

Lotus



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Lotus

The Journal of Inner Peace, Mindfulness and Compassionate Living



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: Our subtitle, The Journal of Inner Peace, Mindfulness and Compassionate Living, speaks to *Lotus's* purpose. *Lotus* is philosophically based on the belief that society is a reflection of its people. As we each move toward inner peace, mindfulness and compassionate living so does our society. We believe that personal growth and spiritual awakening co-evolve and are intricately related, and that such growth is facilitated by *thoughtful reading*. *Lotus* hopes to energize, stimulate, and inform readers on their journeys of self-awakening and inspired living. *Lotus* is dedicated to providing resources for personal and spiritual transformation. Our purpose is to provide our readers with the most thoughtful writings available, current and time honored.

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From the Editor...

Our journey is a journey of soul-making. Our connection with our soul or inner self requires that we redirect the energy trapped in our personal suffering to fuel our goals and dreams. Our growth calls us to transform the scars of our tragedy, circumstances and immaturity into compassion and wisdom. Ensouling requires that we experience our connection with infinity, usually defined as God or love, as healing and revealing. Ensouled, we are compassionate and empowered. Our aim is to reveal our human soul and our task is to develop our essential self. Manifesting our best qualities is realizing our essential, true self. To develop this fundamental "I" is to uncover our resources as we build upon our hopes.

Our journey calls us to live meaningfully—to be committed to a way of life. This way of life causes us to mature, becoming more loving and intentional. As we evolve, we encompass more of life's experience, with all its paradoxes, its ugliness and beauty, renewal and decay. This way of life focuses on deep moving change, applying spirituality to the practical side of life. It includes awareness of a presence—our own deeper nature—guiding us in our work, love, and play.

I shared a tender moment of joy with a client recently when she said:

Mary, I don't need another appointment because I saw a bluebird the other day; I mean I really saw the bird. I thought I knew bluebirds but I had only heard about them. I'd never really noticed one before. My mind is not so busy anymore—worrying or being sad. I can see what's going on around me and I can see beauty.

Valerie had begun counseling some months earlier. I remember first meeting her at my office, a pretty woman in her mid-thirties, frightened and vague. She had coped with life by medicating herself with alcohol. She had given up alcohol a year earlier and substituted excessive work. She blamed others for her unhappiness and unfulfilled plans and was a wonderful worrier. She remained fearful and discontent. Last winter she wound up in a hospital emergency room with chest pains. She got the message either to change or become further diseased. She began talking in her support group and listening to her fatigue and boredom. She also enrolled in a long postponed college program. She quit her second job to have time instead of money for her children and they took their first real vacation in five years. Valerie is blossoming, is more relaxed, and has hopes for a new life direction.

Your story is your own. Like Valerie, you are dedicated to developing your potential. Reading materials such as *Lotus* demonstrates your intent. You too are seeking. We encourage your efforts and celebrate your moments of love, truth, and healing. We challenge you to stay on your path, to tolerate pruning and new growth, to ask yourself the right questions, and to allow support by others also searching.

Lotus is here as a resource for you. We honor your seeking and we join you as we also seek our way to inner peace, mindfulness, and compassionate living.

Welcome to *Lotus*.



Mary NurrieStearns
Editor

Guest Editorial

J I M E L L E R

Our society, late twentieth century mainstream U.S. culture, seems to be particularly concerned with material wealth. Many of our children are addicted to television and video games. People browse in the malls, looking for something to desire. Some of the glitter is off the “yuppie” sheen. It is not entirely upward and on-ward forever, in a cycle of compromising quality of life and family relationships for money and promotions, but we seem to be out of touch with more lasting values. We have not truly begun to build a sustainable culture. Short-term profits and planning still rule the day. We are an addictive consumer culture.

My reading about addiction in our culture has provided me with clues for developing a sustainable culture. Substance abuse or process abuse is the habit of doing something we want or desire, even when it is obvious that this is destructive to us and may result in our own undoing or death. This is true of the alcoholic, the gambling addict, the sexoholic, and of our consumer society.

We are consuming the majority of the world’s resources. This is causing dislocation in third world economies as they move to meet our luxury needs, raising cash crops rather than food to feed themselves. Rain forests are being cut to graze cattle or raise cash crops for a brief period of productivity to provide U.S. citizens cheap hamburgers and coffee. In this country, we are no longer farming; we are soil mining. We are consuming the last of the old growth forests. We are beginning to destroy the ecological infrastructure that sustains us as a species. We are using nuclear energy, which generates waste with a half life of thousands of years. Ways to store this highly poisonous waste are not yet developed. We are committing people yet to be born to tending our waste for generations. We are over spending our U.S. governmental budgets to the detriment of the future. “Weapons now, and let our children pay later” seems to be our attitude.

We need to find a more sustainable way of living or we may not survive, as a culture or a species.

Addictions are usually metaphorical. We are trying to fill up a void. Addictions are a cry, a scream for fulfillment, but with the wrong element or degree of use or for the wrong purpose.

We all must face the void. We all know that we must die. We all contend with some degree of loneliness or emptiness, with non-being, but the substances or the pro-

cesses we abuse do not fill us. Alcoholics Anonymous works because the destructive consumption is replaced with something that is sustaining: spiritual values and a spiritually rich lifestyle. These twelve-step relationships and processes are deeply fulfilling.

One need not be in a twelve-step group to find spiritual or life force fulfillment, although few other means or disciplines are powerful enough to overcome individual addiction. We can find more sustaining values than success, pleasure and material wealth with lifestyles of service or ones directed by wisdom, solitude, inner work, or a higher power. When we are feeling empty, we can turn inward to find our resources. We can use the very energy of our longing to discover what will be more sustaining for us. When we are feeling empty, we might try meditation rather than television or refrigerator or mall grazing.

Our lives are in danger. Our species is in danger. We need to choose a more spiritually based life style and cultural evolution. Our survival hangs in the balance. What will it take for to collectively to see finally our “bottom of the barrel?” Will it take a nuclear accident? We already had Three Mile Island and Chernobyl. Will it take huge oil spills, loss of an ozone layer, and increasing cancer? We already have those. Will it take the loss of many more species from the planet? We are now losing conservatively over a thousand species a year. Some estimates are as high as ten to fifteen thousand a year, lost forever. We must realize that our survival is at stake and we must change. We need to rediscover values greater than material success-values of love, compassion, service, and wisdom.

I know a man named Ken, who collects short quotes that are particularly moving to him. He has collected up to one hundred. Each day he reads one and focuses on it and what it means to him in his life. If he finds a new quote he wants to add, he then deletes one that does not seem as sustaining. He is in the process of creating his own personal scripture or holy works, but it is more than just a collection of wisdom. It is a process of continual self re-examination. Ken’s way is to stay on the path of enlightenment and right living. His highest desire is to know life fully and to be of service to others.

There are ways to conceive and live a more sustainable life style. Thomas Berry says that we can use the earth as our scripture. We can read the language of our planet and act in accord, in constructive and compassionate ways. This too will lead to a sustainable life, but it often means sacrifice. Riding a bike to work is not fast or efficient, but it does not pollute and benefits our health.

A shift in our values is required. From which well will we drink? What type of nourishment do we believe will sustain us? We can choose either a sustainable way of life or the destruction of our current civilization.

We appreciate your encouraging notes, telephone calls and letters. We value open dialogue with our readers and welcome your ideas, reactions and suggestions.

Letters



Following are a couple of personal stories from our readers. Telling stories of transformation empowers and reading them inspires. Thank you for sharing with us.

VALIDATED

I never thought I would be writing to a journal or that I would tell my story but I feel compelled. I connected so much to Alice Miller's article "The Truth About Child Abuse." I am a professional woman in my forties. I have always functioned well in my career and related compassionately with my patients. Few people have known of my unbearable depressions, confusion, fear, and desperate loneliness. I tried for years to feel better and to have close relationships. I read too many self-help books. I tried numerous different kinds of therapy. I have been on medications and hospitalized for depression.

Last year I began working with a new therapist. Over time I felt safe with her as she seemed like a real person who respected and believed me. She urged me to write down my scarce memories and face the past that haunted me. She helped me distinguish between ways I learned to cope as a child and more adaptive mature skills. Words just poured out of me at times. I was often extremely overwhelmed. But I began to feel more real myself. I began to treat the very wounded child in me with the same compassion I extend my patients. My world changed. My panic subsided. I allowed others to know me and learned to respond to their caring.

My life will keep changing. I am considering some major moves. Now I can lead my life. I actually feel empowered. I certainly don't feel that old helplessness. I'm new again to the idea of spirituality. I feel very shaken by an earlier experience in a convent and still fear God may punish me for past mistakes. But I know I will be redefining my spirituality. For now I am grateful to have peaceful moments and a hopeful outlook.

I really don't know how to close. I just felt so validated when I read Alice Miller's article. I suppose that writing this letter is therapeutic for me. I believe in the messages that you are delivering. Thank you for your work.—*Beverly P., Gary, Indiana.*

I WAS MAD

Late last fall I picked up a copy of *Lotus* at a friend's house and read the article on forgiveness. Boy, did it make a difference to me. I had been jilted by my wife on Valentine's Day 1990. I was really unprepared for her exit. She'd

found someone else. I knew things hadn't been good the previous year but I was stunned. For the next year and a half I was miserable, furious at her for leaving, and at the same time blaming myself. I held a grudge against all women. I remember injustices and had a list of people from my past I had never forgiven.

I was mad at the forgiveness article. I had no desire to forgive someone for hurting such a nice guy as me. But the ideas stayed with me and I reread the article several times. It dawned on me that my list of people not to forgive would get longer and that I would be a lonely, bitter, old man if I didn't change.

I'm still working on it. After two dateless years I now have a girlfriend, but I am taking my time. This may not surprise you, but I still have my mother to forgive and suspect that I won't be able to have a healthy long term relationship until I'm further along in my growth. I am calmer these days than I ever have been.

I am now a subscriber and look forward to your next issue. Thanks for making a difference.—*Paul M., Billings, Montana.*

GOD - SEND

I have recently received my first issue of *Lotus*, and I must say that I was very impressed and moved by the articles, especially "Follow Your Bliss" and "Remembering Who We Really Are." (Winter 1992)

This magazine is a God-send at a time when I'm beginning my small steps in discovering my own Spirituality and Awakening.

I'm looking forward to the next issue (I wish it was a monthly magazine) with great anticipation. Keep up the good work! —*Gerry Parks, Salem, Oregon.*

DID NOT HAPPEN

I subscribe to your journal because, as a physician, I'm constantly asked by patients to provide help that standard western medicine cannot provide. Like most other physicians I read a tremendous amount of scientific information in standard textbooks, journals, and abstracts. Like most other people, I am overwhelmed by the information overload. I usually pick up a journal, page through it very rapidly, pick out a few important concepts that I can imbibe in a few minutes, and then throw the journal away. This did not happen when I received my first copy of *Lotus* and now, having just received my second copy, I can see the pattern is set. I have read both issues from cover to cover.

All of the articles satisfy the title of the journal and its intended definition. I found the articles comforting and useful in my profession.

I hope you can continue your high standards of journalism. —*S. David Nathanson, M.D., Detroit, Michigan.*

READ WITH RELISH

I enjoyed my first issue very much. I have subscribed to a number of new age magazines in the past and there would only be one or two articles that really appealed to me. All of your articles were read with relish and I shared them with a number of my co-workers who also enjoyed them. I particularly enjoyed the article about the walls that whisper. This was a powerful new start to the issue of family secrets and as an adult child of alcoholics, this just further validated my truth. Thank you. —*Patsy Poppell, Thomasville, Georgia.*

VERY WILLINGLY

I've had the opportunity a number of times to "try out" a new magazine and then decide if I'd like to subscribe. In an effort to make my life less complicated, I've often decided not to subscribe—either I don't need another magazine to read, the publication is not what it was cracked up to be, or the cost doesn't match the quality.

I've enclosed my check for the first year; I write it very willingly. Your magazine is great, the articles well chosen, and I've already found two to share with colleagues. Thanks so much and continued success! —*Ginger Moore, Raleigh, North Carolina.*

LIFE GIVING

Your magazine is truly life-giving and life-transforming—indeed, like a "lotus flower" embodying petals unfolding beyond measure, each unique and veined with aliveness. Bless you for having believed in what has been abiding within the "seed."

Heartfelt thankfulness. . . for all this healing.

I enclose a check for three gift subscriptions, so that I may pass on the mindfulness and compassion, the peace and the joy I have gleaned from you. —*Edith Pennoyer, Livermore, Evanston, Illinois.*

NEED TO THINK

I just finished reading your 2nd issue of *Lotus* magazine. I must say that each article compelled my interest and I endeavored to read it thoroughly from cover to cover. I intend to share it with a few friends in the hope that they will also subscribe and help your cost of operation. We desperately need to think about so many urgent concerns both global and personal. —*Anna Leone, Berkeley, California.*

WISH GOVERNMENT HAD KNOWLEDGE

Received my first copy of *Lotus* a couple of weeks ago. I read it from cover to cover in just a few days.

Every article was interesting and thought provoking, but I especially liked "Educating the Public," an interview with Jacques Cousteau. I do not watch TV much (haven't even had one now for over ten years) but when I did have a TV I did make it a point to watch the Jacques Cousteau show. He has the philosophy of an advanced soul. One can't help but to wish that the people in government that make the decisions had his knowledge and concern.

I can hardly wait for my next issue. Also I must tell you I mean to share my copies of *Lotus* with certain of my friends whom I know would get a lot out of reading them. Thank you for putting together such a good magazine. —*Patty Miller, Arivaca, Arizona.*

ARDUOUS JOURNEY

Recently I returned from a long and arduous journey through the Middle East with the American Friends Service committee and I saw how each side could not acknowledge the suffering of the other side, nor the harm each had done to the other. I wonder if the time has come for a new American peace initiative. I'd like to share it with you.

