TOWARDS A SPIRITUAL WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY

IS IT FEASIBLE GIVEN CURRENT PARADIGMS?

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Mind-body dichotomy
Mechanistic view of life
Materialistic concept of mind
Segmental approach to the individual
Illness=biomedical change
‘Natural’ causes of illness
PARADIGM OF WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY

BELIEFS

POSITIVISM
- Reality is rooted only in what can be observed

OBJECTIVISM
- Feelings, thoughts etc. regarded as objects

RATIONALITY
- Reason superior to emotion
- All assertions are verifiable by logical proof

CAUSALITY
- Nothing occurs randomly
- Natural causes for all events and effects

APPROACHES

MECHANISTIC
- Newtonian physics, purposeless machine

LOGICAL REASONING
- Intellectual exercise

REDUCTIONIST
- Sum of the parts equals to whole
SELF / EGO

EMPHASIS IN ‘WESTERN’ THINKING

SEPARATE
AUTONOMOUS
IMPORTANT

REFLECTED IN PSYCHOLOGY AS:

SELF ESTEEM
INTEGRITY
EGO-BOUNDARIES

REFLECTED IN PSYCHIATRY AS:

SELF-DEPRECIATION
HOPELESSNESS
GUILT
PASSIVITY FEELINGS
DEPENDENCY
ENMESHED
# Ideals of Mental Health

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<td>Harmony</td>
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Aldous Huxley (1947) argues:

IN ALL RELIGIONS
Contemplation of truth is the end
Action is the means

(STEAM ENGINE REVOLUTION)

IN WESTERN CULTURE
Action is the end
Contemplation of truth is the means

Reference
PARADIGM SHIFT?

Erich Fromm (1960) argues that:

(a) Psychoanalysis emphasises:

Knowledge as transforming the self
Limitations of conscious thought
Free association superseding rational thought
Etc.

(b) Developments in psychoanalysis promote:

‘A more direct and positive affinity with Zen Buddhism’

Reference