

Willem Lammers

It's a deeply moving experience to feel the power of the word working in my own being, to experience change so immediately. Time expands and slows down, my flow of thoughts comes to a standstill. An inner space opens up, a space for my Self.
Ira Mollay

Logosynthesis is ...

... a remarkably elegant and efficient system for guided change – psychotherapy, coaching, and counseling. This system contains elements from many models in the field: energy psychology, transactional analysis, psychoanalysis and hypnotherapy, in a new and effective combination.

As one of very few models, Logosynthesis also creates a unique space for the spiritual dimension of guided change: it helps us understand personal growth and development as a quality of our deepest human nature. As a method, Logosynthesis applies the age-old power of the word as a new, amazing healing tool, a starting point for surprisingly gentle healing of trauma, addiction, fear and stress symptoms.

Logosynthesis teaches clear interventions in the form of specific sentences offered to the client, embedded in a beautifully broad and deep view of human nature.

This book offers a very clear and readable introduction to the model. It explains the application of Logosynthesis in your own practice for guided change, with examples for different types of issues. Annotated transcripts of actual sessions will help you to understand the system in detail.



Willem Lammers, TSTA, is the founding director of **ias**, a leading training institute for coaches and counselors in Switzerland. As a licensed psychologist, a psychotherapist, and a consultant to people and organizations, he has been working on the boundaries of body, mind and spirit for more than 30 years. Willem also runs a private practice for psychotherapy, supervision and coaching.

He is the author of numerous articles and several books in the field. Willem likes to travel and offers regular lectures and workshops in many different countries.



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ias
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LOGOSYNTHESIS

Change through the Magic of Words

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the Magic of Words

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Logosynthesis

Change through the Magic of Words

**with a foreword by
Nancy Porter-Steele and Curtis Steele**

ias publications

For Nancy & Curtis

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Names of clients have been altered to protect their privacy.

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Foreword

It's our privilege to write the foreword for this first English-language edition of Logosynthesis, and to be part of the development of Logosynthesis™ in our own way – which to date is minor, but we hope will become more useful as this excellent information is disseminated.

We came in contact with Willem Lammers shortly after our first course in any Energy Psychology modality, which was Thought Field Therapy. Persuaded to move past our intense skepticism by the personal experiences we had in the course, we discovered an online discussion list about Energy Psychology, being hosted by Willem. As we communicated with Willem via his list, he suggested checking out Emotional Freedom Technique™, Gary Craig's excellent development – based, originally, on Thought Field Therapy. We did that, spending some time arguing by phone with Gary whether this whole thing was too good to be true, and/or whether the way it was being presented was exaggerated, and would destroy the possibility of having any of it accepted in the world of mainstream, reliable psychotherapy, counselling, and other professional disciplines.

Fortunately for us, we are committed to our experience, even when it appears to be dissonant with what we've been taught, or what we logically deduce. Consequently, we have happily studied Emotional Freedom Technique intensively, used it extensively, have become part of the panel of advisors to Gary Craig's very beneficial website (www.emofree.com), and have become regular participants in the annual Energy Psychology conferences in Toronto, Canada. At one such conference we came in contact with CFQ Healing Qigong, an entirely non-verbal energy healing system, which we since study, practice, and teach.

And, meanwhile, Willem Lammers generously shared some of his developing insights – which have subsequently become the remarkable method and theory that you will read about in this book.

I (NP-S) emailed back and forth with Willem, and he sent me information about work he was developing, involving the removal of energies of harmful external thought forms from clients' fields. I began trying this out, and found it helpful. When Louise Ghiz of Dalhousie University gave me the opportunity to recommend someone to do a program for the ongoing professional development program she organizes for the Dalhousie School of Social Work, I was excited to recommend inviting Willem. This worked out successfully, and in the autumn of 2006, Willem taught a Level One Logosynthesis course here in Halifax, under the auspices of the School of Social Work. About thirty persons attended. Most are psychotherapists. Several are experienced teachers, trainers, and supervisors of psychotherapy.

