

December 28, 2023

Dear Friends of the ACO:

A year ago, my 2022 President's message focused on several key themes including:

- **That clarity and simplicity are at the core of orgonomy.**
- **The world has been lost in clouds of complexity, confusion and darkness.**
- **We must fly straight and level to find our way out of the clouds.**

As I write this, I am reminded of [last year's letter](#). The words and photos I used then express my message about how the ACO is doing as clearly and simply as I know how. And I can't resist again showing the photo collage of the babies to bring home the simplicity and clarity of unarmored life.



In 2023 in every aspect of our work, from training, public education and publishing, we have been clarifying, simplifying and holding our course as straight and level as we can as we navigate the clouds.

This year I will spell out some of the details that exemplify how we have been doing that.



A core function of the ACO is to train medical orgonomists. 2023 saw a strengthening of our already good medical orgonomy training program that followed a major review by the ACO Training Committee begun in late 2022 of how it could be improved. In November 2022 we implemented a number of changes that have been solidified in 2023. These included renewed emphasis on individual tutorials for the trainees, as well as clarifying

and simplifying the functions of each of the three monthly seminars and who would be in charge of each as its facilitator. The result has been improved teaching and deeper discussions of the clinical cases presented in seminar. We have also encouraged seminar members to either show a video of the patient they present or invite the patient to join us on Zoom to be interviewed live. This technology has provided a much deeper understanding of the patient than can be conveyed through a written protocol alone, and has allowed us to meet patients from as disparate locations as Switzerland and Greece and in the US from Connecticut, Pennsylvania and North Carolina. In 2024, we plan to have the best of both worlds with some of our training seminars hybrid to enjoy the improved contact of meeting in-person while continuing to allow our trainees who live at a distance to regularly attend on-line.

The social organomy training program has also continued in a steady, solid manner with both tutorials and social organomy case presentation seminars in which the members continue to meet in a Zoom format four times a year. This year these presentations covered a variety of thought provoking topics in social organomy, including one in February on aspects of the Israeli economy presented months before Israel was recently so much in the news; in April one of the members showed photos and videos of wildlife she had taken throughout the world that provided a unique opportunity to discuss healthy aspects of biological contact and social interactions; in June a review of the timeless aspects of sociopolitical character was illustrated in selections from an Anton Chekhov story from the 1880s; and in October a discussion of the spontaneous work function was illustrated by numerous examples from one of the member's personal and professional life.

In 2023, **the ACO continued a steady, active public outreach.** Our public "A Different Kind of Psychiatry" case presentation series begun in November 2018, available free to the public, just completed its fifth year. Since turning to an on-line webinar format in 2020, it has always drawn a live viewership that includes people new to ACO activities. We produced six episodes in 2023 with a total attendance of 130 that included 14 new people.

Following live presentation, video recordings of the webinars are also posted on the **ACO website and the ACO YouTube channel** where people can watch them at their leisure and convenience. To date the 2023 webinars have been seen an additional 573 times. Views continued to accrue months after first posting, such that there has been a total of 6,098 views of the webinars since they were first posted on the ACO's YouTube Channel two years ago. Our webinars also receive significant additional exposure when the audio portion of each is turned into a podcast (see below).

The ACO's "A Different Kind of Psychiatry" podcast continues to be our most prominent public activity. Since first launched on July 20, 2019, the regular monthly episodes have totaled 55 with 19,958 total listens/downloads averaging 362 per episode. The podcasts have shown a steady growth in listeners with a total of 5,534 downloads in 2023 with higher peaks and an average of 42 more per month than in 2022. The content has included the case presentation series webinars (as mentioned above), discussions and interviews with ACO clinical associates on various topics, and new in 2023, professional narration of selected *Journal of Organomy* articles.

Links to our webinars and podcasts are distributed and promoted by e-mail blasts and social media.

