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The Life Circulatory System

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THE LIFE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM

Milton R. Cudney, Ph.D.
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by

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Introduction

Knowledge of the Life Circulatory System (LSC) has been a godsend to me personally and a terrific guide in my work as a professional counselor. I believe this knowledge can be equally important to others and therefore I very much want this information to find its way into the public record where it's available to anyone who wants it.

Ross L. Mooney, a former professor at The Ohio State University actually discovered this system, only at that time he saw it as a Model of a Living System.* It's true it could be used as a model of a living system, but I have come to appreciate it more as a discovery of a new system in human beings. It's an addition to our knowledge about human systems and takes its place of importance alongside our knowledge of other human systems of respiration, digestion, elimination, reproduction, skeletal, blood, muscular, glandular, and neural.

To truly understand this latest system discovery it helps if it's seen from a perspective larger than itself. Therefore, let's look at a framework bigger than the LCS before focusing on it directly.

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The "Big Picture"

It's been my experience that if one wants to solve a problem or understand something, one needs to look at it from a framework larger than itself. For example, if this square □ was a problem to solve or something to comprehend and one stayed inside it □, that person would probably be lost and not understand it very well. But, if the person got outside the thing and saw it from a larger perspective □ one would see solutions to problems heretofore not seen, and the thing being looked at would be viewed more accurately.

To help myself view life from a wide angle I've put together a large framework and it can be used to help illuminate the LCS, and put it in a context bigger than itself. A drawing of this "Big Picture" follows.
The "Big Picture" begins with a creator who uses a creative process. This process has created, in this order, a universe, galaxies, solar systems, the earth, nature on earth, animals, the human family, individuals, the human mind, and consciousness. The path on the left side represents this creative process and includes some of the methods the Eternal Being uses to create through an infinite amount of transactions which have taken place over a long period of time. I call the path on the left the "life in" path. It is the work being done to construct whatever is being formed.

The path on the right, the "life out" path, depicts that which the created entity does with what has been designed into it by the "life in" process. In the case of humans, they have, over the years, worked, loved, painted, danced, walked, hunted, thought, fought, written, invented, built institutions, worshipped, and the like.

The conscious mind, enlarged in the lower right hand corner, is the latest thing evolving in humans. It's drawn as being partially evolved, which it is. Being partially formed is both good and bad news. The good news is that this consciousness ability can be used to further the efforts of the creator. The bad news is that because of limited conscious development humans have made many anti-life choices and work against the way they are made and how this entire living place operates.

There are many implications for living which can be seen from this "Big Picture" drawing such as the significance of openness in the entire
universe structure (represented by the broken lines between systems), how everything in the universe is connected and whole (consciousness is part of the mind, which is part of the individual, which is part of the human family, which is part of the earth, and so on), there is a creative process (the "life in" path) which we can use as a guide. The thing I'd like to illuminate most, however, for purposes of seeing the importance of the LCS, is the flow of life both "in" and "out" in the larger scheme of things. It's the core of all existence, what the source is all about.

Description Of The Life Circulatory System

If our creator's main purpose is the generation of life via a life "in" and "out" arrangement, and we were made by that method, it stands to reason that the process would be built into the fabric of our being. Or, said another way, if one understood how the creator operated, and knew nothing about human beings other than that they existed, one could correctly hypothesize that there would exist within humans a system to serve this life "in" and "out" function. And, of course, there is. It's the Life Circulatory System, the focal point of this publication.
Below is a model of the LCS, and an explanation of how it works.

- The infinity signs represent an infinite number of trips people take with others, their cultures, and their environment.
- The arrows represent life energy flowing both 'in' and 'out'.
- Openness occurs back inside the person & out in the transaction area.
- Life flows both ways in a living system.
- Growth occurs inside the living system be it a person, institution, or nature.

When a human baby arrives into the world, he/she begins an infinite amount of trips with its environment from "in" to "out" and back "in". The reason for these trips, and a system such as the LCS, is because humans have seeds of human potentiality and must reach out to the environment for psychic energy (ideas, stimulation, information, love, etc.) to feed on and nurture these seeds in order that they can grow. As can be seen, then, the purpose of this system is to provide a means for life to continue to flow "in" and "out" after humans are born.
The human self is of critical importance if the LCS is to fulfill its purpose. See, life rides the LCS circuits, but in order for life to grow it needs a holding place inside the human design; a place where life can accumulate and expand. The human self serves this purpose. The self is structured in such a way that it is a living entity, but it serves as a holding place for life too. You could think of the self as a vase or a container in which life has a place to be stored in order to be called on to respond at appropriate times. The self is different than a vase, though, in that life taken into the self is made part of the container. The self, then, is the holding place where mutual give and take of life energy can take place. It's also the basis of operation for a person, its core, its soul.

