey and Humphrey hold that stress can "have a devastating effect on growing children" (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1983, p. 136). In considering childhood stress, they focus on five major aspects: (1) childhood emotions; (2) factors which induce stress in children; (3) helping children understand the stress concept; (4) child stress reduction techniques; and (5) principles to apply in helping children deal with stress.

They suggest that a teacher or parent can alleviate some of a child's stress by knowing some of the causes that induce stress in children. They discuss childhood emotions, especially "self-concern," as important factors in the phenomena of childhood stress. They identify numerous self-concerns which contribute to stressful phenomena in childhood:

> Self-Concerns Associated with the Meeting of Personal Goals.
> Self-Concerns Which Involve Self-Esteem, *ego needs*.
> Self-Concerns Related to Changing Values.
> Self-Concerns Which Center Around Social Standards.
> Self-Concerns Involving Personal Competence and Ability.
> Self-Concerns About Their Own Traits and Characteristics (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1983, p. 143-145).

Factors which influence childrens' stress levels include:

> Test Anxiety as a Stress Inducing Factor.
> Teacher Behaviors which Induce Stress in Students (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1983, p. 143-145).

To help children understand the complicated and complex concept of stress, Humphrey and Humphrey developed materials specifically for young

children, with the help of the late Dr. Hans Selye. (Ibid., p. 151). These materials were designed for a child's level of understanding and are "based on the principal behavioral implications of the code of behavior set forth by Dr. Hans Selye's book, *Stress without Distress*" (Ibid.). Their goal is for children "to achieve a rewarding life style, in harmony with the laws of nature, by using stress as a positive force for personal achievement and happiness. . ."(p. 151). The stress reduction techniques they suggest for children, in conjunction with their material, is the the use of relaxation.

Other Stress Reduction Techniques for Children

This section lists a few recent approaches for reducing stress in children as discussed by Humphrey and Humphrey.

One method of stress reduction for children is called "Systematic Desensitization." The procedure is a form of behavior modification; it is described as "the process of systematically lessening a specific, learned fear in an individual" (Ibid., p. 157). This clinical procedure, introduced by psychiatrist Dr. Joseph Wolpe, is designed to reduce anxiety reactions. The method consists of repeatedly presenting to the child's imagination, in a deeply relaxed state, items that are particularly anxiety-evoking, until no more anxiety is evoked. The items on the list continue to be presented until the strongest of the anxiety-evoking stimuli fails to evoke any stir of anxiety in the patient. Systematic Desensitization describes the "process of systematically lessening a specific learned fear in an individual" (Ibid.). Wolpe's process involves three phases--(a) training the subject in deep muscle relaxation, (b) constructing an anxiety-evoking hierarchy of stimuli, and (c) counter-posing relaxation and the

anxiety-evoking stimuli. (Wolpe, 1973, in Humphrey and Humphrey, 1980, p. 79).

"Tiger Juice" is another approach designed to reduce child stress. This method combines relaxation and desensitization, and was designed by Dr. Stewart Bedford, a California-based clinical psychologist. The approach takes into account the purpose of our natural stress reactions and relates it to survival in primitive settings--the "fight or flight" response.

"Kiddie QR" is a Quieting Reflex (QR) technique originated by Dr. Charles Stroebel. This method is "Essentially, considered an educational preventative health care program for helping children in the four to nine-year age range deal with stress" (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1983, p. 159-160). This technique emphasizes the goodness of the body and "making friends with one's body" (Ibid.).

The Stress of "The Hurried Child"

David Elkind, a child psychologist and author of numerous books on children, explores the unique burdens brought upon youngsters by today's pressures--to cope, to succeed, to win. For these "hurried children," who are forced to achieve, their traditional rites of passage come too early and their stress lies in constant fear of failure. Elkind contents that "the practice of hurrying children, in any of the ways. . .is a stressor. . . the more hurrying demands are made on a child, the more likely it will be that the child will be overstressed" (Elkind, 1980, pp. 142-146).

Elkind examines the phenomenon of problematic stress around children by comparing Sigmund Freud's model of emotional illness (the first

comprehensive understanding of emotional illness) to Hans Selye's ideas regarding the distress reaction, which he views as being common to all people. Comparing these two positions, Elkind says:

> Basically, Freud argued, disturbed behavior arises out of conflict; it is either a symptom of conflict within the individual or between the individual and others (Freud, 1935).. . .Freud also suggested that the disturbed behavior of the neurotic or psychotic was an exaggeration of a normal reaction to conflict. . .
>
> But some years ago Hans Selye. . .identified a type of distress reaction that is common to everyone and which, while it may not produce neurotic or psychotic behavior, can have negative effects for the individual's psychic and physical well-being (Elkind, 1978).
>
> Selye demonstrated that our bodies react in a stereotyped and specific way to any special or extra demand (physical, emotional, intellectual) made upon it. Selye speaks of situations, events or people who produce the stress reaction as "stressors." Stressors are not bad or good, they are just special demands. . . stressors in the sense that they call for an extra effort of adaptation. In some ways our bodies are like machines--the more we use them, the sooner they wear out. .It is the *amount* of use to which the machine is put, not the purpose, that determines how quickly it will start to break down.
>
> What Selye has done, therefore, is to make us look beyond conflict to understand human distress (Elkind, 1980, p. 141-142).

Elkind concludes that it is clear "that conflict is a major cause of emotional distress. And to the extent that hurrying causes conflict, which it often does, it is also a cause of distress" (Ibid.).

For Elkind, like Selye, stress is the wear and tear in the human body, "produced by the very process of living" (Ibid.). Elkind examines childhood stresses beyond the family, in the arena of schooling. He concludes that "Schools today stress children in a variety of ways quite beyond the familiar

stress of competition for grades and honors" (p. 153). He specifies the following ways that schools hurry and stress children :

> Teachers and administrators operate on the basis of stereotypes and false expectancies. . .
>
> . . .by labelling children too quickly and too early for management rather than pedagogical reasons. . .Many young children, for example, are diagnosed as learning disabled or retarded when in fact they may have limited vision. . .(Elkind, 1981, p. 156).

Elkind suggests that other sources of childhood stress come from* such negative environmental factors as classroom size; lack of individual attention; acceptance of failure; hurrying children; and tedious, repetitious, meaningless, and boring activity. (Ibid. pp. 156-159).

Diane Syer suggests additional considerations for understanding the hurried-child trend. She points the finger of blame on family fragmentation, the erosion of social institutions such as religion, the mobility of people in our society, and a pervasive sense that the future will be grim. (Elkind, 1981, p. 169).

The Stress of "The Fast-Track Child"

Similar to the "hurried child" phenomenon is the "fast-track child" notion. Literature points to a growing body of concern around stress and the "fast track" younger population--those being pushed to achieve. This stress is found particularly in academically accelerated programs, which are multiplying as parents seek ways to secure advantages for their children. Numerous books

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* See Appendix B for more detailed information on Elkind's views regarding environmental sources of childhood stress.

and journal articles are emerging under this theme, suggesting that the phenomenon is growing.

Michael J. Fimian assessed classroom stress and burnout experienced by 121 gifted and talented students, ages 10-15. His studies (1982) reveal a significant link between stress or burnout in gifted and talented students due to tedium, poor self-esteem, externalized locus of control, and poor school-life quality. (Elkind, 1986, p. 631).

Sandra Robinson (1987) describes the trend of kindergarten curriculum being advanced to the level of what was previously first grade work. In this light, Elkind says:

> Not surprisingly, many specialists in child development worry that young children are being pushed to do more than they are developmentally ready to do. The result is stress on children that may affect how they perceive themselves as learners and as competent individuals (Elkind, 1986, p. 631-36).

Priscilla Vail describes parents who network in a "frantic dash for [their child's] academic excellence" (1990). In her book, Smart Kids with School Problems (1990), she notes the "fast-track" child phenomenon begins for some as early as the diaper days.

Andree Aelion Brooks describes the problem by saying:

> . . .to guarantee such outcomes, these parents soon convince themselves, they must start their children on a program of academic and social preparation almost from the cradle. . .It is as though they dare not let up for a moment for fear their children will not maintain a competitive edge.
>
> Yet the best efforts of these fast-track parents can sometimes result in unintended negative consequences for their children. There is a potential for stress disorders among those

> youngsters who are not emotionally and intellectually able to function well under such pressure. For example, an increasing number of teachers are telling me about very young children who arrive at school with trembling hands or facial tremors, with headaches and stomachaches, or exhibiting aggressive behavior. Second-rate doesn't rate at all in a majority of the households from which these children come--and the children know it. . .(Brooks, 1989, p. 613).

Brooks (1989, 1990) sees "Fast-Track" childhood stress as being perpetuated by "Fast-Track Parents." To better understand the behavior of young people in our schools today, Brooks suggests that we start by analyzing lifestyles and concerns of parents.

Anne Petersen, also alarmed by the rising phenomena of the fast-track child, conducted a study in the late 1970's of 355 young children from the most fashionable suburbs of Chicago. Her 1978 follow-up research on these same children reveals the following statistics:

> . . .from the first study group of eleven year olds, 75% "felt okay" about pressures to succeed. However, by 1986 half of these same youngsters were functioning well, a third of them had periods of great difficulty, and the remainder were having serious mental problems. . .However, the supercharged competitive environment was stunting the ability of even the most able of them to form close friendships with peers, since those peers were consistently seen as competitors. . .In addition, because the parents are dashing about on their own fast professional tracks. . .they have a lot less time for nurturing. Thus they turn to hired help to assist in the rearing of their children. And studies of the very rich show that such delegation early on can have a strong impact on the formation of a child's personality (Petersen, 1978).

As the phenomenon of the fast-track and hurried-child grow, other concerns on childhood stress emerge.

Joseph Chilton Pearce on Children and Stress

Joseph Chilton Pearce's writings are concerned with the development of the child--physically, intellectually, emotionally, and creatively--within the context of stress. He advocates rediscovering the capacity for creative intelligence, which he suggests is built into human genes in astonishing potential. In his book, The Magical Child , Pearce says:

> The mind-brain is designed for astonishing capacities, but its development is based on the infant and child constructing a knowledge of the world as it actually is. Children are unable to construct this foundation because we unknowingly inflict on them an anxiety-conditioned view of the world. . .If the child were allowed to develop this natural world view, logical maturation would develop a utility, value, and ability almost beyond our imagination (Pearce, 1977, xi).

Pearce connects intelligence and creativity with stress.* He holds that through a balance of stress and relaxation an ultimate well-being is reached. He contends that "intelligence grows by moving from the known-predictable into the unknown-predictable" (Ibid., p. 32). His point is that a great deal of human life is "repetitious, and after a time, any repetition tends to be screened out of awareness" (Ibid.), thus to continuously direct a child toward rote learning is to destroy the child's creative intelligence.

In regard to stress, Pearce says that a child is "born into the world in a state of general excitement, or stress. Children and young people actively seek out the stress of excitement. . .stress is the way intelligence grows" (Ibid., p. 36). Hence, if we cater to the negative aspects of stress in a child's life, we inhibit their intellectual growth. Pearce is not suggesting that adults impose extreme

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* See Appendix B for more detail on Pearce's theory of balancing stress and relaxation.

stress because that tightens their "body's defense systems" (Ibid.). The point for Pearce is "the life principle of stress-relaxation. The strong intelligence knows that stress must create its own relaxation when the natural mind-brain-body process of interaction is allowed to unfold" (Ibid.).

Pearce suggests that children be encouraged to find a balance between tension and relaxation--between the known and the unknown. In this way, he contends, the balancing stress factor allows the potential for a child's creative intelligence to grow. Pearce suggests that parents and teachers work with a child's innate creative intelligence in order to facilitate a child's natural unfolding. He contends that adults must change their view of the world in order to free children for a more healthy and balanced development of intelligence.

Writers Addressing Children's Issues Relevant To Transcending Stress

Alice Miller: A Child's Search for Their True Self

Alice Miller, like Pearce, is concerned with the creative well-being of children, particularly in regard to their inner life and concept of self. She is a pioneer in fostering childrens' search for their true Self. Miller offers a creative approach to examining repression, which she contends keeps one from learning the truth of one's life. See believes creativity transcends "the inadequacy of psychoanalysis. . .[and] its deceptive theories" (Miller, 1981, p. viii). Miller emphasizes the lack of ability to experience authentic feelings as a negative factor in the lives of children. She holds that authentic feelings have been for the most part destroyed; she points out that in regaining the lost capacity for genuine feelings, a child's source of natural vitality can be retrieved.

Miller contends that we live in a culture that encourages humankind not to take seriously or delve deeply into one's own suffering. She holds that the power of repression keeps an individual from learning the truth about himself or herself. Miller suggests the popular mode is making light of suffering and being proud of this lack of sensitivity. She believes this is an undesirable and disastrous attitude, because it conceals tragic conditions. (Ibid.).

Miller offers access to the undistorted reality of childhood through creative and spontaneous painting. Her findings point out that spontaneous and unrestrained creativity facilitates discovery for a child, as well as an adult. It uncovers one's personal story. This way of expression, she suggests, frees one from the inhibiting intellectual constraints and concepts resulting from our upbringing and professional training. Miller's view is that "the true self remains deeply and thoroughly hidden unless creative channels are opened to facilitate the truth breaking through" (Miller, 1990, p. 167). Miller's question is "How can one love something they do not know, something that has never been loved?" In her book, The Untouched Key (1990), she points out that the traumatization of children take its toll on society later, which should be a concern for every adult. Further, she holds that if knowledge were disseminated regarding the devastation imposed in the lives of children it "should lead to fundamental changes in society" (Miller, 1990, p. 167).*

Miller points to the violence toward children and its cost to society, and explores the clues, often overlooked, connecting unnoticed childhood traumas to adult's lack of creativity and destructiveness. It is Miller's goal to encourage sympathetic witnesses to support children and inform society about the ignored

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* See Appendix B for more details of Alice Miller's notions on the development of children.

plight of children, in order that human beings can be saved from blind self-destruction and anti-social destructiveness. Miller implies the "dis-ease" of society and adults is their lack of conscious awareness, which perpetuates conflict, generation after generation, if left unattended. (Ibid.).

