

Overview of Reichian Therapy

Richard Hoff

Wilhelm Reich, an Austrian psychoanalyst, was born in 1897. After graduating from the University of Vienna, he spent six years (1922-1928) as clinical assistant to Sigmund Freud at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Polyclinic. By the late 1920s, Reich had broken with Freud, expounding controversial theories and doing pioneer work in relating neurosis to its physiological basis. It has become increasingly clear that Reich raised, sometimes decades in advance, many of the questions that concern us now.

In 1939 he settled in the U.S., where he began his work with orgone (life) energy. In 1954 he was arrested, ostensibly for selling orgone boxes, but more basically for the sexual tone of his work. He died in a Pennsylvania penitentiary in 1957, tired and bitter. A brilliant and emotional thinker, writer, and researcher, he is considered today the father of most body-oriented therapies. These include of course, Reichian therapy, which is presented here by Richard Hoff.

WILHELM REICH is the father of most present-day "body work," body-oriented therapies, and deep emotional therapies. His work, in turn, is really the natural and logical development of the work of his pioneering teacher, Sigmund Freud. However, Reich's penetrating genius and forthright courage led him into realms far beyond those explored by Freud, and brought him into sharp conflict with the psychoanalytic movement. I am referring here not to the later, more sensational "orgone" work, which lies beyond the scope of this article, but only to the therapeutic technique which Reich called "character-analytic vegetotherapy,"¹ which remains the core of all his later therapeutic work and is a complete and incredibly effective healing system in itself.

Whereas psychoanalysis is largely verbal and insight-oriented, Reich's system of therapy works directly with the body and the character structure, utilizing an ingenious array of powerful and original techniques to release repressed sexual-emotional energy through convulsive discharges. The ultimate aim of the therapy is to dissolve neurotic character structure and muscular armoring at the

deepest biological levels, to restore free, natural energy flow, and, finally, to establish "full orgasmic potency"—the ability to build up and release full energy at the moment of orgasm.

This concept of "full orgasmic potency" lies at the very heart of Reichian Therapy. Like Freud, Reich was convinced that the root cause of neurosis is repressed sexual energy. Our society is obviously anxious and horrified about sex like nothing else. This anti-sexual attitude descends on us like a pall from earliest childhood, crushing down on our bubbling, spontaneous flow of erotic energy. Babies are denied the warm, sensual suckling and cuddling they crave.² The blissful release of excretion becomes tainted with anxiety and disgust. Our crotches become "dirty" and "nasty," too awful to be seen in public. Sex is enshrouded in secrecy and obscenity, shame and guilt. We learn to fear and resist our own deepest natural urges. The effort of resisting such a massive push of primal survival energy involves an equally massive contraction of the entire organism. The resulting pain and frustration arouse intense feelings of sadness and rage, which must also be suppressed. This entails yet more contraction. The contraction grows more and more entrenched and automatic; it becomes our habitual way of being. We lost much of the spontaneity and aliveness of childhood. We become stiffer, duller, more "armored." This armoring, and the underlying negative emotions surrounding sex, are incompatible with the surging currents and ecstatic convulsions of orgasm. The natural *orgasm reflex* has become disrupted by chronic *orgasm anxiety*.

Reich found that full orgasm is characterized by an enormous build-up of energy followed by a reflexive release, consisting of involuntary, wavelike convulsions of the entire body musculature, sensations of "melting" and "streaming," a loss of normal ego-awareness, and, finally, a profound feeling of peace, relaxation, fulfillment, and grateful tenderness toward the partner. When release is incomplete because of chronic armoring and orgasm anxiety, the surplus energy remains damned up inside. This reservoir of pent-up sexual energy, or "sexual stasis," is the immediate source of energy for the neuroses. The en-

¹In German, "vegetative" refers to the primitive, involuntary, plasmatic level of biological functioning.

²Suckling is erotic for babies even to the point of "oral orgasm," and mothers may subconsciously fear this sensuality as well as the erotic stimulation they themselves naturally tend to feel through their nipples.

ergy simply has nowhere to go except into neurotic symptoms, such as anxiety, sadism, or compulsive behavior. Thus, neurotic defenses from the past block sexual release in the present, and the resulting sexual stasis supplies the driving power for the old neurotic patterns—which themselves originated from chronic sexual frustration—in an endless vicious circle.

