EPISODE TWO

BEYOND THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

SELF CREATION

…always already there

ACT ONE

A DRIVE TO SELF-ACTUALIZATION

I have many gifts. I was lucky to be born into a great family in a great country. I have always had a roof over my head, and I have never had to worry where my next meal might come from. I have a large family and I have always had a large amount of love. I had a good education, I have a good job, I make a lot more money than I need, and I sometimes feel prouder than I should. I didn't have to do much to reap the benefits of the gifts I was so fortunate to have, and so sometimes, I feel more than a little guilt. Why was I so fortunate? I don't live in Africa where half the people are either starving or dying from AIDS. I don't live in Iraq where a bomb could blow my entire family away in a split second. And I don't live in Israel where almost everybody in every country around me prays for my death. I live in Canada, where for the vast majority of us life is good, safe and easy. It's too easy sometimes. Why are we so lucky?

I used to play bridge every Wednesday with my mother at the Edmonton Bridge Club. One evening we chose to sit with Viren, a kind man I used to work with. I was thinking about religion at the time, as I often do, so I asked him if he was Hindu. He said he was. A discussion ensued about Hindu beliefs. I then mentioned how sad it was that Muslim terrorists had such horrible lives that they perceived suicide killings as their only option. Viren suddenly became quite agitated and declared, "It is a great honour to have been given this gift of life as human beings, the highest order of life in the universe. Our purpose is to honour the lives we have been given. Wasting them is unforgivable."

I believe there is a purpose to life, and it is really quite simple – it is to do the best with what we have. I don't think anybody should feel guilty about the gifts they've been given. However, I do believe they should feel guilty if they don't discover, foster and share these gifts.

To leave our talents undiscovered or undeveloped is a waste of life, and it is an insult to those who have to fight every day of their existence for the chance to get to the next.

I discovered my passion in the summer of 1997. Until then my life was aimless and uninspiring. I had wasted a lot of energy on wasteful things like drinking, watching television, or wrestling with God. When I discovered my passion, however, I discovered my purpose, I discovered myself and I discovered god. This passion has transformed and continues to transform who I am.

Writing is my passion. It is a compulsive passion that originates at the core of my soul. It is this core, I believe, that ignites a passion in all of us. It is a passion to become our own greatest selves, a drive to achieve our highest potential. It is a drive whose purpose is to express itself, and its expression is as unique and creative as each and every human on this planet.

Discovering, igniting and expressing our passion is akin to the process of self-actualization. I believe that self-actualization, the discovery of passion, the discovery of purpose, the discovery of self and the discovery of god[1], are in fact synonymous. For me therefore, the existence of our gods and self-determinism and self-actualization are not mutually exclusive. My own search for meaning started with a search for god, and it remains so to this day. The gods, therefore, will be a prevalent theme of this section.

For me, god and purpose, or meaning, are inexorably bound together. My definition of god has become quite mercurial, but it usually hovers around creativity and all this term implies. For this novel, for example, this god of mine has become 'self-actualization'. Like all gods, however, self-actualization has been hard to pin down. It means different things to different people (which if you think about it is 'self' intuitive). As the term implies, the process of 'self'

[1] The use of the lower case 'g' is deliberate. The small 'g' god is the term I use to represent that which is undefinable – it is the 'mysterious', the 'sacred', the 'force', the 'creative force', the 'universe', 'mother nature' – it is whatever that which inspires and/or causes 'awe' and wonder and joy. I also use it as an inclusive term for those who believe in a 'god' other than the Christian God or Allah, or those who believe, or believed in multiple 'gods' (Greeks and Romans). The upper case 'G' God is the term I use to refer to the Christian God.

actualization is as unique as the person who experiences it. The highest potential for a mother in Africa, for example, is quite different than that of a career father in Canada. Each has their unique set of gifts and opportunities, the combination and application of which will lead to unique results.