As life energy is sent from the environment into the individual it is sent into the various component parts of the self. On subsequent trips that the self makes it is different than it was before, albeit difficult to detect these differences with a single "in" and "out" trip. Nevertheless, the self is always in the process of becoming because of the constant input and output process.

This LCS, like other human systems, operates without conscious intervention. The system is too important to leave to chance. However, if consciousness is added the system can be made to function in a peak performance manner.
When Nature Was Home For Humans

The LCS worked fine when humans lived entirely in nature and constantly interacted with such things as plants, animals, weather, soil, streams, sun, and moon. At that time in human history the environment was totally alive and as our ancestors interacted with it, life was fed into them and they gave life back to the environment. There was a two way ecological fit.

Eventually Humans Built Their Own Environment

When humans began to design their own cultures, for one reason or another, they built both living and non-living components into their institutions of home, church, school, government, and other institutions. At times these institutions feed life into people in the form of security, caring, love, stimulation, encouragement, understanding, and honesty. But, it is all too evident that built into the design of many cultural
organizations are anti-life components such as violence, rejection, abuse, prejudice, rigidity, dishonesty, alienation, and stagnation. As life rides the circuits of the LCS life grows inside people, but as anti-life particles penetrate into people they begin to grow inside too, and drain life out of people.

What Grows In The Self When Life Rides The Circuits?

What grows in the self when life rides the circuits of the Life Circulatory System depends on the make-up of the individual person and the amount and frequency of the life ingested. One important aspect of growth, however, is in the mental area. Ideas expand, information is stored, curiosity grows, bigger questions evolve, and thinking becomes more critical. In the emotional area feelings such as love, understanding, kindness, and tenderness expand as well as accurate and fitting anger and fear. It results in the person developing more and more resources in the emotional area.

As the Life Circulatory System is used correctly such things as humor, aesthetic appreciation, skills, friendliness, a wider and wider perspective, responsibility, and maturity emerge. In addition, the spiritual part of the self expands and the self feels more connected to the whole of life and appreciates it more. Positive attitudes about self, others, and the creator develop.
What Happens To The Self When The Culture Sends Anti-Life Into It?

As has been mentioned earlier, it is a fact that as individuals interact with their culture anti-life energies are sent from the culture into the human self. Some individual selves, through no fault of their own, when they are children, get more anti-life (and more often) sent into their systems than others. Selves also differ in their ability to cope with anti-life input. The point is that the amount of anti-life and the frequency of it and one's ability to cope with it are all important variables when considering what happens to individual selves when they are met with anti-life from homes, schools, churches, government, i.e., the culture. Each self has its own unique reaction based on its own individual make-up and how much anti-life comes its way. But, basically this is what occurs.
As the anti-life energy and material in the form of abuse, rejection, ridicule, prejudice, being overwhelmed, organizational structures not fitting to human beings, bad information, poor examples set by adults, isolation, fear, comparisons, being embarrassed, etc., comes into the self it does some damage in the form of hurt, scaring people, overwhelming them, and the like. For the most part the shock from the anti-life input is felt at the unconscious level.

If the input is more than the self can satisfactorily tolerate, either from one experience or more likely a series of experiences, the self figures out, primarily at the unconscious level, a way to cope with this dilemma. The dilemma being that the self was made as a life system but it is having to ingest anti-life input. It's quite a bind to be in, and one it was not designed for, nor ready to handle. The bind is especially true if the anti-life input threatens one's ability to survive, be safe from harm, belong, be loved, or threaten other basic human needs, as it usually does.

For the most part, what the self does, deep in the recesses of its unconscious, is to try and protect itself and devise a way so that the anti-life energies can't continue doing their damage. The self reasons that if it can quit sending itself out on trips with the culture, and/or devise a way the harmful cultural input can't get in, the problem would be solved. Therefore, the self takes the anti-life input, collects it together into patterns, and uses these as walls or shields around itself. The walls or shields may not be around or in front.
of every living part of the self, usually only around those parts which have been harmed. On the inside of the self it could be represented by the following drawing:

![Diagram of Living Self]

As you can imagine, as these anti-life particles build up inside the self and form into self-defeating behaviors, it makes it easier to do SDBs in new moments of living because one keeps stumbling over the negatives all the time.