C.G. Jung: A Young Person's Need for Adapting to the Self

Jung is also interested in the child's search for their Self. From his psychological perspective, modern education is unbalanced. Although his reference is not directed to stress, I believe he offers insight into the importance of "self-education." In this regard he says:

> Our modern education is morbidly one-sided. . .It is the kind of training that enables a young person to adapt himself outwardly to the world and reality, but no one gives a thought to the necessity of adapting to the self, to the powers of the psyche, which are far mightier than all the great powers of the earth. . .Small and hidden is the door that leads inward, and the entrance is barred by countless prejudices, mistaken assumptions, and fears (Jung, 1981, par. 80).
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> . . .the psychoanalytic method of education. . .covers every department of life. The goal of this education. . .is not that a man should be delivered over helplessly to his passions but that he should attain the necessary self-control (Jung, 1964, par. 837).
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> The teacher must not be a merely passive upholder of culture; he must actively promote that culture through his own self-education. . .The indispensable basis of self-education is self-knowledge (Jung, 1981, par. 111).

Spiritual Education of Children

This review covers various points of view regarding deep spiritual issues influencing a child's early development. I consider these writers' contributions spiritual because they address a child's development both in terms of the need

for the psyche's growth as well as the domain beyond the psyche, which is considered herein as spiritual. Writers on this subject include G. I. Gurdjieff, J. G. Bennett, and Rudolf Steiner. Although these authors do not directly address stress, I believe their understanding of childhood offers parents, educators, and society insight into children's deeper needs. Awareness and education of the whole child--their psyche and their spiritual needs--are two primary themes in this selection.

Theories of G. I. Gurdjieff on the Education of Children

The concern of G. I. Gurdjieff * is the development of the whole human being. His student J. G. Bennett explains Gurdjieff's point of view by saying that the problems adults face come from the "fact that our childhood did not proceed as it should have proceeded in accordance with the real needs of human nature" (Bennett, 1984, p. 66). For Gurdjieff, most of education, as we know it in contemporary society, is "almost entirely harmful to the essential nature of the child" (Ibid.) Gurdjieff emphasizes the difference between "mechanical" and "original education." By a mechanical education, Gurdjieff is referring to a way of directing a child that results in an "artificial being who has lost touch with his real self" (Ibid.). A mechanical education, he says, produces an artificial human being, "one who manifests himself equally mechanically" (Ibid.). By an original education, Gurdjieff refers to a child's education that is "based on the principle that everything must come from his own will. Nothing should be given in a ready-made form. One can only give the idea, one can only guide or even teach indirectly" (Ibid.). Gurdjieff's point is that "if something is told to a child

* See Appendix C for greater elaboration on Gurdjieff's position.

directly, he is being educated mechanically" (Ibid.). From this perspective, a mechanical education results in a child who is created by the system, but with an original education, the child creates from his or her own true self. Gurdjieff says:

> Mechanical manifestations and the manifestations of someone who can be called an individual are different and their quality is different. The former are created; the later create. The former are not creation--it is creation through man and not by him. The result is art which has nothing original. One can see where every line of such a work of art comes from (Gurdjieff, 1973, p. 127).

The consequences of a mechanically directed education, both in the homeplace and the school, is that the rising youth moves into adulthood as a less-than-balanced human being. His or her predisposition is less individual and more learned, or copied, like that of a robot. Hence, as adults, the problem is to "rediscover the real self and repair the damage that has been done to us by a faulty education" (Bennett, 1984, p. 66).

Gurdjieff points out that a mechanical education destroys a child's sincerity and concern for nature. As well, he points out, we are ingraining into our children a kind of conduct that suggests "how to be insincere with others and deceitful in everything. . .never to be able to do as the 'conscience' present in them instinctively directs" (Gurdjieff, 1950, p. 378). Gurdjieff, sees our faulty education as perpetuating itself: the child grows up, and as an adult they "automatically produce their manifestations and their acts; just as during their formation they were 'taught,' just as they were 'suggested to'. . .just as they were 'educated.' " (Ibid.).

The outer mask that we wear, from Gurdjieff's perspective, is also a result of our education, as children learn little by little to "conceal their genuine inner and outer trifling significance from others, and in consequence they automatically become slaves of others to the degree of humiliation; or. . .[have] all their inner experience, under somebody's 'thumb'. . ."(Ibid., p. 1077).

Theories of J. G. Bennett on the Spiritual Hunger of Children

J. G. Bennett * describes the "spiritual hunger" of children as the need to perceive meaning in all levels of life and experience. He says:

> In our relationship with the young, we must preserve the spiritual hunger and religious potential that is latent in every child . . .the spiritual need really begins with. . .the need to "belong". . .a meaning which is stable, which we can turn to in all conditions of life. . .This spiritual need to "belong," for our life to make sense, cannot be something that is private for each one of us; for obviously, life cannot make sense in isolation from a greater whole. Herein lies another important difference between the spiritual need and the psychic need. . .the spiritual need means that it is a need that cannot be satisfied. . .except in relation to a Whole, in relation to a reality that is more than ourselves.
>
> This simple spiritual hunger for life to make sense, which also means the need that each one of us should have a place in something greater, is only the beginning. . .We have a spiritual need to know why we should or should not do something, why there is a duty to live one way and not another. . .These questions "why" and "why should" must be related to something which they [children] can trust, which they believe in, which makes sense for them. . . (Bennett, 1984, pp. 1-6).

For Bennett, contemporary education is detrimental to the essential nature of the child and results in an artificial being. He speaks of the need for parents and teachers to prepare children for adulthood "in such a way that their

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* See Appendix B for further elaboration on Bennett's description of a child's spiritual hunger.

true potentialities--which are limitless--should not be too much obstructed by our mishandling of them" (Bennett, 1984, p. 66). His emphasis is placed on the human situation, and he concludes that "We do not start from the true starting point for a man, but with a very severe handicap" (Ibid., p. 67). He does not suggest that this is only the result of a faulty education, but as well is "the accumulated influences of wrong ways of living that mankind has followed for countless generations" (Ibid.).

For Gurdjieff and Bennett, the human problem is first a problem of "repair or restoration, and only afterwards as one of natural and full development" (Ibid.). These thinkers identify the inherited burden of humankind as egoism. In this regard, Bennett says:

> This egoism is associated with blindness, with illusion, so that man cannot liberate himself from his egoism--that is, his false attachment to an unreal part of himself--unless he can first liberate himself from the illusion that he is already a normal human being.
>
> The illusion of normality results in our seeing--as Gurdjieff puts it--reality "upside down." Because of this, man in his life on earth tends to give importance to the things which are unimportant, and to be unable to value the things that really do matter. This is not just a matter of knowledge. . .but rather that in spite of what he knows, he remains a prisoner of this state of illusion (Ibid., p. 67).

For Bennett, one of the consequences of egoism and illusion is that man's basic concern is what others say and think of him, and he values himself not for what he really is, but instead, for what he may appear to be in the eyes of others. Thus, man becomes "dependent upon the influences that surround him, particularly the influences of other people" (Ibid.). From this perspective, the illusion is a failure "to value the real part of ourselves, which Gurdjieff calls our

real "I" " (Ibid., p. 68). Thus, for Gurdjieff and Bennett, the real task before educators and parents is to prepare a child for adulthood and the acquisition of their own "I." In this regard, Bennett says:

> The real task of those who prepare children for adult life is to make it possible for them to acquire their own "I": that is, to be themselves in front of all their outer and inner life situations.
>
> The parts of man that require to be educated and developed. . .are not normally developed at all under our present educational procedures. . .
>
> I am going to speak now rather about. . .dividing the needs of man into three parts: the bodily needs, the psychic needs, and the spiritual needs. . .in a certain sense, the three parts of man [intellectual, emotional, and moving] which have to develop do correspond to these three sides of man's nature (Ibid., pp. 68-69).

An education that includes the body and its relationship to "I," would teach one to know one's body and to have an attitude toward the body "as an instrument to be used and not as part of his own self" (Ibid., p. 70). This means that a child should be instructed to "learn to be free from the kind of bodily fears that afterwards very much restrict one's ability to live life fully. . .[thus] parents should not seek to shield their children from every kind of hardship. . .[or tolerate a child to] be squeamish about his body. . ." (Ibid.).

In regard to the psychic needs of children, both Gurdjieff and Bennett point out the need to place special emphasis on the "right feeding of the impulse present in all children to learn, to make, and to do things"(Ibid., p. 70). This means that "the ability to learn can be acquired through training and that this is part of the psychic preparation. It is not the end point" (Ibid.) For these thinkers, the specialized skill that is required is not the point. Instead, the aim

for a child should be "psychic flexibility, the psychic adaptability that comes from learning things that is important for the future life. This satisfies one of the essential psychic hungers of man and prevents this hunger from feeding itself on useless situations" (Ibid., p. 71).

Bennett warns educators and parents that they should "never attempt to teach children directly about high and deep spiritual questions. . .If we did so, they would only be taken as a psychic, mental, or emotional experience and would not really penetrate into the deeper understanding of the child" (Ibid., p. 71). The procedures he suggest is to "begin from afar in such a way that their own search would be encouraged" (Ibid., p. 72). His point is that adults should respond to a child's search regarding deeper realities, not necessarily practical earthly knowledge, by not trying to "instill or teach them." Bennett says:

> In short, the psychic hunger of children can be satisfied through the development of their latent powers and through their own natural sensitivity to the wonders of creation. These are food for the psyche and they include all that is required for their preparation to live full and useful lives on earth. All that is beyond this is unnecessary and only weakens the psyche and disturbs its normal equilibrium (Ibid.).

In regard to the spiritual hungers of a child, Bennett suggests that the problem is "not just that of a natural development, but of a putting right of something which is not right with man" (Ibid., p. 72). For example, he points to the "Illusion of will"--which he suggests is that "Man supposes that his desires and his impulses proceed from his own "I," from his own will; whereas in reality, they are only reactions to his environment" (Ibid.). Bennett does not refer here to "self will," which refers to reactions that vacillate from the many parts of one. Instead, the "I" that he describes is a permanent, not reactionary, part of one.

The question, then becomes how to approach this "I" that is latent in a child, in order to allow the real "I" to enter into the child's consciousness and "occupy its right place as the ruler of his life?" (Ibid., p. 73). One aspect of the answer, Bennett suggests, is connected with decision and responsibility.

Our educational system reflects two differing attitudes toward decision and responsibility. Bennett points out that in the first, a teacher accepts the responsibility for the student, whereby the results come through a child's responses to the responsibility taken by the teacher. The teacher's expectations are of conformity, obedience, and imitation. The other attitude, Bennett proposes, reflects the "importance of developing the power of decision and freedom in the child, and leaves a great deal of freedom in the choice in the manner of working and, indeed, of whether to work or not" (Ibid., p. 73). However, Bennett contends that both these methods of education can give disastrous results, contrary to the intention. His point is that "if a child were constantly expected to make decisions before it had reached the age of decisions. . .this would only produce a state of nervousness, and even the failure to develop his own "I." (Ibid.). The solution, for Bennett and Gurdjieff, is to put before a child a decision, at comparatively rare intervals, in such a way that it will not be forgotten, and to carefully observe the child. The important thing is to show a child the importance of deciding one way or the other. From their perspective, the capacity for developing decision making occurs spontaneously, and one should not try to "reach this through any sort of sentimental or emotional approach" (Ibid., p. 74); or try "to get something over" to the child, which only increases their weakness, automatism, and their suggestibility and dependence on others--"you must simply put them in front of situations where

they are able to learn. . .in accordance with their needs and with their own state of development" (Ibid.).

For Bennett, another important value which furthers the process of acquiring one's own "I" is "not being closed to other people" (Ibid., p. 77). Children should know not only their own family, but "they need very much to know more than this because there are different types of people, and they need to have their natural understanding of types--which is inherent in them--allowed to develop by contact with people" (Ibid.). Bennett considers insight into people very much lacking in most people today. The significance of insight, according to Bennett, is knowledge of humankind, which helps to arouse compassion toward all people, and develops the desire to serve humanity. Bennett's life-time aim was "to help people to become free from the illusion that holds us in that unfortunate situation of living our lives according to false values, or 'seeing Reality upside down' " (Ibid., p. 79.).

Bennett and Gurdjieff are concerned with breaking down the veneer of illusion and sentiment, false good will, false hope, and false expectation that prevents humankind from coming into contact with conscience. For these thinkers, the quality of the self, or "I" of man is the "place" in which "he is aware of spiritual realities. Conscience was for Gurdjieff the supreme glory of man; the Divine Spark. . ." (Ibid., p. 80). Humankind has a choice in regard to living by conscience. Of this Bennett says:

> Man must choose either to live by his conscience--or to live by the influences that act upon him from outside. Then he will be a slave of his own physical appetites, his psychic appetites, and so on. The only way in which man can become free is to find and to learn to live by his own conscience (Ibid.).

The question is "How can we as parents and teachers do something about this situation?" From Gurdjieff and Bennett's perspective, the child's situation is much better than the adults' (for children are more free), and the only thing the adult can do is to change himself. Bennett says:

> What we can do is to correct ourselves, and through correcting ourselves not only do our procedures towards our children change, but the consequences of our own nature will cease to be transmitted to them.
>
> . . .we transmit to our children hereditary defects of character, or will, of the inner quality of the self. . .This means. . .that we are not at the right starting point. We carry with us an hereditary taint, an hereditary burden. This we transmit to our children because we accept to be as we are. We cease to transmit this if we cease to be as we are, and therefore, in changing ourselves, we also change our children.
>
> Our aim should be that the children of the future should carry less of a burden and that the world should be different from what it is now. . .we can change the future of mankind if we will change ourselves (Ibid., p. 81)

This change, of the future of mankind, is a fundamental aspect of service which ranges far beyond egoistic fulfillment. In this light, Bennett suggests that there is little we can do to change the present or the immediate future; but we can change what will come in future generations "If we begin to liberate ourselves from these illusions, from the deep defects of egoism and false valuation which infect the whole of our human life" (Ibid., p. 82). Bennett puts before parents and educators a great task that begins first with oneself, a task which breaks the transmission of hereditary traits of egoism and illusion. This requires us "to be prepared to make sacrifices to liberate ourselves from our own defects for the sake of others rather than for our own sake" (Ibid., p. 83).

From this perspective, the right education of children consists in the parent and teacher serving the child's whole development through the path of their own enlightenment. This is a concept which derives from an appreciation of the unity of man and families, not only in time, but through time. It recognizes a transpersonal, family identity of "inherited," characteristics and qualities. These fundamental ideas challenge our notions of what individual "person hood" is. Further, these ideas invite many questions regarding *role* in the educational setting. But most importantly, Gurdjieff and Bennett remind us that education is most furthered by that which disabuses us of our illusions and restores a more normal ability to perceive the truth.

