

December 2010

Dear Friend of the ACO:

What do you think of when you look at this picture?
A sense of joy? The future? The wonderful possibilities life has to offer?

In contrast, when many of us take stock of our current world, instead of joy and hope, we see that it's been a difficult year for the world economy, for our country, and, on a more personal level, for many who struggle to make ends meet, for those striving to strengthen family relationships or just "keep it together," and for individuals who want to live a more meaningful, fulfilling life.



We are Surrounded by Gloom and Doom

The country is collapsing under the weight of a crippling economic downturn, while politicians embroil themselves in fraud. Meanwhile, they send the army to fight unpopular foreign wars and struggle to cope with a surge in immigration.

A contemporary report about the USA? No, this is Michael Scott's description of fourth-century BC Athens in *From Democrats to Kings*.

The children now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority, they show disrespect to their elders... They contradict their parents, chatter before company, and are tyrants over their teachers... As for girls, they are forward, immodest and unwomanly in speech, behavior and dress.

Observations about modern youth? No, they are at least centuries old and variously attributed to the ancient Greek philosophers Socrates or Plato, eighth century BC Hesiod, or even from a cuneiform tablet in ancient Babylonia.

Are these just the "gloom and doom" of pessimists over the years? The reality is that serious human problems have been with us since the beginning of armored civilization five to six thousand years ago. Ironically, hearing grim reports from the past such as these, that sound so modern actually gives us hope that despite great obstacles, the health in human life comes through and expresses itself even in the face of such troubles.

Let's not forget that when Elsworth Baker and his colleagues founded the American College of Orgonomy (ACO) 42 years ago in 1968, the country was reeling from a series of devastating assassinations, teenagers seemed utterly out of control and the politics over a foreign war bitterly divided our country. Talk about "gloom and doom!"

False “Light and Hope”

The opposite of “gloom and doom,” in fact the answer to it, is “light and hope.” Unfortunately, these words have been co-opted by religious and political leaders who promise the impossible. Reich warned about such “freedom peddlers” who try to beguile people with false promises for their own power or aggrandizement.

Practical Application of Knowledge is the Real Antidote

The real light lies not in religion but in the brilliance of the knowledge at the core of organomic discoveries. Likewise, genuine hope lies not in politics but in the practical application of “life-positive,” functional knowledge. This knowledge tells us the revolutionary fact that nature functions spontaneously, rationally and in a life-positive way, except when it has become perverted in human beings whose pathological armor is evident in chronic rigidities of mind and body that result in destructive or self-destructive ways of functioning.

My father-in-law conveys this sense of the human distortion of nature in one of his favorite expressions, “There is enough trouble in the world without man-made trouble.”

The ACO as a Beacon of Light

We here at the American College of Orgonomy like to think of ourselves as a beacon of real light and a source of genuine hope in the “gloom and doom” that pervades not just the headlines but the history of our world. The ACO was founded with a positive view to educate people about organomic knowledge as well as train them in its practical applications while continuing to develop and advance this knowledge. And here we are today over four decades later fulfilling that promise through the basic functions of training, public education, publication and research.

Over the years, our core function has become more clearly defined: to preserve the quality of work in organomy and to develop and expand this science so that many more people can benefit from the unique and remarkable perspective that organomy offers. The ACO is the only organization in the world that has an active, comprehensive, in-depth training program in medical organomy. For over 40 years we have been training physicians in orgone therapy as developed by Dr. Wilhelm Reich. And we are now developing a comprehensive training program in social organomy. Also, *The Journal of Orgonomy* is the only organomic publication in the world that has been published semi-annually since 1967, reporting new work in all aspects of organomy with articles including clinical case studies and theory, and innovative research in organomic physics, biology and the social sciences.

The Real Hope for the Future

The real hope lies in supporting the health in children right from conception and raising them in a way that keeps alive their capacities for love, pleasure and satisfying work in the face of the human perversion of armor.

Raising children in this way requires special awareness and a real understanding of a child’s true emotional and biological needs. For this to be possible we must educate parents or potential parents about what these needs are. We must also educate parents about their own need for therapy to help them overcome their own difficulties and rigidities that prevent them from making the essential, real connection their infant and child needs. We must train a wide range of social organomists including teachers, social workers, family and couples’ therapists and others who will be able to educate and work with parents and potential parents about these needs of children.