I have long recognized that we Americans are in denial about the terrible suffering we have inflicted through our wars, our invasions, our massacres, and our efforts to control other people. It occurs to me that an act for helping heal ourselves and enabling some Americans to come out of denial might be to initiate a new kind of pilgrimage. To do this I suggest we follow the lead of the Vietnam Vets Restoration Project. They returned to Vietnam to acknowledge the suffering they had caused, made their amends by rebuilding a clinic they had destroyed, and asked for forgiveness from the Vietnamese.

Is it time some of us began such pilgrimages? We could go in any size groups from two or three to one hundred or more—to every area where we have fought a war. We could acknowledge the harm we have done, be prepared to make amends suitable to the area, and ask for forgiveness.

If we are faithful to our charge and blame no one, judge no one, this tiny trickle of people might grow—just as the Vietnam Vets project is growing. Perhaps such an example might help bring the awakening we need to become a peaceful people.

Peacemaking now seems to me to be a healing as well as a political process. Perhaps our efforts may be more fruitful if we add this dimension to them. In Peace. —*(Ms.) Gene Knudsen Hoffman, Santa Barbara, California.*

REFLECT MY CONCERNS

I'm so pleased and satisfied with *Lotus* that I'm ordering a subscription for my brother and his wife. Your topics reflect my concerns and the articles are well written. What I especially value is the loving tone of each issue. Thank you for contributing to my life. —*Barbara Lubasch, New Hampton, New York.*

The Journey



For Meaning

S A M K E E N A N D A N N E V A L L E Y – F O X

✂ Where did I come from? ✂ Why is there something rather than nothing? ✂ Why is there evil in the world? ✂ What happens to me when I die? ✂ With whom do I belong? ✂ How close should I be to my mother, father, brother, sister, wife, husband, cousin, son, daughter, lover, or friend? ✂ What are my duties, my obligations? ✂ What is taboo, and what should I avoid? ✂ What is the purpose of my life, my vision? ✂ Whom should I imitate? ✂ Who are the heroes and heroines? ✂ Who are the villains? ✂ Who is our enemy? ✂ What are the stages along life's way? ✂ Who are my helpers, guides, allies? ✂ What is disease? ✂ How can I be purified, healed? ✂ What should we do with bounty, wealth, surplus? ✂ What is our relationship with animals?

Sam Keen is a noted speaker and author of several books. Ann Valley-Fox is an educator, writer, and author of a book of poems "Sending the Body Out."



What is a myth? Few words have been subject to as much abuse and been as ill-defined as myth. Journalists usually use it to mean a "lie," "fabrication," "illusion," "mistake," or something similar. It is the opposite of what is supposedly a "fact," of what is "objectively" the case, and of what is "reality." In this usage myth is at best a silly story and at worst a cynical untruth. Theologians and propagandists often use myth as a way of characterizing religious beliefs and ideologies other than their own.

Such trivialization of the notion of myth reflects those certainties of dogmatic minds, an ignorance of the mythic assumptions that underlie the commonly accepted view of "reality," and a refusal to consider how much our individual and communal lives are shaped by dramatic scenarios and "historical" narratives that are replete with accounts of the struggle between good and evil empires: our godly heroes versus the demonic enemy.

In a strict sense *myth* refers to "an intricate set of interlocking stories, rituals, rites, and customs that inform and give the pivotal sense of meaning and direction to a person, family, community, or culture." A living myth, like an iceberg, is 10 percent visible and 90 percent beneath the surface of consciousness. While it involves a conscious celebration of certain values, which are always personified in a pantheon of heroes (from the wily Ulysses to the managing Lee Iacocca) and villains (from the betraying Judas to the barbarous Moammar Kadafi), it also includes the unspoken consensus, the habitual way of seeing things, the unquestioned assumptions, the automatic stance. It is differing cultural myths that make cows sacred objects for Hindus and hamburgers meals for Methodists or turn

dogs into pets for Americans and roasted delicacies for the Chinese.

T O T E L L A S T O R Y

We are storytelling animals. As our primitive ancestors sat around the fire carving spearheads and eating blackberries they told stories which in time were woven into a tapestry of myth and legend. These tales were the first encyclopedia of human knowledge. They explained where the world

*Every person
has a story to
tell. That's
what makes a
person and
defines the
journey that
person makes
through life.*

came from, why there were people, why snakes have no legs, why corn smut stops birth hemorrhages, why conch shells are sacred, why coyotes howl at night, and why the gods put fire and death on earth. In the dramatic telling, the triumphs of heroes and the antics of fools came alive again. Stories told the people of a tribe who they were, where they had been, where they were going, and how to stay friendly with the spirits.

Our modern myths are often unfocused; we don't celebrate our myths

enough; they frequently hide like outlaws in the backwoods of the unconscious. For a variety of historical reasons (the emergence of machines, cities, anonymity, money, mass media, standardization, automation) we've lost awareness of storytelling as a way to dramatize and order human existence. But whether we acknowledge them or not, our myths and stories live in our imaginations.

To be a person is to have a story to tell. We become grounded in the present when we color in the outlines of the past and the future. Mythology can add perspective and encouragement to your life. Within each of us there is a tribe with a complete cycle of legends and dances, songs to be sung. We were all born into rich mythical lives: we need only claim the stories that are our birthright.

With a little imagination each person can find within himself a replacement for the myths and stories lost when we ceased living in tribes. A person is a complex being made up of a million individual smells, tastes, memories, and hopes. Listen for a few minutes to the voices that run through your mind. Every psyche is a private theater filled with scenes and characters. Listen and you will hear your father, mother, brothers, sisters, children, lovers, friends, enemies, teachers, and heroes acting out their dramas on your stage. Hearing the multiple voices within yourself will remind you that you belong to a special clan. Your people still inhabit you. They will help you to celebrate your myths, sing your songs, and tell your legends.

The techniques of storytelling and the psychology which underlies them rest on a discovery of the obvious: that what all persons have in common is their uniqueness. Every person has a story to tell. That's what makes a person and defines the journey that person makes through life. There are no autonomous, anonymous, pragmatic individuals—we were all raised by an intimate group that had traditions, values, rites of passage, ceremonies,

and legends. When we forget our stories, leave our heroes unsung, and ignore the rites that mark our passage from one stage of life into another, we feel nameless and empty.

We can rediscover the uniqueness of the person if we reassemble our myths and stories which have been homogenized into business, education, politics and dissipated in the media. Find the unconscious and make it conscious, find an audience for the untold tales, and you will discover you are already on a rich mythic journey. What most of us lack is only the permission to tell the stories that are our own birthright.

You can't tell who you are unless someone is listening. There are better and easier ways to get an audience than by hiring a psychiatrist. Find a partner to listen and tell your multiple stories, stories of your childhood, your family, your roots. Be all those characters who wander around in your head. Journey back into the past, ahead into your future, and out into cosmic time. Discover a few of your many selves.

The emphasis on telling stories amounts to a new way of defining personality and psychology. Psychology ought to be much more concerned with boredom and excitement and less concerned with mental illness and lost and found identity. The dis-ease of the modern psyche is more of a vacuum than a thorn in the flesh. If we are alienated, disgraced, frustrated, and bored, it is

DEALING WITH YOUR DEATH

If you want to feel what death means to you, take a look at your favorite death fantasies.

- ✂ How do you most frequently see yourself dying?
- ✂ Who died the way you expect to die?
- ✂ What activities may dictate your style of dying? (Smoking, drinking, commuting, worrying, mining, skydiving?)
- ✂ When will you die? Who died at this age?
- ✂ Why are you going to die? Is death a failure? A depletion of energy? A natural conclusion to life? Do you die to make room for the living? Because your body is worn out? Because you are bored, frustrated, despairing? Because you are satisfied?
- ✂ What is your dominant attitude toward death—defiance, acceptance, fear, longing, sorrow, curiosity?

Imagine you died yesterday and look back on your life. You died with many dreams unfulfilled.

- ✂ What accomplishments, relationships, moments mean most?
- ✂ What are your regrets? What have you left undone that you wanted to do? What have you done that you wish you hadn't?

Death wears many faces. When the young die, death is tragedy; when the old or incurably ill die, it is deliverance; when our enemies die, it is retribution and justice.

- ✂ What moods and emotions have dominated your experience of the death of others? (Grief, anger, fear, relief?)
- ✂ Whose death would cause you the greatest sorrow? Whose would give you the greatest pleasure? Who would care the most if you died?

In the world of myth death is usually considered an unnatural event, a strangeness in need of an explanation. Here is an excerpt from "African Myths and Tales" (edited by Susan Feldmann) that tells why death came into the world.

Formerly men had no fire but ate all their food raw. At that time they did not need to die for when they became old, God made them young again. One day they decided to beg God for fire. They sent a messenger to God to convey their request. God replied to the messenger that he would give him fire if he was prepared to die. The man took the fire from God, but ever since then all men must die.

Make up your own myth about why we must die.

because of what *hasn't* happened, because of potentialities we have not explored. Few of us know the fantastic characters, emotions, perceptions, and demons that inhabit the theaters that are our minds. We are encouraged to tell a single (true) story, construct a consistent character, fix an identity. We are thus defined more by neglected possibilities than by realized ones. We rehearse and repeat a monotonous monologue while heroes and villains, saints and madmen, ascetics and libertines wait in the wings for a chance to seize center stage and run wild. In this sense, identity is a repetition compulsion, a conspiracy to put a consistent face before the world, to cover up the glorious inconsistency of emotions and desires. The character we develop domesticates the world and leaves us no wilderness to play in. There are many territories of imagination and many strange regions of emotion that we may not enter without throwing our sanity into question. Until we cross some borders, we are likely to remain rational, banal, boring, bored. A major concern of any therapeutic psychology should be to help an individual lose identity.

A psychological proposal is always political and this one proposes an ideal relationship between the

individual and the community. Paradoxically, an individual becomes strongest, most vivid, and most open when he discovers the contradictions of his psyche. Each of us harbors the entire range of human possibilities. Every I is a we. We can become authentically public only by first going to the depths of the private. At the heart of the uniqueness of the individual lies the universal. Every person's deepest ecstasies and fears are old as mankind and common as dirt. Thus, the greatest freedom for the individual comes from the love of many stories. The strongest state is the one that keeps the fewest citizens in jails, insane asylums, and ghettos.

D E A T H : T H E
A W F U L
C E R T A I N T Y

The only event we can predict with virtual certainty is the one we least like to think about—our own deaths. Death is the doorway to the future, the one fact in a world otherwise governed by probabilities. Before we can fantasize freely about our futures we have to break the death barrier—confront the ambivalent feelings that cluster around our images of the end.

Modern people don't die; they just pass away. Soldiers take care of our killing and undertakers do our burying, preferably discreetly. Classical philosophers insisted that wisdom and happiness were only possible after a person had come to terms with the inevitability of death. Plato defined philosophy as training for dying. If we evade death we avoid the event that sets the definitive limits on our mortality; we cling to the illusion that there's an eternity of time in which to do the things we lack courage to do today. Death disillusioned by reminding us that we arise from and return to the earth (humus). It makes us human by confronting us with the fragility of life and the need for decision.

For the human animal there is no purely biological act. Death (like

birth or sex) is surrounded with interpretations and explanations. We need to understand what death means and why people should die. Throughout the course of history the myths, images, and metaphors used to interpret death reflect a profound ambiguity. It is never clear whether death is friend or enemy, the beginning or the end of life.

Either death is: an end to life, the ultimate enemy, the grim reaper, the castrator. In the Christian tradition, as in many ancient myths, death enters the world as a punishment for transgression against some divine law. Man dies because he ate the forbidden fruit or because he broke a taboo or stole fire from the gods. If there were no enmity between man and the gods, no alienation, there would be no death.

Or death is: a prelude to rebirth, the hidden friend, the womb of life, the lover. In cultures where the feeling for nature remains strong, human life is seen as analogous to the life of plants and death is viewed as one stage in an eternal cosmic cycle. In the winter of his life man dies in order that he may be reborn in the spring. The Hopi Indians symbolize this by burying their dead in the fetal position. In the end we come back to the beginning.

Different psychological realities underlie these two estimates of death. We experience death only as observers. A dying person experiences dying but, presumably, not death. The survivors observe a lifeless body and experience grief, relief, anger, and panic. To an observer death seems final. It steals away a unique person whose life can never be restored or repeated. If we have loved the dead person death seems the final enemy of love and life. When we think about our own death we are inundated by the images and fears that surround an imaginary future event. But we confront our feelings about death most directly when we come face to face with any radical change in our lives. Something in us (the ego, the infan-

tile self, the first-born self) does not believe we can survive fundamental changes in personality structure or life circumstances, and so each crisis in life is shadowed by death. Then when we survive the crisis we realize that change may mean metamorphosis rather than death. The ego dies and a stronger self is born. Then it may come to us that death is only a gateway to wider life, the final trip beyond the prison of the ego.

Speculations and explanations always pale before the reality of death. In the end we have to face it raw. We can escape obsession with death by paying attention to the appeals of living. It is un-lived life that makes fear of death persistent and morbid. We might even see our death as a gift to the living: nature decrees that the father dies so the child can inherit his full place in the sun. Even the death of those we love is not a total loss. Death adds the bass notes to the symphony. By our grief for what is missing we know the terrible value of what was once present among us.

Maybe the best we can do is struggle against death as if it were our final enemy, refuse to "go gentle into that good night," affirm the priority of light over darkness. Then, in that penultimate moment (when, it is said, our life flashes before us and we know that it was good), we may allow death to turn its other face toward us and know that it is a friend. Maybe. •

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Love and Forgiveness

Love is the most magnetic thing in the universe; love attracts love; its whole essence implies and signifies union and reunion, reuniting, bringing together anew. The impersonal Eros of the universe is the cosmic energy which holds the stars and their respective planets aggregated and coherent in their courses, and it governs the building and the structure of atoms. It is all-permanent and in consequence all-powerful. It is the cause of the energy which works in such myriad forms and everywhere, operative alike in star and in atom, holding them together in inescapable embrace; yet, marvelous paradox, it is this same power which guarantees the individual integrity of every cosmic unit. It is also the mystic and wonderful magnetic sympathy which brings together human beings, man to man as brothers, woman to woman as sisters, and, man to woman and woman to man in a genuine marriage. Love is likewise the only true basis of friendship.