Philosophers and psychologists have their own definitions, which are usually dependent on the definition of their gods. Is self-actualization teleological, for instance? Is it innate? Is it a possibility, or a potentiality? Is it a drive, or a choice? I will attempt to answer these questions, and perhaps a few others, by discussing the philosophers and psychologists who contributed their thoughts about self-actualization and its teleology. I will then discuss the interesting and sometimes tumultuous relationship with their gods and how this relationship affected their philosophy. I will conclude with a reflection on 'higher-self-actualization' in our postmodern age.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow focused much of his work on the need for psychology "…to attempt to understand humans who are in the process of reaching their full potential" (Hergenhahn, 2001, p. 520). Maslow coined the term 'self-actualization' to describe this process. According to Hergenhahn, Maslow also realized the impossibility "…for any person to completely reach his or her full potential…", so he created a hierarchy of needs, the progression through which was a self-actualizing process (p. 521).

This hierarchy moves from physiological needs (food and shelter), to the need for safety, to belonging and love, to esteem and finally to self-actualization (Hergenhahn, p. 521). Maslow believed that "…all humans have an innate drive to be self-actualized…" (p. 522), but this 'teleological' drive is, however, a weaker drive than those lower on the scale, which tend to interfere with the self-actualization process (pp. 521-522). When we need to focus most of our energy on acquiring food for instance, there would be little energy left to drive us toward higher order ends such as creative writing.

According to Maslow, self-actualizing people are creative, they perceive reality accurately and fully, accept themselves and others, tend to be independent of their environment and culture, demonstrate a continuous freshness of appreciation, tend to have periodic mystic or peak experiences, show concern for all of humanity and embrace a strong sense of personal ethics (Hergenhahn, p. 522). Although not stated, I would think that Maslow would also consider these people to be more satisfied and happier with their lives.

Although Abraham Maslow is most famous for fully acknowledging and developing the concept of self-actualization, its roots can be found in the great minds of the ancient Greek philosophers. In Socrates, for example, we see perhaps the first recorded human contemplation that suggests the process of self-actualization might be purposeful, or teleological. Richard Kraut (1992) was certain that the "…central concern of Socrates' life…" was "…care for the soul" (p. 134). Kraut elaborates that according to Socrates the "…soul's function is to care for, rule, and deliberate, and so lead to the person's doing well and being happy (*Rep.* I 353d-354a)" (p. 135). For Socrates:

> …the soul is the human being's *instrument,* that by which a person lives – and, if it be so, lives well. Like the horse, the pruning knife, the eye, the bow, the archer, and the doctor, the soul has an *ergon* (function), and the *virtue* (or goodness) of each of these is the fulfilling of that function. (Kraut, p. 134)

So for Socrates there is something within us, this thing he calls the soul, whose reason for being is our happiness.

It is claimed that Aristotle, grand-student of Socrates (via Plato), "…founded self-actualization psychology" (Pivato, p. 28).

> He viewed the soul as the *entelechy* (self-contained purpose) of the body, that is the human personality (as is true of all things) is made with a purpose which must be fulfilled otherwise frustration or misery results. The person who actualizes himself fully, i.e.,

> realizes his every major potential capacity or ability, is adjusted in the sense that he finds himself in a state of *eudaimonia* (beautiful state of mind) or which signifies the same thing for Aristotle, happiness. Within the personality there exists a propensity for what is good for himself, thus the goal of every action of a human being is to achieve good which is realized by activity, that is, the actualization of his potentialities. (Sahakian, p. 9)

Professor Edward Younkins (2013) explains:

> Aristotle teaches that each man's life has a purpose and that the function of one's life is to attain that purpose. He explains that the purpose of life is earthly happiness or flourishing that can be achieved via reason and the acquisition of virtue. Articulating an explicit and clear understanding of the end toward which a person's life aims, Aristotle states that each human being should use his abilities to their fullest potential and should obtain happiness and enjoyment through the exercise of their realized capacities. He contends that human achievements are animated by purpose and autonomy and that people should take pride in being excellent at what they do. According to Aristotle, human beings have a natural desire and capacity to know and understand the truth, to pursue moral excellence, and to instantiate their ideals in the world through action. (p. 1)

Hergenhann (2001) says "Aristotle's philosophy exemplified **teleology** because, for him, everything in nature exists for a purpose" (p. 43). For Aristotle, everything has four causes: material, formal, efficient and final, and the final cause "…is the purpose for which an object exists" (p. 42). Entelechy, the term used to describe this innate purpose, "…keeps an object moving or developing in its prescribed direction until its full potential is reached" (p. 43). Hergenhahn, however, argues that "…what Aristotle meant by self-actualization was the innate tendency to manifest the characteristics or the essence of one's species" (p. 521). For Aristotle, says Hergenhahn, "…nature itself has a grand design or purpose" (p. 43). He identified this as the "…**unmoved mover**, which is pure actuality and is the cause of everything in nature" (p. 43).