Like us, Willem is a long-time Transactional Analyst and trainer. You will find examples of his skillfulness as a teacher and trainer throughout this book. Willem also has omnivorously digested the teachings and trainings of many individuals and schools of psychology and psychotherapy, and has

looked deeply into teachings of various spiritual schools. In Logosynthesis, he has brought together the essences of many of these ways of understanding and working with human experience.

Willem is careful to insist that Logosynthesis is not esoteric. He's right. It's very direct, and not mysterious. At the same time, for those of us who are long-time students of so-called esoteric disciplines (in our cases, Shambhala/Tibetan Buddhism), it is clear that Logosynthesis is completely harmonious with these teachings.

Logosynthesis provides a skillful way of communicating to the basic healthiness that is always available, although often hidden from our awareness. Willem uses the term "Essence" to refer to this basic healthiness, this natural wisdom – you choose your own term. With Logosynthesis, we are able to simply say a carefully chosen sentence, and let go, while "Essence" does the work.

Willem's depth of experience results in his placing this apparently simple work within a precisely stated overall framework requiring the skills of a person well-trained and well-experienced in guiding the process of change for others. This emphasis is important. Without it, the power of Logosynthesis might not manifest at all.

We commend this remarkable work to you, wholeheartedly and with our very best wishes that you may use it to benefit many people, including yourself.

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Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
February 2008

1.

Introduction

Lenore beside her shoes, January 11, 2005

Sometimes, a single day can change the course of a life. For me as a professional coach and psychotherapist, January 11, 2005 was such a day. My understanding of change and development in people altered radically on this Tuesday. What happened?

My colleague Denise had asked me to join her to see one of her clients because she had become stuck in the treatment she had been offering to her.

Lenore was brought to the practice by her husband. She was a petite 42-year-old woman who walked with a slight stoop. Her eyes showed deep fear and uncertainty, mixed with a hint of hope that something could still change her life.

Denise, an experienced psychotherapist, had told me Lenore's story before the session: her life had changed radically in one day. Five years ago she fell down a flight of stairs at a train station on her way to work. At this point her ordeal began. She could not remember what exactly had happened.

Hours later she found herself in an unfamiliar place, bruised and with her clothes ripped. Her husband had to come for her.

After the incident her whole life changed. She could no longer concentrate at her workplace and had to leave her job. She was no longer her old self. She became fearful and was deeply uncertain about herself. She couldn't cope with her life anymore. On the 11th of January, 2005, when I met her, she still didn't know exactly what had happened, five years after the accident. She had been traumatized, with total amnesia regarding the event. A number of doctors couldn't find neurological or any other kind of injuries and considered her a difficult, if not hopeless case. She had contacted Denise under these circumstances. Lenore and her husband were convinced that all her problems had started with the fall five years earlier. The doctors treating her, as well as the health and disability insurance agencies involved, denied this and instead diagnosed a personality disorder.

When my colleague met Lenore she concluded that the doctors had underestimated the extent of the posttraumatic stress disorder following the accident. For the first time Lenore felt understood in her pain and her situation. Treatment began, and after a few sessions Lenore began to blossom: she had finally found someone who took her difficulties seriously. Yet her symptoms showed little change and amnesia regarding the event remained.

Therefore Denise had suggested inviting me for a consultation, based on my experience with Energy Psychology and EMDR – methods that often lead to unexpected results in situations where therapy has become stuck.

Denise introduced me to her client and I took over the lead of the conversation. After a short introduction about possible objectives of my support, I asked her what was bothering her at that moment. She told me that she had felt disori-

ented again this morning in the bathroom, and that her hand couldn't find the glass door of the shower: she had repeatedly missed it by eight inches. That unsettled her deeply. This wasn't the first time she experienced this kind of disorientation: when she went to put a key in a keyhole her hand tried to find it around eight inches away from the actual hole. In her Swiss dialect she described herself in this state as "beside her shoes," in other words, "crazy."

As I listened to her I felt more and more helpless. My head was buzzing with images of her brain and neurological hypotheses. I was trying to get more precise information from Lenore but she was unable to give it to me. She was looking at me helplessly, with her big eyes full of hope, and asked if I, too thought she was crazy.