Gottfried De Purucker was a past leader of the Theosophical Society. He is author of several books including "Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy." The following article is adapted from his book the "The Esoteric Path: its Nature and its Test."



Is it possible to understand another human heart unless you yourself love? The mere operations of the brain-mind will not tell you anything about it. Love is clairvoyant, almost infinitely clairvoyant when it is wholly impersonal. It is love that possesses eyes that nothing can bar the vision of. The vision of love penetrates to the very heart of the universe. Love is sympathy. Love is compassion. There is a deep esoteric meaning in the old injunction: Love all things, both great and small, for thus your own consciousness is enlarged. You yourself become greater in so doing. Hate is restricted and constricted, restrictive and constrictive. It makes things to harden around the individual who hates. It builds veils around him. It is love that rends these veils, that dissolves them, that gives us freedom, that gives us vision, that gives us insight, that gives us pity, that gives us compassion, that gives us love—for love gives love. It is love that harmonizes us with the universe. There is a deep meaning in the injunction so often quoted, "Learn to forgive; learn to love."

Love is clairvoyant and will show you the way always; but personal affection is blind and its steps falter always. Impersonal love is self-forgetfulness, literally and absolutely; personal love is self-remembrance, literally and absolutely. When your love forgets yourself and paradoxically forgets the loved one and loves for pure delight of loving self-forgetfulness, then it is like the cosmic harmony, which manifests in the music of the spheres as the stars and the planets sing in their courses. Personal love is uncharitable and often unlovely; it is concentrated on one object; it is weak

and stumbles in the path; it thinks of self rather than of the other; and it never knows itself; it never gives itself fully, whereas impersonal love is the very soul of self-sacrifice. Impersonal love is self-forgetfulness, and personal love is self-remembrance. There is the distinguishing test.

The core of your being is pure consciousness and in proportion as you ally yourself with the god within; with that pure consciousness, knowledge will come to you naturally. Your understanding will then grow and expand, and finally become cosmic.

*When you can
learn to forgive,
when you can
learn to love, the
longing of your
soul will be
fulfilled.*

The key to understanding, knowledge, and wisdom is self-identification with the god within. This is the path of inner evolution. It is the pathway of growth, both inner and outer, it is the pathway to almighty love, and pity, and compassion. As you grow into an understanding of this, you learn to love, you learn to forgive and then you have peace—peace and bliss, and become conscious with the consciousness of the Universe.

Study yourselves! In yourself lies the pathway to wisdom and the gods. Even as a child learns his letters, these letters lead on to knowledge, and if the soul of him be manifesting, they lead on to wisdom. Know yourselves; for in so knowing you will know all the mysteries of the boundless universe.

Be bold in your learning, but not over-bold. Be courageous as you press forward on this old, old path of the ages, leading to the heart of the Universe; but, be not rash. Guard well your speech, lest something pass out with the unseen words: for you can never recall it. Listen and learn! Forgive and love!

Forget yourself! Forget the good and the evil! Live to benefit others. Innocent pleasures cause no harm. Why make a foolish ascetic of yourself? Pleasures which drive the spokes of desire into your heart and mind are the pleasures, so-called, that you should avoid. Why wear uncomfortable shoes and give yourself sore feet if you have the choice of wearing a pair of shoes which will make you readier and more fit to do your daily duty and make the doing of it a happy duty?

Is it wrong to delight in the glory of the sun, to listen to the whispering of the trees? Is it wrong to read a noble book? Is it wrong to take healthful exercise? Is it wrong to enjoy even the food that you eat? Is it wrong to like things of beauty? Of course not.

If you are strongly attached to something which gives you extraordinary pleasure and you neglect a duty, then conquer that attachment; for it is doing you harm; it is no longer an innocent pleasure, but has become a vice.

Look within. Know yourself. The first step to self-knowledge is forgetfulness of yourself. You cannot become the self universal as long as your attention and thought are concentrated on the limited point of your ego. Lose your life if you would find it. In this rule lies peace and lies vision; and therein lies likewise universal power.

One such rule is: never strike back. Others are: never retaliate and suffer injustice in silence. Still another rule is: never attempt to justify yourself; have patience.

Another, and perhaps the greatest, rule is learn to forgive; learn to love.

Then all these other rules and regulations will come to you naturally for they will come stealing into your consciousness silently, simply; and you will thus know the rules instinctively—intuitively, if you like that term better.

There is no training so effective as the self-initiated effort of self-control. Never strike back. Never attempt self-justification. If necessary suffer in silence till the suffering itself vanishes into peace. Forgive and love. Reach thus happiness and peace.

Achieve the bond of union with your inner god, which is the ultimate aim. How to achieve it, how to do it, is by self-forgetfulness, forgetfulness of the knot of the personality, thus passing into the smooth, orbital movement of consciousness existing around the central core of your being, which is the inner god. Thence finally you blend and become at one with the divinity within you.

Self-forgetfulness, forgiveness of injuries, love of all that is—so simple, so easy a rule! Only your imaginations and your personal failings picture this rule to you as being difficult. Self-forgetfulness, forgiveness of injuries, love of all that is are simple to understand; they are easy to follow; they bring endless peace and comfort. Never attempt to justify yourself. It is not necessary to forget the facts of injury and injustice, but you must forget the feelings of resentment, the sense of injury generally. Pardon, forgive, love. This is the pathway to illumination and to ultimate union with the god within. It is easy. And when you have this viewpoint, which may come stealing into your conscience in the silence of the night, which may come to you like the beautiful dawn over the eastern hills (according to your character), then comes the realization of victories won and achieved in the past; and oh! the beauties, the splendors, the glories that you can see before you!

In conquering your own weaknesses, you help not only the nation to which you belong but all your

fellow-men. More, you help every sentient living thing. Still more, you help everything, so-called sentient or insentient, for you are then at one with the very forces which are the circulations of the universe. In conquering self, you conquer all and become a master of life.

Life is always changing. The very nature of life is change, and advancement, and progress. No one remains a plumber, or a carpenter, or a washerwoman, or a philosopher, or a king, or a sage, or an atom throughout endless

*Know
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so knowing you
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duration. It is the consciousness which advances, not the profession or trade which one follows and then abandons at different periods of time. The learning entity can learn constantly, even if he were making nothing but useless gestures in the air throughout endless eternity, but his learning would be at a snail's pace. Whereas, those who choose the path of self-forgetfulness and love and service for others find life full of interest and variety and learn rapidly and advance rapidly and grow as the flowers grow, shedding the perfume of their noble lives on all that is.

Why make yourself unhappy when it is so easy to be happy? Why not be a superior man or woman instead of an inferior one? It is far easier to do

the daily tasks with a light and joyful heart, thereby doing them well, than to look upon them as slavery and groan under the daily grind. There is no daily grind; it is you who are grinding yourselves. The slave, toiling in chains and suffering from disease, may be in his heart freer than the king, freer than the prince in his palace who is a slave to ignoble passions and thoughts.

The greatest manner in which to teach is by example. It is better even than precept, although precept is good. There is nothing so contagious as example, either for good or for bad.

We should be very tactful and kindly in trying to help others. Probably there are few things which so quickly arouse antagonism and opposition, even to the helping hand, as to do what some people call kindly meddling in others' affairs. We must be very tactful, diplomatic, and kind. And often, perhaps usually, the best way to help others is by so living our own lives that they become a benediction to all whom we meet, watching nevertheless at every instant quietly ready at any moment to stretch out the helping hand.

Instead of trying to kill the faults in others, kill the faults in yourself, and then if everyone does this, the whole world will be at peace. Human beings are always very active in seeing the little mote in others, but they rarely see the beam in themselves. The better way, the kindlier way, is to try to help others and not to humiliate them through their faults. You cannot kill the faults in your brother. It is his work. Your duty is to kill the faults in yourself. Therefore be an example. Set the example yourself and you won't need to worry about others. That example will be like shining light in a dark night. •

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The Pilgrimage

For Peaceful

Self

W I L L I A M
C U N N I N G H A M

"The hardest battle is to be nobody but yourself in a world, which is doing its best, night and day, to make you like everybody else."



T*he problem of finding and directing one's self is basic to our times where we have a great tendency toward materialism, conformity, and hurried life-styles. The need to be as you naturally are, to be authentic, is an instinct that rules in every aspect of your life. The more it is denied the more a creeping sense of malaise and dullness descends upon you. The forces of your human spirit can flow productively or destructively, but they are going to flow.*

William G. Cunningham is a professor at Old Dominion University. He has earned several grants for stress and educational research and chairs several university committees. He has published numerous articles in national educational and psychological journals.



Throughout history, people have set out on pilgrimages, on developmental journeys, on personal quests to discover and better understand themselves. Alone or in groups, driven by pain, drawn by longing or lifted by hope, they searched for relief, happiness, peace, power, joy, or they knew not what. Their search was not something that was originally sought or wanted but something that rightfully asserted itself in their lives. They had a strong and personal desire to discover freedom and liberation. The search arose from questions about how one could feel manipulated, restrained, and unfulfilled when one had inherited a world full of opportunity and freedom.

The basic structures of human development are like a ladder, each rung of which is a level in the great chain of being. The motivation to take the next step in the ladder begins with a search for some deeper level of meaning in otherwise very productive and traditional lives. We see in many normal lives the great emptiness that creates the void which in turn motivates the search. Some are what Rollo May calls "wounded travelers," those who are engulfed in internal conflict and unable to release their natural energies. Contemporary people are dragged along in a producing and consuming cog-wheeled system to the point where they become part of the machine and lose touch with their

own nature. Identity is found in organization and the materialistic-world in which they live. They have become their financial security, status and esteem that they have earned and thus, deserve. Yet somehow they realize that they are something more than this, but they are no longer quite sure what. Their daily lives have dissipated their spirits and eaten up their time. These modes of living obscure the



opportunity and energy to re-center themselves. They have locked their energy and spirit into foreign attitudes and behaviors and lack the vitality needed fully to live their lives.

Rollo May states, in *The Nature of the Will*, that "Man has had to pay dearly for his material achievements. His life has become richer, broader, and more stimulating, but at the same time more complicated and exhausting. Its rapidly increasing tempo, the opportunities it offers for

gratifying his desires, and the intricate economic and social machinery in which it has enmeshed him make ever more insistent demands on his energy, his mental functions, his emotions, and his will." For convincing evidence of this it would suffice to observe a day in the life of an average business-person, public servant, politician, professional, or homemaker. It is only through all manner of numbing compensations and distractions that we are able to hold off the agony that we feel in such undeveloped states.

The individual often lacks the resources to cope with the difficulties and pitfalls of this kind of existence. Resistance may crumble in the face of demands, confusions, and the enticements this kind of existence imposes. The ensuing disturbance leads to increasing discouragement, frustration—even to depression. The past floats by in a fog of hopes not realized, opportunities not grasped, and unfulfilled potential. The future becomes a confrontation with one's mortality. Expectations increase as we struggle harder and harder to become what we believe we should have been already. I'm reminded of Erma Bombeck's saying "If life is a bowl of cherries, what am I doing in the pits?"

The difficulties that are encountered in life are caused by a conceptual thinking process that allows us to deal effectively with a complex, crowded, fast paced, high pressure world but does not allow us to experience the joy and natural pleasures that are available to us. We have learned to use our minds and bodies and work hard to better our lives, and it has worked quite well for us in many ways. However, the harder we use our minds and bodies in trying to live and

in working to control our burdens and our destinies, the more we find ourselves trapped in an endless struggle for “self-aggrandizement” and “self-improvement.” The agony of the quest is that there is no end to it. The more that is learned, the more there is to know—and the more desire to know. The more we acquire, the more there is to acquire—and the more desire to acquire. The absurdity is that the struggle promises final rest and peace, but leads only to greater and greater internal turmoil.

The whole of life can take on a sad or oppressive aspect which diminishes our ability to see its beauty and degrades our ability to add to that

racing blindly down a well traveled road.

If we are not rendered totally insensitive, our defense mechanisms begin to fail in their soothing and concealing purpose and a desire for further development begins to emerge. We either act on this desire or we get stuck in the middle of our distress—wallowing in it and not knowing what else to do. Progress begins with an awareness that the reasons for our internal conflict are not “out there.” They lie in our undiscovered and atrophied inner resources. The eyes see, the ears hear, the fingers touch, but it is our consciousness and unconscious that as a whole shape all

conscious left brain which will result in a productive, controlled, materialistic perspective. However, it is naive to expect such mechanistic conceptions will explain the mysterious quality of life. Persons who take on a larger world view point out the dangers of developing one-sided institutions that result in one-sided individuals that focus on rational, logical, analytical, controlled, conservative, scientific, technical, material thought.

Such a one-sided view of humanity could result in a world unresponsive of creative, conceptual, expressive, artistic, holistic, spiritual, and emotional life. Over a long enough period of time, humanity cut off from a large

“There was this young boy who so badly wanted to play with his mother. On this day, his mother had worked particularly hard and was quite tired by the time she had arrived home. The boy’s demands for the mother’s attention were more than she could bear that evening and in frustration she took a map of the world and tore it into pieces and threw it on the living-room floor. She told the boy, who had never had a geography lesson in his life and did not even know his states, that as soon as he put the world back together she would play with him. She then went into the kitchen for her coffee and well-deserved period of relaxation. Lo and behold, the child came back in about four minutes and told the mother the world was back together. She walked back into the living-room with her son and to her amazement the world was in perfect order. Thinking she had a genius in the family she asked, “How did you get the world back together so quickly?” The little boy explained, “Well you see on the back side there was a picture of a little boy just like me, and when I put all the pieces of the little boy together just right and taped it and flipped it over, the world came out just perfect.”

beauty. As we get more and more out of sync with our own nature and the nature around us, we must exercise greater caution in our lives. As we lose our spontaneity and freedom, our lives become externally planned and controlled with a great potential for fretting, hostility, or depression which underlies our interaction with others as well as ourselves.

