How does the Materiality of the Artist's Book Help to Augment an Understanding With Respect to Creating a Narrative About Memory and Identity?

MA Visual Arts Book Arts, Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts London

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catcatalyst.co.uk

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Abstract:

The purpose of this paper is to better understand the parallels of memory, identity and wellbeing and to explore how the tactile nature of interacting with the five senses, can help to remind a person suffering from Dementia, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's Dementia, or Stroke, of previously forgotten key aspects of one's core self.

This study intends to offer insight into the way that a Dementia sufferer can reuse past memories, stored as feelings, in order to navigate new situations as a form of identity retrieval in the absence of being able to store any new factual information. I will postulate that one's most frequently indulged thoughts, feelings and desires, can not only contribute to one's long term mental outlook but also to one's physical wellbeing too. My argument is that it is never too late to create new neurological pathways due to the brain's neuroplastic ability to self-heal. In particular, by engaging with the materiality of the Book, including photograph albums and the Artist's book, combined with music, all have the potential to stimulate neurological pathways in the brain that can revive a sense of self-identity and in turn physical wellbeing. I shall be looking at book artists; Chandra Mohini, Sara Mackillop and Amanda Couch.

What I hope to achieve is that by raising awareness surrounding neurological conditions and mental health issues one can extend an invitation to commit to the communication of wellbeing, self-love, inner peace and connectivity via the platform of the Arts and in particular the materiality of the Artists Book, old photographs and music, which contribute to a positive perception of self-identity that in turn endorses self-worth and general wellbeing.

Book Arts, Memories, Self-Identity, Dementia, Neuroplasticity,

Introduction:

The purpose of this paper is to communicate how the narrative of materiality contained within Book Art can offer comfort, connection and security to the sufferers of Dementia, Alzheimer's, Parkinson and Stroke, (but also equally to persons with other neuro-diversities)¹, and one is able to comprehend how powerful the evocation of memory is in relation to the concept of personal and collective-identity, and in turn how important identity is for a sense of wellbeing.

The aim and focus of this study is; to better understand the parallels of identity and memory and to explore how the tactile nature of interacting with the five senses, can help to remind an individual of key aspects of one's core self via the materiality of the page. For example:

- Rediscovering old photographs in family albums
- Scrapbooks of newspaper clippings and old post cards
- Old movie posters and LP Albums covers
- Songs and lyrics that were played at community dance halls in the 1940's and 50's

These may trigger memories about other unique aspects pertaining to a particular era such as the fashions one once wore, the vehicles one used to ride in or drive, the places one used to frequent, the company one used to keep, designs of products that one used daily, adverts from newspapers or magazines one used to read, jingles from the radio and tv commercials of the day, all of which are stored in

¹ Such as Bi-Polar disorder, Autism, Dyspraxia, ADHD, Dyslexia, and

one's long term memory and have contributed to ones perception of how one feels about one's life.

Engaging with the materiality of the book, with pages to touch, turn and handle playfully, combined with sound has the potential to stimulate neurological pathways in the brain that revive certain memories that are crucial to a sense of self-identity.

During an 'Artists Books Now' talk at The British Library, (2018), Book Artist, Amanda Couch, reminded the audience that with our contemporary and increasing reliance upon and obsession with the screen, there is still something so boldly present about reading, touching, holding, and engaging with a physical book, 'caressing its leaves while cradling its spine'.

> Artists' books are one of the few art objects which most audiences are able to become intimate with, to hold and to bring close, into the realm of their own bodies, to touch, feel, breathe on, or into them'. Couch, *The British Library, (2018)*

The tactile stimulation of these neurological pathways to reconnect persons suffering from memory loss with certain aspects of one's former character and personality, can help to reconstitute a sense of self-identity through carryingover certain memories from previous experiences and reframing them to serve in the present moment. These former memories can serve to assist an individual to navigate through new and unfamiliar territory in the absence of being able to store new information. People with dementia are often using past experiences to make sense of the present. In the absence of the new information which they have not been storing, they naturally search for past situations to provide them with a context for what the hell is going on. James, *Contented Dementia*, (2009)

In this discussion the term 'self-identity' is used not in the broader sociocultural sense of how we see and place ourselves among others but rather in the tradition of American psychology that focuses on 'individuated self-concept' (Brewer, 1991). Furthermore, for the purpose of clarity, definitions of key terms used in this paper are given in glossary after the bibliography.