I had to think about this. I wasn't surprised that the physicians didn't know what to do with Lenore and had diagnosed her inner state as a personality disorder. Sadly, in many cases such a label doesn't change the situation. It equally fails to support treatment of the problems, although it does succeed in conveying the impression that the speaker knows what she/he is talking about. I didn't know either, but something inside me struggled with this simple solution. I delayed my own diagnosis for a while, even though I didn't have a clue what I could do now.

I sat there silently and looked over at Lenore. My eyes began to wander in an unfocused way over the suffering woman sitting opposite me. Then suddenly an image came to me. To her right I saw a thin, delicate, light shadow like a wisp of fog. Normally I would have dismissed such a perception as the product of fatigue or fantasy, but now her words were resonating loudly and clearly in my ears: "beside my shoes." Could it be that she was actually "beside her shoes," not as a metaphor but literally? That she had shifted part of her life energy to another place because of the accident?

I followed my intuition. The neurological hypotheses didn't help me to help Lenore and neither did the diagnosis of personality disorder. During my studies one of my teachers had drawn my attention to the literal meaning of the word "crazy" (in German "ver-rückt" literally means dis-placed – translator's note): when you are "ver-rückt," nothing is left in its usual place, and here we had it. Lenore literally was sitting there "beside her shoes." A part of her had shifted in space and consequently her conscious mind was looking for the keyhole eight inches to the left of her physical body.

It was so simple and yet so absurd. However, in thirty years of psychotherapy and counseling I had learned to take the absurd seriously, especially since studying Energy Psychology. Therefore I took Lenore's words literally. I told her what had caught my attention during my daydreaming, explained my thoughts about her shoes and her sitting beside them. I asked her if she was ready to try an experiment. She became curious and agreed – she had nothing left to lose.

I then asked her to retrieve the energy from the "body beside her" back to her physical body. She immediately reacted with intense fear. That confirmed my assumption that we were dealing with something substantial, and I decided to follow this track. I looked at Denise and we both promised Lenore to be there for her. I gave her the assurance that she could interrupt the experiment at any time. Then she made a second attempt. The effect was dramatic. Lenore became physically and emotionally highly agitated. She gasped for air and tears ran down her cheeks. She was crying, but she stayed with the process. For a moment I was worried. But I decided just to wait. The agitated phase seemed to last an eternity. Then, after twenty minutes, she calmed down and it became clear how deeply the experiment had probed: she now knew what had happened five years ago. She described exactly how she had been pushed down a flight of stairs at a

train station by a pedestrian in a hurry. She stayed lying on the floor for several minutes, hurt and frozen with cold and terror. She then told how she had returned to the parking lot to drive back home. She had found her car but she couldn't open the door. She then decided to take the train but she couldn't open the automatic door and the train left in front of her. Finally, she managed to contact her husband. He picked her up and took her home.

Lenore was bubbling with joy and relief that she had regained her memory and finally knew what had happened. The split between her consciousness and her body had been healed: she was no longer "beside her shoes."

That was the beginning of Logosynthesis. Since the beginning of my training as a psychologist, psychotherapist and coach I had been consistently looking for new ways to ease pain and distress. After the session with Lenore I began to investigate the dynamics behind my discovery: The course of the session with Lenore could indicate that human consciousness can exist independently of body and space. Such experiences are not new. Reports on such experiences exist in all spiritual traditions, in case histories of deeply traumatized people as well as in the description of near-death experiences. And in scientific research, especially in modern physics, there are more and more signs of the real existence of such phenomena (Sheldrake, 2003; Radin, 2006).

This was a new discovery that we could apply this knowledge to treat all kind of disturbances with the help of relatively simple methods of coaching, counseling and psychotherapy. The discovery of the power of the word had especially important consequences for the development of Logosynthesis as a model for guided change.

This book describes Logosynthesis as it was developed after the ground-breaking session with Lenore on January 11, 2005.

