

# The Seven Rays: Relevance and Application in Therapy

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It is my belief that esoteric psychology, especially the ray techniques in therapy, is definitely the psychology of the future as therapists will be more and more dealing with clients who are conscious or spiritually aware. In consequence, there will need to be therapies to address the innumerable dilemmas that are part and parcel of the spiritual path itself, and perhaps new forms through which therapist and client can and will relate to each other.

One of the things that I have had to come to terms with over the years is the fact that in the context of the counseling situation (as opposed to lecturing where I am openly discussing the subject) it is generally inappropriate to address the subject of the rays at all. First, in most cases clients have no knowledge of the subject, or know that I have any knowledge of it; if they do know of it, they have no awareness that I am using it. Second, having their own set of issues and problems, they have no interest in being lectured on a subject so abstruse that most of us who know about it have difficulty with its complexities at times. Even worse, few people wish to be told that their lives would really work better if they could convert their 6th ray astrals to 2nd!

The question then becomes how this study is used. The answer depends in large part on:

- a) the type of therapy being employed;
- b) the ability of the therapist to restructure or re-orient his or her current modality to include the application of esoteric psychology;
- c) the degree of consciousness of the therapist, especially as regards his or her own working knowledge of metaphysical laws and principles, for while concrete study is a large part of learning about the rays, practically speaking, hunches, guesswork, and intuitive

flashes may be an even larger part.

In attempting to further elucidate how the rays can be used in the context of therapy and counseling, I will be basing my comments on the nature of my own work.

I mentioned earlier *new forms* through which the therapist and client might relate to each other. I have found in developing my own style over the years (no doubt conditioned by my ray apparatus) that there appears to be a weaving together of three distinctive yet unified roles: therapist, counselor, and teacher. Each of these seems to call forth three different types of energy, subtle perhaps, yet I feel acutely aware of them inside myself.

First and foremost, the work is highly interactive, process oriented and experientially based. It seems to blend the skills of psychotherapy (client-centered and humanistically oriented) with all the accumulated knowledge of metaphysics and that aspect of teaching which is the wisdom to know what is relevant to use and when.

I have many clients who are *consciously treading* the path and open to the subtleties of the esoteric perspective. I have others who know nothing of metaphysics and would be frankly horrified (initially anyway) to find themselves talking about rays, re-birth, monads, etc. I am extremely cautious of my language with these clients and work delicately to simply create an atmosphere of trust and bonding. Initially, I stay with phrases like: "What's your 'sense' or 'feeling' about that?", so that the idea of sensing into a situation (leading ultimately to development of intuition) becomes commonplace in time. At first, I use straight forward words and ideas to get the client to acknowledge that there is a

place that "knows" and that the *knowing place* somehow feels different from the chatter and babble of the *other place* (personality response).

Sometimes the work simply involves listening, being present, receiving, mirroring back what they have said, without adding anything of my own. Other times the "teacher" aspect is called forward, and where relevant (especially in the case of clients and students who are spiritually aware will, for example, verbally relate their problems or predicaments to specific universal Laws and Principles (or the breaking of them or to right use of energy, or to energy as it relates to the centers, etc.

I often teach clients to meditate or focus <sup>1</sup> and in the case of non-spiritually oriented people, these methods start out as simply tools for stress reduction NOT to achieve lofty or transcendent states of consciousness. (Whether this happens in time is another matter.)

Finally, there is the aspect of "homework." At the end of each session the client is given homework that varies in nature and scope (and according to his or her ray type) from study materials to inner or reflective work. The study aspect includes books and articles, materials that I have written, and excerpts which I have compiled from articles or books, etc. The reflective work may include journal writing and pondering or considering certain questions, affirmations, qualities, goals, etc. For certain types the work will be on the line of visualization, or practice in sensing/intuiting some new insight they have come upon, to deepen their understanding and ability to *remember to remember*. For others, a more concrete, practical line is appropriate.

I find that home practice has two main values: it provides a continuity from session to session; and it develops what esoteric students call "training", i.e. teaching the client to take responsibility for thinking, discriminating, evoking (soul energy), and most importantly to practice being conscious (even if they aren't yet).

For my part, I too, do reflective homework on the client or student: Why is the client coming to sessions in the first place? Who is this person really? What are the individual's

goals, priorities, current and long-range focuses? (this usually includes consideration of their point of spiritual development and awareness) and of course, What are their rays?