And essential for any of the other steps to be possible, we **MUST** train well-qualified medical ergonomists who can help patients as well as social and medical ergonomics trainees live and work in a way that is in touch with their deeper biological and emotional core.

This is a huge task, one that will require generations. The ACO is the premier organization to carry on this work. **AND** we need your ongoing help to do it. I want to tell you about what we have accomplished in public education and training, about these vital concerns. But I first want to put the ACO's current economic situation in perspective, in relation to the larger economy in this country and the world.

The Current State of the Economy

In my April 2009 letter to you, well into the economic downturn that began in 2007 when the bubble of overexpansion burst, I described that the alternating expansion and contraction of pulsation is the basis of every emotional and biological process. This biological pulsation also underlies social processes and social cycles, including the alternating expansion and contraction of economic cycles. I then observed:

Our current economic and social problems have resulted from a longstanding overexpansion in our society. Once that false expansion could no longer be supported we see a severe contraction not unlike a major depression that follows a manic episode in an individual. A contraction following the giddiness of overexpansion causes us to assess more realistically what is important to us and the true value of what we spend our money on.

Traditional quantitative indicators declared that the recession officially ended in June 2009. This means that the economy is actually expanding, however slowly, but most people don't feel or perceive it because they are still in a state of contraction. The emotional truth is that people are afraid and in the face of fear lack trust and confidence in the economy. As a result they are more cautious than ever about spending their money and deciding what to invest in.

These obvious emotional factors clearly highlight the limitations of the purely quantitative, mechanistic view of the economy. Fear and other emotions are therefore explained by the rather mystical concept of "animal spirits" originally popularized in a 1936 book by John Maynard Keynes, and now seeing a revival among contemporary economists to explain the reactions in the current economy.¹

I am excited that the next issue of the *Journal of Ergonomics* will feature two articles applying functional thinking – thinking as nature functions -- to the field of economics. This is a true antidote to the armored distortions of mechanistic and mystical thinking in this field.²

Direct Effects of the Economy on the ACO

The current economic contraction has both helped us and hurt us. Diligence on the part of our staff in the current economy has revealed many opportunities to reduce expenses by actively pursuing new vendors

¹ See Robert J. Shiller's Wall Street Journal Opinion article, January 27, 2009, "Animal Spirits Depend on Trust," <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123302080925418107.html>.

² The first in a series of articles by Dr. Charles Konia, "Functional Economics, Part I: The Biological Origin of Economic Debacles" accompanied by the first in a series of articles by Robert A. Harman, M.D., "Practical Functional Economics, Part I: The Functional Nature of Exchange."

or renegotiating more favorable contracts. To give you just a few examples, we secured a new propane supplier and a new printing firm for the *Journal*, resulting in a nearly 50% savings with no loss of quality. These kinds of savings as well as many other cost-cutting measures will keep us on track to be under budget for expenses for the year.

In the early days of the economic downturn, as I reported to you last year, many people continued to be generous with the ACO in support of the vital work that we are doing. Many were even more generous than usual with one-time donations, and a good number of people signed up for our new ACO donor membership program. A few major donors were able to arrange unexpected “windfall” donations. This increased support allowed us to balance the ACO budget for 2009.

This year has also shown a mixed picture with some people wanting to donate even more than usual, and others unable to contribute anything. Some asked that the top level of our member donor program be increased and one even requested that it be open-ended because he wanted to give \$200 per month. Unfortunately, we did not receive any “windfalls” this year, and as the economy has failed to rebound, our income from donations overall has been negatively affected.

The Condition of Our Sources of Income

As I have reported to you in the past, approximately one third of our annual income for many years has come from donors like you, another third from fees for our training programs, and the final third from income from our activities such as *Journal* and book sales, events, etc.

Our income from training has remained about the same. For the long-term, we must keep in mind that this is our most successful service or product. It not only fulfills our core function, because it brings us people with a depth of knowledge and the ability to continue and develop the work, but it also brings in revenue. The reality is that we could increase enrollment in our training programs by 50 to 100% without any significantly greater expenditure of time and energy on the part of College members. We need candidates, however. This will require a long-term effort. Meanwhile in the short-term, we are actively taking some steps. We are surveying potential candidates for the social oronomy training program. If there is sufficient interest, we have decided to begin another introductory didactic course in fall 2011.