It should be noted that the toxic energy and material which accumulates into self-defeating behavior patterns (SDBs), never becomes part of the living self like living input does. This toxic garbage is housed in the vase, to once again use this analogy, but it does not become part of the vase. Thus, there is a separation of living and non-living matter and energy inside, and it's why we have a choice to either go with the accumulated waste or the living self.
Choices Are A Key To Staying Alive

In a culture such as ours in which there are many living parts to it, but many anti-life aspects as well, choices become vital. For example, each day, either in real life experiences or through television and newspapers, we get inundated with violence, hatred, beer ads, fast buck schemes, prejudice, con artists (usually posing as something else), distorted views of what a woman or man ought to be, non-human images of what people ought to be, and the like. To stay alive people need to let living input come into their systems but reject anti-life input.

On the inside of a person choices are vital too. Many people do not realize that choices are made in their inner world because they are made so fast and so much of it goes on in the unconscious; the nighttime part of the human mind. We need to bring as many of these choices out into the open as we can in order that living choices are made in that arena also. When we transact with our world, in order to stay on the living path, living choices must constantly be made. For example, to satisfy our human need to belong, choices made in the inner world which lets people close as opposed to alienating them, are in order. Choices to take care of our health as opposed to substance abuse keeps us on the living road. To trust our own living material (interests, needs, wants, abilities, spiritual hungerings, etc.) is a living choice and much better than the non-living choice of doing things to impress others when it goes against who we are. The choice to lay our total selves on the
line, so to speak, in things that we do such as school, work, and relationships, is much better than the choice many people make which is to hold part of their talent and experience back.

**Consciousness Needs Living Input Too**

As institutions continue to send anti-life energy into human systems, it will force our human consciousness to wake up to what is happening. The human suffering and pain resulting from the anti-life collective mass inside the human psyche will continue to be so damaging that we'll eventually ask ourselves what's wrong and do something about it. The model of the LCS can help guide the conscious mind as it searches for solutions. Humans need to ask some important questions: "What can we do to make our homes, schools, churches, government, etc., living systems themselves?" "What philosophies, theories, and methods do we need to devise in order to insure that life rides the circuits of the LCS?" "What symbols and rituals will be needed to insure that life will grow in our culture?" "What are examples of life and what are examples of anti-life so that people can know the difference?" Once the correct questions are asked and we see what needs to be done, we need to implement that which is revealed to us.
The Life Circulatory System Can Illuminate Relationships

Once people become more consciously aware of what constitutes living material and what constitutes non-living elements, both in the outer environment and in the inner world, the conscious mind will then have direction on what to let in, what to reject, what to send out and what not to send out. (See addendum #1). Once the sorting is done people will be able to relate better, because it will be clear that if one sends anti-life out to another person it ruins relationships, and hurts both parties.

The LCS can also illuminate the idea that life begets life and death begets death. If one person in a relationship reacts to another in a non-life way (alienates, is prejudiced, imposes perfection, responds with inferiority, is dependent, etc.) the other person in the relationship is likely to respond with his/her anti-life behaviors. This is so because as anti-life behaviors come our way we quickly detect, on an unconscious level, that there's danger in the air. In that reality few people send their best life self out. It feels safer to keep our life self back and send these toxic substitutes instead.

The model can point out, however, how beneficial it is to meet anti-life behaviors with life-giving ones. This, of course, is high level development. It is meeting alienation with caring, prejudice with understanding, the enemy with love, shallowness with depth, and hostility with sensitivity. If one can truly meet anti-life
behaviors with life-giving ones it tends to lessen the other's use of defeating behaviors and pulls living substance out of them. In order to have the ability to meet death with life, however, it requires that one grow a lot of life in self in order to have that life developed inside to be called upon in these difficult anti-life situations.