Theories of Rudolf Steiner on the Spiritual Education of Children

Rudolf Steiner speaks of "wholeness" in education, and includes the realm of the spirit. He, like Gurdjieff and Bennett, says that "it is essential for a teacher to work on himself, not merely to use his natural gifts but to transform them. . . doing everything in the light of a knowledge of the child as a citizen of the spiritual as well as of the earthly world" (Steiner, 1982, p. 9). Steiner's perspective recognizes the child's existence even "in the spiritual world before birth, which sees all physical process as the result of spiritual powers" (Ibid., p. 10), thus placing education in a context which begins and ends outside the material dimension.

Steiner's concern is that modern education lacks regard for the whole story of man's development. He proposes the need for a new "Art of Education," taking into consideration the whole of life. He says that "We have no knowledge of Man in our present cultural life. We have theories, but no living insight, either into the world, life or men" (Ibid., p. 20). For Steiner, true insight leads to a "true

practice in life, but we have no such practical life today" (Ibid.) This is noticed by the ever increasing number of destructive elements in society today. Steiner says:

> The point now at stake is that people should not remain asleep any longer, more particularly in the domain of teaching and education. Our task is to introduce an education which concerns itself with the whole man, body, soul and spirit; and these three principles should be known and recognised.
>
> . . .Life as a whole is a unity, and we must not only consider the child but the whole of life; we must look at the whole human being. . .life is a unity, it is all connected (Ibid., pp. 21-22).

For Steiner, the educational process must be intimately connected with life. His theories and their practice are incorporated into what he refers to as Anthroposophical Education. He describes this approach by saying:

> Anthroposophical education and teaching is based on that knowledge of man which is only to be gained on the basis of spiritual science; it works out of a knowledge of the whole human being, body, soul and spirit. . .the great change that has taken place in the world as far as the shaping and development of culture is concerned. We no longer look at the human being himself, but only at what can be presented to him in the way of knowledge, what he should know and bear as knowledge within him. . .The world-significance of modern intellectualistic education is that it leads right away from life. . .a quite external way. . .People today have no idea of the extent to which they are intellectualized. Here we touch precisely on the world significance of a new education. It lies in the fact that we free ourselves from this intellectuality. Then the different branches of human life will grow together again. Then people will understand what it once meant when education was looked upon as a means of healing, and this healing was connected with the world significance of the human being. . .Today everything is separated. . .(Steiner, 1971, pp. 13, 168, 170, 174).

In Steiner's book, Human Values in Education, he examines various forms of education and concludes we must bring the real world back into our schools. This means that a teacher "must stand within this world, he must have a living interest in everything existing in the world. . .[only in this way] can the world be brought in a living way into the school. . .the world must live in the school" (Ibid., p. 174).

Steiner address modern schools' preoccupation with intellectualization as a detriment to the development of the whole child. He concludes that this singular focus on the intellect fails to take into consideration "what it once meant when education was looked upon as a means of healing, and this healing was connected with the world significance of the human being. . .today everything is separated" (Ibid.).

Steiner says that at present we are in the position of "trying to meet the demands involved in modern life with means which are utterly inadequate." (1981, p. 5). In this regard, Steiner says in his book, The Education of the Child:

> Many are setting about to reform life, without really knowing life in its foundations. But he who would make proposals as to the future must not content himself with a knowledge of life that merely touches life's surface. He must investigate its depths (Ibid., pp. 5-6).

For Steiner, as proposed in his Anthroposophy, spiritual knowledge affords the true foundations, not only for spiritual and mental education, but for physical.

Chapter Summary

Summary of the Literature on Teacher Stress

The literature reviewed reveals rising concern for the psychological and physiological well-being of public-education teachers as a result of stressors in their jobs. This concern is supported by statistics that point to epidemic proportions of illness and dis-ease for teachers as a consequence of stress. (Sparks & Hammond, 1981).

Some of the stress-producing factors for teachers suggested by authors reviewed in this chapter are: involuntary transfers, managing disruptive children, overcrowded classrooms (Ibid.), incompetent administrators, and lack of administrative support (NYSUT, 1979). From William Miller's point of view all stress is not negative, but he contends there are two sources of distress especially true for teachers: self-imposed stress, which comes from unrealistic expectations on ourselves that lead to dissatisfaction with one's self, and situational stress, which comes from attack on deeply held values and beliefs. His point is that major distress occurs where values conflict. Miller's resolution for stress is through mind control and regulation of one's body organs through such methods such as biofeedback, autogenic training, progressive relaxation, Zen, yoga, and meditation. (Miller, 1979). He believes that one should develop a stress-reduction plan by examining the stress in one's life style, job, and in one's self. In regard to situational stress in schools, Miller advocates the usefulness in schools for administrators, teachers, and students to create a mutually supportive environment. He does not suggest methods to develop such environments.

Humphrey and Humphrey see the stress-inducing factors--of self-concern, working conditions, administrators, colleagues, parents, and student misbehavior--being resolved by behavioristic resolutions. They suggest such methods as behavior modification, biofeedback, self-systematic desensitization, or progressive relaxation for controlling stress.

Summary of the Literature on Teacher Burnout

There is rising concern over the amount of burnout in the lives of teachers today, and it is noted as a problem reaching "hurricane force" (Cedoline, 1982). Most literature describes teacher burnout in relationship to continuing stress in the school environment. Burnout for most authors describes a specific dysfunction resulting from responses to occupational distress. (Cedoline, 1982).

Cedoline's approach to burnout prevention is through learned responses. His point is that one can learn to cope with distress in the same way one learns maladaptive responses. Cedoline, like many authors on stress, notes the relationship an individual's perception of the stressor inevitably plays to burnout. (Ibid). The bottom line for Cedoline is that an individual must convert the perception from negative to positive by converting the "negative energy of an enemy into the positive energy of an ally" (Ibid.). He sees social support to be an effective means of preventing occupational stress. Cedoline also suggests that such methods as meditation, relaxation, desensitization, yoga, autogenic training, and self-talk are useful for managing future stress. (Ibid).

Shaw, Bensky, and Dixon contend that burnout occurs when individuals reach their adaptability limit and can no longer effectively cope or adapt to a stressor, be it environmental, physical, or psychological. (1981). These authors

suggest that stress and burnout come from the problems of our society, which have a dramatic effect on our schools and teachers. Shaw, Bensky, and Dixon prescribe inservice educational strategies, such as seminars on burnout intervention and consultation on health. They note that seminars on personal empowerment help to return the enabling force back to the individual. (Ibid).

For Melendez and de Guzman, teacher burnout "is a distinctive kind of work-related stress" (Melendez & de Guzman, 1983. p. 5). They add that "burnout is not only a very costly phenomenon for the individual, but it is also very costly for organizations" (Melendez & de Guzman,1983). These authors connect burnout in academe to negatively perceived work-related events leading to dysfunctional behavior. (Ibid). Melendez and de Guzman see a relationship between burnout and the person-environment fit. Their prescriptions for burnout are both personal and organizational. They agree with Selye's philosophy of changing distress to eustress by "altruistic egoism." (Ibid.).

Summary of the Literature on Children

Erik Erikson's statement that "The most deadly of all sins is the mutilation of a child's spirit" sums up our authors' concerns regarding the wide-spread movement of stress into the lives of children. The phenomenon of "the hurried-child" and "the fast-track child" are examples of childhood gone awry, causing problematic stress for youngsters. The literature reviewed notes the important role that parents and teachers play in stress reduction and prevention.

Methods to cure or prevent childhood stress are often relaxation-based. Joseph Chilton Pearce, for example, advocates a balance between stress and relaxation as a necessity for the development of creative intelligence. Alice

Miller, however, encourages fostering a child's search for their true Self. Her notion is that "the true self remains deeply and thoroughly hidden unless creative channels are opened to facilitate the truth breaking through" (Miller, 1990, p. 167). Her prescription lies in spontaneous creativity, especially through unstructured painting.

The writers who explore the spiritual dimensions of childhood address education as a way to reach and develop the whole human being: body, soul, and spirit. These authors describe how society, parents, and educators can help our children to develop their inner being. They point to the need to feed a child's spiritual hunger so that a balance exists between the subtle existence and the ego needs of the psyche. These thinkers contend that by educating the whole human being, society focuses on true constructiveness, instead of the psyche's hunger for self-gratification.

Bennett's notions shed light on the distinction between the spiritual and psychic nature of humankind, and of a child's hunger to satisfy both these domains.

These authors propose an education for children not unlike the meaning of the Latin derivatives for education, *e* + *ducere*, which mean "to lead out" (Partridge, 1983, p. 169). For example, as Gurdjieff points out in his notions of "mechanical education verses original education," a child brought up in an original education is lead to create from his or her own true self; whereas a mechanical education creates the child--an artificial child--whose true nature is destroyed and hence is an automaton.

CHAPTER V

CRITIQUE OF LITERATURE

This chapter is a critique of the literature reviewed on stress and burnout. It analyzes the possibilities and limitations for the resolution of stress and burnout that I see resulting from the literature's theories.

This critique views the literature from the perspective of my "Theory of Balance." The theory holds that there are three independent but integral spheres, each with its own need for balance and its own intelligence for perceiving when its needs are satisfied. The spheres operate in a hierarchical relationship. The first two levels I refer to as the psyche. They are the biological-physiological sphere,which include the bodily functions; and the psychological aspects, ego needs, including thoughts, feelings, and sensations. The third level is the spiritual sphere, which is independent of, but interacts with individuals and the world. Each sphere has its own need for balance in its own domain, but in common they all share the requirement that external stimuli must satisfy "meaning" and "purpose" relevant to their need. Further, needs are fulfilled when a pursuit advances the meaning and purpose called for by each sphere. The Theory of Balance holds that when there is complete integral unity in all the spheres, then the individual experiences a sense of belonging--to one's (true) self and one's world (participating in its evolution). Without equilibrium, one resides in a life without purpose and experiences a pervasive sense of unbelonging, problematic stress and possibly suffers burnout. This theory suggests that the underlying pattern of stress and burnout is an unfilled

need in the human mechanism for complete equilibrium of purpose, in all of its parts.*

Literature I have reviewed points out that the theories of Hans Selye are the foundation of stress research. While additional insights are offered, the basic premises of the field have not been changed since Selye first defined them. Hence, this critique first examines Selye's offerings. Following a critique of Selye's theories, this dissertation then categorizes contemporary writings and assesses the various perspectives and their implications for understanding the phenomena of stress and its resolution.

Burnout is considered by researchers to be an advanced stage of unrelieved stress. Although a critique is offered regarding the possibilities and limitations of the theories concerning burnout, assessments of stress are to be considered equally applicable to burnout.

A Critique of the Medical, Biological-Physiological, Psychological and Philosophical Theories of Hans Selye

Hans Selye's writings on stress, in my opinion, are the most complete, most unique, and most creative of all the contributions I have reviewed. His work not only contains medical, biological-physiological, and scientific theories on the mechanisms of stress, but his work incorporates psychological insight and philosophical intuition as well. As a thinker, his range gives him central importance among the writers reviewed. After numerous and continuing attempts to assimilate Selye's entire work, I continue to find greater depths and insights every time I return to his theories (although I am not always in complete

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* See Appendix C for an expanded explanation of the Theory of Balance.

agreement with him). In particular, I attach the greatest importance to his notion of the body's inherent need for balance.

Selye's formulation of the General Adaptation Syndrome is probably more profound than has been recognized by the general medical community. It does appear to me that Selye's theory offers medicine a gold mine of research possibilities around a unified theory of immune response. With the present interest in immunology, perhaps someone will re-discover the homeostasis principle.

Two general branches of medicine exist today: the allopathic, which fights diseases with antigens, and the homeopathic, which fights diseases by stimulating the body's defenses. Contemporary medicine has followed the allopathic line of development since the eighteenth century. Tremendous advances have been made against many diseases during this time. However, work has focused on the symptoms of disease more than the restoration of health, an important distinction.

Homeopathic stimulation involves the introduction into the body of substances which are *homeo* (the same as) the pathogen. These substances, according to the homeopathic doctrine, arouse the body's immune responses. Traditional medicine (before science) was based upon notions similar to homeopathic procedures; and as we have seen in Selye's interpretation of early shock-based treatments, probably used stress to arouse the G.A.S. to alarm and defend the body. It is the present writer's contention that remedies which support or enable the body's natural defenses would seem to be less problematic than those which do not. In regard to Selye's definition of stress as "A nonspecific response of the body to any stressor, manifesting in wear and

tear of the organs," I believe this is the most accurate description that any writer offers regarding the nature and mechanism of stress.

Selye (and most writers on stress and burnout) suggests that the prevention and cure of stress results from work in the emotional and mental domains. To accomplish these ends, the writers suggest a variety of curative methods: clinical re-evaluation exercises, biofeedback, psychoanalysis, meditation, and various Eastern practices. Of these cures or preventions, the most frequently recommended are psychoanalysis and various Eastern practices, especially meditation. These result in one or more of the following: relaxation, heightened awareness, integration of past events, re-conceptualization of environmental phenomenon, and restoration of meaning and purpose.

In regard to Selye's points regarding psychoanalysis, I conclude that Selye is mostly concerned with what might be called integration of unconscious contents to the level of ego consciousness, rather than a specifically Freudian methodology. I base my conclusion on Selye's definition of psychoanalysis, in which he says:

> Psychoanalysis. [is] The method of analyzing an abnormal mental state by having the patient review his past emotional experiences and relating them to his present mental life. The technique furnishes hints for psychotherapeutic processes (Selye, 1979, p. 470).

Selye adds that the "fundamental human need. . .[is] to work for some reward, and to judge and enjoy our success in proportion to the magnitude of the compensations we can accumulate" (Selye, 1979, p. 438). Therefore, I further conclude that Selye's psychoanalysis appears to be solely devoted to

the enhancement of ego consciousness, through its support of meanings and purposes based upon ego gratification.