This paper will reference works by a number of neuroscientists and philosophers such as Oliver James, Oliver Sacks, and in particular Dr. Jill Bolte-Taylor, who suggests that there are various components that are defined by the 'left and right mind', which when working in cooperation with one another can contribute towards ones overall personality² offering a more integrated perspective, and so what I hope to encourage is a dialogue on the importance of positively-reframed 'good-feeling-memories' for a sense of long-term emotional wellbeing, particularly while the brain is no longer able to store new information.

Contentment is achieved by repurposing past memories which have pleasing-feelings attached to them so that they can help to re-endorse a sense of 'self-worth' in the present moment, serving as a sort of navigational dot-to-dot compass through the new, uncertain and the unknown. What's more, due to the

² My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey, (2006), by Dr. Jill Bolte-Taylor, (page 133)

brain's *neuroplasticity*, one has an innate ability to form completely new and alternative neurological pathways, despite old ones having been lost through damage, disease or stress.

> The Neuroplastic revolution has implications for, among other things, our understanding of how love, sex, grief, relationships, learning, addictions, culture, technology, and psychotherapies change our brains. All of the humanities, social sciences, and physical sciences, insofar as they deal with human nature, are affected, as are all forms of training. All of these disciplines will have to come to terms with the fact of the self-changing brain and with the realization that the architecture of the brain differs from one person to the next and that it changes in the course of our individual lives.

Doige, The brain's Way of Healing, (2015)

Scientific research now suggests that the brain is a 'self-changing' organism, which means that it can also *self-heal*. This is something that Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor talks about in her book: *My Stroke of Insight, (2006),* also the title of her 'Ted Talk' presentation, which first went live in March 2008. In her presentation, Bolte Taylor presents an actual human brain to demonstrate how the two hemispheric lobes of the brain sit inside the Cranium and are in fact *separate*, linked together by a cord that consists of fibres known as the 'Corpus Callosum' and a brain stem that extends down the spinal cord. Through this demonstration Bolte Taylor was able to highlight that these hemispheres can work independently as well as co-operatively.

Bolte Taylor herself a stroke sufferer at the age of 35, concluded her inspirational talk of how she made a full recovery after eight years by claiming that anyone can 'purposely choose to step to the right of their left hemisphere' at any given point in time. What Bolte Taylor means by *stepping to the right* is that due to the constant demands and pressures of modern living, the majority of functioning people in society are what is known as; 'left-brain dominant', where one's logical and rational thought process may have a tendency to over-rule ones righthemisphere to the exclusion of, or suppression of one's true feelings or life-long desires. In this case scenario the resulting internal dialogue can become somewhat self-orientated and lacking in consideration, connection or compassion, in one's attitude either towards oneself, or towards other people.

> The two halves of my brain don't just perceive and think in different ways at a neurological level, but they demonstrate very different values based upon the types of information they perceive, and thus exhibit very different personalities. Bolte Taylor, (2006, p 133)

Bolte Taylor states that we have two separate cognitive minds with two different personalities, which also perceive and process information differently, similarly to that of a computer's 'Parallel Processor' (right-hemisphere - that deals with feelings and emotions) and a 'Serial Processor' (left-hemisphere - that deals with thinking and thought patterns). In her book Bolte Taylor says: 'It is my goal to help you find a hemispheric home for each of your characters so that we can honor their identities and perhaps have more say in how we want to be in the world' (2006 p 133).

Personally I have always been intrigued by the concept of memories and how they contribute to one's perception of self-worth and self-identity, as while I was a child growing up with my mother, I observed that my mother (a perfectionist), had a highly critical internal dialogue bordering upon the tyrannical, which appeared to worsen over time culminating in a series of serious strokes. Upon reflection I wondered whether the unforgiving nature of a hyper-critical internal dialogue could have served as a contributory factor towards the deterioration of my mother's mind, and conversely, whether the nature of *a positive*

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and up-lifting internal dialogue could in fact have an empowering effect upon one's mental health, serving to assist and maintain not just one's mental outlook but also one's physical wellbeing.