We cruise life’s highways with no real idea of who’s driving, where the controls are, or even where we ultimately want to go. Being out of control is horrifying, but we don’t realize it because we are lulled into feeling safe because we have so little responsibility or obligation for ourselves. Our basic needs are well met. It is like the pilot who proudly says to the air-traffic controller, “Yes, I know I’m lost but I am making great time.” We are

our experiences and give them meaning. Living is certainly an act of perception and we need to understand how we perceive and realize that each developmental stage provides a different view or perspective on reality. Each stage leads to a different sense of identity, morality, self-needs, and a new level of ego development. Limited perspectives are replaced by clearer perspectives. The view from the earlier stage remains in existence but the limitations in its perspective do not. As William Blake suggests, you can learn, “To see a world in a grain of sand, and heaven in a wild flower—Hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour.”

Humans have power beyond all other creatures on earth because our minds have infinite resources. We can focus on our very rational, possessive,

portion of their inner capabilities could create a world that would no longer appreciate the intrinsic value of creation and would violate both inner nature and the outer ecological environment. Many suggest that we are already dangerously close to this point, and that it is reflected in the hearts and attitudes of mankind.

Many different kinds of people, the economically and status “successful” as well as the “less-successful,” quietly stifle their introspective thoughts about who they are and what they want. Their external domination requires them to learn to be satisfied with all they have achieved and are respected for, resigning themselves to a life that has become barren. They will try to find new external causes to

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 70

ECSTASY. IT WAS ONCE CONSIDERED A FAVOR OF THE GODS, A DIVINE GIFT THAT COULD LIFT MORTALS OUT OF ORDINARY REALITY AND INTO A HIGHER WORLD. THE TRANSFORMATIVE FIRE OF ECSTASY WOULD BURN AWAY THE BARRIERS BETWEEN OURSELVES AND OUR SOULS, BESTOWING ON US A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR RELATION TO OURSELVES AND TO THE UNIVERSE.

Ecstasy



Robert Johnson is a noted lecturer and Jungian analyst in private practice in San Diego, California. He is the author of several books including "Transformation: Understanding the Three Levels of Masculine Consciousness" and "Inner Work: Using Dreams and Active Imagination For Personal Growth." The following is excerpted from "Ecstasy: Understanding the Psychology of Joy" by Robert Johnson. Copyright 1990 by Robert Johnson. Printed with permission from the author.



It is the great tragedy of contemporary western society that we have virtually lost the ability to experience the transformative power of ecstasy and joy. This loss affects every aspect of our lives. We seek ecstasy everywhere, and for a moment we may think we have found it. But, on a very deep level, we remain unfulfilled.

Our materialistic society teaches us that the only reality is the one we can hold onto, the only thing of value what we can "take to the bank." Our spirits need nourishment as much as ever. But, having excluded the inner experience of divine ecstasy from our lives, we can look only for its physical equivalent. And no matter how hard we look, or how many low-grade ecstatic experiences we accumulate, we crave more.

This craving has led to the most characteristic symptom of our time: addictive behavior. So many of our lives are touched by addiction—if not our own, then that of a relative, a friend, a celebrity. Do you recognize any of these? The successful young entrepreneurs who think they need cocaine to give them the competitive edge; the super moms who can't get through the day without a tranquilizer; the harried managers who need two or three drinks every night after work to unwind; the young children who try street drugs because they are already touched by our society's bankruptcy of feeling; the college students who go to parties solely to get drunk or stoned; the dangerously fast drivers who are addicted to the thrill of speed; the insider traders who make illegal deals on the stock market because they are addicted to the kick of making money; perpetual singles

who go from lover to lover, addicted to the first glow of romantic love.

Addiction is the negative side of spiritual seeking. We are looking for an exultation of the spirit, but instead

*Unfortunately,
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of fulfillment we get a short-lived physical thrill that can never satisfy the chronic, gnawing emptiness with which we are beset.

To fill this emptiness, we need to

reconnect with the capacity for ecstasy that lies dormant within us. Our first step must be to try to understand the nature of ecstasy.

W H A T I S
E C S T A S Y ?

Dionysus has been called the most important of the Greek gods. Certainly he is the most misunderstood! The very profusion of his names and qualities makes immediate comprehension difficult. He is called the god of wine, the god of abandon, the great liberator, the god of ecstasy. He represents the continual rebirth of life in the spring, the irrational wisdom of the senses, and the soul's transcendence.

Western civilization praises the orderly life. We have a healthy skepticism that insists "seeing is believing." Our world is built on thinking, logic, progress, and success, and within these limits we feel secure. But today even our scientists tell us that these limits are illusory. Quantum physics shows us "the *dancing universe*; the ceaseless flow of energy going through an infinite variety of patterns." This is the Dionysian energy, the dance of the Maenads, the power of life that flows through all of us and unites us with heaven and earth.

You may not have identified it as such, but you have probably consciously touched Dionysian energy in your life: when you look into a loved one's eyes and feel for a moment love that is beyond time and space or when you spontaneously shout for joy and feel the positive, invigorating energy charging every cell of your body. Unfortunately, we spend so much time trying to understand the world and ourselves intellectually that we have virtually cut ourselves off from the spontaneous, guilt-free experience

of our emotional and irrational natures. We have almost forgotten that such a thing can exist.

Dionysian ecstasy is found in the *sensuous* world, the world of poets and artists and dreamers who show us the life of the spirit as seen through the senses. Do not confuse this with the sensual world, the materialistic world of pleasure that is destitute of spirit. The sensual world is the one we see all around us: the pursuit of money for its own sake, the desperate chasing after empty pleasures. The sensuous world is filled with the profusion of nature's fruits; it is the divine realm, the garden of the gods. What a beautiful thing! If one can make the translation from the sensual world, devoid of spirit, to the sensuous world of Dionysus, then one can begin a new era in one's life.

ECSTASY AND JOY

In the West the word *ecstasy* is likely to evoke thoughts of X-rated movies. But this very misunderstood term comes from the root *ex stasis*—to stand outside oneself. If I say, "I am ecstatic! I am simply beside myself," I mean that I am filled with an emotion too powerful for my body to contain or my rational mind to understand. I am transported to another realm in which I am able to experience ecstasy. When the followers of Dionysus drank the god's wine they stepped for a moment outside their daily lives and experienced spiritual ecstasy.

I am sorry to say that we rarely stand outside ourselves these days. The world is too much with us. We are constantly working, thinking, planning, doing—what to eat, where to go, how to support our families, who to vote for. All the responsibility and power we burden ourselves with! We can't bear it for very long without breaking down in some way. We need some relief from all that strength—to be for a moment in that timeless, spaceless, primal place which has no responsibility, which isn't going anywhere. We need to stand outside our-

selves and experience the flow of life, the Dionysian energy.

Joy is another Dionysian attribute that we have managed to water down. We hear the word in Christmas carols—"Joy to the World!" We read it in books—*The Joy of Cooking*, *The Joy of Sex*. But what does it really mean?

A friend once paid me a high compliment. "Robert," he said, "you're one of the few people I know who ever uses the word 'joy.'" Nonplussed, I replied, "Oh?" and that was the end of the conversation. But he'd pricked my curiosity. When I thought about it, I realized that I had no idea what the word meant. So off I went to the dictionary, where I found one of those fine differentiations in pairs of words that are so valuable to me.

To my surprise I found that "happiness" was defined as "a happening of chance, luck, fortune." The word "joy," on the other hand, was defined as "an exultation of the spirit, gladness, delight, the beatitude of heaven or paradise." That's quite a difference! Happiness is always short-lived. We are constantly chasing after this experience; we think that we should be happy—after all, isn't the pursuit of happiness guaranteed to us in the Bill of Rights? But happiness comes at the whim of fortune. No happiness can be kept permanently.

So ask yourself this question: Do you want happiness, which is luck or fortune? Or do you want joy, which is the beatitude of paradise? These two are so close and the differentiation is

so crucial: because to seek joy is to seek Dionysus.

LOOKING FOR ECSTASY IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES

Our society esteems thinking and doing, progress and success above all else. We go straight ahead, aiming for the top, looking out for number one in all our endeavors. If a given thing does not have a monetary value or



Robert Johnson

show a concrete return, we will probably place it lower on the scale. We tend to like those things we can control and dislike what we can't control or understand.

These are the values of our patriarchal society with its emphasis on power and acquisition, and it has won many fine prizes for us. Without our love for discovery, facts, science, progress, and innovation we would certainly not have all the medical

advances that save lives or the machinery that makes our daily routine so much easier. All this, however, has been won at the expense of less tangible qualities—feeling and intuition, caring and nurturing, empathy and receptivity—the Dionysian qualities. We tend to devalue them because they do not show concrete rewards.

Craving spiritual ecstasy, we mistakenly seek material fulfillment. We chase after a phantom and when we catch it—in the form of more money, more food, more sex, more drugs, more drinks, more oblivion—we find that we have been chasing ephemeral happiness when we should have invited lasting joy.

What do we do next? We use all the intellectual power at our command to fill the void looking for “the answer.” But the answer can be found only in the sensuous world of Dionysus and we have forgotten where that is.

D I O N Y S I A N M A L N U T R I T I O N

We have chosen the quick fix over the spiritual nutrition of Dionysian energy and we are starving because of it. I was vividly reminded of this by the following story.

A British doctor ran across an interesting paradox. Indian Hindus in their usual diet don't get enough vitamin B₁₂ to keep a rabbit alive, yet in general they do not suffer from B₁₂ deficiency. How could this be? The doctor decided that either his understanding of how much B₁₂ the body needed was in error or that the Hindus' diet included more B₁₂ than tests indicated it did. So he went to India to study the problem more closely and found that the data were completely at odds. No, there was not enough B₁₂ in the Hindu diet to keep a rabbit alive; yet the Hindus were doing well. Was it climate? Psychology? The doctor brought a Hindu man back to London with him so that he

could perform more clinically precise tests in his own laboratory.

He fed the Hindu exactly the same diet in England as the man had eaten in India and quite soon the man came down with vitamin B₁₂ deficiency. What had happened? It turned out that the English food was *too clean*. There were enough weevils in the flour and worms in the fruit of India to give the Hindus the bare minimum of B₁₂ they needed to survive. But in the sanitized food of England there was not enough to meet even minimum daily requirements.

This is exactly what we have done with Dionysus. We have cleansed him out of our consciousness, denied him on moral grounds; and we are the worse for it. Like the weevils in the flour and the worms in the fruit, we get just enough poor quality Dionysus—through auto accidents and screaming headlines, terrorism and street violence, drinking and drugs—to give us the little bit of ecstatic quality we need to keep alive.

But, as with any addiction, we need more and more and more. Because we are not getting the divine joy we actually need to satisfy us, we crave its opposite. Thus robberies become muggings, muggings become beatings, beatings become shootings, shootings become bombings, and where will it end? This is the addictive behavior that plagues our society and touches every aspect of our lives.

S E N S A T I O N A N D M A T E R I A L I S M

When western society chose to follow the erratic footsteps of the degraded Bacchus instead of the joyful dance of Dionysus, it began to confuse materialism with sensation. As a result we citizens of the late twentieth century can truly be said to have lost our senses—or at least to have lost contact with them.

Even the clothes we wear tell us something is amiss. Both men and women today “dress for success” by wearing ties—in effect separating their heads, their thinking processes,

from the rest of their bodies and thus symbolically cutting off sensation below their necks. When they take their ties off at the end of the day they go wild. All that bottled-up sensation comes rushing out looking for somewhere to go.

At first glance, I suppose, our society looks terribly sensation oriented—the flashing neon signs of Broadway, the almost naked bodies on billboards, our obsession with food and exercise. Originally, perhaps, we want these things for the pleasurable sensations they give us. But after a while we develop a craving for sheer quantity and lose sight of quality all together. So it seems that we are *materially* oriented, and that is a fine distinction to make. We want more things—more cars, more money, more clothes, more drugs, more fun—but we're frightened of touch, of making real contact with another person. We're more likely to take our clothes off in front of a stranger than we are to let down our emotional defenses in front of someone we love. This unease with human contact is a reflection of the absence of good-quality Dionysus and it has been a great loss for our society.

Never did I experience this loss more vividly than during a visit I made to Grace Episcopal Cathedral in San Francisco soon after the custom of the passing of the peace had been instigated in the Episcopal church. Robed and gloved ushers came down from the altar and shook hands with the person at the beginning of each row of pews and this “peace” was then to be handed down from person to person until the end of the row was reached.

Well, the woman to my right was clearly horrified by this plan. She couldn't bear to touch a stranger. The Dionysian quality of being close was forbidden to her. She turned around to me with an anguished look on her face, proffered a gloved hand, and stiffly put out her little finger. I took the little finger and shook it carefully with my thumb and forefinger. The

pained embarrassment at having to touch was vividly expressed between us.

I don't get angry very often, but for some reason the anger just welled up in me over this. So I turned around to the man on my left, raised him up with a big bear hug, and sat him down again. The poor man was so embarrassed that he sat there staring straight in front of him and the peace went no farther.

This is our general, official, and especially religious attitude toward sensation. Nice people don't do it. As for feelings, yes, you may have feelings, as long as they are very discreet and totally under control. (I can't help contrasting this attitude with that of the Muslim world. There, if you are talking with a man and you stray farther than six inches from his face while you are conversing, this is a public announcement of an insult. It means you don't like him. Of course if you get within six inches of most westerners, they become exceedingly uneasy and slowly begin to back up in an effort to increase the distance!)

Today, just as that woman and I could find no dignified way to exchange a human touch, as a society we have no respectful, dignified way to touch Dionysus. In the same way that my passing of the peace was transformed almost instantaneously into the passing of anger, our hunger for the sensuous Dionysian experience is transformed almost instantaneously into a search for sensuality. Thus we cannot find the humanized archetype because we are looking in the wrong place and in the wrong way.

I N T I M A C Y

We often bemoan the "loss of intimacy" in our society. We are quick to take a stranger to bed, but we are loathe to be touched emotionally. When we lost the concept of touch as a way to contact the god, we became ashamed of our natural urges and guilty even for our fantasies.