It Helps To Think Choices Through Ahead Of Time

It helps the conscious mind know what to do if a person thinks situations through ahead of time because life happens so fast that one can't always take time to consciously think it through in the heat of the moment. It helps the conscious mind to know that (1) Openness to life is very important. Thus anything one can do to be open to learning, open to music, books, ideas, nature, learning from mistakes, and such, is critical. The LCS also illustrates the importance of (2) Connectedness. One needs to connect inwardly to one's own living self, and outward to other people and other living things (animals, nature, plants, sun, trees, etc.). If you study the LCS it could become apparent that both "in" and "out" are equally worthy. One needs to spend time in one's outer world, but the inward journey is salient too. Thus, such things as setting aside quiet time to be by oneself, meditating, thinking, asking oneself what one's internal response is rather than what it should be according to others, and trusting one's inside living responses are vital. Through prior thinking and meditating
living responses become more deeply ingrained in the self and when interacting with life one can just let what comes out from the inner self, just flow out, because one has done his/her homework. Today's responses, then, are real and spontaneous because of prior good work and deliberation.

As humans continue to make trips from "in" to "out" and back "in", it should become obvious the self continues to be altered. Therefore, a person would stand to benefit if he/she continued to make peace with this new reality and trusted the new self in upcoming transactions. This requires flexibility and adaptability on the person's part in order to adequately roll with new inner and outer realities.

Use Of The LCS For Helpers

A readily evident implication for helpers, if the LCS is studied, is that the helper needs to send life into clients in their transactions with them. Most people agree that understanding, genuineness, sensitivity, empathy, love, and compassion are life-giving behaviors for helpers to use as they interact with clients. It can also be beneficial if the helper exhibits a sense of responsibility and discipline as well as encouraging clients to perform at their best. It helps, too, if the helper's mind is fully alive, and that the helper has developed living philosophies, theories, and techniques to use with clients. To be most alive, though, one's self, including philosophies, theories, and techniques, must be open to living input in
order that these can grow and evolve. This insures that they will remain alive and clients will obtain life from these as they relate to them. If a helper's ideas, theories, and methods cease to have living input into them, they die, and clients receive death from the helper as opposed to life. Having rigid ideas and being locked into perceptions doesn't allow for new input and insures that one's professional self will begin to die. There are many ways that helpers can receive living input i.e., reading, discussion with colleagues, research, course work, conferences, and such. But, if you look at the LCS of the helper and client it is evident that clients can be a great source of life to helpers too.

People normally seek professional help because anti-life energies accumulate inside themselves and as they use these anti-life behaviors it throws them off the living track, and they don't know what to do about it. Therefore, as the professional interacts with clients, anti-life input comes towards the helper and it's advantageous for helpers not to take these anti-life behaviors inside themselves. The life and anti-life must be sorted out. At the same time, clients possess much life and the helper would be wise to feed on this. Clients have living ideas, feelings, feedback, philosophies, and so forth. Clients can sense what is helpful to them and what isn't as they transact with the helpers, and they can provide a feedback system which helpers need in order to make professional transactions a truly
living experience. Helpers can benefit by taking advantage of life that comes to them from clients.

Clients aren't the only people to accumulate toxic waste inside themselves either. Helpers accrue this stuff also. That's not a sin on the helper's part or a put down; just a reality. If helpers, though, can be open to their anti-life behaviors and let living input into themselves, these behaviors will change from a death to a life reality. It stands to reason, then, that helpers need to monitor their own behaviors, identify how the anti-life behaviors are kept going, see replacement behaviors for the anti-life ones, and implement this knowledge. Helpers don't have to be perfect examples of living systems to be helpful, but they need to be on the living path doing something constructive about their own anti-life behaviors.

The LCS Can Guide All Relationships

The LCS can be used to guide all relationships be it teacher and student, manager and employee, husband and wife, friend and friend, parent and child, coach and player, and even a person and his/her pet. As an example, an owner can give life to a pet in the form of security, affection, petting, playing, discipline, and obtain in return from the pet such things as affection, acceptance, curiosity, playfulness, beauty, security, and touching. The goal of any relationship is to have living energy flowing both ways with both parties benefitting.

The LCS can also be of benefit when looking at a larger living unit such as a department, a
business, a church, or even something as large as a city or nation. When analyzing the unit's transactions the question to ask is how much living energy is being sent out and taken in, and how can this be improved. The unit could scrutinize its internal affairs - between people and between departments - and its external proceedings with its clientele and other institutions. The key is to use the LCS as a microscope to illuminate life happenings in order that these can be maintained and increased and to pinpoint anti-life transactions in order that they can be reduced and eliminated.