In Helen Cohn Schucman's book, *A Course in Miracles* (1976), Schucman writes; 'the opposite of fear is *love*, but what is all encompassing, can have no opposite'. Schucman also a professor of medical psychology called her book, 'mind training in the relinquishment of a thought system based on fear'. So popular has Schucman's book now become that it is regarded as the 'New Age Bible³', regularly referenced and quoted by other New Age authors, such as Marianne Williamson who completely based her own book *Return to Love*, (1992) upon the text of 'A Course in Miracles', becoming well known as a spiritual teacher in her own right as a result. In *Return to Love*, Williamson suggests that 'God is the love within', as in 'Self-Love'. This concept of developing a softer internal dialogue is also supported in Chapters 15 - 17 of Bolte Taylor's aforementioned book, where she says that prior to her stroke experience;

The cells in my left hemisphere had been capable of dominating the cells in my right hemisphere where the judging and analytical character in my mind had dominated my personality... My stroke of insight is that at the core of my right-hemisphere consciousness, is a character that is directly connected to my feeling of deep inner peace. It is completely committed to the expression of peace, love, joy, and compassion in the world. Bolte Taylor, (2006, p 133)

Neurologist Oliver Sacks, postulates that a diseased or incomplete brain processes the world in a way that cannot be shared with others, however before disease sets in one can perhaps consciously weed out the mental weeds to maintain

³ See Appendix 14

one's mindful garden blooms. In so doing the left and right hemispheres not only cooperate together they also complement one another. One can achieve this by turning one's inner tyrants into one's inner *best friends* thus learning to extend compassion towards one's inner-self, by regularly engaging ones right-hemisphere, which processes feelings and emotions, in order to endorse self-confidence and trust, instead of self-loathing and doubt. Then perhaps when one's internal thoughts consist of a more loving and supportive inner-dialogue one then circulates ease as opposed to dis-ease.

The one key difference between someone before dementia sets in and after dementia is that sufferers are unable to store any new information. However, what is interesting is that the longer-term memories *are all still there*. When my mother suffered a series of strokes I too discovered that her longer-term memories were all still there, including those of me as a child growing up with her and so therefore we had a memory bank of shared memories that we could tap into and reactivate that could distil calm and contentment into current situations, in spite of not being able to store new information. Another interesting factor was that growing up, my memories of my mother as a young woman were gleaned from the black and white photographs from my mother's collection taken before I was born, which had also become a part of our collective memory.

The thrill found in a photograph comes from the onrush of memory. Berger, *Uses of* Photography, (1978)⁴

⁴ On the connection of photographs to memory in the essay 'Uses of Photography, John Berger wrote: The thrill found in a photograph comes from the onrush of memory. This is obvious when it's a picture of something we once knew. That house we lived in. Mother when young. But in another sense, we once knew every- thing we recognize in any photo. That's grass growing. Tiles on a roof get wet like that, don't they? Here is one

I found that certain analogue photographs from our collective memory of her former youth and our shared past could serve as master key-frames in the timeline of her life, linking a sense of objective reconnection with a sense of identity, as in 'who' she used to be, once was, enabling a reclamation of personal status. This greater sense of self-confidence contributed to an increased sense of contentment and wellbeing in the present moment. These longer-term memories could be reframed in the now to provide a context for new experiences, connecting a historically-based way of perceiving situations through memories of how she *felt* at a given time, and then applying this *good-feeling* context to the events in the here and now. Drawing upon the past to add a pleasant spin to the present proved of vital importance with regards to encountering new experiences and maintaining a continued and uninterrupted sense of calm and contented-wellbeing. Photographs of pivotal moments from my mother's and my own shared history seemed to serve as companions offering a connecting bridge between the past and the present creating a visual narrative that could provide feelings of security and stability from which my mother could make her own sense of any new presenting situation.

Oliver James cites the work of Penny Garner, who is the developer of SPECAL and SPECAL SENSE; where he says: 'The most important legacy of Penny Garner's work over a period of ten years alongside hospital staff was to liken the illness (Dementia) to a photograph album⁵'.

of the seven ways in which bosses smile. This is a woman's shoulder, not a man's. Just the way snow melts. (1978)

⁵ James, Oliver. 'Contented Dementia', 2009, page: 40.