It is during these reflective periods that I often come upon insights and intuitive directions that our work together should be taking. These might not occur during actual sessions because diadic energy interaction is so entirely different from that of the singular reflective process. It is this aspect then, of both of us actively considering, actively taking responsibility for the work at hand that makes the sessions so alive and vitally interactive.

### Considering the Rays

Since there are number of "first" considerations, the following can be used in any order:

1. What are the client's rays?
2. Which ones are predominant? (Mental, Emotional, Physical, Personality or Soul)
3. Of the soul and personality ray, which is predominant?

Whether the soul or the personality ray is dominant varies according to the client's degree of development, and in some cases is immediately clear. However, differentiating between the ray of the soul and the ray of the personality can be a real conundrum, for people entering therapy are seldom functioning in their most integrated or "enlightened" states. Identification with personality life is very potent, and until some degree of equanimity is attained, it can be difficult and puzzling to sort out the differences between who the client is and who he thinks he is in the moment.

In the case of the highly evolved individual, however, who is functioning under the influence of the soul ray and whose personality life is well integrated, the question becomes: Is this a soul crisis or a personality crisis? While the two are ultimately related there is a difference and the distinction needs

to be made. A soul crisis is often prompted by a deep inner urge to take steps or make major life changes that will at the appearance level cause upheaval and disruption, especially to the personality life. If, during the course of therapy, the client can be guided experientially into sitting with, sensing, being with what these changes might feel like, the outcome (and this is the major distinction of a soul crisis) will feel forward moving, life enhancing, and provide opportunities for greater service. It is the personality that experiences the scared, uneasy or queasy feelings. The personality crisis is marked by reactivity to events and people and is often exacerbated by unwillingness to respond to the soul's direction and influence.

There are times, especially when the client is talking, expressing feelings (or not expressing feelings) or perhaps reacting to something, when I am keenly aware of which rays are operating and predominant (I make a quiet notation to myself). Other times a particular ray is clearly in evidence, but I am unable in the moment to ascribe it to a particular vehicle--soul, mind, or personality--in which case I make a mental note to myself, e.g. "Now that's a first ray comment if I ever heard one!" and let it pass until a hunch or intuition comes through at a later date.

Although I gain insight as the sessions progress, it is usually in the first session that the rays are most evident. This is due, in part, to the fact that initial impressions are usually fresh, new, and uncolored by previous data. Also, it is generally in the first session that the client tells the whole story: why she or he is there; what she hopes to accomplish; what the obstacles seem to be, etc. It is therefore relatively simple during this period to observe (in terms of ray perspective) how the story is being told: style, manner of presentation, ability (or lack thereof) to communicate and express. At this time the therapist might also note where the emphasis is: On feelings? On content? On accuracy? On resistance or apathy to the issue at hand? This information will optimally reveal the client's rays, and will

minimally or generally indicate whether you are working with a 1,3,5,7 line or a 2,4,6 line.

What I find critical to know as early as possible (because it is on the "line" of my work) is:

1. How do they get what they know? (i.e., head type, heart type)
2. How do they go about processing themselves? (i.e., mentally, sensitively or a combination of both)
3. Do they receive visually? (color, images, symbols)
4. Or do they hear? (voices in the head)
5. When they have an experience of truth, where is it registered: (head center, heart center, solar plexus or some combination)

These facts are easily obtainable without ever mentioning chakras or anything else esoteric. If someone tells me they have an insight I simply ask (sometimes quite purposely off-handedly): "Oh, how can you tell when something is 'true' or, 'right'?" The answers, although varied, are generally expressed in the following manner: "Oh, I get this gut feeling!" (usually touching their stomach) or "It's like this light bulb going on in my head!" or "It's not anything I see or hear, there's just this warmth (perhaps pressing a palm over the heart) and when I feel that I always know it's 'true' or 'right'." The point to be emphasized here is that I have no investment whatever in how they process or on what energy line (1,3,5,7 or 2,4,6) they operate. All I need to know is WHAT IS so that I can tune in to their line of least resistance, in other words their natural way--or ray.

### **The Practitioner's Natural Way-Ray**

It is necessary (as well as profoundly interesting) to figure out how we as therapists go about adapting esoteric psychology, particularly the rays, to our own distinct styles and methods; to observe the processes we use--i.e. our own line of least resistance--to adapt this study to our work.