After the Greeks, progress towards a self-actualizing psychology and philosophy slowed considerably. It wasn't until the fourteenth century with the emergence of humanism, an "…intellectual movement, based on Platonic philosophy, which emphasized the primacy of human values and individual creativity over feudal and ecclesiastical traditions and institutions" (Cantor, 1994, p. 540), that humanity began to emerge from its deep slumber. "Humanist philosophers believed that the human mind was capable of deciding for itself without relying on traditional authority" (Cantor, p. 540). This breaking free from traditional authority became an important foundation for Immanuel Kant's enlightening philosophy.

In Kant we see the driver of self-actualization to be our 'will', the purpose of which was to achieve the 'highest good'. Moral responsibility and free will were inexorably bound together by Kant. Kant's categorical imperative, which according to Hergenhahn (2001) is much like the 'golden rule' of Christianity (p. 170), says: "*Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law*" (Wood, 2001, p. 178). For Kant, although this imperative is innate, we are free to choose whether to follow it or not (Hergenhahn, p. 177).

Kant endows us with a possibility of self-autonomy through the exercise of our power of reason. Our capacity to reason gives us the freedom to rise above our 'nature' and the freedom to think for ourselves instead of letting others direct our thinking for us. This freedom is however contingent upon an obligation to follow the categorical imperative. "For Kant, the idea of moral responsibility was meaningless unless rationality and free will were assumed" (Hergenhahn, p. 170). It is not possible, in Kant, for man to rise above nature without "…making oneself into a being bound by principles…" (John E. Smith, in Hendel, 1957/1981, p. 22). For Kant, "…character is not something *given* by "nature" but something which must be achieved in the sphere of freedom…" (Smith, in Hendel, p. 22). Smith clarifies that "… through freedom, man's task is to *will* the internal connection between his own individual reason and the moral law, or that reason which is universal for all men" (p. 23).

Smith says "Kant looks for constancy not in what man *is* but in what he *should be.*" (Hendel, p. 20). To Kant "…man is the being of freedom, and this means that he cannot show himself as a creature of reason unless he actively determines himself in a manner which accords with reason" (pp. 23-24). To accord with reason, for Kant, means to act morally.

George Schrader, in Hendel (1957/1981), explains that Kant insisted that the self "…has no given nature or essence which as a potentiality only waits to be realized. […] Autonomy and self-existence are not given potentialities but possibilities" (p. 40). Schrader clarifies that Kant believed that to transcend our nature, "…it is our own form and character which we must develop…" (p. 42). In Kant's view, says Schrader, if man "…is to have a character at all, he must create it" (p. 42).

Our capacity to reason is of fundamental importance to Kant. It alone gives us our freedom. Schrader says that for Kant, reason "…is instrumental to the exercise of will and the realization of subjective existence" (Hendel, p. 43). For Kant, enlightenment through the exercise of reason makes self-determinism possible. In Kant's words:

> Enlightenment is man's exit from his self-incurred minority. Minority is the incapacity to use one's intelligence without the guidance of another. Such minority is self-incurred if it is not caused by lack of intelligence, but by lack of determination and courage to use one's intelligence without being guided by another. *Sapere Aude!* Have courage to use your own intelligence! Is therefore the motto of enlightenment" (Wood, 2001, p. 135).

With Kant, we see the linking of primary pre-requisites for self-actualization: free will and our capacity to reason and to make intelligent choices. For Kant, "…the self is fundamentally a possibility for existence which can realize itself only through freedom" (Schrader, in Hendel, p.44). Self-actualization then for Kant is more of a possibility than a potentiality – a possibility only through the application of reason and the act of will.

As Kant states in his *Critique of Judgment,* "…it is only culture that can be the ultimate end which we have cause to attribute to nature in respect of the human race" (Wood, p. 353). He believes therefore, that for the sake of culture, "…in the depths of our nature there is an aptitude for higher ends" (Wood, p. 355). For Kant, the highest end is the highest good, or the 'summum bonum', from which his categorical imperative is derived. Nature is teleological to Kant, and man is "…born to be its ultimate end [goal]" (p. 352). So, in Kant we see a belief that the teleological source of self-actualization is found in our nature, like Aristotle, and that the function of our intelligence and will, if we choose to use them, is to achieve the highest good.