Book and journal sales have also remained about the same. As I have described elsewhere, we no longer generate income from our social oronomy public presentations since we decided to use them for public outreach. This relatively small decrease in income has fortunately been made up by the generosity of some of our supporters who will underwrite these presentations.

Our general donations, however, have recently fallen off. Even though we have been able to cut expenses our current shortfall for projected income for the remainder of this year is \$20,000. We need your help NOW to be sure that we can continue our work.

Who Does the Work of the ACO?

Given the breadth and extent of our activities many people cannot believe that all of our administrative work is accomplished with just two paid staff members: one full time executive director and one part time administrative assistant. We could not accomplish what we do, however, without the more than 250 hours contributed *each month* by volunteers who are members of our board of regents, executive committee, on the faculty of our training programs, *Journal* staff, and business advisory board, as well as our public speakers, writers, editors, website developers and others who provide many other

functions. Many of these volunteers are our medical ergonomists and psychologists and others who, without pay or fanfare, see that things get done.

Our Administrative Functions Continue to Go Well

Our office has continued to function at a high level. The new staff reporting arrangements I noted last year continue to work well and pay off in improved contact within the organization. Debra Sansanelli has continued to do excellent work as our executive director and we made a seamless transition to a new administrative assistant in January. Our office manager left to take a full-time position elsewhere, something we were not in a position to offer her. Debra took on or delegated to volunteers many of the functions previously performed by the office manager, and at a considerable saving we were able to replace that position with our new part-time administrative assistant, Jill Schwartz. These changes were in great measure made possible because of the restructured and streamlined organization we had accomplished that resulted in improved contact between Debra as executive director and the president and the executive committee.

These changes have also continued to have a profound effect on Debra's ongoing excitement, creativity and initiative in developing and improving many aspects of what we do. You have seen the public face of these changes in Debra's new approaches to promoting our public talks, and her work on our flyers. She also came up with the idea for a silent auction at our annual dinner. This new initiative, organized entirely by Debra, netted \$1800 from donated goods and services, some of which were from local theaters and businesses who had no previous knowledge of us or our work, thus developing both a new source of income as well as public outreach.

From the Medical to the Social Realm

From the beginning our training and educational efforts focused largely on medical training and public education about medical aspects of ergonomics, in particular medical ergonomic therapy. As social problems have become increasingly evident in the world, however, we have had to focus more on the social realm.

Our Success with Social Ergonomics Training and Education

It is with great pleasure that I can tell you about the success of the ACO's social ergonomics training program and public presentation series. In 2001, with a pilot group of three students, we started a Social Ergonomics Training Program offering training in the application of ergonomic principles within the social realm to clinically oriented practitioners in fields such as psychology, social work, nursing, marital and family therapy, and organizational development. After many subsequent meetings of the social ergonomics training subcommittee with Drs. Virginia Whitener, Dee Apple and myself to develop the program, we decided to start a series of public presentations on social ergonomics to inform people about the field of social ergonomics and recruit candidates for the program. The first event in December, 2006 overflowed our seminar room and prompted us to renovate the ACO headquarters to create a larger meeting space. By the second event we had generated sufficient interest that we began to interview people for the training program. We also expanded the criteria for admission to include others not engaged in providing therapy but who may apply the knowledge of social ergonomics in a wide range of fields such as those working as teachers, administrators, politicians, writers, businesspeople, attorneys, managers, etc.

In October 2007 we began the three-year didactic seminar with the largest class in the history of the ACO. On August 28th of this year, three physicians and seven social ergonomics trainees completed and graduated this course.

Last year I mentioned how the didactic seminar was life-changing for one of the students, who entered the social organomy program as a businessman planning to use what he learned to help in his business relationships. After the section of the course on the individual character types, he changed careers and

now will complete his master's degree in psychology in about six months. He plans to go on for a Ph.D. in clinical psychology and continue his training with the ACO as a social organomy therapist. To underscore the enormous impact this seminar has had, another student has made a major change in his life. He also began the course as a businessman hoping to apply organomic knowledge to the working relationships in the company where he worked. When he sat in on a couples' session as part of his final exam in August he was so moved by the changes made by the couple he concluded that it is really possible to effect significant changes in relationships working solely in the social realm. He has now been accepted in a master's program in organizational psychology and plans to continue training in the ACO social organomy training program.