I agree with Selye that psychoanalysis (integration) offers possibilities to "know oneself" better. In my opinion, integration is a very important first step in satisfying the psyche's psychological needs and the reduction and prevention of stress. By integrating unresolved hindrances, negative psychological interpretations of stressors are recognized and may be neutralized. I entirely support Selye's notion and consider that it is of utmost importance "to know thyself" and that psychoanalysis "helps to understand how previous experiences. . .can continue almost indefinitely to cause mental or even physical disease" (Selye, 1978, p. 406). I believe any process of psychological integration is helpful for curing stress and burnout. In fact, my opinion is that the integration of one's unconscious unresolved hindrances must occur before one can begin to make any permanent progress toward transcending problematic stress. However, I see limitations in psychoanalysis. Freudian psychoanalysis, by definition, is considered with only one level of what I would call waking conscious awareness, of which the ego is the seat. (Dictionary of Psychology, 1983, p. 417). According to Carl Jung, referred to by some as a psychoanalyst (Ibid.), "Consciousness is the function or activity which maintains the relation of psychic contents to the ego. . . the ego is the only subject of. . .consciousness" (Jung, 1971, par. 700 & 706). This means that from a psychoanalytical perspective, the waking conscious mind is the ego.* In psychoanalysis, the

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* Psychoanalytical theory refers to the unconscious, the subconscious, and the conscious. Thus, in this dissertation I refer to psychoanalysis as addressing one level of waking consciousness. The unconscious is the seat of the libido and of repressed memories, and was considered by Freud to be the most important level of mind. The id is the seat of the libido, from which arise the animalistic, chaotic impulses which demand gratification. The id is governed by the pleasure principle and attempts to force the ego, governed by the reality principle, to accede to its

contents from the unconscious mind are integrated to ego consciousness, and the ego is relegated to the role of interpreting the unconscious. The problem I see here is that a psychoanalytical integration does not recognize other, more objective, less-self-interested--hence spiritual and non illusory--levels of consciousness. This means that the powerful contents of the unconscious are left to an egoistic and illusionary interpretation. This leaves a self pursuit as the only repository of interpreting meaning, and as the source of many purposes, "or driving forces." Thus, in my opinion, psychoanalysis as a practice does not seek to develop or nurture other, more objective or spiritual, levels of conscious awareness. My point here is that integration is important for psychological balance, but to transcend egoism and illusion, integration and interpretation must occur at objective levels of consciousness.

To understand the full implication of psychoanalysis, I believe that one must realize that the ego is concerned only with its self, i.e. as a mediator between the id and the superego, with particular interest in itself. As a result of psychoanalysis, the subject will be more self-oriented (which may be good or bad depending upon the subject), but he or she will certainly be unchanged in regard to the state of his or her Being and deeper and more spiritual purposes. To consider that the only level of conscious awareness available to humankind is the ego, is to limit one's potential for a higher and more objective, less self-interested, and spiritual level of fulfillment. A focus on ego consciousness fails to consider the spiritual dimension of being. Hence, if one stops at this level, all efforts remain egoistic, and self-centered consciousness persists in society. My

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wishes regardless of the consequences. The ego is the superficial portion of the id, or primitive infantile mind. Ego is particularly the individual's conception of himself. The ego mediates between the id and the superego, the critical aspects. (Dictionary of Psychology, 1983).

point here is that psychoanalysis is only the first step. Psychoanalysis can help prepare one to form a link with the unconscious and one's personality, but attempts to change should take into account the whole being. The implication this has for society is in my view extremely important: I contend that the problem facing society, which education mirrors, is that of the omnipotence of self-centered egoism. This world view permeates humankind today, driving greed and concern only for ego, personal, gratification. I believe that the essence of society's problems stems from this predisposition to ego consciousness. In my opinion, when ego-centered psychoanalysis is the singular focus of resolution for the problems of the human condition, the unresolved spiritual need inherent in the human mechanism will continue to create stress, and will perpetuate out-of-balance behaviors in individuals, our society, and our schools. It seems to me that Selye and his followers simply mirror the predisposition of contemporary society to see things through self-centered awareness. I am not discrediting the medical or physiological foundations of Selye's writings, because I see them as a springboard for further consideration.

I believe that Selye's and others' recommendations of Eastern or mystical practices for therapeutic resolution are also grounded in an ego-centered model. Selye suggests these practices for the purpose of obtaining relaxation and eustress (Selye, 1978, p. 420), but not for spiritual development. The irony of course is that the esoteric traditions which support these practices are intended to restore man's spiritual sense of purpose through the development of being.

When considering Eastern practices, it is not unimportant to recognize that the idea of "stress" is a Western phenomenon. The Eastern cultures, as I

understand them (except the "Westernized" cultures, i.e. Japan), are not known for high incidences of stress. They do not recognize and define stress in the same manner that we do. (Koller, 1970). The Eastern cultures, along with the primitive cultures, differ markedly from ours in the degree to which their populations adhere to traditional explanations of the sacred, the profane, and the individual's responsibility to define his role and purpose in regard to the two. These traditions inform morality and meaning throughout life, serving in their native contexts to penetrate the ego level and change the inner world. (Needleman, 1980). To "penetrate the ego" here means to transcend the ego's limited focus and to overcome its inevitable fate: by definition, ego stands alone and must ultimately experience a profound sense of unbelonging. To break this barrier opens up more profound levels of meaning which apply across the barrier of individual existence. The ego-level of therapy by whatever practice--Eastern or Western--cannot transcend the limitations of personality and thereby renew the life.

Jacob Needleman, well known as a consultant in the fields of psychology, education, medicine, business, and author of numerous books on spiritual perspectives, speaks to the crisis facing modern society and the future. His point of view is that scientific and technological progress have brought only a partial understanding of the universe. Further, he holds, they have brought the disruption and erosion of many patterns of human life and belief. One of his concerns is the use of extracted spiritual methods for the purpose of therapeutic resolution. He says:

> Methods or no methods, experience or no experience, here the point is whether or not the teaching guides the formation within

> human nature of true individual being, the creation of intermediate man, who alone in the cosmic scheme can care for, or harmonize or relate all the forces of creation. The core of a great teaching can become as obscured by "experience" as by "doctrine."
>
> For the sake of completeness, it must be added that the converse situation, namely the existence of the "bottom half" of tradition without the "top half" leads to what is called "psychologism," the explanation and employment of spiritual methods solely for psychotherapeutic ends. This is the problem facing a growing number of contemporary Western psychiatrists seeking to make use of the practical teachings of the East or the mystical writings of the West (Needleman, 1980, pp. 180-181).

I agree with Needleman that Eastern methods, i.e. Zen, Yoga, meditation, lead to illusion when taken out of their cultural and religious contexts, and are used as mundane therapeutic methods in fragmented contexts. These traditional practices must be respected as parts of larger bodies of knowledge regarding man's nature, being, and his relationship to his source. To remove these exercises from their cultural and spiritual contexts is to eliminate the objective benefit of the entire tradition's wisdom and direction. Spiritual meaning and purpose must remain in context to restore a coherent equilibrium that satisfies the human mechanism's intrinsic need for spiritual unity. The problem with the literature reviewed, in my opinion, is that it does not recognize the role played by the invisible worlds, nor does it offer a sufficient body of knowledge whereby an individual can be led to address their spiritual need for meaning and purpose.

Although lacking a spiritual component, Selye offers, unlike subsequent writers, a wide perspective on stress. The remainder of this critique examines the values, attitudes, and points of view of later researchers in a framework which refers to the writers' basic underlying disciplines: social or psychosocial;

psychological; behavior modification; psychoanalysis (critiqued above); and spiritual.

Social or psychosocial points of view are represented by Sethi, French, and Zimring, who discuss stress in regard to the general population. This critique also includes writers addressing "the hurried-child" and the "fast-track child" phenomena; and William Miller, Cedoline, Shaw, Bensky and Dixon; and Melendez and de Guzman, who review stress or burnout regarding teachers. It is interesting to note that the majority of the writers on stress and burnout regarding children and teachers, write from a psychosocial or social perspective.

The psychological perspective is offered by King, Stanley, and Burrows who address stress in regard to the general population. Humphrey and Humphrey view stress from a behavior modification perspective in regard to children as well as teachers. Stress reduction techniques for children reviewed here also fall into this category.

The spiritual and insightful perspectives are represented by Gurdjieff; Bennett, Steiner, Pearce, Miller, and Jung. These authors respond to a child's spirit, his or her creative development, and the search for a child's true self. Bennett addresses the spiritual hunger of a child.

Critique of Social or Psychosocial Perspectives on Stress and Burnout

Numerous environmental concerns are cited by authors writing from a social or psychosocial perspectives. They see the causes of stress and burnout as originating in the environment, and consider the resolution to be either social in nature, or to reside in a combination of the individual and social approaches.

The following list provides examples, proposed in the literature reviewed, of the social causes of teacher stress and burnout:

-Overcrowded classrooms,
-Overcrowded schedules,
-Inability to meet unrealistic and unproductive administrative demands, i.e. continuous testing and paper work, etc.,
-Disruptive, often disturbed, students and uncooperative parents,
-A competitive, nonsupportive administrative and teaching community,
-The demand to teach an ineffective, administratively imposed curriculum,
-The demand to teach simultaneously to a very broad spectrum of student ability and cultural backgrounds,
-Insecurity due to the power of the administrative unit to capriciously transfer the teacher's school or teaching situation without warning,
-General lack of public respect for the profession.

Humphrey and Humphrey summarize further examples of how they view the cause of teacher stress, by saying:

> Stress-inducing factors [stressors] in teaching are (a) self-concerns which induce stress, (b) general working conditions, (c) actions of administrators, (d) actions of colleagues, (e) actions of parents, and (f) behaviors of students (Humphrey & Humphrey, 1986, pp. 2-17).

The people who lay blame on the environment seem to be working from the same value assumptions and illusions that create the basic problems in the social environment, i.e. they ignore or downplay the role of individual responsibility. Although I agree very much that there is a great deal wrong in our society and in our public schools; I contend that these problems basically

reflect the condition of the individuals in them. The limitation I see in this approach is that the environment cannot be "fixed" until the people who are in it, and who continue to construct it, change.

Many people are voicing their concerns over society's ills, and have been doing so for centuries, but in my view they project onto society the problems caused by a lack of unity in their own being. I believe that we cannot seek a positive understanding of society and its failures without understanding the collective human problem reflected by the larger society. In my opinion, the essence of the problem stems from asking the wrong questions and offering the wrong solutions. If you accept, as I do, that human purpose is a more complex issue than egoistic pursuits will satisfy, then our attitude toward the "social causes" theory must be one of skepticism. We cannot survey the prodigious cycle of social ills without first considering what meaning and purpose we attach to our existence. Our pragmatic language speaks only in terms of egoistic values, with an over-emphasis on the importance and power of humankind, and an excessive confidence in human ability to know and *to do*. We fail to take into account that we human beings have no permanent "I," nor objective level of consciousness, from which to assess ourselves and the world from any other perspective than illusion. We judge ourselves by what we imagine we are. This leads to illusion and states of tension where our values and actions become confused. Our society's failures are the warning signs which point to symptoms of the underlying malady of humankind's ego consciousness.

Melendez and de Guzman write from a psychosocial perspective regarding teachers. Their prescription is for both personal and organizational modifications, which they describe as helping to create a "person-environment

fit." They suggest that Selye's "philosophy of altruistic egoism," and the dictum to "be good to yourself," are the necessary components for the prevention of stress. In my opinion, the limitations in their perspective lie in its ego-centered view of fulfillment, and the assumption that one can modify the person-environment "fit" by willful imposition. I believe that the person-environment link can never be resolved harmoniously when the active force is self-centered, and lacking in regard for the unity of all life.

Writers with a focus on children, i.e. Elkind, Fimian, Robinson, Vail, and Brooks, point out specific social causes of stress for children in schools. The suggestions by these writers basically fall into the following categories:

-Crowded classrooms,
-Little individual attention,
-Hurrying through a fragmented, often (to the child) unintelligible curriculum,
-Boredom due to lifeless, fragmented learning content,
-Competitive "winners" and "losers" frame of reference in school activities,
-Acceptance of a high rate of failure for slower learners,
-Pressure for constant high academic performance (both at home at school) for brighter children,
-A threatening, sometimes violent, competitive social atmosphere among children in many schools,
-Negative teacher attitudes toward the child,
-Failure is expected and accepted,
-Hurrying children.

If we ask what the values are that support these situations, I think we can see that these creations reflect a generalized lack of appreciation for spiritual meaning and purpose. These are symptoms; they reflect a failure to take into

account the whole of the child. They do not foster, as Alice Miller says, a search for the child's true self; or as Steiner says, the whole child--body, soul, and spirit. In my view, unless society as a whole, of which public education is but a mirror, comes to appreciate these values, then we will continue to perpetuate environments that ignore the spirit inherent in our youth.

William Miller writes, in his book Dealing with Stress: A Challenge for Educators, of the conflicting values and discrepancies between teachers' expectations and social reality. He concludes that "distress can occur in a situation where there are conflicting values" (Miller, 1979, p. 10). He speaks about "oneness of mind and body. . .particularly in Zen Buddhist philosophy. A person cannot be divided in some arbitrary way, but is an entity with interrelated parts that are inseparable" (Miller, 1979, p. 17). Although implying the existence of spiritual needs, he fails to incorporate further notions regarding the spiritual relevance. He prescribes a social solution by suggesting that "Creating a mutually supportive environment" is helpful for reducing stress in the lives of teachers, students, and administrators. His reference that people cannot be divided in arbitrary ways from their interrelated parts, I believe, is very insightful; but Miller's theories require further development for them to stand on their own.

Cedoline's psychosocial perspective positions teacher burnout as an "occupational hazard and a phenomenon induced by distress." Although he characterizes burnout as manifesting in the individual, he also views it as a socially dysfunctional behavior that distances individuals from those around them. His prescription is to "learn new responses" which he contends are preventative and not remedial, because "it equips people to cope effectively on a long-term basis" (Cedoline, 1980, p. 93). He says, "social support is the

number one antidote for distress" (Cedoline, 1980, p. 18). I believe Cedoline's notions on coping offer limited resolution for stress. His belief that social support is the best antidote for distress may be true, but to be truly responsive to others' distress requires a high level of awareness and compassion that most people are unable to give. We have a case here of being told "what," but not "how."

Shaw, Bensky, and Dixon describe specific social problems and causes of stress for educators. Their models of intervention are inservice seminars and consultation from an outside person. In my opinion these cures seem inadequate to the task at hand. However, if a seminar were to be conducted by an individual who used an integral language which addressed humankind's fragmentation (as well as it potential unity), a cosmology that offered a version of meaning and purpose beyond the ego's needs, and a methodology that applied the theory, then perhaps the wisdom would plant insights that could lead individual teachers in the direction of transformation.

Sethi's psychosocial notions speak to stress in the general population. His says that external causes in the environment or work place can only be transformed through personal awareness and particularly through meditation. My concern is that Sethi extracts Eastern methods of meditation for enhancing personal awareness. I have offered my concerns (above) regarding the use of "fragments," of an esoteric teaching for therapeutic ends.

Other writers, like French and Zimring, discuss "person-environment fit," based on a concept of the "overall design of the physical environment," affecting the person, directly and indirectly. French presents the person and the environment as parts to be manipulated, as if that were possible. In my opinion,

the limitation in this perspective is the mechanistic analysis of person-environment fit. They suggest that the cure is properly to modify the behavior of the stressed individual to fit the environmental situation, which is seen as a given, but they fail to recognize the limitations of individuals to transform their level of being in to order transcend their pervasive mechanicality and adapt themselves willy-nilly to new conditions. They offer no other resolution. In my opinion, it is not a case of modification to fit, but transcending the stressors through living a life that has meaning and purpose in all the parts of one's being.