Sometimes it can be confusing regarding what is life-giving and what isn't. Let's use an athletic coach as an example. In one instance it may be life-enhancing for the coach to be tough and demanding, but a moment later sensitive and caring may be the life response. Some people see this as inconsistent. It's not. The consistency, though, comes in the coach continuing to give his/her life responses. What can also add confusion is that one person may have a particular life response (let's say serious) to a situation and another person may respond with humor to the same identical situation and both responses are life-giving. What needs to be kept in mind is that people are unique and therefore may have different life responses to the same situation. Having the mindset of trusting one's own living self will help negate any confusion in this area. If one trusts his/her living self, even if the self is not perfect and mistakes are made, that person will have living responses riding the circuits of his/her LCS.
In addition to the above, life is an ever changing phenomenon and if one is flowing with life, of course one will be asked to alter responses to fit varying conditions. It's why flexibility and adaptability are important because it allows the living system to adjust to internal and external changing conditions.

Closing Comments

When used correctly the LCS knowledge can help a person interact with all of life in a way in which life flows "in" and "out" of him/her. A person can get to the point where one can actually see and feel life coming in from a flower, a book, an animal, a song, another person, and going out from oneself to a pet, a garden, a client, a relative, or a friend.

One is really on the living path when life flows "in" and "out". A very important element, though, is to do it with knowing. The knowing part means consciousness is alive and that is special. Consciousness is a living entity and like any living thing it needs life fed into it as well as having it flowing out.

While life is flowing "in" and "out" it is also being grown on the inside. That's why inside is worthy of attention. Life accumulates "in there" in the form of love, patience, knowledge, toughness, ability to cope, sensitivity, appreciation, and so on. When one grows this living material inside oneself, with knowing, one is well on his/her way traveling up the life road.
Personally I carry the picture on the LCS constantly with me, right in the front of my mind, and it reminds me that in all areas of my life - home, at a restaurant, with friends, playing golf, counseling, and so on, - it is vital to give and take life from these experiences. Of course I make mistakes, but upon reflection the LCS helps me to learn from these mistakes and turn them into living experiences. I have never had so much good direction in my life nor felt so much in control even when, through no fault of my own, life treats me badly. Knowledge of the LCS is something you can always carry with you, helping you to know what to do to grow life in yourself and what to do to give it out to those around you. If each of us makes our contribution perhaps in time we can have life flowing back and forth throughout our culture. We should settle for nothing less.
**Addendum#1**

**Examples Of Living and Non-living Energy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living Energy</th>
<th>Non-living Energy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>Rigidity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Rejection, abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of difference</td>
<td>Prejudice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor</td>
<td>Ill-tempered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimism</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genuine</td>
<td>Fake, pretend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>Discouragement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>Uninquisitive, apathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing life feelings</td>
<td>Stifling life feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust one's living self</td>
<td>Doubt one's self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Non-committal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to others</td>
<td>Alienation, isolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Irresponsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping others</td>
<td>Ignore other's needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for health</td>
<td>Substance abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Uncaring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>Not thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>Undiscipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth &amp; development thinking</td>
<td>Business as usual mindset; maintaining the status quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Stagnate, inert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
<td>Insensitivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety, secure</td>
<td>Threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulation</td>
<td>Stifle, boredom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order</td>
<td>Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Inferiority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Judgemental</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strive to do one's best</td>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Disloyalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Timing</td>
<td>Ill-timing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The many people who were fortunate enough to know Ross L. Mooney, a former professor at The Ohio State University, knew him as a very special human being. Not only did he identify *The Life Circulatory System*, he fully utilized it in his own life. When he died in 1988 he was a prime example of what a human can become if he/she uses the conscious mind to grow life in oneself. Ross was extraordinarily loving, very kind and gentle, realistic, intellectual, incredibly conscious, and connected to himself, to others and to all of existence. In what he became lies hope that if others of us live life correctly, taking life energy in and sending it back out, we too can develop into someone very special. When Ross died the world lost one of its best, but the life he developed in himself continues on through his creations, his writings, and in those he touched.
Milt Cudney and Ross Mooney were the best of friends for over twenty-five years. Over the years they consciously exchanged life energy with each other, and both benefitted from these exchanges. Currently Milt is a professor of counseling in the Counseling Center at Western Michigan University, and in his work with people there, he developed the theory for the elimination of self-defeating behaviors. He continues that work, but he is very interested in helping individuals and organizations consciously utilize The Life Circulatory System to grow life in themselves. In his heart Milt entertains the secret hope that one day America will become aware of The Life Circulatory System and use it to guide and direct all her transactions.
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Milton R. Cudney, Ph.D.