Penny believes that it is of the utmost importance for a dementia-sufferer to feel a continued and uninterrupted sense of contented-wellbeing by *not* forcing a dementia-sufferer to consult a memory that is failing with questions, and to avoid pointing out that their use of past experiences and memories to navigate the present is actually incorrect, but to support them in this to maintain their state of contentedness derived from a sense of previous identity.

This is also why the trusted companionship of family members is so important as the hand that turns the pages of the photograph albums for their loved ones, they also serve to bridge the span of time by acting as a 'constant', the connecting thread that binds the different time frames together. Companionship serves as a kinetic narrative that can instantly restore a familiar sense of peace and calm, not so dissimilar to the kind of trust shared between a parent and a child. Role-reversal of parent and child in old age or the onset of dementia is quite common. In addition, brain damage often facilitates a return to innocence, as pure and trusting as a Child's, moreover, in the absence of being able to retain new information a person may live more fully in the present moment. Often a dementia sufferer will not be able to recall the event of being shown a series of photographs yesterday or a week ago but will still derive new joy from seeing them over and over again.

Penny Garner uses the analogy between our memory and a photograph album to illustrate her view of how the memory works⁶. The photograph album

⁶ Garner, P. 'The SPECAL Photograph Album', 2008, Third Edition, Burford, Oxfordshire.

represents the place where each new memory is stored, and the photographs symbolise individual memories. The photos on the last pages are the most recent and those near the beginning of the album are the oldest. In waking hours, the album is kept open on today's page in the here and now. To make sense of what we are doing, where we are and who we are with we constantly glance at the latest photographs. Sometimes we need to leaf back through recent pages to seek further information. Only comparatively rarely do we turn to pages further back in the album. Using this album is as fundamental to our mental existence as breathing is to one's physical existence. It is something that happens automatically and that we take for granted and yet it is a critical component of one's identity, enabling one to make sense of what is happening at every waking moment.

What is important is that when dementia begins, what happens with respect to the way in which memories are stored is that instead of storing any factual content, the memory only retains the *feelings* associated with the experience. Penny describes the fact-free, feeling-only photographs in the album as 'blanks', in so far as the factual information has not entered the album in the first place. These blanks exist as associated feelings only. This is succinctly summed up in the words of Alice in the 2007 film *Still Alice* based on the novel by author and neuroscientist, Lisa Genova:⁷ 'I have no control over which yesterdays I keep, and which ones get deleted. This disease will not be bargained with.'

⁷ *Lisa Genova: <u>'Still Alice'</u>.* (2007) Originally Self-published with i-Universe, later acquired by Simon and Schuster and published by Gallery Books (a division of Simon and Schuster) - in 2009. Lisa is also a leading neuroanatomist.

Book Artist *Mohini Chandra* takes the historical journey that a photograph embarks upon through time and geographical space one stage further with her Artist's bookwork entitled: 'Album Pacifica' (2001). In this work what appears to be an entire family photo album consisting of over 100 photographs is depicted using only the reversed side of the photographs. The story told from the backs of these photographs offers us clues to an Indian family's migration trails across the globe. The viewer is also informed of a first holy communion, political activity in the 1950's, a royal visit, a marriage, a birth and funeral, all from just the backs of the photographs.

Chandra says that Album Pacifica was one of her favourite art works, however, it was also an attempt to reunite her dispersed family, reclaim a sense of personal and collective memory, history and family identity. Therefore, in the absence of family identity the work enables the viewer to conjure up an imaginary photographic landscape, or an imaginary family even though the actual photographs are denied, facilitating a space in which the audience's own histories and experiences may be imagined, projected or remembered.

Memory is a strange faculty. The sharper and more isolated the stimulus memory receives, the more it remembers; the more comprehend-sive the stimulus, the less it remembers. This is perhaps why black-and-white photography is paradoxically more evocative than colour photography. It stimulates a faster onrush of memories because less has been given, more has been left out. Berger, *Keeping a Rendezvous*. (1991, p 192–193)

Other ways to utilise the materiality of the book, including graphic novels and zines are via feats of paper-engineering such as the use of fold-outs, cutaways, pop-ups, see-throughs, peep-holes, lattice, windows and sliders, plus the sophisticated use of colour, and/or image. One such Book Artist who utilises the materiality of the fold in her book is Sarah McKillop's *Laptop* (2016), by mimicking the opening and closing of a laptop through the opening and closing of a turning page.