Orgasm anxiety forms the basis of the general pleasure anxiety, fear of life, and particularly the fear of love, which is such an integral part of the prevailing human structure. Real love is more than a mental attitude of affection; it is a passionate emotion that involves powerful streamings of energy in the heart, the belly, the entire body. In an armored person such streamings arouse subconscious fears of passionate warmth, of sexual arousal, or “losing control.” In other words, the block against the immense explosion of orgasmic energy forms the *energetic basis* for a general block against all strong energy currents. In addition, the underlying rage and bitterness caused by the chronic sexual stasis poisons our natural feelings of love.

Reich believed that sexual stasis, because of its effect on the autonomic nervous system, is also the root cause of most disease. The autonomic nervous system is made up of two complementary systems, the *sympathetic* and the *parasympathetic*, which exert an opposing influence on every organ in the body. The sympathetic nervous system mobilizes the organism for emergency action—“fight or flight.” It stimulates secretion of adrenalin and is involved in combating any kind of stress or infection. The parasympathetic, on the other hand, is involved in relaxation and pleasure, such as digestion or sexual arousal. Generally speaking, the sympathetic goes with *contraction*, the parasympathetic with *expansion*, of the total organism. A healthy organism would normally oscillate between these two poles in accordance with changing circumstances. But the armored, orgasmically impotent organism is essentially in a chronic state of contraction. At the same time, the constant pressure of dammed-up energy acts as a continuous source of stress. Physiologically, this entails chronic activation of the sympathetic nervous system, or “chronic sympathetocotonia.”

Perusal of Table 1, which lists the various functions of the autonomic nervous system, reveals a remarkable correlation between the type of disease that affects a specific organ and the effect of sympathetic activation of that organ. For example, *cardiovascular hypertension* corresponds to the effect of the sympathetic nervous system on the blood vessels, which is to contract them. Similar correlations can be found for constipation, ulcers, emphysema, rheumatism, arthritis, and many other common diseases—indirectly, even cancer. These observations seem to be well-substantiated by the experiments of Hans Selye, whose “stress syndrome” theory of disease has become widely accepted medical doctrine. Even where a pathogen is definitely involved, the susceptibility of the organism depends on the general state of the constitution. My own experiences have led me to a strong suspicion that flu and the common cold are largely sublimated or “disguised” releases of repressed emotions.

Orgasm anxiety and sexual stasis, according to Reich, are also the root cause of the mass social neurosis which

now threatens our very survival as a species. War, racism, sexism, ruthless exploitation of one group by another, and fascism or dictatorship of all kinds—overt or covert—are all essentially based on *hatred*; and chronic sexual frustration is the primary source of hatred. This connection is particularly evident in the typically anti-sexual tone of racial bigotry, fascist torture techniques, and our common “cuss-words.” Authoritarian, antilife political regimes are not merely imposed on the masses by a powerful few: they actually arise out of and are based on the authoritarian, antilife attitudes of the masses, which in turn emerge from the typical authoritarian, sexually repressive family upbringing. This type of upbringing tends to produce a resigned, impotent character structure, lacking in genuine self-confidence and submissive to authority, but with strong underlying sadistic and rebellious impulses. People with this structure may long for freedom and independence, but are actually deeply afraid of it. One is reminded here of the common practice of castrating a bull or a stallion to make it docile, “one of the herd.” Such a character structure on a mass scale forms fertile soil for any sort of repressive, reactionary political movement, and constantly undermines the best efforts toward democracy and humanitarian reform.

Reich, then, saw neurosis not merely as isolated pockets of sickness in an otherwise healthy, “normal” society, but as a mass phenomenon, an “emotional plague” promulgated by the very structure of society. Neurosis is the norm. Similarly, a neurotic symptom is not an isolated defect in an otherwise healthy personality: the whole *character structure* is more or less neurotic. The symptom is only the most striking indication of the total underlying condition.

Increasingly Reich came to see the neurotic character structure as a *constellation of defenses against the free flow of sexual-emotional energy*. Accordingly, therapy meant identifying and dissolving these characterological resistances, step by step, so that the underlying emotions could emerge. Reich called this process “character analysis,” contrasting it with the usual psychoanalytic practice of *symptom analysis*, in which the individual contents of the patient’s unconscious were interpreted as soon as they arose, without due regard for the total characterological resistance. Symptom analysis usually had little emotional or therapeutic effect on the patient, but Reich found that careful and consistent character analysis led to powerful emotional release and more substantial cures.