1.1. What is Logosynthesis?

*A song is sleeping in all things
It's dreaming on and on
And the world will start to sing
Once you hit the magic word.*

-- Josef von Eichendorff

This book consists of three parts: an introduction, a part on areas of application; and transcripts of actual sessions. In the appendix you will find further information on teaching seminars in Logosynthesis.

The introductory part will help you to understand the principles behind Logosynthesis and the way the method works.

The parts and chapters are written in such a way that you can follow your intuition and start the book wherever you feel yourself drawn.

This book only teaches the basics of Logosynthesis. For professional use we recommend further training and supervision: many specific aspects of applying the method can only be taught live. You can find details about training in the last chapter of the book.

History and basic principles

The work with Lenore was the beginning of a fascinating adventure. The discovery of the dissociation between a virtual person and her physical body had deeply impressed me. I was happy that Lenore had been able to bring her two bodies together and to initiate a new phase in her treatment. This process intrigued me. I began analyzing the dissociation between a physical and a virtual body. This phenomenon could be of importance for the treatment of my clients.

A second session with Lenore became as important as the first one. A few weeks after the first session she scheduled a follow-up with Denise and me. At this point she described how her memories of the event of five years ago had cleared up even further and how happy she was with her newly discovered memories. But the session was also interesting for another reason.

When I asked her on what issue she wanted to work today, Lenore described her fear of an upcoming medical examination. It turned out that this fear was triggered by the memory of a professor who hadn't treated her with adequate sensitivity during a previous examination. As Lenore described her fear of the renewed contact with the professor, she constantly moved her head to the right – as if someone was talking insistently to her on her left side and she was trying to escape this. I let myself be inspired by the first session with Lenore and asked her where in the room the image of the professor was located. She made a gesture towards her left ear and described how the professor was yelling at her from a distance of around twelve inches: in Lenore's perception, the professor was in the room and her body was actually reacting to his felt presence. When I asked her to remove the image of the professor from her "personal space" the fear of the next examination disappeared immediately. Subsequently the examination went smoothly.

This was another important discovery: Not only her awareness of herself could be located in another place in space. Also virtual representations of important people and aspects of the environment could be "parked" within our body and our personal space. These representations are real to the people affected, as if they're present in the same room. The physical body also reacts as if these people were really there.

What really interested me was the benefit for Lenore's treatment. With the removal of the representation of the professor, the fear of the next examination by one of his colleagues had disappeared. My assumption during the session had resulted in immediate benefits. Representations of actual people, in this case the unpleasant professor, could effectively exist as a virtual reality in space, and they could also be removed to prevent further damage.

That is how I came to a preliminary version of the principles that were later to become Logosynthesis:

- Our awareness of ourselves in three-dimensional space is not always in the same place as our physical body. Fragmentations are possible.
- Representations of people exist in the space around us, in three dimensions.
- As soon as these representations cross a certain borderline in space, they directly impact our thoughts and feelings as if the person really were in the same room. In this book, our personal space is the space within this borderline.

We can use these basic assumptions in therapeutic work with our clients. Subsequently I started to observe my work with my clients in this light. It turned out that this phenomenon of "beside one's shoes" wasn't that unusual. In reports from victims of sexual abuse, near-death experiences during surgery and after car crashes experiences of a split between the body

and the consciousness of a person in space are frequently reported. Long ago, Goethe wrote that “two souls, alas, dwell in my breast.” In psychological and psychotherapeutic literature we speak of dissociation. When people talk about an inner conflict, it strikes me how often they seem to portray different positions in space. If we take this literally – and why shouldn’t we? – virtual bodies exist besides the physical body, as subtle energy structures. They can be perceived by our consciousness, even if our five senses do not notice. Esoteric traditions describe up to seven separate interconnected bodies (see for example Leadbeater, 1928). It is also not unusual to picture other beings in our personal space: from my early religious upbringing I remember the picture of a small boy. His mother is not home and he considers reaching into the candy jar. On his right side you can see an angel holding him back while on his left side a grinning devil eggs him on.