Book Artist Amanda Couch points out that 'Corporal language is embedded in the description of books, its anatomy and its materiality. Terms such as spine, footnotes, headers, appendix and in the case of manuscripts - the hand -(Latin = manu) are written into its name as well as leather covers of actual skin.'

What I am interested in is the animated engagement of images. Sequencing for example, can control the timing of the reader and of the reading. The reading can be paused or halted simply by the act of looking. Similarly, flicker books or flick books tell a story either down the edge of a page, or along the edge of a book, where the process of looking is speeded up. Also, through the ambiguous use of white space around a small area of text, or maybe surrounding a lone word on a page, time can be slowed or stopped, encouraging the reader to believe that the word or words have particular significance, importance or status (like in poetry). These techniques, I argue, can also potentially be utilised to stimulate memory and identity.

In particular illustrations from one's favourite childhood stories are also very powerful as there is often a fond affection for the novels that one grew up with in one's early years, and this is why they are often picked up by advertisers to appeal to sectors of the population of a certain age. For those who grew up reading the Famous Five stories by Enid Blyton, for instance, these characters have now

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been re-appropriated by Great Western Trains to advertise mini-breaks to Wales⁸.

In the British Library's talks, *Artists Books Now Vol 1* (2018), Amanda Couch cites Michael Camille, an Art historian of the middle-ages who wrote that for the medieval reader, 'every turn of the page was an act of intense interpenetration, one resonates with sensations, from the feel of the flesh and hair-side of the parchment on ones fingertips, to the lubricious labial mouthing of the words with one's throat and tongue'.

Social worker '*Dan Cohen*' explored sound as a form of materiality and in particular the link between music and memory for those with Alzheimer's or Dementia. In Michael Rossato-Bennett's 2014 documentary '*Alive Inside*'⁹ Cohen and neurologist '*Oliver Sacks*' go about providing long-term, care-home residents (whom have not opened their eyes for ten years) with mini-iPod music players and headphones. One such resident is 'Henry' whom upon hearing the music from his youth again, suddenly opened his eyes, started talking enthusiastically and became joyously animated. A YouTube video of Henry's first experience of an iPod went viral. What this music appears to provide to residents is a kinaesthetic engagement to access memory and a former identity in time. Cohen is also founder of the nonprofit organization 'Music & Memory', which works to combat memory loss utilising empathy to restore a deep sense of self to those suffering from Alzheimer's and

⁸ YouTube link: Great Western Trains: https://youtu.be/oWsMgb2bTp4, (November 2018)

⁹ YouTube link: Alive Inside: https://youtu.be/5FWn4JB2YLU, (November 2018)

Dementia¹⁰. The aliveinside.org website states that, 'There are 46 million elders dealing with Alzheimer's and dementia¹¹ worldwide (online 2018).

To test my theory that a visual and kinaesthetic engagement with the materiality of the book can help to:

a) stimulate memories,

b) reconnect with a former sense of self-identity, and

c) re-frame one's feeling-based memories more positively in the present moment;

I made an artist's book for my mother. I refer to this book as 'Sequence' and for these reasons Sequence was specifically designed to be visually based, (without any words) and to be handled.

In this work I re-photograph a pile of analogue photographs placed one on top of another. The pile represents the sequential stages of three generations of our family. I start with a small black and white photograph of my grandmother taken in the early 1930's when she was a young woman. The format of the photograph is representational of the technological photographic processes of the times. When one turns the first page of the book one also turns over the first photograph from the pile. One can see the back of the photograph on the reverse side of the page detailing the colour and texture of the photographic paper. Also, from the backs of old photographs one can determine:

 ¹⁰ There are 244,000 people with dementia living in care homes, of whom about 100,000 are being given anti-psychotic drugs. On the basis of the above study - (misunderstanding of the use of old memories from the past to navigate the present) - about 24,000 people are dying prematurely as a result of these drugs.
 – Oliver James (2008)

¹¹ See Glossary

- An ageing process where colours can become faded or mottled
- Notice any damage to the photograph such as tears, creases or folds that evidence having been torn out of an album, or kept inside a wallet
- Observe any typographical letters or numerals pertaining to the printing process of the time
- Additional handwriting serving as reminders of where and when the photograph was taken and who the people were in them
- The photographic studio's contact details and location stamped on the back in coloured inks
- The different brands of photographic papers such as: Agfa, Fuji, Kodak or Konica, etc.