By “character” Reich means the *how* of a person’s behavior, as distinguished from the *what*. *How* a person talks, for example—the quality of his voice, his intonations, his expression—is more significant than the mere content of what he says. “Words may lie, but the character never lies.” Similarly, such things as posture, carriage, gait, mannerisms, gestures, and facial expressions tend to have a set, habitual quality that makes a person uniquely recognizable to others, but of which he himself is largely unaware. The character analyst learns to feel the *expression* or emotional quality inherent in each of these traits and in the character as a whole. Based on his intuition, the analyst then proceeds to help the client become aware of his own character, primarily in a feeling or experimental way rather than merely intellectually. The analyst starts with the most

TABLE 1. ACTIONS OF THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM.*

Organ	Sympathetic action	Parasympathetic action
Musculature of iris	Inhibition of m.sphincter pupillae: <i>Dilation of pupils</i>	Stimulation of m.sphincter pupillae: <i>Narrowing of pupils</i>
Lachrymal glands	Inhibition of lachrymal glands: <i>"Dry eyes"</i>	Stimulation of lachrymal glands: <i>"Bright eyes"</i>
Salivary glands	Inhibition of salivary glands: <i>"Dry mouth"</i>	Stimulation of salivary glands: <i>"Mouth waters"</i>
Sweat glands	Stimulation of sweat glands: <i>"Cold sweat"</i>	Inhibition of sweat glands: <i>Dry skin</i>
Arteries	Contraction of arteries: <i>"Cold sweat"; pallor</i>	Dilation of arteries: <i>Redness of skin, increased turgor, without sweating</i>
Arrectores pilorum	Stimulation of arrectores pilorum: <i>Hair is "raised". "Gooseflesh"</i>	Inhibition of arrectores pilorum: <i>Skin smooth</i>
Bronchial musculature	Inhibition of contracting musculature: <i>Relaxation of bronchi</i>	Stimulation of contracting musculature: <i>Bronchial spasm</i>
Heart	Stimulates heart action: <i>Palpitation, tachycardia</i>	Depresses heart action: <i>Heart quiet, pulse slow</i>
Gastrointestinal tract: liver, pancreas, kidneys; all digestive glands	<i>Inhibits peristalsis. Reduces secretion of digestive glands</i>	<i>Stimulates peristalsis and secretion of digestive glands</i>
Adrenals	<i>Stimulates secretion of adrenaline</i>	<i>Inhibits secretion of adrenaline</i>
Urinary bladder	Inhibits musculature which opens bladder, stimulates sphincter: <i>Inhibits micturition</i>	Stimulates musculature which opens bladder, inhibits sphincter: <i>Stimulates micturition</i>
Female sex organs	Stimulates smooth musculature, reduces secretion of all glands, decreases blood supply: <i>Decreased sexual sensation</i>	Relaxes smooth musculature, stimulates secretion of all glands, increases blood supply: <i>Increased sexual sensation</i>
Male sex organs	Stimulates smooth musculature of the scrotum, reduces glandular secretion, decreases blood supply: <i>Flaccid penis. Decreased sexual sensation</i>	Relaxes smooth musculature of the scrotum, stimulates glandular secretion, increases blood supply: <i>Erection. Increased sexual sensation</i>

*Adapted from W. Reich, *Function of the Orgasm* (Noonday Press, 1961), pp. 259-260.

obvious or superficial traits—those of which the client himself is most likely to have some awareness—and gradually proceeds to the deeper layers.

Suppose, for example, the client has a habitual smile. This smile might persist even when he is discussing the most painful emotions or experiences. Such a set expression, whether obvious or subtle, is clearly a block to the natural flow of feelings. The analyst would begin to point the smile out to the client, as it is happening, repeatedly, consistently. He would call attention to the incongruity between the smile and the painful content of what the client is saying. He might urge the client to wiggle his face around, or scowl, or make other expressions which contradict the smile, or he might have him exaggerate the smile. At the same time the analyst would be on the alert for signs of offense, resentment, anxiety, or any sort of resistance. He is well aware that in attacking the client's *character* he is attacking that which the client identifies most intimately with *himself*.

In fact the analyst's very position of "authority" inev-

itably arouses latent negative emotions and attitudes which the client originally felt towards his parents and siblings. This is called the "negative transference." The analyst knows that it would be futile to try to push any therapeutic insights through this wall of negativity. Indeed, it is precisely these negative feelings that form the most important part of what lies concealed in the character armor and that the analysis needs to deal with. The analyst therefore tries to elicit these feelings and encourage the client to express them openly. As the negative feelings emerge, the defensive function of the smile will also become more apparent. This work with the latent negative reactions and transference is one of the most difficult, demanding, and subtle tasks of the therapy. Properly handled, the transference relationship is the royal road into the unconscious; bungled, it is the shipwreck of many a therapy.