Speaking for myself, it gives me great joy

and satisfaction to "clothe" complicated esoteric information in simple, understandable, non-spiritual language, metaphors and analogies. I practice this regularly for the skill has provided me with innumerable opportunities to relate deeply to people who are either not aware or not interested in "all that weird stuff." Another practice that I have engaged in for many years is "trying on" the rays to see how they "fit": "What would it feel like to be a 2nd ray soul? ... How would I act ... BE? The same goes with Personality, Mental, Astral, Physical, and with each ray at every applicable level. The therapist who wishes to try this needs to imagine his or her own life circumstances, and ask: "How would this ray [substitute the various rays] condition my responses to this and that situation or person, etc."

Needless to say the above method is not suitable to every therapist's style--or ray type--hence the need to observe and determine what is suitable and what does fit one's own particular patterns and processes. The value of the above has to do with what I think of as "chameleon-like adaptability" (an excellent therapeutic tool, I find) to access and adapt at an energetic level to the client's energy pattern, while still maintaining one's own center-place. This type of resonating is clearly useful in and out of therapy. In fact, I've come to feel that disharmony among individuals (or groups) is often nothing more than the inability, rather than the unwillingness) to know-in-the-moment how to tune in to someone else's pitch or key. The task then (and by whatever methods) is to better attune to the client, in order to design processes, meditations, homework, etc. that synchronize with his or her natural rhythms, and on a deeper level to help individuals become more sensitively aware and attuned to who they already are.

### **Some Practical Applications**

While the following examples are generalized and often stereotypical, I have found that the traits, vices and virtues of each

ray, as Bailey describes them, accurate and true when generally applied. It is necessary to bear in mind that while a certain ray personality or mind may be under discussion, the whole picture of an individual is entirely dependent upon:

- a) the other conditioning rays in the chart;
- b) how they interact with each other;
- c) which of the five energies is predominant (Note: if it is the soul ray, that fact outweighs all other data, general or specific).

Further, it is possible to find two individuals with precisely the same rays, who will, due to cultural as well as astrological factors, manifest entirely differently. Another probable reason for this diversity in people on the same ray is that each ray has more than one name, hence more than one quality: Love/Wisdom; Harmony/Conflict; Order/Ritual. People on the same ray may manifest different "sides" of that ray. For example, a 7th ray personality may love law and order, but have no affinity whatever for ritual or ceremony. Similarly, some 4th ray types lean more toward harmony/beauty while others thrive on conflict and the dramatics that often precede major transformational breakthroughs and consequent balance or integration.

### **Client A:**

Let's assume that Client A (I will stay with the male pronoun for clarity of writing) is exhibiting some of the more negative aspects of a 3rd ray mind: scattered, overly busy, non-focused, and preoccupied with too many non-essentials. The work, over time, will be to gently point up or weave in some of the higher 3rd ray attributes: energy, efficiency, formulating clear plans of action, clear organized thinking, etc., ever keeping in mind that the ray data is still a backdrop to what the client came to therapy for in the first place. (It's unlikely to be a ray reading)

Understanding the rays in this context can be of real value. By knowing what Client A is,

you also know what he is not; for example: intensely practical, specific to a fault, concerned with using every moment wisely (5th ray).

The advantages of knowing this from a ray perspective are twofold:

1. It diffuses any urge to try to force the 3rd ray mind into 5th ray exactitude since he will likely, by his very nature, always have many eclectic interests in a wide variety of subjects, and possibly abhor the narrow, overly specific methods of the 5th ray type.
2. It allows the therapist to move toward helping the client integrate qualities that are already inherently present, even if latent or as yet undeveloped. The therapist may then assist Client A in trimming down some of his activities to a few of his choosing, keeping a journal, making lists, or writing creatively to help clarify the thinking process and to become more aware of the value of prioritizing.

The methods and techniques are not the concern here. This is entirely up to the discretion of the practitioner, based upon the type of therapy being employed. The major point is understanding the client's basic *modus vivendi* in order to help him be the best of what he already is by nature--or ray. (I am not here referring to a disciple consciously choosing the line of most resistance in order to accomplish specific inner work.)