This materiality that I have recorded from the backs of the photographs is equally as important as the fronts, as it details the photograph's own history as a unique physical object in time and space that was designed to be handled. It wasn't until the 1980's that the white borders around the edges of the photographs disappeared, making maximum use of paper size for the image. In his 2002 article, *Talking about pictures: a case for photo elicitation*, Douglas Harper talks about the importance of these material details: 'Photo elicitation evokes information, feelings, and memories that are due to the photo-graph's particular form of representation'.¹² Even the frilly edges around some of the photographs from the

¹² Douglas Harper: Talking about pictures: a case for photo elicitation, Visual Studies, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2002

1950's are representational of social customs and traditions belonging to a previous era.

Conclusion

What I would like to see in the future are more care homes geared to implementing the physical aspect of materiality with regards to the five senses, with a more creative and open-ended approach of utilising the power of sound and images together to stimulate the mind. Returning to Bolte Taylor, she points out that although modern neuroscientists can seem satisfied with intellectualising the functional asymmetries of our two hemispheres from a neurological perspective, there has however, been minimal conversation pertaining to the psychological or personality differences contained within these two structures.

> Most commonly, the character of our right mind has been ridiculed and portrayed in an extremely unflattering light, simply because it does not understand verbal language or comprehend linear thought. Bolte Taylor, *My Stroke of Insight*, (2006, p133)

In an interview with Oprah Winfrey, Bolte Taylor says that while she was unable to communicate with staff or family, she was able to engage with people energetically, therefore eye-contact was extremely important as it established trust and conveyed an understanding that they understood 'I'm in here, come and find me', and that she needed to be engaged with as an individual, rather than being talked about as if she wasn't in the room.

Furthermore, this principal of consciously-directed-energy can also be applied to the energy of one's most frequent point of focus, such as ones most frequently indulged thoughts, feelings and desires, which I argue, not only contributes to one's long term mental outlook, but can also affect one's long term physical wellbeing.

Therefore, in the interests of maintaining the balance of good health it is essential to become mindful of one's internal dialogue, lest one inadvertently manifests old unwanted patterns. Moreover, it is never too late to create *new* neurological pathways due to the brain's neuroplastic ability to self-heal.

The way to achieve this is via *pleasurable engagement*, which can be greatly facilitated via the materiality of the Artist's book as a pathway to stimulate the senses and to keep one's imagination alive.

I end this paper with a poem I wrote which I feel synthesises my research into its essence form.

Heart-Supported Mind¹³

Twilight is the inky blue-black, steely-cool lens of the logical mind

The rational left-hemisphere that's always asking: Who? What? Where? When? And Why?

Generally, over focusing 24-7 upon all the little things one should have said, or could have done

Inner-narratives on constant rewind sometimes for years, decades or even lifetimes

Retrospective key frames in one's timeline, robbed of fun

Completely oblivious and unaware, that one was born with a Righthemisphere

Offering an additional lens of self-compassion, via heart-supported mind

¹³ Miller, C, 2018. iPoem's Blog. (Accessed 19th November 2018)

Like a prism of decision-making processes that are mutually beneficent and kind

Via a hemispherical union, of left and right, both online at the same time

Co-operating as a 'Whole Mind'

Balancing the polarity of individuation, via an authentic heart connection:

To each-other, the Natural World, the Cosmos and The-All-There-Is

As a direct extension of Source-Energy, each of us, a little piece of Primordial Qi

A metaphysical integration, providing meaning, purpose and inner-peace

Awakening ones third eye, that can scry a previously unknown spectrum, discover a parallel dimension

Refracting the piercing white light of inner-sight

The other side of the rainbow crescent moon...

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<u>Appendix</u>

A Summary of chapter three of Anthony Giddens' Modernity and Self-Identity. Self-identity, history, modernity Glossary:

Drawing on a therapeutic text – 'Self-Therapy' by Janette Rainwater – Giddens selects ten features which are distinctive about the search for self-identity in the late modern age:

1. The self is seen as a reflexive project for which the indivdual is responsible. Selfunderstanding is relegated to the more inclusive and fundamental aim of rebuilding a more rewarding sense of identity

2. The self forms a trajectory of development from the the past to the anticipated future. The lifespan rather than external events is in the foreground, the later are cast as either fortuitous or throwing up barriers which need to be overcome.