If the character-analytic work proceeds correctly, the client will begin to become aware of his smile and his other traits as *symptoms* rather than inalienable parts of his true self. He will begin to feel the emotions immanent in the

smile, as well as the underlying feelings which the smile is warding off. For example, the apparently polite or pleasant smile might harbor a concealed feeling of "Nothing touches me." Just beneath that might be a deeper feeling of "You can't get me, you bastard, I won't give you the satisfaction!" And beneath that, warded off by the defensive attitude, might be passionate feelings of pain, longing, sadness, and rage. There might be oral impulses to cry, scream, bite, or suck. If the transference has been properly dealt with, the client will become increasingly aware of the formerly covert feelings of mistrust, fear, anger, or longing which he feels toward the therapist, and of their roots in his earlier relationship with his parents. He will also begin to feel how his smile and other traits serve to disguise, contain, or ward off those feelings, and to sense the roots of these defensive patterns in his past. With the growth of awareness and deeper feeling, the defensive patterns will loosen their hold on the character, the underlying emotions will spontaneously emerge and find discharge, and the whole personality will become clearer, healthier, and more capable of seeking and enjoying real satisfaction in life and love.

Years of clinical experience with character analysis led Reich to his most original and extraordinary therapeutic discovery: the discovery of "muscular armoring" and the famous "Reichian body work." He found that neurotic character structure and repressed emotions are actually physiologically rooted in *chronic muscle spasms*. Emotions are not just feelings floating around in the brain—every emotion also involves an *impulse to action*. Sadness, for example, is a feeling—a psychic event—but it also involves an impulse to cry, which is a very physical event

involving a certain kind of convulsive breathing, vocalizations, facial expressions, tearing, and even actions of the limbs. If the urge to cry has to be suppressed, all those convulsive muscular impulses have to be suppressed by means of a willful effort of holding or stiffening. Above all, one must hold the breath. This not only suppresses the sobs or screams, but lowers the energy level by decreasing the intake of oxygen. Also, the muscular tensions block the flow of energy which is an essential aspect of emotional excitation.

If the muscular holding has to become habitual, it turns into chronic spastic contractions of the musculature. These spasms become automatic, unconscious; they cannot be voluntarily relaxed; they persist even in sleep. *Suppression* has turned into *repression*. The forgotten memories and feelings lie dormant but intact in the form of *frozen impulses to action* in the muscles; and the totality of these chronic muscle spasms constitutes a system of *muscular armoring* which defends us against both stimuli from without and impulses from within.

Thus, muscular armoring is the physical aspect, and character armoring the psychical aspect, of our total defense system. One is truly inseparable from the other. For example, the neurotic smile we discussed earlier is not only an emotional defense or a psychic attitude—it is also a chronic spastic contraction of the musculature of the face. It can be effectively attacked by physical as well as by psychological means.

Reich developed a variety of ingenious techniques for dissolving the muscular armoring. These techniques have been further expanded and elaborated by his followers. Here is a list of some of the most typical:

WILHELM REICH ON EMOTIONS

Gerald Grow, Ph.D.

According to Reich, every human emotion can come in two forms. One form, which he called "primary," is an expression of the depth of the person. Expressing a "primary" emotion leads you back toward wholeness and balance. For example, under certain circumstances anger functions as a primary emotion; feeling and expressing anger is then the best, and perhaps only, way to become recentered.

In contrast, "secondary" emotions do *not* serve to rebalance you. Secondary impulses are part of a vicious circle in which an unsatisfying feeling keeps reinforcing itself.

Here's the important thing: secondary emotions only arise when primary emotions are suppressed. When a person's natural longings for love become blocked, secondary, perverse longings may appear: masochistic urges, sadistic impulses, compulsive sex that fails to

satisfy, as well as feelings of emptiness, deadness, loss of direction, depression.

To Reich, people were basically good, and their deepest longings moved toward wholeness, community, and a profound, gentle, melting, loving passion. He explained everything that is "evil" or "destructive" in human nature as a "secondary" impulse, formed by suppressing the natural, primary, constructive impulses toward love and growth. In other words, destructiveness, masochism, perversion, neurosis, and the long list of human ills are life that is not lived deeply enough: emotions felt down only to the "secondary" layer, and not to the deep heart's core. Human problems come from frozen energy—energy that is held, dammed up, restrained from pulsing out its rhythms and transmitting its life wisdom into our actions.