In addressing social concerns, the main problems I see are a lack of individual consciousness and spiritual concern for the unity of life. The consequence of these failures results in destructive relationships with others and our planet. To reverse this requires awakening and spiritual meaning and purpose--to bring about a new world order where people are united instead of isolated. This would mean that individuals would awaken from a state of illusion and self-centered awareness and consider that there is a purpose for human life, beyond himself or herself. For this to happen, I believe a spiritual psychology is needed that addresses the negative human condition as well as the potential for humankinds unity and transformation. As well, a cosmology is needed that offers a spiritual meaning and purpose beyond the self for psychological transformation. If these values were incorporated into more peoples' practice, attitudes, and resolutions, then I believe we would witness a society of unity, instead of negative relationships, stress and burnout, and destruction.

Critique of a Psychological Perspective on Stress

King, Stanley, and Burrows do not consider the social domain in their critique of stress. Their point is that "stress in humans is a psychological problem which requires psychological understanding" (King, Stanley & Burrows, 1987, p. 9). Their position is that although "stress depends to some extent upon the direct impact of environmental demands" stress is nonetheless "dependent on the mediating role of each person's interpretation and appraisal of the situation" (King, Stanley & Burrows, 1987, p. 4). The cause of problematic stress, they say, is produced by "negative thinking." I believe this is an accurate assessment of the mechanism causing distress. However, the limitation I foresee is in their prescription of psychoanalysis for resolving negative thoughts. Once again, we witness a preoccupation with egoistic resolution, which only perpetuates an environment conducive to more distress. Their prescription of exercise and proper diet for alleviating stress, I believe, offers possibilities to strengthen the body's biological functions and its need for balance. If a spiritual perspective was superimposed on the theories of King, Stanley, and Burrows, I believe their point of view would reflect greater potential for enabling equilibrium in the whole human mechanism.

Critique of Behavior Modification as a Prescription for Stress and Burnout

In direct contrast to spiritual meaning and purpose, in my opinion, is behavior modification, an approach which focuses on "coping." Humphrey and Humphrey suggest behavior modification as the best method for "coping" or "controlling" stress. Their notion is that behavior modification and desensitization are effective means for coping. In my opinion, these methods

subject individuals to dehumanizing demands, and seem further to treat only symptoms, not causes. Their approach reveals a mechanical interpretation of humankind as a being.

Critique of Insightful and Spiritual Perspectives on Children

I turn now to the spiritual themes and insights of G. I. Gurdjieff, J. G. Bennett, and Rudolf Steiner; as well as insightful views put forth by J. C. Pearce, Alice Miller, and C. G. Jung. In my opinion, these writers respond to a child's needs by addressing deep spiritual aspects of their development or significant insights which support a child's spirit.

Pearce believes that a child's innate creative intelligence unfolds naturally. He sees that adults and society must change their view of the world in order to free children for a more healthy and balanced development of intelligence. Pearce's notion that the adult must change in order "to be" aware in the moment of their abuse, offers subtle clues to help reverse the atmosphere conducive to the destruction of a child's spirit. In order to change however, more is necessary than just a wish to do so. The limitation in Pearce's writing is that he lacks a methodology to transcend illusions and abusive behavior toward our youth. As Gurdjieff says "Mechanical manifestations, and the manifestations of someone who can be called an individual, are different and their quality is different" (Gurdjieff, 1973, p. 127). In my opinion, the bottom line is that for adults to make a real difference in the lives of children, they must move from a mechanical existence to a state of awareness, in the moment.

Our true relationship with children should be based upon a regard for their wholeness. As Steiner says, "Work out of a knowledge of the whole

human being, body, soul and spirit" (Steiner, 1971, p. 13). Steiner puts forth a very important notion when he points out that our modern education "leads right away from life" (Steiner, 1971, p. 13). Bennett characterizes the need to belong as a "spiritual hunger." He says:

> In our relationship with the young, we must preserve the spiritual hunger and religious potential that is latent in every child. . .the spiritual need really begins with. . .the need to "belong," the need to have a place, the need that one's life should have a meaning. . .a meaning which is stable, which we can turn to in all conditions of life. . .This spiritual need to "belong," for our life to make sense, cannot be something that is private for each one of us; for obviously, life cannot make sense in isolation from a greater whole (Bennett, 1984, p. 1).

Gurdjieff's insight that "A child's education must be based on the principle that everything must come from his own will" (Gurdjieff, 1973, p. 127) is a reference to empowering the child and also to activating the child. This is in significant contrast to models of behavior modification that want to modify a child's behavior based on the adult's will, which in my opinion only produces a mechanical robot. Gurdjieff illuminates this point by saying that "if something is told to a child directly, he is being educated mechanically and later manifests himself equally mechanically" (Gurdjieff, 1973, p. 127). Our society makes the assumption that all the power and "will" lies in the hands of the adults, but Gurdjieff's spiritual message recognizes that there is a power in the child and it "must come from his [the child's] own will" (Ibid.). I believe that if we allow a child to develop his or her own inherent individual whole, self, which includes the spiritual dimension, then a more creative and more spiritual world, less centered on greed, will result.

Conclusion

I conclude that the literature reviewed on stress and burnout points to problems in our society's values that are reflected in our educational environment, on the whole. This I believe is the work of individuals who view the world from a fragmented, egoistic, illusionary, and pragmatic understanding of humankind and purpose. This view fails to take into account spiritual meaning and purpose. In short, to begin we must first liberate ourselves from illusion, egoism, and false valuation. Then as parents and educators we must preserve the spiritual hunger of our children.

To transcend ego consciousness and participate in more objective and spiritual levels of consciousness, I believe what is needed is a new Western vision of man's purpose. Such a vision would require an integral language which facilitates the understanding of man and his nature, would describe a spiritual purpose, and would offer a method for transcending ego consciousness.

In the following chapter's alternative and expanded frame of reference, I try to bridge the gap between ego consciousness, which acknowledges sel-centered meaning and purpose; and objective levels of consciousness, which recognizes spiritual meaning and purpose. This frame of reference is offered as a means to transcend stress and burnout--the pervasive sense of unbelonging, to one's self and one's world.

CHAPTER VI

AN ALTERNATIVE AND EXPANDED FRAME OF REFERENCE

Introducing The Chapter--Reviewing Stress From An Alternative Frame of Reference

We have seen a significant number of references in the literature reviewed to the concepts of consciousness, interpretation, perception, and self-knowledge. For example: Selye says that life events become problematic due to the way we "take" (interpret) it (Selye, 1978, p. 370). He suggests it is necessary to "know oneself," and that to "induce a state of altered consciousness" (Ibid., p. 419) offers relief. Sethi says that "the response to stress and stressors depends on the mediating of some appraising, perceiving, or interpreting mechanism on part of the individual" (Sethi, 1983, p. 167), which "can be transformed through consciousness" (Ibid.). King, Stanley, and Burrows refer to the "mediating role of each person's interpretation and appraisal" (King, Stanley & Burrows, 1987, p. 4). William Miller says that "a person can consciously control his mind" (Miller, 1979, pp. 17-18). Cedoline speaks of teacher stress coming from "perception" (Cedoline, 1980, p. 128). Despite the frequency of use, these terms are often left as vague principles, leaving the reader to assume their meanings. It is ironic that so little has been established in scholarship thus far, regarding the nature of human consciousness and its relationship to stress and burnout.

The point of departure for this alternative frame of reference is the idea that the study of the parent concept of these terms, consciousness, should be

considered to be central to any discussion which uses the words "interpretation," and "perception," as often as the stress literature does. In this chapter, I try to make these connections through an alternative perspective. The purpose of this section is to help us overcome the limitations of the literature reviewed in this dissertation, which include an insufficient language for understanding consciousness and its bearing on interpretation, perception, attention, self-knowledge, and illusion; a somewhat superficial presentation of the human condition; and a lack of acknowledgment of the spiritual* realm.

This dissertation now proceeds to examine consciousness--and its related topics of being, and presence. To enhance our understanding of the principle of consciousness, this frame of reference uses what might be called an "integral language,"** incorporating terminology useful for exploring the issues of consciousness, and the related topics of human transformation, and spiritual purpose. I do not propose that this language will resonate in the being of all people. But it will appeal to some, especially those who are interested in the questions of human life's meaning and purpose, and the nature of man's position.*** The expanded frame of reference and its integral language provide the context of my "Theory of Balance,"**** which describes a hierarchy of human needs; and holds that work on being, consciousness, and presence enable

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* The term "spiritual" used in this dissertation refers to a world view that acknowledges subtle forms of existence which transcend, but interact with, the material world. "Spiritual" herein does not imply religion, which I take to mean dogma. Spiritual is distinguished from the psyche. "Psyche" herein means the personal mind part of man, i.e. his senses; emotions; thoughts, and ego.

** See Appendix C for expanded definition of "integral language."

*** The term "man" is used in this dissertation as a descriptor of humankind, not necessarily in reference to the male sex.

**** See Appendix C for an expanded explanation of the "Theory of Balance."

participation in more objective* levels of consciousness, thus facilitating the goal of satisfying the human mechanism's intrinsic need for balance between the purposes of each of its parts.

EXPANDED FRAME OF REFERENCE**

This frame of reference takes the position that there are both subjective and objective states of human consciousness. It holds that natural man/woman ("ordinary humans") resides in a curious state of consciousness which is formed predominantly of illusory material, and from which he has the possibility to free himself/herself. This requires efforts, described in more detail below. This frame of reference contends that until humankind rises from its state of subjective consciousness, and addresses the spiritual questions of human purpose, it will continue to fall prey to problematic stress and burnout--a pervasive sense of unbelonging--because all parts of his/her organism are unbalanced.

The frame of reference holds that stress and burnout are only symptoms of a broader problem: humankind's egoism and illusion. These factors create a sleeping state of existence which in turn creates an imbalanced approached to life. A sense of unbelonging results, as the needs for spiritual meaning and purpose are not satisfied. As a consequence, we witness stress and burnout, as well as the destruction of human and planetary vitality.

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* The term "objective" is used throughout this dissertation to refer to a perception that is not affected by an individual's personal illusions. "Objective Consciousness" is the result of a state of being whereby an individual's knowledge and perceptions are independent of subjectivity. "Subjectivity" refers to a condition in consciousness whereby interpretations are created reactions in illusionary images of one's reality. These definitions are provisional. They reflect a belief in an ideal which transcends the example provided by everyday contact and communication with people.

** The ideas of G.I. Gurdjieff form the foundation of this expanded frame of reference. It is to be noted that the writings of his pupils--J.G. Bennett, P.D. Ouspensky, Maurice Nicoll--are also quoted herein; their work reflects Gurdjieff's positions, and they frequently quote his oral tradition in their writings.

Integral Language and Schools

To discuss the topics of human purpose, being, consciousness, and presence, we require a vocabulary which describes subtle phenomenon in precise terms. I have coined the term "Integral Language," to represent this vocabulary.

Many vocabularies do already exist which describe the technical aspects of being, consciousness, and presence.* Reference was made earlier to the Eastern traditions, which commonly possess detailed vocabularies concerning the subtle worlds. These vocabularies are always the result of a "school of consciousness"--a group of people who work together to investigate the nature of existence. Frequently, they arise, function briefly, and then disappear, only to reappear somewhere else. Their activities, artifacts (if any), and their outer form are always dependent upon the natures of the particular people who participate, and the social context in which the "school" arises. P. D. Ouspensky, a student of G. I. Gurdjieff, associates these schools with social regeneration. Schools of consciousness can be identified in many periods of history: medieval schools of alchemy, whose symbolic language involved chemistry and metallurgy; esoteric schools of Christianity, including the Byzantine iconographers; Cabalistic schools of esoteric Hebrew thought; schools of Ramakrishna; schools of Pythagoras; schools who supported the building of great cathedrals, such as Notre Dame; schools of Sufism; as well as the ancient schools of philosophical study in India; the schools of theory in Egypt; or schools of practice in more recent times in Persia, Mesopotamia, and Turkestan. (Ouspensky, 1972).

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* Refer to Appendix C for this frame of reference's definition of being, consciousness, presence.

George Gurdjieff (ca. 1873 - 1949) founded such a school in 1922 at the Chateau du Prieure, near Fontainbleau, which he named *The Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man*. It was devoted to the development of, as he put it, "man without quotation marks." In regard to the purpose of schools of this type, Gurdjieff says, as quoted by Ouspensky:

> "Schools are imperative, first of all because of the complexity of man's organism. A man is unable to keep watch on the whole of himself, that is, all his different sides. Only a school can do this, school methods, school discipline--a man is much too lazy, he will do a great deal without the proper intensity, or he will do nothing at all while thinking that he is doing something; he will work with intensity on something that does not need intensity and will let those moments pass by when intensity is imperative. Then he spares himself; he is afraid of doing anything unpleasant. He will never attain the necessary intensity by himself. . .He tries to accomplish his task in the easiest way possible and so on. This is not work. In work only super-efforts are counted, that is beyond the normal, beyond the necessary; ordinary efforts are not counted." (Ouspensky, 1950, p. 347).

J. G. Bennett, a student of Gurdjieff, further describes the primary aim of a "school of consciousness" as *transformation*, "the unification of the natural and spiritual elements of our being by breaking through the barrier of illusion that keeps them apart" (Bennett, 1974, p. 1).

Bennett founded *The International Academy for Continuous Education,* based on the principles of Gurdjieff's school, at Sherborne House in Sherborne village, Gloucestershire, England, in 1971. It was a five-year project for the purpose of introducing a practice for the transformation of man. Bennett's intent was to prepare a sufficient number of people for the work of building a new and more harmonious world. He saw the "New World" as a place where people could live with the common intention of transformation, for the purpose of

serving the harmonious evolution of life. (Bennett, 1974). Bennett describes his school in the following way:

> The Basic Course at the Academy is the product of many years of research into the techniques of transformation. By this, we mean the realization of the potential latent in human beings for self-perfecting in body, mind and spirit. These researches have drawn upon methods used in many parts of the world including the principle religious and spiritual movements of East and West.
>
> Those who are already convinced that transformation is possible and know that nothing else gives meaning to life, are in search of methods of achieving it that really work. Those who are aware that there is something terribly wrong with the way human life on this earth is going--and especially their own lives--are looking for a way out. The Academy has something to offer them and all those who feel the need to help their fellow men and know that they must first help themselves (Prospectus of *The International Academy for Continuous Education*, 1973).