#### **Client B:**

For Client B let us assume the general stereotype for the 4th ray personality, as it is not an uncommon type. This client enters the office upset, agitated and full of dramatics about the issues involved. Further, you note over time that this client not only seems to be in perpetual crisis but, appears to love being in this constant state of inner motion. Further, it seems that this client continually--even masterfully--continues to create new and more complex predicaments, sometimes after only

very brief periods of harmonic rest.

Since for a 4th ray personality or mind harmony THROUGH conflict is not only normal and natural but even productive, the therapist might be inclined to take this all quite in stride. If the therapy is ongoing, the therapist will watch the client through a series of "catastrophes", each ultimately being resolved into a new and higher level of integration and development, often producing major *gestalts* and transformational breakthroughs.

With this type, while it may be of value to try to stabilize or harmonize the conflicting energies (methods vary) or to discover how the client feels about having one crisis after another (some people quite thrive on it and experience a kind of "high" from the excitement--astral or otherwise), the therapist is less likely to be overly concerned by these constant energy fluctuations than he or she would be with, for example, a strongly oriented 5th ray type.

#### **Client C:**

If a 5th ray type, particularly with an abundance of other energies on the 1,3,5,7 line, comes into therapy highly agitated, under stress, and in deep crisis or conflict, there is, in my opinion, definite cause for concern and for more direct and immediate action than with the 4th ray type.

I have found generally that with certain types of highly cerebral individuals (especially the type that tends to focus on his or her subject to the exclusion of all else) there is a tendency toward depletion, exhaustion, and burn-out which occurs far more rapidly than with those on the 2,4,6 line. This type can, in time, crack under pressure, and in extremis can break down.

The work here is to decentralize the issues and to do whatever is necessary, by whatever methods, to realign the vehicles to some degree, bringing the client into a more stabilized "normal" condition. Sometimes this is accomplished by actually working on the problem or issue at hand. However, just as

frequently with this type, there exists a preceding step, which is to find some place of rest INNER OR OUTER, where the client can just BE for awhile. The problem is put "on hold" until a later time or session.

Interestingly, it seems that the 4th ray type will usually respond well to therapy or counseling while in the height of crisis, whereas the 5th ray type will frequently be unresponsive to anything except the sense of being loved, cared about, nurtured, etc., until a more relaxed state can be achieved.

There are many more examples of practical applications and uses of the rays in therapy. The above comments are intended to serve as a working model.

I will close this article with the following observations of a more general nature:

1. Although the ray techniques seem to be of inestimable value to those who study them, one does not have to know anything about the rays to be a good therapist or counselor. While traditional psychology and esoteric psychology can meet and blend (and hopefully in time they will), they are for the moment two different fields, with the emphasis on different aspects of the client. The rays therefore should be viewed as another tool or skill, not as an end.
2. Should one decide to embark upon this study (especially if one is already a successful practicing therapist or counselor) it is reasonable to think in terms of years, not weeks or months. It seems to take that long to integrate the material which is profound, often confusing and vast in scope. It is therefore not meant to be ingested in large doses, but rather to be assimilated over a period of time.
3. For me, the real learning process has been in constantly and watchfully balancing the aspects of knowing and feeling (or sensing). i.e. integrating concrete study with intuition, hunches, and 'playing-around-with.' The point is that despite one's so-called "natural line", this material seems to

require both the concrete and the intuitive. Nothing less seems to work.

4. Some key words to consider:

*Practice:* Creative visualization or some other similar process in order to get a "feel" for the rays.

*Application:* It is not always applicable or appropriate to use the ray techniques. There are times, for example, in an experiential process with a client in the context of therapy that the subject is so irrelevant that it doesn't even cross the mind.

*Integration:* It has to fit or be worked into the experience and training that the therapist already has.

On the whole, I have found that there are major advantages of using the ray techniques in a client-therapist relationship. They allow for a deeper attunement and understanding of the rhythm and functioning of the client as a five-fold being, especially if his or her rhythms are completely different from the therapist's own. They also allow the therapist to become more aware of the client's inherent capabilities and possibilities through an understanding of the term "line of least resistance." For the therapist, use of the ray techniques often results in major breakthroughs in terms of flexibility and adaptability, both personally and professionally.

### References

1. I use E. T. Gendlin's method of "focusing". See: Gendlin, E. T.: *Focusing*, Bantam Books, rev. ed., 1981.