Beyond Kant, Sorén Kierkegaard focused "on the irrational, emotional side of human nature" (Hergenhahn, 2001, p. 191). Different from, but similar to Kant's focus on the dominance of traditional authorities over our ability to think for ourselves, Kierkegaard focused on the dominance of traditional authorities over our ability to 'feel' for ourselves. He believed that "…no one should tell you what you feel as you read a love letter or the Bible, nor should anyone tell you what the correct interpretation of either should be. Your feelings and your interpretation define what in the experience is true for you" (p. 192). Here we see the seeds of a rather pragmatic, subjective and somewhat 'intuitive' philosophy that is developed more fully by future philosophers.

Much like Kant, Kierkegaard believed that "…the self is not given as a reality either phenomenally or noumenally, but as a possibility. Man's chief problem is to become an authentic self" (Schrader, in Hendel, p. 39). With Kierkegaard we perhaps see the roots of the idea that self-actualization is such a possibility through a hierarchical process. According to Hergenhahn (2001), Kierkegaard believed in 'approximations to personal freedom' and that these approximations occurred in stages: first is the aesthetic stage which is basically pleasure seeking and hedonistic, second is the ethical stage where people "…accept the responsibility of making choices but use as their guide ethical principles established by others", and third is the religious stage, where "…people recognize and accept their freedom and enter into a personal

relationship with God. […] People existing on this level see possibilities in life that often run contrary to what is generally accepted…" (p. 192), and therefore they in effect have more choice, or capacity to act independently, and to become authentic human beings.

Against Kant, Arthur Schopenhauer saw no purpose in will. He described the will "…as a blind, aimless force which cannot be known. In humans, according to Schopenhauer, "…this force manifests itself in the **will to survive** […] For Schopenhauer, the powerful drive toward self-preservation—not intellect and not morality— accounts for most human behavior" (Hergenhahn, 187). Although Schopenhauer didn't have much to contribute to self-actualization, he introduces the concept of a 'force' that is later labeled the 'Dionysian spirit' by Friedrich Nietzsche, the 'libido' by Sigmund Freud, an 'élan vital' by Henri Bergson, and the 'energy of the processes of life' by Carl Jung.

Schopenhauer's 'will to survive' had an enormous effect on Friedrich Nietzsche, who I believe, with his 'will to power' and 'higher man', paved the way for modern day self-actualization psychology and humanism.

"We should consider every day lost on which we have not danced at least once."[2]

To be honest, only a few years ago, Nietzsche appalled me. His declaration that God was dead annoyed me and I accordingly avoided anything written about or by him. However, I could not do justice to the subject of my novel without learning about Nietzsche, and therefore, learn about him I did. Surprisingly, through this learning I acquired quite a fondness for Nietzsche and I also found the origins of the concept of a creative energy that has been the focus of much of my thought over the past few years.

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[2] Nietzsche - *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.*

According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

> Nietzsche, having […] absorbed the German romanticist, and specifically Schopenhauerian, view that non-rational forces reside at the foundation of all creativity and of reality itself, identified a strongly instinctual, wild, amoral, "Dionysian" energy within pre-Socratic Greek culture as an essentially creative and healthy force. Surveying the history of Western culture since the time of the Greeks, Nietzsche lamented how this Dionysian, creative energy had been submerged and weakened as it became overshadowed by the "Apollonian" forces of logical order and stiff sobriety. […] As a means towards cultural rebirth, he advocated the resurrection and fuller release of Dionysian artistic energies – those which he associated with primordial creativity, joy in existence and ultimate truth. (p. 5)

Hergenhahn (2001) confirms that "At the heart of Nietzsche's psychology is the tension between Apollonian and Dionysian tendencies" (p. 194). Apollo and Dionysus were Olympian Greek Gods, with Apollo representing "…our rational side, our desire for tranquility, predictability, and orderliness", and Dionysus representing "…our irrational side, our attraction to creative chaos and to passionate, dynamic experiences" (p. 193). Hergenhahn states that "Nietzsche believed that Western philosophy had emphasized the intellect and minimized the human passions, and the result was lifeless rationalism" (p. 193). One of Nietzsche's major goals, says Hergenhahn, was "…the resurrection of the Dionysian spirit" (p. 193).