J. G. Bennett defines schools and their essential work in the following way* :

> [An esoteric"*school*" is] A specialized society engaged in the transmission of knowledge and power relating to transformation of selves and the evolution of mankind (1976, p. 302).

The significance I see in schools of consciousness is that they are formed by people pursuing transformation of being, through work on consciousness, especially presence, for the purpose of harmonious service. As our study is interested in consciousness and transformation--transcending egoism and illusions--these schools are relevant. This work requires a teacher. For Ouspensky and Bennett, that teacher was George Gurdjieff.

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* Refer to Appendix C for definitions of other related terms.

Gurdjieff wrote three major books: All and Everything, Meetings with Remarkable Men, and Life Is Real Only Then, When I Am, but his primary contribution came through his role as a leader of groups devoted to the study of existence and human nature's possibilities and limitations. His concern is that humankind rise from our customary level of consciousness, where illusion and sleep are the predominant mode, to an objective level of consciousness; and through this "sacrifice," serve the ultimate aim of human existence: transformation. (Bennett, 1974). Hence, his work is significant to our study. I believe that the root of his contribution is his teaching regarding man's levels of consciousness.

An Alternative Psychology: The Human Condition

States of Consciousness

My first concern stems from the reviewed literature's failure to examine human consciousness and its relationship to interpretation, perception, self-knowledge, egoism, and illusion. I believe that a brief look at Gurdjieff's tradition will help us to understand man's consciousness in a way which will allow a new appraisal of stress and burnout.

Gurdjieff's teaching begins "Man is asleep." He defines the following four states of consciousness possible for humankind: *

1. Sleep,
2. Waking state or waking "sleep" (humankind's everyday condition) **
3. Self-consciousness,
4. Objective consciousness.

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* Refer to Appendix C for description of these four stages of consciousness.

** In this frame of reference, this state is also referred to as "sleeping consciousness."

From this perspective, it is possible for humankind to work in different states of consciousness; but as we are, Gurdjieff proposes that ordinary* man lives in the two lowest levels of consciousness: sleep and waking state. From Gurdjieff's point of view, we know nothing of objective consciousness and have no control over our states of consciousness. We do not even remember that a higher, more objective, level of consciousness is possible. Gurdjieff concludes that it is possible, even inevitable, to acquire control of one's consciousness and to have objective awareness, but he adds that certain methods and efforts are required. The term "objective" is used here to describe a level of awareness which is not subject to illusion, whereby one's perceptions and interpretations are impartial and not dominated by personal concerns. The term "ordinary" here refers to the first two levels of consciousness.

The first level, sleep, is described by Ouspensky as the purely subjective and passive state, full of dreams. (Ouspensky, 1950, p. 142). The second state of consciousness, waking sleep, is the level where ordinary man lives his daily life, imagining that he is a conscious being. This is the level where interpretations and perceptions are subject to illusion. From Gurdjieff's perspective, the main obstacle for most people in acquiring higher levels of consciousness is that "they think they possess it" (Ouspensky, 1950, p. 142). To awaken from these levels requires that one first realize that he is asleep.

Ouspensky describes the third level of consciousness, self-consciousness, as the state in which one has the potential to remember oneself rightly and to be aware of one's being. From the Gurdjieffian perspective, as put

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* The term "ordinary " refers in this dissertation to the condition of life or man whereby no inner efforts are being made for spiritual transformation. Ordinary means the level of sleeping consciousness.

forth by Ouspensky, this third state of consciousness, self-consciousness, "constitutes the natural right of man *as he is*, and if man does not possess it, it is only because of the wrong conditions of his life" (Ouspensky, 1950, p. 142). In this state of consciousness, we can know the truth of who and what we are.

The fourth state of consciousness is objective consciousness. Ouspensky notes that it is called objective because it is the state in which one can see things as they truly are. It is in this fourth state of consciousness that one can "know the full truth about everything: we can study 'things in themselves,' 'the world as it is.' " (Ouspensky, 1951, p. 31). From this point of view, the third and fourth levels result only from inner growth through lengthy and right efforts. (Ibid.).

From this perspective, we see that it is possible for one to transcend the level of sleeping consciousness and rise to a more objective and spiritual level of being.

Ordinary Man As A Machine

To examine the human condition, this study examines Gurdjieff's reference to ordinary humankind as a machine. This analogy is used because Gurdjieff holds that man, as he is, behaves like a machine, unaware of who and what he is, set in motion only by external influences--all his "movements, actions, words, ideas, emotions, moods and thought produced by external influences. . .just an automaton" (Ouspensky, 1951, p. 14). This point of view is comparable to behavioral psychology's definition regarding human behavior as mechanically subject to external stimuli. However, behavioristic psychology stops here, without reference to other forms of being which are not mechanical, or to other states of consciousness (Dictionary of Psychology, 1983, p. 56).

Gurdjieff defines our present, limited state of being as only one level possible for human kind.

Gurdjieff elaborates on man as a machine, by saying that "average man is indeed incapable of the single smallest independent or spontaneous action or word. All of him is only the result of external effect " (Gurdjieff, 1950, p. 1203). I believe this line of thought is particularly relevant to our study of stress and burnout because at the level of sleeping consciousness, problematic stress comes from an automatic reaction and interpretation of the stressor. This means that when one is in a state of sleeping consciousness, an automaton, one is incapable of conscious separation from external stimuli, the stressor, and the result is stress. The problem this reveals is that ordinary man does not know himself nor his mechanicalness. For these reasons, Gurdjieff describes ordinary man as a robot, a machine. Maurice Nicoll, a student of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, quotes Gurdjieff:

> How can one stop being a machine?. . .It is possible to stop being a machine, but for that two things are necessary. First, it is necessary to know, to realize, that one is a machine, and second, to know the machine itself and its possibilities. A machine, an actual machine, does not know itself and cannot know itself. If an actual machine were to know it is a machine it would then no longer be a machine. . .Man as he is, asleep and driven by life, is a machine without seeing it, without realizing it, but that if a man begins to observe himself and to become conscious of himself he can eventually cease to be a machine. In this teaching, this *double* view of Man is always emphasized--Mechanical Man and Conscious Man (Nicoll, 1952, p. 1010).

It is important to understand consciousness as a barometer of being. "Being" here does not merely mean existence. It refers to vital substance, who and what one is. Ouspensky points out that to be able "to do," one must "be."

But as we are, the level of our being is that of a machine, mechanically reacting to external conditions. Hence, "sleep is the chief feature of our being" (Ouspensky 1950, p. 66). "*Knowledge* depends on *being*" (Ibid., p. 65). One who wishes to awaken must observe and verify the level of consciousness in which he or she lives. Nothing can be attained in sleep, according to this perspective, because at the level of sleep, only illusion is perceived.

Attention

To further this study of consciousness, I turn now to the role that attention plays in the expanded frame of reference. In order to awaken, it is necessary be active in regard to one's attention. (Gurdjieff, 1950, p. 39). Ordinary humankind is used to perceiving (and being) passive. In order to work with attention, one's will must become active. To know that one's attention is distracted (i.e. lost in thought), one must awaken to one's inattentiveness, in the moment. This means making an effort to direct one's attention, instead of letting it wander. This work that Gurdjieff proposes is concerned with the collection and refinement of the quality of our attention. (Ouspensky, 1972, p. 119). Reference has been made in this dissertation to "presence." Jean Vaysse, a student of the Gurdjieffian work, notes that to be present is to have collected attention. He adds that "We cannot go further in our search for more presence in life conditions without first turning inwardly toward ourselves, without more experience and understanding of what we are, and without developing qualities we still lack" (Vaysse, 1979, p. 158).

Focused attention is necessary in order to study oneself and impartially observe more and more of who and what one is. This brings us to an important

aspect of Gurdjieff's methodology for awakening and self-knowledge, the discipline of "self-observation," which is an act of focusing one's attention inwardly. (Ouspensky, 1972, p. 119).

"Know Thyself" -- Self-Study: Self-Observation

This examination now turns to Gurdjieff's methodology for self knowledge. To study oneself, it is necessary to direct one's attention inwardly, for which Gurdjieff offers a particular method--self-observation. Self-observation has a direct relationship to the level of one's consciousness. As we are, objective knowledge of ourselves is vague and distant: "Man in his present state is very far from self-knowledge" (Ouspensky, 1950, p. 104). The relevance of self-study to our examination is that it is an objective way of working that leads one to self knowledge.

The phrase, "know thyself," generally ascribed to Socrates, has been the basis of many schools, even more ancient ones than the Socratic schools. As noted in the literature I reviewed, many writers on stress suggest the importance to "know-thyself," but offer only vague hints of its meaning. To know thyself, according to Gurdjieff, means to impartially know the machine, through self-observation.

From Gurdjieff's perspective, knowing where to begin and what methods to use can help one to avoid creating more illusions about oneself. It is necessary to understand that the practice of self-observation, from this perspective, is not thinking about oneself. Instead, it is an impartial observation in the moment. In observing oneself, certain inner changes begin to occur. In short, "self-observation is an instrument of self-change, a means of awakening. By observing himself he throws, as it were, a ray of light onto his inner process

which have hitherto worked in complete darkness" (Ibid., p. 146). Ouspensky notes that the essential aspect of self-observation is that it brings one eventually to the realization of a wish to change habitual behaviors. (Ibid.).

Self-observation is an act of divided attention. It is an impartial and objective seeing of oneself. It is referred to as an *instrument* for awakening, because it is an *impartial observer* who takes a glimpse, in the moment, of one's manifestations. (Ibid.). The impartial observer can be likened to a photographer who takes a picture. It is impartial because at the level of consciousness where self-observation is available, the "photographer" can be without value judgment. During self-observation, the observer distinguishes between the outer event and one's inner state, while maintaining a relationship to each. Self-observation is the key to help one see and separate from one's fragmentation and habitual reactions to external stimuli. The base practice involves observation of bodily sensations, followed later by observation of feeling, and then observation of thought. (Ouspensky, 1950). Authentic self-observation does not occur at the level of sleeping consciousness. The similarity between ordinary observation and self-observation is that they both require attention. The difference is that in "observations," one directs attention outward through the senses; but in "self-observation" the attention is directed inward, and is divided between the inner state and the outer event by the impartial observer. (Ibid).

Gurdjieff points out that in order to observe oneself, one must first of all remember oneself. (Gurdjieff, 1950). The first stage of self-remembering follows the moment one stops identifying with personality-based phenomena and awakens to an impartial observation of oneself. "Only by beginning to

remember himself does a man really awaken" (Ibid., p. 143).* The term "awakening" refers to the process which enables an individual's will to become active, at first through efforts to direct one's attention. Much of Gurdjieff's practice is directed toward impartially observing and understanding one's own manifestations, whether physical, emotional, or intellectual. Gurdjieff's self-knowledge is not presented as the sort of self-knowledge indicated by most references, reviewed herein, to the same topic, which I think tend to be summary acknowledgements of behavior. From this perspective, directed-focused attention is not thinking about oneself, nor is it retrospective thoughts of some past occurrence. Instead, self-observation is an impartial and objective observation, in the moment. It is participation in objective consciousness.

One result of such self-observation is the accumulation of many examples of negative and habitual behavior, which provide objective evidence of who and what one really is--instead of who and what one thought one was. The importance of self-observation to our study of stress and burnout is that self-observation reveals objective data regarding one's habitual reactions to external stressors.

The Psychological Condition of Ordinary Man

As we have seen, it is through self-observation that Gurdjieff proposes one can impartially observe and verify the characteristics of their condition. It is noteworthy that from this perspective, verification of one's condition is hailed as important. In the following study, I will examine the psychological side of the human condition from Gurdjieff's point of view. Special reference is made to the

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* Refer to Appendix C for Gurdjieff's further notions on self-study and self-observation.

specific conditions that Gurdjieff pointed to as those which keep man most asleep, and imprisoned in their automatic reactions to stressors.

Identification and Inner Considering

The psychology of ordinary, sleeping man, from Gurdjieff's perspective, reveals many negative conditions. Two examples are what he calls "identification" and "inner considering." Identification is a state characterized by a lack of control over one's perceptions. Ouspensky describes it as follows:

> 'Identifying' or 'identification' is a curious state in which man passes more than half of his life. He identifies with everything: with what he says, what he feels, what he believes, what he does not believe, what he wishes, what he does not wish, what attracts him, what repels him (Ouspensky, 1951, p. 43).

Ordinary man's consciousness is absorbed by everything, he cannot extract his attention from his attachment to external influences: people, other people's ideas, objects, and so on. What this means is that "in the state of identification man is incapable of looking impartially on the object of his identification. . . .in a state of identification, man has even less control over his mechanical reactions than at any other time" (Ouspensky, 1951, p. 43-44). Identification is the main obstacle to self-remembering. When we are identified, we are asleep, a slave to dimness; we do not remember ourselves. If one's aim is to awaken and "to remember," it is necessary to make efforts against identification.

The second negative condition of sleeping man, from Gurdjieff's perspective, is internal considering, which is habitual "identification" with ourselves and other people's attitude and disposition toward us. From this point

of view, we "inner consider" mostly in the sense that we do not think that others value us enough; we become identified with how others treat us. The problem is that our "lives are filled with considering, that is, worrying, doubt, and suspicion, and there remains no place for anything else" (Ouspensky, 1951, p. 44). Internal considering is not only identifying and habitually considering other people's attitudes towards us, but also is habitually considering and identifying "with society and historically constituted conditions"* (Ouspensky, 1951, p. 44).

The context of Gurdjieff's remarks on identification and inner considering serve to illuminate his view of ordinary man as a machine, which is not only uncontrolled but is without the capacity to control itself, because its attention is captive to random events.

The reverse of internal considering, according to Gurdjieff, is "external considering." Whereas internal considering is a mechanical act, external considering requires *conscious* efforts. External considering means that one consciously acts toward another as they would wish you to. It requires one to see into the state of another person. As I understand this concept, external considering is an event based on an increase of consciousness. It represents attainment of a certain freedom, and it is a way to develop will (not self-will, which is associated with mechanical, subjective levels of being), through an act of conscious self-control for the purpose of considering others. An important prerequisite of this deed is that one must not let it be known that one is externally considering. (Ibid.). The consequence of external considering is that one comes to accept and find room for other people. Bennett notes that this is an important exercise because it begins to put one in a "right relationship with

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* See Appendix C for further reference to Gurdjieff's notions on internal considering.

others" (Bennett, 1974). In the context of our study of harmonious and less stressful relationships, I believe the significance of external considering is that in this state one can awaken to objective compassion for other people and put the needs of others before one's own.