Six of the social organomy trainees who graduated from the didactic course have applied to continue in training, and we held our first meeting of a new social organomy case presentation seminar in October. It is so exciting to see this next step in the development of social organomy as a practical discipline, one that will comprise people from many walks of life who will be qualified to bring organomic principles and knowledge about healthy, rational, satisfying love and work relationships to the treatment of individuals and couples, to improve teacher-student relationships in the classroom, and to address relationships in a wide range of groups and workplaces. This new seminar will also become a new source of income for the College.

Our Public Outreach

It is gratifying to see that our social organomy public presentations have been so successful that they have grown and become a major vehicle for the College's contact with the public. In October 2009, the series outgrew our space at ACO headquarters and moved to downtown Princeton in order to house a larger audience and have broader public exposure in the Princeton area. In 2010, thanks to underwriting support from generous donors, we have offered them free to the public as a way to help us reach out not only to our usual attendees, but to new people as well. Our first free-to-the-public presentation at the Princeton Public Library, Saturday, June 5th, "Armored Language," by Dr. Dale Rosin, was a rousing success. We saw new faces, including students and teachers, and thanks to a cover story published in the "Time Off" weekend events section of the Packet newspapers the day before the event, we received unprecedented public exposure.

Dr. Theodota Chasapi's presentation on the impact of mother-baby bonding on the ability to love was also free at the Princeton Public Library. "The Roots of Love and Hate," on Saturday, October 2nd, brought in more than a dozen new people who had not had previous contact with principles of natural expression, armor and genuine contact with infants. Several pregnant women spoke at length with Dr. Chasapi after the talk about how they might improve their connection with their newborns. This is just the beginning of the kind of meaningful outreach we can and need to make with the public.

The next in our series is scheduled for Saturday, February 5, 2011. Dr. Edward Chastka and I will speak in a "round table" discussion format on various aspects of "The Doctor-Patient Relationship," a very timely topic.

These public presentations have become our primary means for in-person contact with the public and though free to the them, they are obviously not without cost to us. I am pleased that many attendees responded to our appeal for support and have continued to make donations in lieu of the admission fee.

Our Appeal to You

We need you to have confidence in the ACO that we will do everything we can to keep the light of organomic knowledge burning to brighten the gloom cast by unawareness and to further its practical application to bring genuine hope to combat the sense of doom that afflicts our world. Although people are afraid to invest in uncertain times, and even though you may not yet have confidence in the economy, we need you to trust us with your investment in our core function: to keep organomy alive and developing so that it can be brought to bear on the vital concern of taking real steps that will help raise new generations, right from the start. We must depend on you to support us to keep organomy alive AND we need you to depend on us to accomplish that. Trust comes from the truth. I hope that my report about how we are doing gives you some clarity about the College. I also welcome your questions about what we do and how we do it to help deepen your trust in your investment in the ACO.

The Best Investment That Anyone Can Make

Our donors are primarily people who have been in orgone therapy and experience what it can do. What is this worth? There is no dollar value that can be placed on the extent and depth to which you have been touched by the knowledge of organomy, in your love relationships and in your ability to work and experience pleasure and satisfaction. There is no way to measure the value of such an investment. Every dollar you give us goes to our two basic functions of keeping the science and knowledge of organomy alive and developing and bringing that knowledge to people to make a difference in their lives and in the world.

We Need Your Support Now

With your support we have a chance to take the many steps needed to accomplish that which is most vital for the future of humanity. At this time of year every tradition has a “festival of lights” holiday to celebrate the coming of light into the gloom of the depth of winter. The Christian tradition captures us emotionally with the celebration of the birth of an innocent infant who comes into this troubled world. Go back to the image of the baby at the beginning of this letter and take a moment to realize that your contribution to the American College of Orgonomy is a gift toward a healthy future.

There is so much that the American College of Orgonomy offers. I am asking you now to reconfirm your commitment to what we are doing. I hope you will join us by continuing your financial support to insure our success in this monumental task. With the enclosed card or on-line at www.orgonomy.org, please send your donation or sign up as a member donor so we can count on a steady income to sustain us in the coming months and years ahead.

From all of us at the ACO, I wish you and yours a happy Holiday Season and a healthy New Year.

Sincerely,

Peter A. Crist, M.D.
President

p.s. If you are not already on our e-mail list, please help us make contact with you more quickly by going to our website at www.orgonomy.org and clicking on “Join Our Mailing List” to receive our e-mail communications.