To Nietzsche, finding our passion outside of Christianity was of fundamental importance to the survival of humanity, because, with our scientific 'Apollonian' rationalism, and the arrival of Darwin's evolutionary theory and materialism in the nineteenth century, those "…philosophers and scientists of his day" (Hergenhahn, p. 194), we had killed our God: "Do we not hear the noise of the grave-diggers who are burying God? Do we not smell the divine

putrefaction? – for even Gods putrefy! God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him!" (Nietzsche, 1882/1973, p. 168).

Mendelowitz & Schneider, in Corsini and Wedding (2008), claim that "Nietzsche's blasphemous talk of the "death of God" was, in fact, the outcry of a deeply spiritual man bemoaning the loss of absolute faith and prophesying a future of profound dislocation" (p. 302). Humanity had "…relied on God for so long for the ultimate meaning of life and for our conception of morality…" (Hergenhahn, p. 194) that without God, we were lost. We were animals, just like every other earthly animal, and we were no longer the centre of the Universe (Hergenhahn, p. 194). Although the Christian God's last days have dragged on for quite some time, Nietzsche prophetically lamented this loss and the death of our sense of purpose as the ultimate consequence. It became Nietzsche's raison d'etre to rescue humanity from the abyss of desperate meaninglessness that was at humanity's doorstep.

Nietzsche turned this impending doom into an opportunity for humanity to evolve into fully mature, independent beings. "According to Nietzsche, the absence of […]traditional sources of meaning and morality means that humans are on their own" (Hergenhahn, pp. 194-195). With his 'superman' he encouraged each of us to grab life by the throat and to pursue our own meaning. In a future world without God, Nietzsche encouraged us to think for ourselves, to live on our own terms, to become a sort of superman. Western civilization was about to remove the yoke of its God, and he in effect encouraged us to replace this god by acknowledging that we could and should become our own gods. Without the Christian God, we had to create the greatness of God within ourselves. In one of his Notebooks, Nietzsche wrote, "He who does not find greatness in God *finds* it nowhere; he must either deny it or create it" (Nietzsche, 1886/2003, p. 26).

To enable us to become 'supermen', however, Nietzsche first had to dispose of determinism and our culturally imposed morality which had sprouted from our philosophic and

religious roots. We were entangling ourselves in a cage of godless, lifeless conformity and Nietzsche hoped to free us from our cage with the 'will to power' (in deliberate opposition to Schopenhauer's 'will to survive'). Hergenhahn (2001) adeptly summarizes the will to power as "…the tendency to gain mastery over one's self and one's destiny. If given expression, the will to power causes a person to seek new experiences and to ultimately reach his or her full potential" (p. 195). Here we see self-actualization as a possibility if our teleological 'will to power' is directed to this purpose.

Hollingdale (1977) says, in his introduction to *A Nietzsche Reader,* that in Nietzsche's philosophy a non-metaphysical transcendence is possible. With his theory of 'will to power', Nietzsche "…sought to explain the admired attributes and achievements of mankind as products of 'sublimated will to power' – of the capacity to transform the drive to power over the world and other men into power over oneself…" (p. 11).

"Nietzsche said, "every man is a unique miracle"; "we are responsible to ourselves for our own existence"; and "freedom makes us responsible for our characters just as artists are responsible for their creations" (Golomb, 1989, pp. 123, 128, 129)" (Hergenhahn, 2001, p. 194). Hergenhahn explains that for Nietzsche, however, we are only potentially free, and that if we use our will to power to mold the ingredients available to us into an authentic, unique personality, we are free (p. 194). In effect, the 'will to power' becomes the 'will to create a self'.