3. Reflexivity becomes continuous – the individual continuously asks the question 'what am I doing in this moment, and what can I do to change?' In this, reflexivity belongs to the reflexive historicity of modernity.

4. The narrative of the self is made explicit – in the keeping of an autobiography – which requires continual creative input.

5. Self-actualisation implies the control of time – essentially, the establishing of zones of time which have only remote connections with external temporal orders.
Holding a dialogue with time is the very basis of self-realisation, and using the everpresent moment to direct one's future life course is essential.

6. The reflexivity of the self extends to the body. Awareness of the body is central to the grasping of the moment. The point here is to establish a differentiated self, not to disolve the ego.

7. Self-actualisation is understood as a balance between opportunity and risk. The individual has to be prepared to take on greater levels of risk than is normal – to change is to risk things getting worse

8. The moral thread of self-atualisation is one of authenticity... Personal growth depends on conquering emotional blocks and tensions that prevent us from understanding ourself – recover or repeat old habits is the mantra

9. The life course is seen as a series of 'passages'. All such transitions involve losss.

10. The line of development of the self is *internally referential* – it is the creation of a personal belief system by which someone changes – one's first loyalty is to oneself.

11. The next question Giddens asks is how can we connect up these ten features of self-identity to the institutional transformations characteristic of the late-modern world? *(Well, he is a sociologist, after all!)*

12. Dementia is a group of symptoms that affects mental cognitive tasks such as memory and reasoning. Dementia is an umbrella term that Alzheimer's disease can fall under. It can occur due to a variety of conditions, the most common of which is Alzheimer's disease. People can have more than one type of dementia.

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The Making of: 'A Course in Miracles'

A Catholic priest recounts the mysterious spiritual journey of 'A Course in Miracles' scribe Helen Schucman.

Journalist Randall Sullivan met Father Benedict Groeschel, a Catholic priest and popular speaker, while Sullivan was investigating claims of miraculous occurrences in America and abroad. In this excerpt, Father Groeschel discusses Helen Schucman, who "scribed" the bestselling spiritual work "A Course in Miracles." Reprinted from: The Miracle Detective: An Investigation of Holy Visions, with permission of Grove/Atlantic.

...[Father Groeschel] was certainly no less perplexed by what he had witnessed more than 30 years earlier, when he had been present at the inception of a book now considered to be the "New Age Bible." He had been a graduate student in psychology at Columbia University during the late 1960s when one of his professors, a woman named Helen Schucman, had written-"which is not to say authored"-A Course in Miracles. Helen Schucman was nearly sixty when they met, and Groeschel, who was then almost forty, knew her not only as a teacher but also as a friend. "Helen was a very scientific lady," he recalled, "a Jewish intellectual who considered herself to be an extreme agnostic, though not quite an atheist, and very sceptical about everything having to do with religion or spirituality." Schucman also was witty and engaging, and Groeschel, who was writing his dissertation on the relationship between science and theology, found her to be one of the most stimulating conversationalists he had every encountered. The older woman became a good deal more fascinating to him when she announced in 1969 that she was taking dictation from a disembodied voice she knew only as the "Son of God. "It had all started one day when she was riding the subway uptown and experienced a vision, Schucman explained: A beautiful light suddenly filled the car and shone on the faces of the people all around her. A short time later, she felt compelled to begin writing page after page of blank verse that eventually grew into A Course in Miracles. Groeschel still could vividly recall his "dizzy astonishment" as the professor explained that she knew the meaning of each sentence she was writing but had no idea what was coming next. "The interesting thing is that it scanned," the priest remembered. "It was written in iambic pentameter, and some of the passages were quite beautiful." The result was a series of discourses by the "Son of God" in which the narrator/teacher/protagonist came across as the figure Jesus Christ might have been if born a Hindu rather than a Jew. Sin, sacrifice, and suffering all were dismissed as illusory, the Maya (though this word was never used) of those chained to earthly existence. Only forgiveness is real, and all things, even the most heinous acts, are forgiven, the "Son of God" says again and again, without any need for penance or punishment. He eventually came to understand the book as the product of "an intellectual experience called 'sequential words,'" Groeschel said. "It's actually very common and probably the least impressive of all these things. St. John of the Cross nailed it. He said, 'They're calling the words of God the thoughts that they address to themselves.' Now, there's an ice-cold glass of hot water. "What Groeschel found to be at once most thrilling and confusing about Helen Schucman's process was that, during the time she wrote A