Perhaps we most deeply fear the loss of ecstasy because implicit in it is

a loss of control. Surrender, even to the divine, is something our culture does not encourage. Surrender to the divine means crossing over from our well-defined roles and worlds into the realm of the gods, where everything is possible and nothing is explained. We have no idea what to expect and so we are afraid. As the poet T. S. Eliot said in *Murder in the Cathedral*, we "fear the hand at the window, the fire in the thatch . . . less than we fear the love of God." Truly to experience ecstasy, the love of God, would mean to invite profound change and this we are unwilling to do.

We run after sex, chasing the god again, but so often we get the dehumanized, poor-quality Dionysian experience. Poor quality Dionysus expressed sexually is a terrible thing to behold. Instead of lovemaking we get rape or sexual acts completely devoid of spirit. Just as we try to cut off our heads from the rest of our bodies, we have tried to separate our sexuality from the rest of our lives. We have even given sex its own section of town. Here, in the hours of darkness, what passes for sexual abandon in the twentieth century flashes its lights and plays its music. Our metaphors for sex are filled with energy, but the energy does not strive upward. We say get it on, get it off, do it to me. This low-grade ecstasy is enough to keep us going but it does not lead to transcendence.

To drown our guilt and shut down the voices, we anesthetize ourselves with alcohol and drugs—ironically, in other times and places these substances were divine sacraments used to bring visions of God. With no sacred means of expression, we can express our need for Dionysus only symptomatically: through substance abuse, child molesting and domestic violence, muggings, wars, terrorism, madness.

I N T O X I C A T I O N

Dionysus is the god of wine and ecstasy, liberation and abandon. He is the perennial profusion of color and

life and energy. When we touch Dionysus we touch the irrational wisdom of the senses and experience joy.

Because we have disallowed ourselves this experience, however, we get the darker side of intoxication, a confusion of the senses that is far from spiritual. With the first sip of wine we leave the everyday world and enter a new world. We are with warmth and happiness, free to enjoy ourselves, still in control, but feel able to let go of our burdens. This is the point at which the followers of Dionysus stopped—in fact, some of them never drank wine at all. They needed to be conscious to experience divine ecstasy. You can't be joyous and dead drunk at the same time! Unfortunately when we replaced Dionysus with the drunkard Bacchus, we forgot when to stop.

Dionysus himself got drunk only once and he didn't like it. To cure his wine-induced madness he went for a visit to Zeus's shrine. One story has it that he bogged down in quicksand and was saved by a donkey who took him raving and drunk—but safe nonetheless—to Zeus. As recompense Zeus gave the donkey human speech. The other story, which I like much better, is that Dionysus turned into a donkey and arrived at Zeus's shrine braying, which became human speech. So when we get drunk enough to get this jackass aspect going, we are no longer candidates for ecstasy. Our humanness is lost.

Instead of taking the opportunity to transcend the material world, we keep drinking (or taking drugs, or trying to make money, or falling in love) to regain that first flush of happiness, which we mistook for joy. Chase it as we might, however, happiness is by nature an ephemeral experience. As we drink we become louder, looser, less in control of what we say and do. In trying to hold onto happiness we slide headlong into despair. And if we continue to drink until we can drink no more, we are likely to become violent and ultimately unconscious.

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Living Your Dreams

Your dream is a vision of yourself in the near future. What is the future? Not something waiting for you but something you create through your imagination. The future is possibility waiting for form, the not-yet waiting to be programmed. Dreamers can taste their visions and feel compelled by them, as if they were self-evident truths. "We hold these truths to be self-evident," said our founding fathers, as they laid out the American dream that has guided us for more than 200 years. "I have a dream," yearned Martin Luther King more recently in Washington, D.C., as he painted a picture of equality and fairness in America. John Lennon's song "Imagine" is a dreamer's commitment to human transformation, shared by a generation now in midlife. The dream comes first. Then reality chases after the dream to make it happen.

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Much, if not most, of the dreaming that humans do takes place in childhood and adolescence. We encourage children and young adults to dream and to launch plans to achieve those dreams. “What do you want to do when you grow up?” In the adult years, however, when life is more complicated by many commitments and entrenched responsibilities, dreaming tends to be limited and episodic—a trip to Hawaii, moving into a new house, having an affair. Yet in truth, we never “grow up”; we just keep growing, and our human need for holistic dreaming pervades all of our life and never ends.

As far as we know, human beings are the only creatures on earth capable of envisioning a future and then setting about to make it happen. We dream and imagine; we expect and plan; we invent and create. This is how new companies get born, poems get conceived, Olympic races get won, music gets written, and inventions get made. Our greatest human power is our capacity to imagine, vision, and dream, over and over again. It is an essential part of the life-style of the self-renewing adult and the first step in empowering a satisfying life structure.

P L A N N I N G

Visioning and planning are very different. Dreams are imaginative, soft-headed, motivating, and energy releasing. Planning is logical, hard-headed, factual, and realistic. Without a purposeful dream, planning is reduced to mechanical busyness. Without a realistic plan, dreams are random wishes—daydreams at best. Dreams impregnate new directions;

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plans help new directions develop and happen.

Few dreamers are good planners; few planners follow a dream. The two often war with each other, like hearts and heads, leaders and managers. To empower your life today, however, you need to be both a dreamer and a planner. When you plan, you take the visionary pictures of a dream and connect them to sympathetic worldly forces. A good planner protects the dream in two ways, by looking for environmental forces working against the plan and by adapting the dream to available resources.

Planning is more than a bunch of skills; it is an inner force, a felt competence, a strength within us. Planning is how our integrity gets the world to cooperate with the dream, and the dream with the world. The planner pushes forward with logical steps, like choosing reliable stepping stones to cross a stream. Through

strategic thinking, the planner embroiders the dreamer’s vision with the complexity of the world, weaving together technical and human resources required to bring the life structure into reality. In the life of any successful structurer, the possible dream becomes a probable plan.

A competent life planner follows four principles: First, he or she keeps the dream central to the plan. The plan is merely the instrument of the dream, never the reason for a life structure. The dream stirs up awe and excitement for the journey, while the plan commits a person to an explicit course of action. A good planner implements good dreams; he or she is value driven. An incompetent planner becomes addicted to the mechanical details of management and short-term results; he gets lost in the forest.

Second, a competent life planner constructs plans that draw upon his or her own proven strengths that worked well in previous life structures. If you are a forty-five-year-old just beginning a new life structure, you need to know what has worked for you in previous life structures. A primary advantage of aging is the reservoir of experience that you accumulate; use it or lose it. People are full of “transferable skills.” Competence gained from career can be used in family life, and vice versa.

What earlier were parenting skills may evolve as management talent, and leisure skills of the past may shape an entrepreneurial direction in tomorrow’s life. Sales ability may now become redirected as diplomatic skills, and the peak performer who liked to “win” may evolve into a person who likes to “be.” The most important human resources for the life planner are the virtues that have worked in the past. Almost anyone who has survived forty years of life has developed advanced personal skills that can create new paths and opportunities.

Third, a competent life planner faces squarely his or her limits and undeveloped abilities. By early

midlife, virtually all adults are lopsided human beings. By then, you have almost always specialized in something—a career, parenting, profiteering, housekeeping, serving, or a leisure life—and as your unique abilities consume you, your undeveloped self and your deficits become more and more obvious. As you specialize you forget basic skills in other areas, and you further neglect your already neglected parts. By the time you are forty or so, you are bound to feel that your life is out of synch, merely because you have overaccentuated some of your abilities, neglected others, and become dependent on other people for significant segments of your life.

Carl Jung said that the real planner in the second half of life is our “Undiscovered Self,” which yearns to get born in our forties and fifties. As we age, our neglected parts get louder voices for a say in our (and their) destiny. What were our so-called weaknesses may now seek to become our strengths. They need training, education, and opportunity. Some adults feel trapped in their own success, where they feel bored as their specialized competence continues to encapsulate them. The planner in us seeks to understand our weaknesses, to protect us from them or to turn them into assets.

Fourth, a competent planner keeps adapting his or her dream to the changing realities of the social environment. The planner does not turn chaos into planned change, as so many say. Rather, the planner swims in the sea of change as cooperatively as possible, searching for available ways to a preferred destination. The planner constructs a relatively short-term game plan, with evaluative principles built in, so that the turbulent waters can be tested in an inductive, ad hoc way,

DREAM QUALITIES

- A dream is a compelling picture of a desirable future. It is a poetic picture, not a literal statement. Once invented by the imagination, it hovers over a person as a lure toward the future.
- A good dream is simple, clear; it is easily recalled and rehearsed.
- A dream is a promise that is self-evident and convincing, an idea whose time has come. To think it is to go for it. It feels right, and it's going to happen.
- A dream is a visceral yearning, not a prediction or wish list. It taps a deep inner sense of personal destiny and provides pictures and voices for your inner sense of purpose. It is a picture of what you most deeply want your life to count for. A dream provides a total picture for how you want your life to become.
- A dream is a pull toward higher ground, an inspiration for becoming. It is not a dream to want a new car, an exotic vacation, or even a new career. A valid dream is comprehensive, anchored in the courage to be.
- A dream is a spiritual promise of a new quality of life, a deeper sense of being, a promise for human betterment that is just beyond your reach but worth reaching for and possible to approximate.
- A dream inspires and motivates; it doesn't order people around. When you live as a visionary adult, you have a dream, even if the dream doesn't translate into marching orders for every hour of the day. A dream is energy; whenever you think of it, you get a burst of personal power.
- A dream works like a rudder guiding you toward your chosen destination, keeping you “on course.”
- A dream is like a haunting refrain. You know that you have one when it won't let you go and others are attracted to it within you. You know that you have a vision when it seems already to be guiding you toward its reality, and you don't have to explain it to yourself.

little by little. The planner is an adapter, determined to shape a structure but not sure of every move to make. A plan is a living document, not a stone etching. Few dream/plans turn out the way they began. They take shape and get reshaped along the way. As new opportunities arise, the planner shifts gears to take advantage of them, if they serve the dream. When new obstacles appear, the planner creates new strategies to stay on course. At times, the planner may have to negotiate with the dreamer to modify the dimensions of the life structure in order to proceed. A capable planner is definite and flexible, committed and adaptable, centered and learning, loyal and clever.

LAUNCHING

The second change cycle skill for making a life structure succeed is launching, which puts the dream/plan to work. With launching, the imaginal dream and the realistic plan get projected into the systems of the world to see whether they congrue and stay in orbit. The launching process represents the months and years that it takes to bring the full life structure into reality. It is birthing time, a time for working and waiting, an expectant but busy phase in the construction of the future.

The launcher's job is to get the systems of the world to cooperate with the dream/plan and to modify the dream/plan so that it can fit the systems around it. The launcher aims at a successful completion in a plateauing orbit—a victory that can be sustained. But sometimes he or she chooses to abandon the life structure. Perhaps the mountain is too high, or resources for the climb have been expended. Perhaps the importance of the destination has changed, and the trip is called off. Although launchers aim at plateauing and winning, the good ones are prepared to abort if they have to. And if a launcher has to

exit, he or she will decide either to renew the same life structure under different circumstances (restructuring) or to engage in a life transition so he or she can start all over again in new directions. The launching ability has two essential components—commitment and personal mission.

C O M M I T M E N T

To have a life structure, a person needs commitment, which means much more than compliance with the plan. Commitment is persistence, dedication, interaction, and an intention to win. Commitment begins with adherence to one's own integrity. It is a steady covenant to be true to yourself and to those who share your path. Commitment is lived values. "A value is only a value if it is life-preserving and life-enhancing," writes Allan Bloom. "Commitment values the values and makes them valuable. ...The hallmark of the *authentic self* is consulting one's oracle while facing up to what one is and what one experiences. *Decisions*, not deliberations, are the movers of deeds. One cannot know or plan the future. One must will it. There is no program." True commitment is inner-driven and anchored to the dream within. Henry David Thoreau said,

"A man must find his occasions in himself. . . If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. . . If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he bears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."

While commitment is an inner decision to be definite, persistent, and determined, it is a learned behavior. Commitment requires faith, trust, hope, and patience—all inner capacities. Commitment requires risk taking, teamwork, and long-distance

management—all outer capacities. Many adults in our society have not yet learned how to make their lives work; they lack the prerequisites of commitment, so they fall short of achieving a life structure. They need training in basic life skills that will help them effectively combine their intentionality with the resources of the world around them. They need training in two primary areas of true commitment: attachment and achievement—the ability to attach stems from emotional bonding and inner comfort with others and with adult roles; the ability to achieve stems from clear thinking and actions that make the external world approximate the dream. Both attachment and achievement are necessary skills for creating successful life structures. Both can be learned.

Commitment is more than inner determination; it requires worldly savvy and risk taking. Plans are merely blueprints for action. Launching requires leadership, collaboration, networking, adaptation, incorporation of new opportunities, safeguards against new threats, and timing. Successful launchers have internal gyroscopes keeping them balanced and moving toward their dreams; they also have radar, keeping them apprised of worldly conditions. Sorting out the signals, launchers make their moves.

P E R S O N A L M I S S I O N

When you have a dream and a plan working together in the construction of a life structure, you have a "mission," a circumscribed purpose that defines your use of time and space for the duration of this particular life structure. People with a mission know where they want to go. A person with a mission is clear about what he or she will and won't do to serve the priorities of the plan. The boundaries for taking action are relatively crisp and definite. Life is a challenge, and the singular focus is to reach the goal line of a successful plateau. This

is the all-American place to be: aimed at winning. "Winning," said A. Bartlett Giamatti in a speech when he was president of Yale University, "has a joy and discrete purity to it that cannot be replaced by anything else. Winning is important to any man's or woman's sense of satisfaction and well being. Winning is not everything, but it is something powerful, indeed beautiful, in itself, something as necessary to the strong spirit as striving is necessary to the healthy character."