With his 'will to power' Nietzsche places destiny in our own hands. Like Kant, we are free only if we choose to be, but, opposing Kant's categorical imperative, the choice is to live according to our own moral standards. Although there is a higher self in Nietzsche, there is clearly no *summum bonum.* In his introduction to Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886/2003), Tanner says "Nietzsche is the first philosopher to exult in the fact […] that value is not something that we discover, but something we invent" (p.20). According to Nietzsche (1886/2003):

> The noble type of man feels *himself* to be the determiner of values, he does not need to be approved of, he judges 'what harms me is harmful in itself', he knows himself to be that which in general first accords honour to things, he *creates values*. (p. 195)

The 'superman', or 'higher man' as Hergenhahn suggests (p. 195), is such a person. Nietzsche's higher man would not be a dogmatist but he would proclaim "'My judgement is *my* judgement: another cannot easily acquire a right to it'" and such a person would wish to "…get rid of the bad taste of wanting to be in agreement with the many" (Nietzsche, 1886/2003, p. 71).

Nietzsche's 'higher man' is a Dionysian man. According to Mendelowitz & Schneider, in Corsini & Wedding (2008), "Nietzsche (1889/1982) called for a Dionysian-Apollonian rapprochement. This would afford people "the whole range and wealth of being natural," while simultaneously encouraging their capacity for being "strong, highly educated" and "self-controlled" (p. 554)" (p. 300). Further elaborating they say that "Nietzsche espoused a development of the self that might hit on all cylinders, so to speak, and urged on us a belief in gods who could dance" (p. 300).

From reading Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886/2003), according to Tanner, "…it becomes clear that Nietzsche is attempting to formulate the conditions under which we may hope to recover a conception of greatness, above all of that kind of greatness which we associate with creativity…" (pp. 22-23).

Self-actualization was a matter of will to Nietzsche. He commanded us to "…*will* a self and thou shalt *become* a self." (Hollingdale, p. 232). Asking the question "*What does your conscience say",* he answers, "'You should become him who you are.'" (p. 235). The new human, according to Nietzsche, would "…*want to be those who we are* – the new, the unique, the incomparable, those who give themselves their own law, those who create themselves!" (Hollingdale, p. 237).

To Nietzsche, through the 'superman' we have the capacity to create the world. Reinhardt, in his introduction to Nietzsche's *Joyful Wisdom* says, "The place of the "old God" is thus occupied by the super-human will of the man who joyfully affirms the future and who in the consciousness of his superabundant strength re-creates himself and his world" (1882/1973, p. 9). To the superman Nietzsche says, "…the world should be formed in your image by your reason, your will, and your love!" (Hollingdale, p. 242).

A potential for self-actualization exists in Nietzsche's will to power, but this potentiality is only a possibility if we choose to use this will to power to create our higher selves. Like Aristotle and Kant, self-actualization is once again a natural teleological drive that becomes possible only through human intent.

In the same age of Nietzsche, where the world was contemplating the weight of materialism and Darwin's theory of evolution, William James came along to hold free will back from the abyss over which it was precariously perched. With his 'will to believe' he attempted to nullify the overwhelming forces of his day that asserted the non-existence of free will.

Influenced quite significantly by Darwin's theory of evolution, William James, in Sahakian (1975), believed that, ""Mental life is primarily teleological; that is to say, that our various ways of feeling and thinking have grown to be what they are because of their utility in shaping our *reactions* on the outer world" (1892, p. 4)" (p. 295). The mind had a purpose, and this purpose is the "…pursuance of future ends and the choice of means for their attainment" (1890, vol. 1, p. 8)" (Sahakian, p. 295). Suckiel (1982) says James "…pictures the human being as a striving, goal-positing, interest-fulfilling organism, whose most important characteristic is his volitional appropriation and projection of ends" (p. 2). James says the mind, as a teleological mechanism, is "…a transformer of the world of our impressions into a totally different world – the world of our conception; and the transformation is effected in the interests of our volitional nature, and for no other purpose whatsoever" (Suckiel, p. 3).

However, according to Suckiel, James also "…sees the rational and cognitive faculties of human beings to be subservient to the spirited and emotional aspects of our nature" (p. 2). For James, although human consciousness is thoroughly teleological, "Human cognitive activities – concept formation, belief acquisition, theory construction, and the like – function like tools which are limited and molded by the individual's preferences, desires, goals, and interests" (p. 2). These desires, goals and interests are what James labeled demands.