Course in Miracles (a book that any number of fundamentalist Christian ministers have called the most dangerous ever published), she became intensely attracted to the Catholic Church, attended Mass regularly, and was devoted to the Virgin Mary. Only under close questioning did Schucman admit that, many years earlier, she had briefly been a Christian. This had resulted from an "accidental" childhood visit to Lourdes, where she had been so moved that she received baptism upon her return to the U.S. She also had prayed the Rosary for years afterwards, Schucman claimed, until she adopted scientific scepticism as her creed, and lived by it for most of her adult life. When he suggested she apply for membership in the Catholic Church, Schucman replied that this was unnecessary because, as a Jew, she had been Catholic before "you Gentiles came along and made all these rules." No less fascinating to the priest was the sharp distinction between Schucman's own stated convictions and the content of A Course in Miracles. "I hate that damn book," she often told him, and regularly disavowed its teachings. Groeschel continued to try to "open the doors of the Church" to Schucman, but his influence was subverted by her husband. William Thetford, also a Columbia professor, was a mysterious character, and "probably the most sinister person I ever met," the priest recalled. Only after he retired from teaching did Thetford's Columbia colleagues (who knew him best as a rarebooks expert) discover that all during the years they worked with him, the man had been employed as an agent of the CIA--one who was, among other things, present at the first fission experiment conducted by physicists assigned to the Manhattan Project. Thetford also was "the most religious atheist I have ever known," Groeschel recalled, and conceived a great enthusiasm for A Course in Miracles, personally arranging for its publication. Schucman was embarrassed, Groeschel remembered, and confided to the priest her fear that the book would create a cult, which of course it did. Groeschel initially read the Course as "religious poetry," but grew steadily more negative in his assessment of it as the years passed and sales of the three volumes passed into the millions of copies. From his point of view. A Course in Miracles served to undermine authentic Christianity more effectively than just about any other work he could recall, and while he was inclined to reject the position of St. John of the Cross that "these things are diabolical unless proven otherwise," doubts had crept in over the years. Most troubling to him by far was the "black hole of rage and depression that Schucman fell into during the last two years of her life," the priest explained. She had become frightening to be with, Groeschel recalled, spewing psychotic hatred not only for A Course in Miracles but "for all things spiritual." When he sat at Schucman's bedside as she lay dying, "she cursed, in the coarsest barroom language you could imagine, 'that book, that goddamn book.' She said it was the worst thing that ever happened to her. I mean, she raised the hair on the back of my neck. It was truly terrible to witness. "Only during Schucman's last weeks of life did Groeschel learn that the woman's mother had been a Christian Scientist, one who read to the girl from the writings of Mary Baker Eddy all during her childhood. This information had contributed to the appraisal of the woman he found easiest to live with, the priest said: "I decided that A Course in Miracles was a fascinating blend of poorly understood Christianity inspired by her visit to Lourdes and poorly understood Christian Science inspired by her memory of Mary Baker Eddy's writings, all of it filtered through some profound psychological problems and processes." Yet doubts persisted. The morning

Schucman died, Groeschel said a funeral Mass for her. "Only, when I opened the missal did I discover that it was the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes," the priest recalled, "and I tell you, I shivered. The odds are one out of three hundred and sixty-five."

He had been sifting his experiences with Helen Schucman through his mind for more than three decades now, Groeschel said, and over the years had realized that any attempt to define them was futile. "What I learned, I think, is that these things can be both real and imaginary, paranormal and spiritual, divine and diabolical. And that when you enter the world of the supernatural, the worst mistake you can make is to impose a ultrarealist point of view. You can't make those kinds of distinctions about experiences that are beyond our comprehension. You have to do as Moses Maimonides instructed and teach your students to say, 'I don't know.'"

https://www.beliefnet.com/faiths/2004/07/the-making-of-a-course-in-miracles.aspx - (Accessed 19th November 2018)