1. *Deep breathing*, natural or in certain patterns suggested by the therapist. This in itself can produce energy streamings, prickling or tingling sensations, tremors, spasms, or even spontaneous emotional releases. The same is true for *repeated screaming*.

2. *Deep massage* of spastic areas, especially while having the client breathe deeply and express the pain with his voice, facial expression, and, when practical, his body. This is an extremely powerful route into the unconscious, either immediately or with time. Occasionally, pressure on a single muscle spasm will produce a spontaneous outburst of repressed emotion, with a specific memory of a forgotten traumatic event.

3. *Work with facial expressions*. This includes such actions as rolling the eyes around, wiggling the face and forehead, stretching the eyes and mouth wide open, and actually "making faces" which express various emotions, especially while maintaining eye contact with the therapist. These exercises are enhanced by deep breathing and making sounds. The face is a major organ of emotional expression, and the armoring there is a major block to feeling.

4. *Pushing down on the chest* while the client exhales or screams. The block to complete expiration is an important part of the breathing armoring. The work on this block also loosens up the block to complete inspiration.

5. *Work with the gag reflex*, the cough reflex, yawning, or any other convulsive reflex. Any convulsions tend to disrupt and break down the rigid armoring, and these three in particular reach deep internal armoring that would otherwise be inaccessible.

6. *Maintaining "stress positions"*, especially while breathing deeply and expressing the pain with voice and face. Stress positions loosen armoring by stretching it, tiring it, irritating it, and inducing tremors or clonisms." Clonisms, like any other convulsions, tend to break down armoring, and are also a sign that armoring is dissolving.

7. *Active "bioenergetic" movements*, such as pounding, stamping, kicking, tantrums, reaching out, and moving or shaking areas like the head, shoulders, arms, or pelvis. Needless to say, these should all be done with full breathing and appropriate sounds and facial expressions. Merely performing such actions as mechanical exercises is of limited benefit and usually indicates a latent resistance. On the other hand, even if the client doesn't seem to feel much at first, sincere work with these movements for a period of time tends to break down inhibitions and liberate genuine feeling.

There is a definite order to the application of these techniques and to the progression of the therapy. This order is never invariable or mechanical; it depends on the individual client, the vicissitudes of therapy, and the intuition of the therapist. Still, there are general laws that should never be overlooked.

The fundamental law of body work is the same as the fundamental law of character analysis: start with the most superficial defenses and work gradually into the deeper layers, at a rate that the client is able to handle. The client's fear and resistance—particularly the *latent* fear and resistance—should always be respected. It is there for good reason. The pain that we harbor within is monumental,

and spectacular "breakthrough" now may be paid for later by increased resistance, severe anxiety, or in some cases even psychotic breakdown.

In body work this law has a very concrete application; and this brings us to yet another of Reich's incredible discoveries: *the segmental arrangement of the armoring*. It turns out that in general, the individual muscular blocks do not correspond to an individual muscle or nerve pathway; rather, they fall into a *segmental* arrangement. The segments function transversely, at right angles to the natural longitudinal flow of biological energy. They are like the rings of an earthworm: when the worm is pinched, its rings constrict, choking off and disrupting the natural sinuous flow of longitudinal energy streamings. Like the segmental arrangement of the spine, autonomic ganglia, and intestines, they represent the worm in man.

Reich identified seven major segments of armoring: the *ocular*; the *oral*; the *neck*; the *chest*; including the arms; the *diaphragmal*; the *abdominal*; and the *pelvic*, including the legs. Each segment is a ring of tension encircling the body, and also includes the underlying internal organs. The relative independence of these segments is shown by the fact that any emotional or bioenergetic activity in one part of a segment will tend to influence its other parts, while the adjacent segments will remain relatively unaffected. In fact, if bound-up energy is liberated in one segment, the adjacent segments will often show signs of *increased* armoring or resistance, as a defensive reaction to the pressure of the released energy, which is trying to push through.

Now, the torso and limbs are like a great reservoir of bound-up biological energy. Any energy which is liberated from this armoring will tend to collect in the chest and abdominal cavities, preparatory to being discharged through the head (as in screaming) or the genitals (as in orgasm). If these outlets are blocked, the pressure can build up to intolerable levels, causing acute anxiety or severe headaches. For this reason it is important to open up the head, throat, neck, and upper shoulder area before allowing too much dissolution of armoring in the lower body. It is the head, after all, that is the primary guardian of the repression in the first place; one might say that we must gain the head's "permission" before we can go very far in opening up the flow of repressed energy. Next the breathing can be gradually expanded, while the formidable energy of the pelvic segment is reserved for last. Thus we have the general rule that, in dissolving the armoring, *we should start with the topmost segments and gradually proceed downward*. Again, this rule should not be applied in a rigid, mechanical way. The organism is an intricately interrelated whole, and one can go only so far in dissolving the armoring in one area without working on the other areas as well.