James focused primarily on the existence and purpose of our consciousness and our capacity to reason to satisfy demands, and the relationship of the former to free will. Hergenhahn (2001) says that for James there existed such a thing as soft determinism, where "…cognitive processes such as intentions, motives, beliefs, and values intervene between experience and behavior. The soft determinist sees human behavior as resulting from thoughtful deliberation of the options available to a given situation" (p. 14). According to James, the "…human mind, thus possesses a "simultaneous theater of possibilities," which will be made to conform to the truth that the willful mind declares" (Bankart, 1997, p. 217). Much like Kant, for James self-actualization is a possibility through the use of reason and an act of free will, or at least a belief in free will.

Also much like Kant, "…for James, the exercise of will is a powerful moral force. For James there was no "debate" about free will; its existence was not just a "fact" but a human imperative" (Bankart, p. 217). And, like Kant, James believed that it was the ability to reason that gave us choice. James' pragmatism, summarizes Bankart, "...became, in a sense, a metaphysics of thinking—a study of how ideas are transformed into actions through the application of human intentionality" (p. 218).

Like Nietzsche, James also believed in our "...individual reality and creative power" (Hergenhahn, p. 299). Suckiel (1982) says that in James's pragmatism was the belief that human thought has a creative and originative function (p. 12). James believed that by ingraining

desired behaviours into habits, you in effect re-create yourself. Self-actualization for James becomes possible through a convergence of his theory "... on a fundamental principle: Act in ways that are compatible with the type of person you would like to become" (Hergenhahn, p. 303). Here we see a strong similarity to Nietzsche in that it is possible to create a self, albeit Nietzsche and James methods to do so are slightly different; willing a self for the former, and molding a self through action, for the latter.

"The notion of the satisfaction of demand is the most central concept in James' ethical theory…" (Suckiel, p. 49). For James, it is our mind's purpose to satisfy demands. Like Kant, for James the satisfaction of all demands is good as long as it doesn't hurt anybody else. Unlike Kant, however, the teleological, natural purpose of these demands is not necessarily the highest good.

It is on the demand side of the equation that our most famous psychoanalysts first focused. Around the time of James, in the early twentieth century, Psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud identified a basic drive he labeled the *libido*. Psychologist Carl Jung expanded the definition of the libido from "instinctual energy, basically sexual in nature …to the energy of the processes of life" (Progoff, 1953, p. 59). In Freud's libido we see a blind, instinctual drive, quite similar to Schopenhauer's blind, aimless force. In Jung however, we see a teleological 'energy of the processes of life'. It is in this energy, I believe, that Carl Jung saw a demand for self-actualization, a demand that was an innate or instinctual, teleological and creative force.

Jung's 'energy of the processes of life' was related quite strongly to French Philosopher Henri-Louis Bergson's *élan vital.* According to Bergson this energy is the vital force that nourishes the evolving universe. As summarized by I. Edman (1977) in his forward to Bergson's *Creative Evolution*, Bergson's *élan vital* is a term to describe the "...creative surge of life..." (p.xii). It is probable that Jung derived the 'energy of the processes of life' from Nietzsche's Dionysius, and Bergson's *élan vital*, but it was likely heavily influenced through his study of

Eastern philosophies, including Taosim's Yin and Yang. The 'energy of the processes of life' also likely become very real for Jung when he learned of the fascinating observation by physicists at the time that, through the simple act of observation, humans affected the behavior of quantum particles.

Carl Jung "…conceived of energy movements as a general characteristic of the psyche…" (Progoff, 1956/1973, p. 105), and he turned the focus of his life's work to the study of the unconscious and the movements of this vital, creative energy that was "...manifested specifically in the psyche of man" (Progoff, 1953, p. 59).

In the deepest layers of the unconscious, Jung's *suprapersonal unconscious,* are "innate possibilities of ideas, *a priori* conditions for fantasy-production…" (Read, et.al, p. 10). For Jung, these 'possibilities', or templates of perception were inherited. They were biological and genetic, and not mystical as some have interpreted them to be. The 'energy of the processes of life' ignited these possibilities in the context of culture which then became expressed in the form of ancestral images, or 'archetypes' as Jung labeled them. Nagy (1991) confirms that for Jung "…the concept of the archetypes embraces both the unknown energic drive force or life force and (partially) the image by which it is expressed and perceived" (p. 144). Nagy also explains that Jung saw intentionality in the 'creative force' (p.142). For Jung, the 'energy of the process of life' and these archetypes combined into a teleological foundation for the unconscious, which was the primary driver of human behavior.