The Psychological Condition of Ordinary Man: Many "I's"

Gurdjieff's psychology is ruthless in its criticism of what he calls "ordinary man," or man without a permanent "I." His psychology of "man as he is," includes a view of inner man as a fragmented mosaic composed of "many I's." These I's compete with one another for the right to represent the whole identity. As each different "I" takes its place on the stage of sleeping consciousness, it voices its own opinions and makes its own commitments. One result of this state of being is that decisions made today are often forgotten about tomorrow, when another "I" has taken over. Another result is that man's will, like his identity, is discontinuous. As Gurdjieff puts it, "Man cannot do."

A consequence of man's fragmentation is what Gurdjieff terms the "Law of Accident," which is the condition of life for a man who does not possess a unified "I" and cannot "do."(Bennett, 1976, p. 202). Things at this level just happen. According to Gurdjieff, we are carried along by great forces in whatever direction they happen to be going in at the moment, all because we have no permanent center of gravity, or will, of our own. An example is war, which Gurdjieff says begins with universal tensions that could be transformed into something harmless by conscious acts of what he calls "Conscious Labors," and "Intentional Suffering," discussed later. (Gurdjieff, 1950). Instead, because we are asleep and "slaves" to our own habits and many I's, we cannot make the necessary efforts to sacrifice even small things. From Gurdjieff's perspective, the

tensions accumulate until they dominate mankind, creating the hysteria which manifests as mutual destruction. (ibid.).

The point of fragmentation, as I see it, is that the many "I's" (or many personalities) behave mechanically, which means that they depend on external circumstances and keep man a machine. Our many personalities depend on habitual identification with a stressor.

Gurdjieff offers the analogy of a house full of servants who do not have a master to look after them. The servants, the many I's, do first one thing and then another, with each doing whatever they want, and none doing his or her own work. The house is in a state of chaos because all the servants are trying to do someone else's work, which they are incompetent to do. When the master (the "I" enters), it puts each servant to work, in their own area, and the house is restored to order. This analogy illustrates the need for a master within, a permanent "I" to restore unity. The other side of man's fragmentation is his *potential for unity*, a permanent and stable "I." To obtain a permanent state of inner unity, a permanent "I," a process of inner work is required. A permanent "I" cannot be formed accidentally. From this perspective, the "I" is a hypothetical permanent master within, unlike the many "I's." In this regard, Ouspensky suggests that "our chief enemy is the word 'I,' [and that]. . .we have really no right to use it in ordinary conditions" (Ouspensky, 1971, p. 176).

<u>The Psychological Condition of Ordinary Man: Lying, Imagination, Negative Emotions, and Habitual Talking</u>

Gurdjieff postulates that it is necessary to know all of oneself, and that nothing can happen for a man who does not know himself. In addition to identification and inner considering (addressed above), Ouspensky describes

four negative and habitual features common to all sleeping humankind: lying, imagination, expression of negative emotions, and unrestricted talking.

"Lying," Ouspensky concludes (quoting Gurdjieff here and following) "is unavoidable in mechanical life. . .[lying] means speaking *about things one does not know, and even cannot know, as though one knows and can know* " (1951, p. 41). However, Ouspensky adds that "lies are created by 'buffers'. . .In order to destroy the lies in oneself as well as the lies told unconsciously to others, 'buffers' must be destroyed" (1972, p. 155). Ouspensky refers to buffers as an "appliance by means of which a man can always be in the right. 'Buffers' help a man not to feel his conscience" (1972, p. 155). Buffers keep us from seeing our inner contradictions. They prevent us from seeing the truth about ourselves and other things and diminish the shock of the truth. Buffers begin to disappear when one transcends the level of sleeping consciousness, and we begin to awaken to conscience. It is noted that everyone has their own unique set of buffers to hide their chief weakness and make things seem safe. Buffers take the form of a strong conviction. (Ibid.).

The second dangerous feature in mankind is "imagination." Ouspensky says that imagination is lying to oneself. "Man starts to imagine something in order to please himself, and very soon he begins to believe what he imagines, or at least some of it" (1951, p. 42). Imagination can take the form of daydreaming. The negative consequence is that it is a habitual mental activity "not directed towards a definite aim" (Ouspensky, 1950, p. 111). If one's aim is to awaken and observe oneself, imagination takes his attention and "he forgets about observation" (Ibid.). We imagine something to please ourselves, soon believing it. "Imagination is a destructive faculty. . .[and] always carries him

away from his more conscious decisions" (Ouspensky, 1951, p. 42). Contrary to what most people believe, "imagination is quite artificial, and quite undeserving of meaning in the sense of *creativity*" (Ibid.).

A third dangerous characteristic is "the expression of negative emotions." Ouspensky points out that the term "negative emotions" means "all emotions of violence or depression: self-pity, anger, suspicion, fear, annoyance, boredom, mistrust, jealousy and so on. Ordinarily, one accepts this expression of negative emotions as quite natural and even necessary" (1951, p. 42); but from the Gurdjieffian perspective, humankind has "a right *not* to be negative, but *no right* to be negative" (Ibid.). In relation to the mechanical manifestations of negative emotions "it is not enough to observe them, it is necessary to resist them, because without resisting them one cannot observe them" (Ibid.). This is obviously contrary to much popular therapy.

"Habitual and unrestricted talking" is another mechanical manifestation of sleeping man, which Ouspensky says "must be not only observed, but resisted as much as possible. With unrestricted talking one cannot observe anything, and all the results of a man's observations will immediately evaporate in talking" (1951, p. 43).

In concluding this section on the psychological condition of ordinary man, reference is made to Ouspensky's point regarding the difficulty of work on transformation. It is possible, he says, that one can "think, feel, act, speak, work *without being conscious of it* " (Ouspensky, 1972, p. 116); and that one can make the mistake of "thinking that you *always have consciousness*. . .in reality consciousness is a property which is continually changing. . .It is necessary to distinguish consciousness from the *possibility of consciousness* " (Ouspensky,

1972, p. 117). From this perspective, work on transformation begins by "observing in yourself the appearance or disappearance of consciousness. . . separated by long intervals of completely unconscious mechanical working of the machine" (Ouspensky, 1972, p. 116).

Psychological Summary

The problems of society, according to Gurdjieff, are the problems resulting from the condition of man's being, at the individual level. According to Gurdjieff, responsibility for the condition of our being is ultimately our own. The fundamental, radical solution to the problems of society then, is to change our being. This is the work of transformation.

The relevance of this study, regarding the psychological conditions of ordinary man, to stress and burnout is that in the ordinary state of sleeping consciousness, one is set in motion only by external influences. As I see it, this means that at the level of sleeping consciousness one interprets or perceives stressors from habitual and reactionary viewpoints. Further, in a state of sleep, one falls prey to one's mechanical and negative characteristics and identifies with one's illusions of the stressor. Hence, one is unable to separate oneself from the stimuli--and act with freedom.

In this examination of the negative characteristics of ordinary man, we have seen that a change of being is required for psychological transformation. It is this change of being that my Theory of Balance contends satisfies the psyche's need for psychological balance. However, the Theory of Balance does not stop here. It suggests that beyond the psyche's psychological needs for ego balance, there is yet another level of the human organism requiring balance: the spiritual realm. By activation of spiritual meaning and purpose, the

theory proposes that psychological needs take on a spiritual meaning and transcend self-centeredness. Gurdjieff's theory and practice I believe offers this possibility.

The following section summarizes Gurdjieff's cosmology, which offers man a framework for understanding the spiritual purpose of his existence. From this point of view, psychological transformation integrates with a spiritual cosmology and then takes on a spiritual aim.

An Alternative Cosmology: The Purpose of Human Existence

The Doctrine of Reciprocal Maintenance

My second concern, in regard to the literature reviewed on the resolution of stress and burnout, is the writers' disregard for human purpose beyond self-centered consciousness. I believe the significance of Gurdjieff's cosmology is that it proposes a spiritual meaning and purpose for human existence. This means to me that an individual's transformation has broader import than for his or her own egoistic aims alone.

Gurdjieff's cosmology addresses the purpose of human existence through what he calls the"Laws of World Maintenance and World Creation," (or as Bennett describes it, the "Doctrine of Reciprocal Maintenance"). In my opinion, this is a profound and important study. I see Gurdjieff's Doctrine of Reciprocal Maintenance* as the key to understand his great question: "What is the sense and significance of life on earth, in particular human life?" Gurdjieff spent his life searching for an answer to this question. His cosmology is devoted to presenting the answers he found. It offers a new world view, linking

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* See Appendix C for further explanation.

the psychology of man's possible evolution, with participation in a reciprocally maintaining process which balances all life. This doctrine, which Gurdjieff called the "Trogoautoegocratic Process," holds that "everything that exists in the universe depends on other things for its maintenance and must in its turn maintain the existence of others" (Bennett, 1974, p. 6). The link of Gurdjieff's psychology with his cosmology is that in order to participate in this reciprocal-maintaining process, it is necessary for one to move from a sleeping state of consciousness--because at this level man can do nothing but react, identify, and see himself and the world upside down.

I see Gurdjieff's view of reciprocal maintenance as extraordinarily significant to the present study and the Theory of Balance, because it proposes purposes that transcend ego-centeredness, and it addresses the spiritual and the cosmic needs of humankind. I believe it is crucial, on an ecological level, to recognize the reciprocal principle, because we are recklessly destroying life on this planet. The principle has social significance, because when groups of people are working together with a reciprocal attitude toward life then consideration for others grows. This means that a vital, new world community can be formed by those who put themselves in the place of others.

The Theory of Reciprocal Maintenance

The Doctrine of Reciprocal Maintenance, according to Gurdjieff, holds that human life is required to produce something for the harmony of the universe. This something is energy, generated by conscious inner work. Gurdjieff contends that "man is not intended to live for egoistic purposes, that he has obligations to fulfill. . .that he must respect his fellow men and accept some

kind of social discipline" (Bennett, p. 12). Bennett describes the problem by saying:

> Modern man has invented a new reason, that is: self-interest. We shall live in a certain way because it is more satisfying. . .the religion of self-interest is the newest of all. It rejects any other motive for right living except self-interest. . .we are already seeing the tragical consequences (Ibid., p. 14).

Gurdjieff's view is that human experience releases energies. How we live determines the quality of energy we produce. Gurdjieff holds that certain energies are "required for the orderly evolution of this solar system. . .we have to make our contribution" (Ibid., p. 18). From this point of view, man's existence creates a debt of energies, which must be paid individually. A debt is owed to Great Nature (Gurdjieff's term), as payment for its own sacrifice of the energies and substance which enables each man personally to occupy a life on the planet. Gurdjieff holds that this debt must be paid in kind: through man's own sacrifice of self. In nature, this interchange of substances in payment of being-debt is the universal characteristic of natural life: everything eats the being of others; and is, in its turn, itself eaten, sacrificing its self for others. (Ibid.). The sacrifice is not only physical, but involves the creation of emotional and mental energies as well.

According to Gurdjieff's world view, ordinary man is in a kind of debtor's prison: his suffering creates the energies which pay off his debt to Great Nature. The *quality* of his suffering determines how much is paid, and how quickly. To sacrifice oneself entirely is to cancel the debt. When this is done, one is free to inhabit the being and consciousness of *cosmic* individuality. To resist or avoid the suffering of self-sacrifice, in little or large things, according to Gurdjieff, is to

force Great Nature to contrive to get its suffering in any way possible. Misfortune--whether personal or collective, natural or man-made, through war or accident, famine or disease--is a function of man's reticence to give himself up to self-sacrifice, which balances the energy scales of the Trogoautoegocratic Process. (Ibid.).

Conscious Labor and Intentional Suffering

The questions now are "*How* does one sacrifice oneself?" and "*How* does one fulfill one's obligation?" The answer is at once very simple and very complex. The "how" Gurdjieff calls "conscious labor" and "intentional suffering."*

Conscious labor and intentional suffering, as service, means to set aside one's own ego gratification for the sake of others. Taken to its logical conclusion, it is to sacrifice one's being knowingly and completely for the good of others. **"Intentional suffering is accepting the consequences of actions one undertakes for the benefit of others"** (Bennett, 1974, p. 29). It is to take on a task fully aware that it may be unpleasant, or it will cause one difficulties, in order to help someone else. Intentional suffering in short means "one accepts the consequences of one's actions, knowing that this will include painful experiences" (Ibid.). Conscious Labor and Intentional Suffering, Gurdjieff says are "the realization of which alone enables a being to become aware of genuine reality" (1950, p. 104).

Gurdjieff's idea of conscious labor refers to what we might call "service." But the kind of service he speaks of is concerned with our obligation to serve the future through conscious sacrifice of the lower nature's desires: "to prepare

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* See Appendix C for reference to the distinction between intentional suffering and voluntary suffering.

a better future for mankind we must learn to make present sacrifices for the sake of the future" (Bennett, 1974, p. 21). This act is called *conscious* labor because it is necessary to know what must be done. "It is an exceedingly difficult thing to serve the future rightly. Many people want to do good for the future but they do not know what is needed. They do not know how to sow the seeds that will make a better future" (Ibid., p. 22).

Change of Perception Required

To know what is needed to serve the future harmoniously, Bennett points out, requires a change of perception. It is not sufficient merely to have foolish good will, to serve, and to suffer. Instead it is necessary "to have new kinds of perceptions, a new understanding of other people, otherwise we are liable to blunder. With the best of intentions we can do harm and not good to other people, sow evil and not good seeds for the future" (Ibid.) Thus, the first obligation is to understand human life better. This begins with an understanding of what purpose human life serves. Bennett notes that Gurdjieff's teaching is concerned with the study and understanding of man because he has obligations to fulfill. Bennett says that "This is the notion of the **transformation** of man" (Ibid., p. 23). The social relevance is that through transformation perceptions are changed which enables "people [to] come together. In the absence of this, [transformation] people are separated" (Ibid.). In this regard, Bennett further says:

> Our present life suffers terribly from isolation and loneliness. There is the disintegration of family life which is one of the symptoms. But in general it is one of the sad features of our great cities that there is so much less understanding and connection between people than in the past. Our great organizations have

> become so impersonal that the very core of human existence is dropping away. That core is the sense of the **unity of mankind.**
>
> We have to move towards this unity not as it was understood in the past, but in new ways. There will be changes. Something will emerge. . .in the form of new perceptions, the ability for people to communicate without words and without outward signs, through a deeper understanding and perception of one another. . .**Group consciousness**. . .in some way or other we have to get beyond our isolated and separated individualities, to the awareness of the connection between us (Bennett, 1974, p. 23).