Two social organomy activities are also open to the public by application. **The Sociopolitical Discussion Group** led by Drs. Chastka and Crist has been ongoing since February 2017 shortly after the 2016 US election. Now in its seventh year, it currently meets on a Saturday morning every other month with a core group of eight to twelve participants that has evolved into a cohesive work group despite often disparate views. Its move to Zoom since April 2020 has also allowed a group of 15 to 20 auditors to attend from anywhere in the world including such far flung places as Oregon, Italy and Greece.

The depth of discussion that can occur in this group was illustrated by the most recent meeting on November 11, 2023. The suggested topic, the invasion of Israel by Hamas and Israel's and the world's response, initially sparked

lively discussion about terrorism, the emotional plague and the obstacles that propaganda puts in the way of distinguishing fact from opinion. But later the discussion turned to look more deeply at antisemitism underlying much of the current Israel/Hamas situation and the public response to it. One of the participants said, “Antisemitism seems to be a unique example of the emotional plague that keeps cropping up. Why the Jews?”

In fact, *Why the Jews: The Reason for Antisemitism, the Most Accurate Predictor of Human Evil* by Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin was recommended as a good source for understanding antisemitism, its history and what might be the basis for emotional plague attacks on Jews. The book cites the fact that Judaism is a monotheistic religion as one of the factors. The concept of and belief in one true God was a serious threat to cultures who held each of their multiple gods to be sacred.

The discussion in our group, turned to the functional basis of religion. Reich thought that cosmic longing—the deep sense of a desire to be in touch with something deeper and larger than us—is the basis of all religion. Dr. Baker noted that armor interferes with deep contact and turns cosmic contact into cosmic longing.¹

In the group I expressed my perspective on this: “We can also use our understanding of orgonometry to help understand the distinction between monotheism and polytheism. Orgonometry allows us to look either in the direction of the common functioning principles of a phenomenon or in the direction of its variations.”

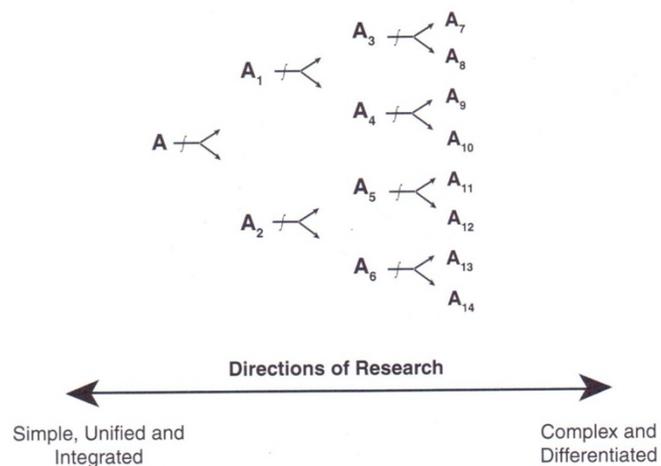
“A key significance of monotheistic religion is that it goes ultimately in the direction of the deepest common functioning principle in nature. As Reich made clear in his book *Ether, God and Devil*, God is functionally equivalent to the deepest common functioning principle of spontaneous orgonotic streaming—the basis of all of nature. A monotheistic religion is therefore closer to the fundamental basis of all creation and in that way potentially more of a threat to the mechano-mystical approach to life perpetuated by established armored human cultures.”

One of the participants said, “This is amazing that we can bring religion and functional thinking together like this.”

Is there anywhere else on Earth that such discussions could take place other than at the ACO?

Meanwhile, the **ACO Readings in Social Orgonomy Course**, begun in 2021, continues to meet on the alternate months from the discussion group. Over the past two years it has been using the pre-published manuscript of Charles Konia’s *Clueless* as the focus of discussion. A new semester will be announced shortly.

Directions of Research



¹ The armored state interferes with full satisfaction of the desire for cosmic contact. The individual’s natural healthy longing for cosmic contact may become deadened resulting in a mechanical approach to life or may become intensified and distorted into mystical longing and seeking outlets or solace in such practices and beliefs.