This combination of life force, or the 'energy of the processes of life', and the archetypes lurking in the deepest corners of our minds is key to Jung's process of self-actualization. It is a creative force with intention, and the archetypes are the template through which this force acts. Becoming conscious of the various psychic energies working within the unconscious and aligning these energies by developing a balanced personality, is the process of self-actualization, or individuation, to which Jung refers. "According to Jung, the goal of life is to reach self-actualization, which involves the harmonious blending of all aspects of personality"

(Hergenhahn, p. 490). This process of individuation is a recognition of the conflicting forces within one's personality and a synthesis of and harmonization of them (Hergenhahn, p. 490). According to Jung:

> …the self causes people to try to synthesize all components of their personality. It represents the human need for unity and wholeness of the total personality. The goal of life is first to discover and understand the various parts of the personality and then to synthesize them into a harmonious unity. Jung called this unity *self-actualization*. (Hergenhahn, p. 489)

Self-actualization is in part a process of energizing or igniting those lesser developed aspects of self. If one was primarily introverted, for example, a move to self-actualization would mean a focus of energy toward development of one's extroverted qualities. The process of individuation involves the centering of self, which to Jung is the movement toward the higher self that results in both an alignment and expression of the 'energy of the processes of life'. I thought of a useful metaphor to explain this process. Take a house with two rooms, one room is our conscious minds, the other our unconscious. Imagine for the purposes of this example that the house has no roof. Now imagine a candle as our 'selves'. We normally hold this candle over only one room. The other room is in constant darkness, full of shadows and unknown forces. Individuation is a process of moving the candle higher so it can shine into both rooms, and while doing so it transforms from a candle into the sun.

In the mid-1900's, Carl Rogers, a father of client-centered therapy, "postulated that all living organisms are dynamic processes motivated by an inherent tendency to maintain and enhance themselves. In human beings, this actualizing tendency is expressed by on-going attempts to realize the individual's unique potential" (Corsini & Wedding, p. 142). This actualizing tendency, according to Rogers, was "part of a more general *formative tendency*, observable in the movement toward greater order, complexity, and interrelatedness that occurs in

stars, crystals, and microorganisms as well as in human beings" (p. 142). Rogers believed that "…persons are constantly evolving toward complexity and more effective self-creation" (p. 142).

With his demands and satisfaction thereof, William James provides a useful framework for me to compare and summarize the ideas of the various 'self-actualization' philosophers and psychologists. The broad range of demands upon us can include Aristotle's natural entelechy, Kant's traditional authority, Nietzsche's constricting religion and rationality, Nietzsche's will to power, Schopenhauer's aimless drive and will to survive, and Jung's innate possibilities, unconscious shadows, and the energy of the processes of life. The mind or the 'self', its consciousness and capacity for reason is the tool we have to make sense of these demands and choose how best to satisfy them. With our mind we can become consciously aware of our demands, and thereby control how we might or might not choose to satisfy them. This in itself is a process of self-actualization. The more aware of these demands or influences we are, the more choices, and therefore, the more free will we have. Or as Jung would put it, the more aware of our unconscious we are, the more conscious we become. Knowing why we act, or why we wish to act as we do, gives us the possibility to change our behavior. We can even turn these demands toward our own ends, perhaps as Nietzsche suggests by taking the demanding will to power and using it to become better, higher human beings, or very similar to what Carl Jung suggests, by engaging the energy of the processes of life to ignite, or to become our higher selves.

Our fundamental purpose, I believe, is to discover our passion. When we find our passion, we plug in to our 'higher selves' – we become who we are. Like many philosophers and psychologists, I believe this drive to self-actualization is innate. For Aristotle, there is a natural entelechy, driving us to our highest individual and species potential. For Kant, there is a higher purpose in will and reason, and self-actualization is a possibility if we choose to use them. In Nietzsche we see an innate will to power that we can use to 'will a self', to become higher, happier, powerful human beings. With William James we find purpose in our consciousness and ability to reason and the freedom they give us to shape our 'selves' and our future. In Jung we

find a teleological energy, a ‘Self’ driving force of life that demands creative expression, that can be focused through conscious awareness and the process of individuation to the development, or perhaps discovery of the ‘higher self’.