To win, you must grow your dreams in the structures of the world around you. That is not easy. Every social system has its own rules and prerogatives, and they do not easily cooperate with individual priorities. A successful launcher convinces whatever systems that he or she needs to cooperate with his or her dream/plan or adapts his or her dream/plan to the systems in order to find congruence. In that exchange,

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however, a trick is played. Once the dream is embedded in the world, it begins to be entrapped; it begins to die, and the external structures begin to control the person. Sustaining your personal mission means staying on the path that belongs to you, and this requires continuous evaluation of the journey. The ability to evaluate your journey is critical to staying on course. "Am I on course or off course?" the launcher asks, and if he or she is off course, corrective measures are taken. The launcher wants to win but loves the challenge of winning almost as much. He or she wants to be a peak performer with optimal performance. If the plan is not working or the dream is judged to be outdated, the healthy launcher aborts the mission and moves the structure as rapidly as possible to disengagement, where a decision is made either to take the minitransition for restructuring the life structure or to begin a life transition in search of new directions.

P L A T E A U I N G

The third change cycle skill is plateauing, the art of sustaining a successful life structure. Oscar Wilde once remarked that "In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it." Plateauing is knowing how to stay at the top of your realized dream and to keep enriching the dream/plan for as long as it makes sense to do so. People who succeed in achieving or becoming the life structure that they have been pursuing discover that making a plateau work is a new ball game. Some people like it and thrive on it. They bask in the recognition and rewards and strive to enhance their position. Others experience themselves slipping into a pensive reevaluation and a loss of motivation.

There tend to be two distinct periods of plateauing, early and late. The first few months and years of plateauing serve to sort out the long distance runners from the discomfited. The plateau pursuers lack the capacity to

enjoy their own success. They don't really want to succeed; they just want to prove that they can win. For them, being there is not as exciting as getting there. Some people who arrive at a plateau feel an absence of challenge, and they move toward exiting and disengagement. They may have a fear of success that keeps them from settling into the plateau. These are often loners who move from job to job, from relationship to relationship, and from city to city, repeating their pursuit of success without achieving sustained success. They are pursuers of a plateau, not plateauers. They have not learned how to love success and to thrive on it.

The long-distance runners are positive plateauers who become their finest selves in their plateauing roles. This is their victory, and they want to invest in it. They renew their vision within the plateau so they can keep growing within the structure. They learn to mentor others, to shape policies, to serve as ambassadors for their organizations, and to leave some legacy. They have staying power. They maintain their success by pursuing new levels of attainment, influence, growth, discovery, and contribution. Or, if parenting was the core of the dream plan, they grow with their children to find more of themselves. Long-distance runners function with what Abraham Maslow called "unconscious competence," the effortless, masterful capabilities of high-performing people. They thrive on constancy, loyalty, honest criticism, curiosity, and a zest for life. Although they enjoy the security and safety of their successful life structures, they keep growing within their plateaus and do not see themselves as having arrived at the top of their climb.

Instead of climbing another mountain, long-distance runners can sit and enjoy the one they are on and find new adventures there. Instead of having to prove themselves again, they can improve who they already are. Instead of boring themselves and needing a "road not yet taken," they

find new and fulfilling destinations on the road that they have already mastered. A plateau is meant to be a dynamic and ongoing celebration of a life structure, a time of considerable stability, creativity, and recognition. If the world cooperates with more order than chaos, healthy plateauers tend to their knitting.

M A N A G I N G T H E D O L D R U M S

Phase 2 in a life structure is feeling out of synch, as if the plateau and even the life structure were "slip-sliding away." During even the most successful plateaus, gremlins invade to disturb the peace. With the flattening of your personal mission in the plateau, there is a tendency to lose momentum, to rest on your oars, and to defend the status quo. As your motivation fades out, forces inside and outside of your life structure invade to challenge your halcyon days.

"Managing the doldrums" is a change cycle that addresses a threefold sequence of regressive experiences. It begins with sensing decline ("Why isn't my life as alive and challenging as it used to be?"), which evolves to feeling trapped ("I'm mad, depressed, and scared as hell, and I'm not going to take it any more") and ends up as resisting change ("Life used to work wonderfully, so I'm going to keep things the way they were"). The predictable sequence is from thinking (noticing decline) to feeling (awareness of being diminished and trapped—scared, angry, depressed) to decision-making (choosing ways to restabilize the life structure). The job of the doldrums manager is to sort out what is working from what isn't so that a realistic and proactive plan of action—rather than a reactive one—can be followed.

S E N S I N G D E C L I N E

There comes a time when the dream of the life structure loses its luster, even though you continue to

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through it.**

go through the routines of pretending that the life structure is alive and well. Usually, in the plateau of a life structure, the demise begins. Restlessness, defensiveness, inflexibility, or some acting out behaviors reveal that the plateau has led to a downward slide. You may be thoroughly bored with your plateau, but since it is the only environment that you can imagine for your life, you deny the boredom and complain, reminisce, and pretend that all is well. Pushed to the margins of your plateau, where your rewards and recognition are minimal, you yearn to make the life structure work again, but already the seeds of a transition have been sown, and you have begun to disengage from the life structure. Decliners have a sense of living in the past without a clear

future. They go through their days looking in on their lives, knowing that they are living on borrowed time. They have low energy, are easily tempted by addictions, and have a high level of denial that anything is wrong. The out-of-synch process for a decliner is an inner dialogue of dissonance and conflict.

Instead of living within a proactive dream/plan, you are now defensive and reactive. Instead of adventuring with your structure as a charismatic leader, you are retreating into past achievements as a mechanical manager, and you don't know where you are going. And, as the old adage goes, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there." Your main intent at this time is to hold on to your gains, at all costs. Those around you who are now vital to your life structure may think that you have sold out and abandoned your right to be in charge. The screw has turned, and your place in the life structure may have become, in the minds of others, a liability to their life structures. They say that you are having an identity crisis, while you feel that a power struggle is going on among them. The dissonance and conflict sap your energy and confuse you. "Sensing decline" is the thinking process of an out-of-synch person; the feeling side can be described as "feeling trapped."

F E E L I N G T R A P P E D

At this point, you feel very confused. Your emotions are like a roller coaster. Throughout the building of your life structure, you had down times when you felt discouraged, sad, or angry. The difference now is that your bad feelings dominate your space and time as if they were part of your character. You feel outraged by the surge of negative emotions. You thought that you had earned the right to a life of positive emotions, with happiness and cooperation lasting forever. You feel betrayed by your own success, undermined by people you trusted (including yourself), lost in

confusion, and unable to sort things out. Sometimes you feel angry, at other times sad. Frequently you feel scared that you will lose your life structure. Drained by the complexities of this navel gazing, you now feel as if you were a caretaker of the home of someone else—someone you used to be. As the song by Harry Chapin goes, "there's no tick-tock on your electric clock, but still your life runs down."

People who succeed at life structuring usually expend their energy outside of themselves, manipulating the world around them. They are seldom trained to manage this implosion of feelings within themselves. Indeed, they are seldom trained to manage their feelings at all, and this is one reason why the out-of-synch phase is so badly managed by so many adults. The decision side of "sensing decline" and "feeling trapped" is resisting change.

R E S I S T I N G C H A N G E

When you sense decline and feel trapped, you resist change. Somebody is raining on your parade, trying to take your life structure away, trying to evict you. The decision here is to hold on and keep things the way they are, even if you are bored, unhappy, ineffective, and destructive. Resisters are reactive and often masochistic. In high denial, they back into their future. They tough it out and endure whatever happens as they live within a double bind: they don't know how to enjoy continuing in the life structure, but they can't or won't leave.

The doldrums manager looks for ways either to restore confidence and commitment to the dream/plan or to end the life structure as it is now. Either you recapture the inspiration and commitment that you had for your life structure as your personal mission, or you give up the life structure and seek a new one before circumstance wrenches it away from you. The less time you are in the doldrums, the better, because they tend

to become a bitter prison for the helpless and the enraged. Instead of sensing decline, you need a plan for the future. Instead of feeling trapped, you need positive feelings of empowerment. Instead of resisting change, you need to choose a future that will be fulfilling.

SORTING THINGS OUT

The ultimate job of the doldrums manager is to help you decide what to do and who to be. You must move beyond merely repeating the past. You figure out what to hold on to and what to let go of. You conduct a thorough inventory of your life, asking only one question of each assumption, possession, relationship, activity, and structure: "Does this add meaning to my life?" If it does, you keep it; if it doesn't, you prepare for surgery of some sort. You identify necessary alterations in your life structure that you believe will improve your life. You consider the possible advantages of moving on.

Sorting things out is like a game of keepers and leavers. The keepers are the continuing aspects that work and empower the life structure—the roles, tasks, relationships, opportunities, challenges. The leavers are those items that detour you from purposive activity within your structure. Sort them out. Delegate what doesn't belong to you; eliminate parts of the structure that have led you astray; alter your roles to comply with your current inner strengths at this phase of the structuring process. Stay true to your passionate values, and rearrange your life structure accordingly.

Sorting things out is a process evaluating how to proceed when a life structure gets blurry and dysfunctional and your role becomes less and less clear. If you are successful at sorting, you will make four piles: things to hold on to, things to let go of, new things or skills to take on, and a game plan for when to move on to either restructuring or cocooning.

GOODBYE AND FAREWELL

The change cycle skill to say good-bye and disengage from a life structure is an essential adult ability possessed by few. Most adults are not trained to exit or depart from their heroic space and time; they would rather stay distressed. When they do leave, they often demean themselves or attack those around them. The self-renewing adult designs exits that honor both those remaining and those leaving—a win-win strategy. Good endings are marker events—turning points that deserve rituals for celebrating the importance of life lived and life ahead.

Endings are symbolically the acceptance of death as reality, yet most of us spend our lifetimes denying the many deaths that we experience in the form of losses. It is our endings, more than our beginnings, that keep us committed to living as fully as we can. "If you can begin to see death as an invisible, but friendly, companion on your life's journey," writes Erich Lindemann, "gently reminding you not to wait till tomorrow to do what you mean to do—then you can learn to *live* your life rather than simply passing through it." Perhaps Elisabeth Kubler-Ross has said this as powerfully as anyone, "It is the denial of death that is partially responsible for people living empty, purposeless lives; for when you live as if you'll live forever, it becomes too easy to postpone the things you know that you must do. You live your life in preparation for tomorrow or in remembrance of yesterday, and meanwhile, each today is lost." There is no way to progress deeply into the future without taking leave of the past—making a leap of faith into an unknown future. The pain of loss becomes motivation to learn how to look ahead instead of backward. Disengagement is usually experienced as a loss, but it also is a liberation, a graduation, a commencement.

RESTRUCTURING

The seventh change cycle skill, restructuring, leads back to phase 1, with a revised plan attached to a renewed dream. Restructuring is repairing and updating the same life structure, leaving it strengthened and improved. It is enacting the plans that have been made to improve the life structure and to begin again. A minitransition is a fairly rapid return to reenact the same dream with a slightly different plan. Restructuring feels like you are crossing a bridge to familiar territory. This produces a catharsis, with renewed energy, confidence, and determination. You feel on course, following your path again. You have restored a sense of purpose and mission in your life. You are on your way.

Restructuring makes sense when the structure is basically healthy, but some minor changes must be made for the structure to work effectively under current conditions.

Restructuring is like a personal strategic plan that extends the old plan by reformulating it. The deep places of the self do not have to be searched and transformed. However, if a restructuring fails or proves futile, a person ends up, naturally, cocooning and then proceeds through the life transition route on the bottom of the cycle. A minitransition is a purging of the life structure, whereas a life transition is a purging of the self. One is the way of strategic planning for structural reform; the other is the way of personal transformation. One is to repair and to upgrade what is; the other is to metamorphose toward new possibilities.

The route through a life transition takes much longer than the minitransition but provides profound personal renewal and leads to a new and usually different life structure. The choice of routes is not always an option. If you experience a trigger event with

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Meditation is not just something extra to be done in our spare time, but is essential for our well-being.

A Y Y A K H E M A

MEDITATION

One of our human absurdities is the fact that we're constantly thinking about either the future or the past. Those who are young think of the future because they've got more of it. Those who are older think more about the past because for them there is more of that. But in order to experience life, we have to live each moment. Life has not been happening in the past. That's memory. Life is not going to happen in the future. That's planning. The only time we can live is now, this moment, and as absurd as it may seem, we've got to learn that. As human beings with life spans of sixty, seventy or eighty years we have to learn actually to experience living in the present. When we have learned that, we will have eliminated a great many of our problems.

Ayya Khema was born in Germany, educated in Scotland and China, and later became a United States citizen. She is an ordained Buddhist nun and spends much of her time teaching and writing.



We are all quite able and efficient in looking after our bodies. We wash them at least once a day, probably even more often. We go out with clean clothes. We rest our bodies at night. Everyone has a bed. We wouldn't be able to stand up to the strain of living if we didn't also rest.

We have a house where we



shelter the body from rain, wind, sun, the heat and the cold. We wouldn't be able to function well otherwise. We feed the body

with healthy nourishment, not with anything that we would consider poison. We give it the food we consider good for us and we take exercise. At least we walk. If we didn't, our legs would atrophy and we could no longer use them. Exactly the same has to be done for the mind.

In fact it's even more important because the mind is the master and the body is the servant. The best servant in perfect condition, young, strong and vigorous, having a weak and dissolute master who doesn't know what to do, will not be able to work satisfactorily. The master has to direct the servant. Even when the servant isn't so strong and vigorous, if the master is efficient and wise the household will still be in order.

This mind and body are our household. If this inner household is not in order, no outer household can be in order. The one we live and work in is dependent on the order that we have created in our own inner household. The master, the one in charge, has to be in the best possible condition.

Nothing in the whole universe is comparable to the mind or can take its place. Yet we all take our minds for granted, which is another absurdity. No one takes the body for granted. When the body gets sick, we quickly run to the doctor. When the body gets hungry, we quickly feed it. When the body gets tired, we quickly rest it. But what about the mind? Only the meditator looks after the mind.