Bennett points to the need for new kinds of perception to be activated which will restore the sacred qualities, like conscience, to their true significance. (Ibid.). However, he points out that as new perceptions begin to emerge between people, we have to be careful not to take them in old ways. "Group consciousness comes through the transformation of energies that are required from man and will make us very much more effective in the fulfillment of our obligations" (Ibid., p. 24). From Bennett's perspective conscious participation in the process of reciprocal maintenance will be more effective through group consciousness. But he specifies that the most important part is the "development of a new consciousness within ourselves. . .to see directly what the purpose of our life is, how everything is connected, how life is not separated from life, how it must be served, and how the fulfillment of our own destiny comes in doing that" (Ibid.). Bennett points out that Gurdjieff suggests, as an alternative to egoistic modes of existence, it is necessary for "man to see things as they really are. We have an instrument that enables us to see the truth, not indirectly through what other people have taught us but by a direct perception. This instrument of direct perception he calls. . .'conscience' " (Bennett, 1974, p. 15). As noted in our study of consciousness, this requires that man move from

from his habitual state of sleeping consciousness to the level of objective consciousness. It is only in this state of consciousness that one can know conscience. It is "time for man to see what our lives are for, what is the sense and significance of our existence' "(Ibid., p. 15). I believe the point is that the human race as a whole must pass beyond our dependence on what others tell us and come to see for ourselves, through our own direct perceptions.

We, as human beings, are "an integral part of the life of this earth and we cannot isolate ourselves from it" (Ibid.). Our debt to life must be paid by more than just simply returning our carcass to the earth from which it came. The reason that conscious labor and intentional suffering requires a change of perception is that we need conscience to be able to enter into other's experience. For this we need to be in a level of consciousness that transcends illusion and sleep.

Current World Needs

Gurdjieff's theoretical cosmology offers practical wisdom for modern-day problems. Practicing Gurdjieff's Doctrine of Reciprocal Maintenance, in my opinion, is what is needed at this time to reverse the destruction of life on our planet. As a result of our lack of being--reflected in the egoistic attitude that immediate gratification is the only purpose of human existence--we are, by default, serving the destructive forces. In our self-centered omnipotence and greed, I believe we are failing to serve life. By this I mean that our relationships with each other and the planet are destructive. For example: we impose stressful situations on others, we allow destruction through war; and we do not have a sufficient regard for the life of the planet, as seen in the frequency of ecological disasters. In response to current world needs, Gurdjieff's "Laws of

World Maintenance and World Creation" offers a paradigm for attitudes and values needed to avoid the destruction of life.

Summary of Cosmology

From the point of view of Gurdjieff's cosmology, we have seen that Reciprocal Maintenance, through conscious labors and intentional suffering, is the answer to Gurdjieff's question--"What is the sense and significance of life on earth, in particular, human life?" This means that conscious individuals are required to generate "the spiritual energies needed to neutralize the destructive forces" (Ibid.). This frame of reference suggests that our human responsibility is to become conscious individuals, in order to participate in genuinely creative acts. This means through conscious actions of conscious labor and intentional suffering, one releases the kind of psychic and spiritual energies required for harmonious evolution of life on this planet. This frame of reference regarding human purpose informs my Theory of Balance, because it is by conscious labor and intentional suffering that one satisfies the inherent spiritual needs for meaning and purpose, beyond the psyche's need for ego fulfillment. In my view, this not only has individual but social significance.

The work of transformation of Being begins with active attention but progresses to self-sacrifice of one's lower nature, ultimately for the benefit of others. This means that one earns freedom from unintentional suffering. The irony here is that one must suffer intentionally, to escape unintentional suffering.

This frame of reference provides a different perspective, from those summarized earlier, on the nature of stress and burnout. This alternative approach suggests that stress and burnout are a function of sleeping consciousness, particularly identification and inner considering. We can now

interpret identification and inner considering themselves as two forms of Great Nature's mechanism for generating the subtle energies required to balance the general flow of "cosmic substances." Hence, it could be said that stress can be seen as Great Nature driving out the energies required to pay men's debts. The specific environmental contexts of stress--the individual stressors--can be seen as Great Nature's chosen mechanisms of the moment. This means that if one's aim is to participate in a reciprocal maintaining process, one must awaken and transcend negative conditions of sleep for the purpose of serving a harmonious world. For example, one must transcend habitual reactions to stressors and negative relationships with others, resulting from one's identification and inner considering.

Teachers stand at a pivotal spot in our society. It is by a teacher that a student is, or is not, guided in the attitudes conducive to spiritual inner growth, i.e. as expressed by the ideas in this frame of reference. However, as we have seen in this study, an individual must transcend his or her own sleep in order to function at a level beyond reaction and illusion. Individuals, conscious or asleep, make up societies. Through conscious individuals the social and educational implications are a more harmonious social, or school, environment --where right relationships are formed and concern for harmonious evolution of life is activated. In regard to stress and burnout, a teacher who is in a state of sleeping consciousness is at the mercy of external stimulation. If they can awaken, and separate from the negative interpretation, then there is a possibility for transcending the stressor. Through self-observation a teacher can see his or her habitual reaction to stressors, which describe a lack of control of his or her inner state--at the mercy of external circumstances.

The implications this frame of reference has for attitudes in our schools are that when one is awake one "can do;" when one is asleep all one can do is react. Hence, by waking up and bringing to the forefront an acknowledgment that there is a purpose for human existence, beyond self-centeredness, one changes attitudes in the educational system and in the lives of students. The result is a greater concern for the unity of life.

The point this frame of reference makes is that society requires conscious individuals to change the destructive attitudes and manifestations of sleeping people. The social relevance is that through individuals' spiritual transformation perceptions are changed, which have harmonious consequences for the society as a whole. This enables people to come together. But in the absence of spiritual transformation, people are separated.

Conclusion:
Stress and Burnout from an Alternative and Expanded Frame of Reference, and the Theory of Balance

The expanded frame of reference, based on Gurdjieff's psychology and cosmology, offers a broad context in which to understand the negative and sleeping conditions of ordinary human existence. And it offers one view of spiritual meaning and purpose.

We have seen a significant emphasis placed in the literature reviewed on psychological resolution for stress, particularly through psychoanalysis as a means to "know-thyself." This psychological perspective offers a resolution that is activated at the level of subjective reality, thus perpetuating illusion. The frame of reference proposes that this is a problem of level of consciousness. Thought at the level of ego consciousness is subject to illusions and thus the

"unconscious" material is interpreted in a subjective manner. Gurdjieff posits objective levels of consciousness, and his method enables impartial self-observation. The significance is that self-observations is not interpretation. Self-observation reveals objective knowledge of who and what one is in the moment, instead of illusions of who one "thinks," or would like to think, one is. If one's intention is to know oneself, then subjective knowledge from psychoanalysis most likely will not give one the true knowledge one seeks.

This frame of reference does not dismiss the usefulness of psychological integration, which as my Theory of Balance points out, is a necessary step for fulfilling the psyche's psychological needs. The point is that if a methodology stops here, there is no possible evolution of consciousness beyond the subjective and illusionary state of the ego: spiritual meaning and purpose are disregarded. Gurdjieff proposes methods that offer man the potential to transcend ego consciousness, and with inner work reach an objective state of consciousness--for the purpose of participation in a spiritual evolution of man and his universe.

In regard to the concepts of perception and interpretation, this frame of reference concludes that interpreting and perceiving are conditions of consciousness. If one perceives and interprets a stressor from a state of sleeping consciousness, the perception is subjugated to a subjective and illusory interpretation.

The frame of reference concludes that the cosmological significance of Gurdjieff's "Doctrine of Reciprocal Maintenance" is an answer to the question of human existence. The relationship this plays to our study is that it takes psychological change to a spiritual level. For example, when one wakes up to

their identification and habitual reactions to and perceptions of a stressor, in that moment they have the opportunity to consciously sacrifice their lower nature and consciously participate in serving the purpose of their existence--through conscious labor and intentional suffering, .

From Gurdjieff's perspective, stress and burnout take on different shades of meaning than we have seen in the literature reviewed. Thus, it is difficult to interpret problematic stress as being anything other than a consequence of sleeping consciousness. From this line of thought, if we consider the social causes of stress for teachers in the schools, we see that the problems before us are the result of the sleeping consciousness of individuals who make up the society and the school community. Even if specific social situations are changed--i.e. the classrooms become less crowded, the teachers are given less paperwork, etc.--the basic mechanical mode of existence, a sleeping level of consciousness, will still produce distress and negative environments. The point this frame of reference makes is that to change one's level of being, and that of society, is to transcend problematic stress. But to change one's level of being requires efforts that are associated with spiritual transformation. The being of a conscious person is directed toward purposes that are different from those of a sleeping person.

One might ask, what hope does education have in the face of the likelihood that most people are not concerned with change of being? This is an important question. It might appear insignificant for only a handful of people to awaken. However, Bennett says that if there were only two hundred conscious people residing in the world at any one time, then catastrophe could be averted.

(Bennett, 1974, p. 46). The point here is that the negative consequences of mass sleep can be averted by conscious people.

A spiritual attitude toward life has a special impact on children. I have seen children being educated in communities where there was concern for the harmonious evolution of life. The children, years later, had an element of service and respect for life that otherwise I have not seen so predominant.

This frame of reference has described the resolution of waking up and self-observation for habitual motivation to external stimuli, a stressor in this instance. This means that if all one's energy is habitually directed outward at a stressor--through identification, negative emotions, inner considering, etc.--then sooner or later one's "energy, strength, and resources" will be depleted. If this continues, the natural result of energy depletion can lead to dysfunctional behavior and dehumanizing and impersonal relationships with others. From the point of view of this frame of reference, we can conclude that burnout descriptions of dysfunction and dehumanization come from a condition of sleeping consciousness. Gurdjieff's psychology of the human condition addresses negative and harmful features of sleeping man, which burnout behavior describes. The significance of Gurdjieff's point of view is that people, teachers in this instance, have the potential to wake up and transform their ordinary condition. For example, the method of self-observation offers a way out of identification, with one's self pity and reactions to external stimuli, and renewal for depleted energy.

Another conclusion relevant for teachers is that at the level of objective consciousness, one is able to have the kind of relationships with others that transcend depersonalized and dehumanized modes of "inner considering."

The effects of a teacher's dehumanization and depersonalization are particularly problematic for their students. These negative and harmful conditions, brought on by sleeping consciousness, lead to destructive relationships, and are not necessary. In order to transcend this condition, a teacher must make his or her own efforts. Even if there was less paper work, better working conditions, etc., a sleeping person will always find something to react to and take his or her attention away from waking up.

Gurdjieff's cosmology has relevance in regard to relationships with others. When people wake up and realize there is a spiritual purpose for human life beyond self interest and sleeping destruction, then the negative conditions of society, hence public schools, will change. This frame of reference concludes that when people are consciously working together, their relationships with others, the society, the environment, and the universe are based on making the future more harmonious. Through conscious labors and intentional suffering, negative, stressful, and destructive environments are transformed.

This frame of reference has offered examples how a teacher may avoid succumbing to stress and burnout. It has pointed out how problematic stress and burnout depend on sleeping consciousness. When one resides in a sleeping state of consciousness, one is a machine--not belonging to one's self or one's world. Hence, the automaton habitually reacts to the external, the stressor. As a machine, a teacher is incapable of consciously separating from the stressor. The result is that they are locked into identification. By awakening, one (a teacher in this instance) can remember oneself and in that moment

observe one's identification with the stressor, transcend illusions, and observe and verify the characteristics of one's condition.

This frame of reference concludes that phenomena have different meanings for a conscious man than the meanings a sleeping man associates with the same things. This truth can be seen in the lives of all who have great being, and who have sacrificed their lower nature in "service." Gandhi, for example, used poverty to gain political strength for service, whereas most people would see poverty as a sign of weakness. Jesus accepted humiliation as a means of glorification, of overcoming his human ego nature. These examples are somewhat extreme; however, the reader is cautioned not to believe that work on being and service requires one to be already great, or to be assassinated, or crucified. Yet, the pattern of *sacrifice of the lower nature for higher purposes* is the key to work on being. This is Gurdjieff's cosmology, which addresses meaning and purpose for sacrificing the lower nature.

The primary idea set forth in this chapter, regarding Gurdjieff's psychological study of the human condition, is that consciousness is a measure of being--but it is not an end in and of itself. To reside in a higher state of consciousness means that one has the possibility to transform one's level of sleep for purposes that satisfy the spiritual purpose of their existence instead of self satisfaction. To be in this state of consciousness means belonging to one's self and to one's world. When one is identified and motivated mechanically by external conditions, one belongs to identification and not one's true self. When one participates in reciprocally maintaining a harmonious future, there is a sense of belong to one's world, because they are consciously interacting with it.

Hence, one cannot belong to anything but what one is identifying with, when one is asleep.

If we superimpose Gurdjieff's cosmology on his psychology, this chapter concludes that he provides answers for psychological change that allow one to participate in spiritual transformation, for the purpose of human existence--a meaning and purpose for awakening to a higher level of consciousness.

In conclusion, this expanded frame of reference offers insight into an alternative to problematic stress and burnout--which describes a pervasive sense of unbelonging, to one's self and one's world. The frame of reference has pointed out the role that consciousness plays in interpretation and perception of stressors. It has pointed out what it might mean to wake up from one's sleep and transcend one's ordinary and harmful conditions. Its cosmology has offered a spiritual meaning and purpose for psychological change, that transcends ego centered consciousness.

Practical Considerations: Implications for Implementation

I cannot say the solution for stress is the "work," as described above. I can say, however, that the "work" is about the broader issues of the transformation of man/woman, and the regeneration of Being, Consciousness, and Presence in humankind; which I believe offers the possibility for transcending stress and burnout.

Gurdjieff's work, as both Bennett and Ouspensky describe, is primarily the work of destroying illusions in humankind--regarding who we are, and what our purpose is. Admittedly, as Ouspensky (1972) points out, it takes a particular kind of person to entertain the idea that their identity is an illusion. People who

have already noticed inconsistencies in the patterns of life are more likely to have an open mind. The approach presented here is not necessarily for teachers, but I believe it is particularly significant for teachers: They are in a position to make a difference in the lives of their students, hence future generations. In short, the theory and practice of this frame of reference is offered for all those who are interested in searching for solutions to the problems of reality. Public schools reflect the attitude and quality of our larger society, in that people behave on the "sleeping" egocentric level of consciousness. Stress and burnout are only symptoms of the consequence of people who live on the sleeping egocentric level, without a more spiritually meaningful frame of reference. My point is that were the educational community to be more concerned about what it <u>means</u> to be a human being, more conscious themselves, and were more active toward developing the seeds of objectivity in their students, then clearly we would have an important ally against the forces of illusion.

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