2023 saw the **publication of three issues of the *Journal of Orgonomy*** which now brings us up to date. In our efforts to expand the readership of the *Journal of Orgonomy*, the ACO began in the fall of 2023, to post free select articles from the [Journal on Substack](#). These can be easily shared with readers' friends and family; there have been five so far in 2023, with plans for 12-20 per year going forward.

This year the **ACO Press also published *Clueless: The Great Human Disconnect*** by Charles Konia, M.D. Dr. Konia's next book, *The Demise of America: How the Emotional Plague is Destroying Our Nation*, is on schedule for publication this month. A new printing/edition of *My Eleven Years with Wilhelm Reich* by Elsworth F. Baker, M.D., complete with new foreword and detailed index, is also close to publication.

Our ongoing **efforts to reach a broader audience** have also been focused this year on developing a marketing approach with a professional marketing company, along with a major overhaul of the ACO website. The work on this project has been steady and is finally rounding the corner with the new brand messaging completed, and its incorporation into the new website progressing nicely. It is described by one of those involved in the project as "modern, clean, better organized and pared back for ease of use both on desktops and mobile phones—with a focus on outreach/connection with those unfamiliar with us and medical orgone therapy and interested in therapy. I personally have a large list of people with whom I would like to share it and our work more generally." The website should be ready go live to the public early in 2024. Following the launch, plans are in place for a new online store and customer relationship management system (CRM). That system will help make the work of our staff much easier.

The staffing and administration of the ACO was simplified and clarified in 2023. This streamlining has resulted in a team working together and functioning better than ever with clarification and definition of each staff member's roles and functions. In addition to the ongoing work on the current website and developing the new one, the new IT person and webmaster we hired in 2022 helped see the ACO through the effects on our electronic office equipment of a major storm and power outage in September 2023.

Over the past year **our building** has been well maintained with some upgrades for the effective use and comfort of our staff, as well as in preparation for when we return to our educational activities to our campus. In addition, care of the trees donated by our supporters and upkeep of the nature trail, all parts of the **Living Campus Project**, will ensure that our **facilities and property** are in good shape, functionally usable and aesthetically pleasing when the ACO is ready to have more people on campus and hold seminars, classes and events there.

We are on a more **solid financial footing** than ever in the history of the ACO, thanks to the dedication of you our supporters. Our general donations in 2023 were significantly above recent years due to a \$150,000 bequest from a beloved member of our social orgonomy training program. We were saddened by her loss but touched by her generosity. But even without that windfall, our general donations have grown steadily each year over the past several years. Among our member donors those in the higher levels have steadily increased their donations and moved up from basic to supporting to sustaining to patron. The total donations have steadily increased, but this shift has left fewer in the lower levels. This underscores our basic problem: the need to engage more people who will become interested in our work. As we've so often said, we are good at helping those who are involved to become invested and fairly good at getting those interested to become involved. But we must continue the work that focuses on finding ways to interest more people who could eventually become involved in the ACO. Our focus on projects that will increase our outreach in new ways is where we need to continue to spend our money.

2023 was the first full year that we began working with a **financial advisor**. As a result, we have reaped the benefits of investment income, which in 2023 amounted to more than \$30,000 compared to a few hundred dollars in previous years.

We must continue to fly straight and level as we find ways to help lift the clouds of darkness that plague the world. We need your support to continue to do that. In this season of gift-giving we appreciate your continued support.

You may still find tax advantages by making a donation before December 31st.

From all of us at the ACO we hope your holidays have been happy. When wishing people “happy holidays,” it’s easy to forget the religious connotations contained in the word roots of “holiday,” holy + day, that indicate a day of religious observation and celebration. “Holy” derives from an Indo-European root, *kailo-* meaning “whole, uninjured.” So, even predating the religious connection, this word root was the origin of our words “whole,” “healthy” and “hale” as in “hale and hearty.”

We thank you and send our best wishes for a happy, wholesome and healthy new year.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter A. Crist, M.D." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Peter A. Crist, M.D., President

[Please click here to support the ACO today.](#)