Looking after the mind is essential if life is to grow in depth and vision. Otherwise life stays two-dimensional. Most lives are lived in the realities of yesterday and tomorrow, good and bad, I like it

and I don't like it, I'll have it and I won't have it, this is mine and this is yours. Only when the mind is trained can we see other dimensions.

The first thing we need to do with the mind is wash it, clean it up, not only once or twice a day as we do for the body but in all our waking moments. In order to do that, we have to learn how. With the body it's very simple, we use soap and water. We learned to do that when we were small. Mind can only be cleansed by mind. What the mind has put in there, the mind can take out. One second of concentration in meditation is one second of purification because, luckily, the mind can only do one thing at a time. Although, as the Buddha said, we can have three thousand mind moments in the blink of an eyelid, we don't usually have that many and we don't have them all at once. Mind moments follow each other in quick succession but only one at a time.

Our mind, that unique tool in all the universe, is the only one we have. If we owned a fine tool we would obviously look after it. We'd polish it and remove any rust. We'd sharpen it, we'd oil it, and we'd rest it from time to time. Here we have this marvelous tool with which everything can be accomplished, including enlightenment, and it's up to us to learn to look after it. It won't function properly otherwise.

During meditation we learn to drop from the mind what we don't want to keep. We only want to keep in mind our meditation subject. As we become more and more skilled at it, we start to use the same faculty in our daily lives to help us drop those thoughts which are unwholesome. In this way our meditation practice assists us in daily living and our attention to wholesome thoughts in everyday life helps our meditation practice. The person who becomes master of his or her own thoughts and

learns to think what he wants to think is called an Enlightened One.

Please don't be surprised if this letting go of thoughts doesn't work all the time; it will surely function some of the time. It is an immense release and relief when one can think, even for one moment, what one wants to think, because then one has become master of the mind instead of the mind being the master of oneself. Being involved in whatever thoughts arise, unhappy or happy ones, in constant flux and flow is what we learn to drop when we manage to stay on the meditation subject.

Our second step is exercising the mind. An untrained mind is like a wavering, fluctuating mass which runs from one subject to the next and finds it very difficult to stay in one spot. You have probably had the experience when reading a book of coming to the end of a page and, realizing you don't know what you've just read, having to read the whole page over again. The mind has to be pushed to stay in one spot, like doing press-ups, like weight lifting, developing muscles in the mind. Strength can only come from exercising the mind to do exactly what one wants it to do, to stand still when one wants it to stand still.

This also creates power in the mind because it's connected with renunciation, with letting go. All of us have sizeable egos. The "me" and "mine" syndrome and "if you please, I'll keep it and you stay out" attitudes create all the world's problems. We can only be sure that the ego is affirmed when we're thinking, talking, reading, seeing a movie or using the mind in the interests of ego. The great renunciation that arises in meditation is to drop all thoughts. When there's nobody thinking, there's no ego confirmation.

To start with, dropping thoughts will only be possible momentarily, but it is a step in the right direction. The spiritual path is all about letting go. There is nothing to achieve or gain. Although these words are used

frequently, they are only ways of expressing ourselves. In reality a spiritual path is a path of renunciation, letting go, constantly dropping all we have built up around ourselves. This includes possessions, conditioned habits, ideas, beliefs, thinking patterns. It is difficult to stop thinking in meditation because that would be renunciation and it is a moment when the ego doesn't have any support. When it happens for the first time, the mind immediately reacts with, "Oh, what was that?" and—of course—one is thinking again.

To be able to keep the mind in one spot creates mind muscles, gives the mind strength and power.

The body's strength makes it possible to accomplish what we set out to do with the body. The mind's strength makes it possible to do the same with the mind. A strong mind does not suffer from boredom, frustration, depression or unhappiness—it has learned to drop what it doesn't want. Meditation practice has given it the necessary muscles.

The mind, being the most valuable and intricate tool in the universe, also needs a rest. We have been thinking ever since we were very small and innumerable lifetimes before that.

All day we think, all night we dream. There isn't a moment's rest. We may go on holiday but what goes on holiday? The body goes on holiday. It might go to the beach, to the seaside or the mountains or to a different country, but what about the mind? Instead of thinking about the work one has to do at home, one thinks about all the sights, sounds and tastes at the new place. The mind isn't getting a holiday. It just thinks about something else.

If we didn't give the body a rest at night, it wouldn't function very long. Our mind needs a rest, too, but this can't be had through sleeping. The only time the mind can have a real rest is when it stops thinking and starts only experiencing. One of the similes used for the mind is a blank screen on which a continuous film is

shown without intermission. Because the film—the thoughts—is continuous, one forgets that there has to be a screen behind on which to project it.

If we stop that film for a moment in meditation we can experience the basic purity of our mind. That is a moment of bliss. A moment which brings the kind of happiness not available anywhere else, through anything else. A happiness which is independent of outer conditions. It's not unconditioned but conditioned only by concentration. It's not dependent upon good food or climate, entertainment or the right relationships, other people or pleasant responses or possessions, all of which are totally unreliable and cannot be depended upon because they are always changing. Concentration is reliable if one keeps practicing.

Once verbalization stops for a moment, not only is there quiet but there is a feeling of contentment. The mind has at last found its home. We wouldn't be very happy if we didn't have a home for this body of ours. We are equally not very happy if we haven't got a home for the mind. That quiet, peaceful space is the mind's home. It can go home and relax just as we do after a day's work when we relax the body in an easy chair and at night in a bed. Now the mind, too, can take it easy. It doesn't have to think. Thinking is suffering, no matter what it is that we think. There is movement in it and because of that there is friction. Everything that moves creates friction.

The moment we relax and rest the mind it gains new strength and also happiness because it knows it can go home at any time. The happiness created at the time of meditation carries through to daily living because the mind knows that nothing has to be taken so seriously that it can't go home again and find peace and quiet. •

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Ritual Sites

D E A N D A B L O W

One of the psychological remains of our primal beginning is the need for ritual. Since our first appearance on earth we have attempted to decipher our relationship with the universe by observing the environment and inventing symbols for what were meaningful phenomena. By our need to understand, ritual made order out of the mystery of life.

“Ritual Sites” is an attempt to replicate what may have occurred thousands of years ago as the first human beings began to define themselves. Mystery is an important part in ritual and I have photographed sites which would elicit a cultural distancing by defying explanation, their meaning hidden from us as we have progressed through time shedding old beliefs for new, forgetting the primitive oral instruction.





Dean Dablow, is a photographer who has participated in numerous state and national photo exhibitions. Dean is also a professor at the School of Art and Architecture, at Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, Louisiana.

*We the living
Stand at the end
Of an unbroken chain
Each of us
The sum of all life*

*We appeared
As if by magic
We became
But had no answers for
Our becoming*

*Time did not exist
Only day and night
An endless succession
Of light and dark*

*What made us human
Was the need to know
We came to know that life began
And life ended
Death was with us always*



*For want of meaning
We invented our knowing
Tradition became truth*

*Huddled in a circle
Our attentive gaze
Fixed upon the symbol
Of our dream
Driving rhythms
Moved us to sing
The joy of life
Our myths were
As real as the sun*

*Extinguished in the sea
Reborn again in morning
The visual was reality
Belief was held in our eyes*

*Mysteries die
Replaced by other mysteries
And with each generation
The past fades
From mind and view*

Deep Cultural Therapy

T H O M A S B E R R Y

Presently, we are experiencing the crisis of a deep cultural pathology. We need a deep cultural therapy. To assist in our emergence from such a pathology, there is a need of exceptional energy resources. Where does energy come from in such crisis moments? There are, I think, two sources—terror and attraction. With addiction, for instance, we seldom recover until we become somewhat terrified by what is happening. We become so frightened that we are willing to undertake a drastic restructuring of our lives, a reordering of our personal life, our environment, our associations—a kind of rebuilding of life from the ground up.

To do this effectively, there is also need of a dream. Jung frequently expressed the idea that “the dream drives the action.” We need a creative dream, a vision. What is causing the difficulty at the present time is a destructive dream. The industrial age is driven by this illusory Wonderland dream.

In reality, though, we awaken, not to Wonderland, but to “Wasteworld.” The conviction communicated in all commercial advertising is that if you only enter more profoundly into consumption patterns, you will attain a certain blessedness. If we will only buy such and such an automobile, a Wonderland experience is available to us. We need only buy a trinket of some kind or a certain type of soap and it will take us from perdition to beatitude.

The industrial world is disintegrating. Everything is grimy. In our cities, grime is eating away the very stones of our buildings. The squalid context of human existence is becoming so unbearable that we are beginning to be terrorized. We are beginning to be concerned by the possibilities of the greenhouse effect, which would change the temperature of the northern hemisphere possibly up as much as 6°, 8°, even 10° Fahrenheit within the next century.

*IF THE EARTH
IS NOT TAKEN
CARE OF,
EVERYTHING
ELSE BECOMES
IRRELEVANT.*

Thomas Berry, CP, is a Passionist priest, author, teacher, and geologist, who is currently director of the Riverdale Center for Religious Research in New York City. The following article is from his book "Befriending the Earth."



When we think of the order of magnitude of change taking place in human affairs, it is important to think of the physical basis of all things human. What do we smell? What is the fragrance or the stench that is in the air? We are beginning to experience the repulsive aspects of our civilization. We are deeply affected by the noise, by the hardness of life. We do not need to begin with religion or education. We might begin with our revulsion at what is happening. We are not only failing to respond religiously, or to perceive the religious dimension of this disaster, but we are not even seeing what we are looking at. We are not even smelling the odors that are around us. Our senses are becoming deadened. Such diminishment of our sensitivities kills off our religious sensitivities and diminishes our understanding. It dulls our imagination. We begin to experience a deadening of our capacities to respond. I sometimes say, "Don't go to sleep, stay awake, stay awake!" We are like persons suffocating in a close environment. We are breathing carbon monoxide. We have to walk people who are in a drugged state, keep them moving. That is not an exaggerated reference when speaking about where we are and what is happening in the dissolution of the earth's ecosystems.

If I dwell on the physical dimensions of what is happening, I hope you will understand. Discussing possibilities, in terms of religion or ethics, cannot happen unless we are *alive*, unless our basic faculties are intact, unless we can respond with the sense of physical vigor required to undergo the needed adjustment. This is a type of human situation that has



Devastation
of Amazon
Rain
Forest.
Each
second we
lose an
area the
size of a
football
field
through the
cutting and
burning of
rainforest.
AP/Wide
World
Photo

never existed before at this order of magnitude or with this type of addiction.

I would like to present, however, not simply the terrible aspect of our situation, but also something of what an alternative might be. I would like to discuss how a coherent future might function, what role the religion and Christianity might be in this new context. I would like to go through individually to indicate the characteristics of the world ahead of us if we would really choose a creative way into the future. Here are some of the conditions of survival in the context of our present discussion.

CONDITIONS FOR SURVIVAL

The first condition is that the universe is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects. Our plundering, industrial-commercial society is a perfect illustration of what happens when the person-spirit, interior dignity of things no longer receives the reverence it deserves.

The second condition is that the earth exists and can survive only in its integral functioning. We cannot save the earth in fragments, any more than we can preserve any living organism

A normal
day of
congested
traffic in
New York.
400
million
vehicles
devastate
the life
system of
the
planet.
Photo by
AP/Wide
World

in fragments. The earth is a *single* reality.

We need a mystique of the earth, a sense of the earth as having a voice, as speaking to us. We must have the sense, in our communication with nature, that it is not simply trees or water speaking to us, but it is the earth itself speaking to us. While there is an ancient term for the earth, *Gaia*, that is used today, we really do not have what I would consider an adequate term for the earth.

The human community cannot survive unless everything else survives. At the present time, a new relationship between humans and the earth is being fashioned. The basic reality is that the earth exists and can survive only in its integral functioning.

Yet the earth is not a global sameness. It is a differentiated unity and must be sustained in the unity of its many bioregional modes of expression. We must be true to the earth in the place or community where we live. If we are in the desert, we live in the desert community. If we are in a valley, like the Hudson River area of New York, we live in the valley community. Others live in the Great Lakes community, and so forth. We make our home in these communities, with all the other modes of being, and if these communities do not survive, we do not survive.

The third condition is that the earth is a one-time endowment. We do not get a second chance. If we kill the earth, it is all over. If we diminish the earth in an irreversible way, it is a loss that cannot be replaced. Neither God nor humans can reconstitute extinguished species. They are gone forever. The Carolina parakeet, for example, will never be seen again. If we kill off the rain forests, they are gone for all conceivable human time.

(What would happen in billions of years we certainly do not know.) It took 60 million years to bring the rain forests into their present state of existence. If we extinguish them, they will never be the same. They can come back if the damage is limited, but on the scale in which the rain forests of the world are presently being damaged, they would never recover.

We are working with what is perhaps the most precious reality in the universe—the earth—and we are spoiling it. It is like being born on



the moon and coming to the earth in all its grandeur, destroying it, and then choosing to go back to the moon.

The fourth condition is this: the human is derivative, the earth is primary. All the professions must be realigned to reflect the primacy of the earth. Economics, for example, must have as its first priority the economic well-being of the planet. As long as the economy of the planet is integral, humans need not worry. The earth will produce and we will find a sufficiency for our existence. But the most absurd thing for us to believe is that we can have an expanding human economy with a diminishing earth economy. Our human corporations cannot survive if the earth corporation becomes bankrupt.

There is a difference between

approaching the biosystems of the earth in terms of human ecology and in terms of nature ecology. Eventually, of course, they must be one. But there are distinctions to be made. My own position is that of the nature ecologists. I include human ecology within nature ecology, rather than the other way around. I understand, of course, that in our functional operations, we are more in control of the human and must produce sufficient human interest in the dynamics of the planet and enough human energy to preserve the ecosystems of the natural world.

If the earth is not taken care of, everything else becomes irrelevant. If anything happens to the earth, religion, education, economics, the medical profession—all would become irrelevant. We can only save ourselves within the earth community. This community (including the human) comes first, otherwise there is no future for any components of the earth community.

The more we keep choosing the human over the earth, the more trouble we get ourselves into.