Reichian body work is powerful. It cuts through the crap. It provides quicker, surer access to areas of the unconscious that used to be virtually inaccessible. Profound, convulsive, emotional releases, and even repressed memories from the earliest periods of life, emerge spontaneously, without special effort, simply as a by-product of the thoroughgoing softening of the resistances. The free-flowing energy that has been liberated pushes into the remaining blocks, further weakening them, and setting in motion a process of spontaneous dissolution of armoring

that ultimately reaches down to the deepest levels of biological functioning, and paves the way for the full development of the orgasm reflex.

But, powerful as it is, the body work is only of limited effectiveness without character analysis. In the course of therapy, sometimes it is the body work that needs to be stressed, sometimes the character analysis. Both are indispensable, complementary parts of Reichian work. The body work gives teeth to the character work, but it is the character-analytic understanding that gives the whole process of therapy intelligence, meaning, and direction. Without this understanding, no matter how forcefully and diligently the body work is pursued, the therapy will bog down and founder at every turn.

Reichian therapy is no panacea. The process of dissolving the armoring requires courage, perseverance, and support. The further you go, the more your whole life has to become therapy. Your energy and life style have to become focused on opening up and getting into your feelings. Your occupation, living situation, and everyday habits all need to become supportive of that process. Above all, you need to cultivate supportive, intimate personal relationships dedicated to openness and growth. Only with loving support can we tolerate the fear and pain of our emerging inner depths. Also, love-related emotions that have been thwarted are at the core of our sickness, and only by means of love relationships can we really deal with those feelings. This means going behind the inevitable conflict syndromes that normally ruin our relationships, and openly getting into the underlying parental projections together. In other words, it is a matter of dealing with *transference*, making it conscious, getting into feelings or even fights together knowing that you're really screaming at your parents or siblings, and not primarily at each other. As you learn to let go more together and share your negative feelings, you build trust and open yourselves up to new possibilities of letting each other's love in. For although releasing your pain, fear, and rage is good for you, it is *letting the love in* that really cures. Loving surrender is also the basis of full orgasmic potency.

Making your life therapy amounts to taking your therapy into your own hands. Once you get a feeling for it, it's amazing how much you can learn to do for yourself, especially with the help of friends who are involved in it

with you. Approached in this way, Reichian Therapy can become the basis of a true yoga—a discipline or path of life designed to open one up to the highest energies. I call it *Primal Yoga*, using the word “primal” both in the ordinary sense and as it is used in Primal Therapy.³ In its breathing, stretching, and convulsive energy-moving techniques Primal Yoga has much in common with established forms of yoga, such as Hatha and Kundalini. The seven segments of armoring even correspond rather closely with the seven chakras. But Primal Yoga differs above all in its specific emphasis on primal emotional release and systematic dissolution of armoring. To me this seems essential. How can we expect to face God when we can't face ourselves or each other; when we are tied up in knots of armoring and repressed emotions; when we are unable to tolerate high levels of energy, or bear the overwhelming ecstasy of full organic convulsions?

The path is hard, but the rewards are immense: reawakening of inner depths, release from crippling life-long burdens, and constant renewal of health, clarity, power, vitality, love, and the magic of existence.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Wilhelm Reich, *The Function of the Orgasm*, Noontday Press, 1971. The basic primer of Reichian therapy, tracing the evolution of Reich's work from psychoanalysis all the way through to orgone biophysics.

———, *Character Analysis*. Simon and Schuster, 1972. A more detailed exposition of character formation and character analysis, also tracing the development through vegetotherapy into orgone biophysics. Includes a fascinating case history of Reich's treatment of a schizophrenic.

Alexander Lowen, a pupil of Reich's and the founder of bioenergetics, has written many interesting and readable books, any of which are recommended.

RICHARD HOFF is a self-taught Reichian practitioner and dedicated primal yogi. He loves nature, philosophy, science, classical music, art, dancing, gymnastics, and martial arts; he is also a craftsman and inventor. Richard's struggle to dissolve his own armoring led to his invention of the *Knobble®*, a small wooden self-massage tool that is effective on all parts of the body.



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