If a person has virtual bodies that can exist separately from the physical body, then we can also assume virtual representations of other people in our personal space as similar energy structures.

Roger Callahan (1998), one of the first developers of the field now called Energy Psychology, called these structures *thought fields* and developed Thought Field Therapy to neutralize them. I prefer to talk about thought forms as they are perceived as more or less distinct forms in space. Even though they cannot be perceived with the eye, they directly impact people.

In working with Lenore my first ideas of a therapeutic system on the base of this model arose. In such a system, the virtual and physical bodies would merge, clearing the immediate personal space of burdensome energy structures.

Subsequently I began to observe my clients more closely when they talked about their problems. I paid attention to where they were looking, or how their bodies reacted when

they talked about people who were causing them problems or making them happy, how they talked about decisions they had made and where they seemed to place their different options in physical space. It got more and more interesting.

During a seminar in Moscow, a few weeks after the sessions with Lenore, Alexej, a 40-year-old psychiatrist, described the pressure he felt from his boss. While he was talking, his body bent into a strange angle, as if a big wedge pushed into his side. When I asked him to tell me what was happening in his body, he described a sharp pain in the middle of his body, as if a big stone was pushing him there. And that’s how he actually looked. Not only could virtual representations of people in one’s personal space actually disturb one’s wellbeing; there were also virtual representations of objects with a similar effect. I then let Alexej visualize removing the sharp stone from his body and his personal space. Alexej’s fear of his boss disappeared immediately the moment he did that, to his and my amazement.

For a time I looked for representations of disturbing persons and elements in my clients’ bodies and personal spaces. I asked them where they perceived a certain person or an event in the room around them: left/right, above/below, in front/behind. These thought forms were dissolved through their conscious removal from their personal space. To do this I used visualizing techniques. But an important problem arose: sometimes people, like Lenore, tend to give those representations great power over themselves. When those representations were experienced as too big and strong, the new method proved to be inadequate.

A next, important step in the development of Logosynthesis was the discovery of the power of the word. In my research I found an interesting approach at www.immunics.org. The articulation of certain sentences has a direct impact on body,

mind and soul without having to make any intellectual or cognitive effort. The Immunic method applies this principle mainly to the treatment of physical symptoms. On this basis the fourth basic principle of Logosynthesis crystallized:

The power of the word can dissolve frozen structures and free our life energy for our life's purpose.

In the new model, the power of the word replaced visualization as the main method of intervention. This took some time getting used to, for my clients as well as for me. The fact that someone can speak a sentence and that this sentence can immediately change or dissolve energy structures as described above seems at first unbelievable.

And so since the session with Lenore on January 11, 2005 I have developed a method to ease human suffering and to promote personal growth. It consists of a model, principles for change, and actual interventions embedded in an integral view of human nature. I call the method Logosynthesis. The name combines two words from ancient Greek familiar to our culture: *logos* is Greek for “meaning,” “mind,” “word” or “teaching.” The Greek word *synthesis* means “putting together” or “combining” and refers to the integration of fragmented parts of a person in the Self. The “putting together” can also be understood as “making whole” or “healing.” Therefore you can literally translate Logosynthesis as “healing with words.”

It's no coincidence that the term recalls some of the concepts from Victor Frankl's Logotherapy (1987) and Roberto Assagioli's Psychosynthesis (1993). Frankl's concept evolved from three basic philosophical and psychological tenets:

- Life has meaning under all circumstances.
- Our main motivation to live is the will to find meaning.

- We are free to find meaning in our experiences and in what we do.

It is Victor Frankl's achievement to be one of the first to expand psychotherapy to include the spiritual dimension. For Assagioli, the founder of Psychosynthesis, as well, the interaction of body, mind and soul was a given.

Logosynthesis builds on my thirty years of experience in guiding human change. It is a pragmatic synthesis of the principles of many schools of change: psychotherapy, energy psychology and age-old healing wisdom. Specialists from different schools of thought will therefore discover features of their own models in Logosynthesis. However, this extremely elegant combination of these working principles is unique.