The fifth condition is that the entire pattern of the earth's functioning is altered. The earth experienced wave upon wave of life expansion, culminating in the planet as we see it now. We had no part in its early development until recently. Now we are going to be involved in almost everything that happens. Not that we can control the functioning of nature, but much will *not* happen unless we accept it, protect it, and foster it. This represents a vast change in the functioning of the biosystems of the planet and places upon us new responsibilities in relation to the natural world.

We not only need scientists, we need more scientists and technologists than ever—but of the right kind. We

need sensitive scientists who, rather than sending us off into some absurd colony in space, have lots of what Barbara McClintock (a biologist, whose biography was written by Evelyn Fox Keller) calls “a feeling for the organism.” We need to have religious sensitivity to the sacred, a deep, emotional, imaginative sensitivity to everything, from the bluebirds to the butterflies, the insects to the trees. Taking care of trees requires sensitivity; a tree responds to things for good or ill. It is not an easy thing to plant trees, bring them to maturity, and maintain their well-being. Whereas trees, at one time, could do all of this independently, they will, for the most part, depend on human understanding in the future. We now have a humanized planet.

Again, it is largely a question of knowing how to stay out of the way of the natural processes and to avoid oppressive, if well-meaning, human intrusion upon these processes.

Until we get this straight, it is most unlikely that anything else we do will go well. Progress, to be valid, must include the entire earth in all of its components. To designate human plundering of the planet as “progress” is an unbearable distortion. Yet that is precisely what we have been doing. What is necessary is for the water and air to be pure, to be more integral with themselves, for everything to “be itself” in an increasingly integral way.

There is also the deeper mystery of the emergent, transformation process. The earth never remains the same, and, consequently, we not only have to take care of things as they are at present, but must also enable them to be what they are called to be in their continuing transformation. There is no “stabilization.” We cannot say, “Well, let’s stabilize things in an

orderly fashion and keep ‘em that way.” We cannot say this because the inner dynamism of things is constantly leading to something different. We have to have a sensitivity to the role we play. When I say that we must “accept, protect, and foster,” I am suggesting that we need new skills, new attention, and a new mode of human presence.

This new role exists for both science and technology. Science must provide a better understanding of the function of the earth and how human activity and earth activity can be



mutually enhancing. Human technologies must become coherent with the technologies of the natural world. The natural world has its own technologies.

For instance, the whole hydrological cycle is a fantastic engineering feat. To draw water up out of the seas, to lift it over the continents, to pour it down over the countryside, the valleys, to nourish the trees, then gather into the streams, to nourish the life there and then to flow back to the sea, with nutrients for sea life— it is all a vast engineering, biological, and chemical enterprise. Understanding this is most important. That is why it is absurd that science, as we have known it, builds things like automobile engines with absolutely no concern for how they affect the functioning of the natural world. They figure,

we’ll build a few automobiles. If a few are good, more are better, until now we have 400 million automobiles on the planet, and by the end of this century, 600 million automobiles, and we devastate the life systems of the planet.

The same with the scientists who so “brilliantly” produced the green revolution, with all the difficulties that it has caused. We do need sensitized scientists, sensitized engineers. Construction engineers at present seem not to have the slightest idea what they are doing building dams.

They do not have the slightest idea what they are doing in this larger dimension.

The sixth condition we need new ethical principles which recognize the absolute evils of biocide, the killing of the life systems themselves, and geocide, the killing of the planet. It is amazing that we should be so sensitive to suicide, homicide, and genocide, and have absolutely no moral principles for dealing with biocide or ge-

cide. Over concerned with the well-being of the human, we feel it is better that everything be destroyed than that humans suffer to any degree.

Two other things are enormously important. First, a new language is needed. Our language is radically inadequate, as we can see from the language of ethics, the language of economics, and the language of medicine. It does not even have words for the type of transformation that I am suggesting. The medical profession is finally becoming aware that, no matter how hard we try, no matter how much technology we invent, we cannot have well people on a sick planet. That should be obvious, but then it is not so obvious to persons under the spell of medical science and its technologies, persons convinced

Clouds of
smoke
spewing
from our
industries
pollute the
air and
have
crippled our
world
ecosystem.
Photo by
AP/Wide
World
Photos.

that human health is simply a matter of manipulative technologies. We have been trying to have healthy people on a sick planet and the medical profession has not, as a profession, protested adequately against those forces poisoning the planet.

We must also have a transformed legal profession. The legal profession does not presently have the terminology to deal with these issues of human-earth relations. American jurisprudence is absorbed in inter-human issues; it has little interest in interspecies issues. In relation to the needs of the present, the legal profession is among the most retarded of the profession.

As I noted earlier regarding language, we need a new dictionary with new terms and definitions of older terms. So, too, in education. What is education? Education is knowing the story of the universe, how it began, how it came to be as it is, and the human role in the story. There is nothing else. We need to know the story, the universe story, in all its resonances, in all its meanings. The universe story is the divine story, the human story, the story of the trees, the story of the rivers, of the stars, the planets, everything. It is as simple as a kindergarten tale, yet as complex as all cosmology and all knowledge and all history. There is no reason why the story cannot be told in kindergarten, not in every detail of course, but in the integrity of its organizational process. It gives a new context for education. We need to get beyond the division between the humanities and the sciences. Indeed, these are mutually implied in each other.

One of our major concerns is the development of new religious sensitivities, sensitivities that will recognize the sacred dimension of the universe and will be integral. Our religion now is a terminal religion. It functions within a terminal context, with all the deficiencies of language, ethics and energies of this destructive period. The dominant energies at this terminal phase have been absorbed

into this type of religion, as well as our consumer economy, education, medicine, and law. But the change that we envisage is into a period governed by this new context.

The religious dimension must enter into every phase of the conditions I have mentioned. It must be a religion, for example, that will foster a definition of the universe as a community of subjects. We are not taught that now. We are taught a lot about the human, but we are not taught religiously that the sacred community is this larger community of the entire planet, even the entire universe. We are not taught adequately the nature of the earth in its real endowment, what it means in its integrity. Above all, we are not taught that there is a certain primacy of the earth community.

T H E R O L E O F W O M E N

An important aspect of the era that it will be guided extensively by the archetype of woman. Recent history shows patriarchal oppression against both the human and the natural. In the new age, the basic symbol will be one of nurturing and being nurtured in a communion of subjects, not one of exploiting and being exploited in a collection of objects. We are speaking here of the feminine in its ontological reference rather than to gender. People will be educated primarily for roles, not for jobs. We need jobs, yes, but what we need really are people with roles, people with vocations who are following certain instincts for human occupations that are really human, not people working in factories where they do some particular job for money and lose all their human skills in the process.

I was reading something about the aboriginal people of Australia, and it said that every person is an artist, every person is a poet, every person is a craftsperson, every person does everything. Such a remarkable thing. We have professional poets and we have professional musicians. We

should all be musicians, we all should be poets. All children should write poetry. It should be our education, the music and dance and so forth. Our glorification of specialization has led to an impossible situation.

Those who have a diversity of functions and are most successful at it are frequently women. They are being narrowed, however, by their participation in patriarchal, corporation establishments.

Four great patriarchal establishments of the western world have led to the ruinous situation at the present, the four relentless, patriarchal establishments that women have had to endure as well as they were able. First were the ancient empires; second, the ecclesiastical establishment; third, the nation state; and fourth, the modern corporation. These, whatever the grandeur of some of their achievements, have brought us to a ruinous situation.

As women move into the new order of things, they are assuming responsibilities. The role that all of us have is to support particularly those gifts and those graces that are brought by women. The alliance of this with the ecology movement is very clear; the natural world is a world of nurturing, being nurtured, a world of inner spontaneities, of esthetic, emotional qualities that we associate with the feminine. The primacy of objective manipulation has been mainly a patriarchal development. We generally think of woman as capable of a special mode of presence to things. While this quality is often looked upon as soft, as inefficient, it has kept the margin of human life human. If we are marginally human, which is the best we could say about ourselves at present, it is because women have kept that sense of intimate presence of all things to one another.

When asked where my hope rests for the future, I might say that it rests extensively on the new vigor, assertion, and acceptance of women, espe-

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Workaholic Organizations

Why are organizations workaholics? Let's look briefly at the environment within which our largest corporations are doing business today.

Following World War II there were no major business competitors to vie with the United States. Both Germany and Japan were rebuilding devastated lands and economies. Economically, the United States was the world power. Now, with a massive deficit and formidable competition from around the globe, U.S. business is facing unprecedented losses.

Productivity and profitability are down. Since 1980, 2.8 million jobs have been eliminated at For-

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tune 500 companies, with 1 million of those from management. The U.S. workforce is characterized by indifference and poor quality. In 1987, American workers applied for more worker compensation than in any previous year.

Real wages buy 13.8 percent less than they did in 1973, and people are working longer hours than ever before. For the first time in this century, young people cannot expect to be better off financially than their parents. The likelihood is that they will be worse off, with fewer able to buy a home and more of them returning to their parents' home to live.

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A business associate put it this way, "When I graduated from college in 1952, I was in an economic climate in which I could expect to get a job with a good company, make a salary that would adequately support my family, and retire with security. I had evenings and weekends at home. It was rare to bring work home. My two sons scrambled to get their jobs. They know that if they let up, lined up behind them are a hundred well-qualified people waiting for their jobs. They leave home at 7 A.M. They rarely return home before 8 P.M. They always work at least one day on weekends and they bring work home every night. Their salaries are barely adequate and job security is nil. My thirty two year old son developed a bleeding ulcer last year; my thirty six year old son has blinding migraines."

This, then, is the climate in which organizations are attempting to do business and workers are attempting to survive. This environment is not an excuse for workaholism, and it does give us some clue as to why we may be seeing a rise in workaholism. It is important to remember, however, that work addiction is a progressive and fatal disease. Therefore, it is the worst response to an already troubled economy. In no way can work addiction bale out a company. It can only bring the company down faster.

C O R P O R A T E S U R V I V A L A B O V E A L L E L S E

Work addicts will do anything to maintain their fix or supply. Although they may feign concern for others, their actual goal is to protect the addiction. This results in massive self-centeredness. Organizations that are workaholic adapt a similar creed. They put their interests above everything else. They are answerable to no one—not workers,

shareholders, communities, or the nation. When an organization is driven by self-interest, everyone is expendable and loyalties are not honored. This aspect of corporate workaholism may account for the rash of mergers, layoffs, and shutdowns. It also leads to the codependents (workers, shareholders, suppliers) scrambling to protect themselves from the destruction. Consequently, everyone is looking out for self and no one is putting energy into the organization.

P R O F I T A B I L I T Y A T A L L C O S T S

The workaholic organization operates with tunnel vision. It sees one thing: the bottom line of the financial statement. To conserve profit, corners are cut with products and work is squeezed out of people. There is tremendous pressure on management to do more with less. Over the years, I have seen many organizations shift the weight of profitability directly onto people. Workers actually become commodities. They are used up and discarded, and others wait in the wings to replace them.

To the extent that employees are codependent with the organization and fearful for their own survival, they cooperate with this madness. Employees, like children of a workaholic parent, develop coping strategies that are usually dysfunctional for them. They please the parent organization; they try to anticipate its next move, they create shadow organizations for support, and they move into full-blown workaholism themselves.

Recovering work addicts have learned that if their sobriety is their focus and if they live honestly and spiritually, the rest of their lives take care of themselves. Organizations that attend to producing a quality product with integrity find that the bottom line takes care of itself.

S H O R T - T E R M S O L U T I O N , S H O R T - T E R M R E W A R D S

Workaholics have monotone minds; workaholic organizations have myopic minds. They go for the fix of the short-term solution rather than risk the long-term plan. An aspect of the workaholic's dishonesty is impression manage-



ment. They look good on the outside, while chaos rages inside. The workaholic's family gets hooked into the same process. Rather than risking an intervention that will have long-range consequences, they placate. They look for ways to get through each situation.

Workaholic organizations are frantic organizations. They rush around, they change strategies, they feel confused. They leap to solutions without thinking through the implications. Think of how exhausting this is for people who work there. The addict is not predictable, so the loved ones become hypervigilant. The organization is not predictable, and people are kept on their toes.

Ironically, short-term solutions almost always have long term consequences, so the time saved now is multiplied a hundredfold in cleaning up the mess down the line. Surely this has been the lesson we are learning from environmental pollution.

MISSION DENIED

Although I write about the addictive aspects of organizations, I nevertheless persist in my belief in organizations. I still believe in the power of corporate effort. I happen to feel that together we can do more than any one of us alone. I have this hope because my own life is filled with extraordinary experiences in organizations where the missions are sacred trusts. The mission is the reason for their existence, their purpose in being. Without a sense of mission, organizations are soulless.

Unfortunately, the workaholic organization has usually lost sight of its mission. It may give lip service to the mission, but in reality something else has replaced it, usually a preoccupation with profit. The workaholic loses self in the progress of the disease. The workaholic's identity is the disease. This is why some addicts exhibit a schizophrenic personality. When they are involved in the addiction, they become someone else.

Workaholic organizations are inevitably out of touch with their mission. In stages, they ignore the mission; it fades; it doesn't inform decision making. Eventually, it doesn't matter any more. Something else is driving the company.

Workaholic organizations rarely do internally what they do well in the marketplace. For example, I have worked

with many hospitals. Their mission is healing. Yet some of the most unhealthy people I encounter are doctors and nurses. I have several church organizations as clients. I rarely find spirituality among church professionals. Telephone companies' most serious internal problems are with communications.

Imagine the stress on workers that workaholic organizations create by being out of sync with the mission. If people join organizations to help heal, communicate, invent, and so on, and they find themselves not doing the very thing that drew them there in the first place, it creates tremendous stress.

Workaholic organizations let conflicts of interest deter them from their mission. They prefer to spend time focused on the conflict rather than their real purpose.

An architectural firm that was designing a building for its own company entered into a conflict of interest between landscapers and engineers. The landscapers wanted clear windows in the entry atrium (for plants) and the engineers wanted tinted glass to conserve heat and cooling. The landscapers won.

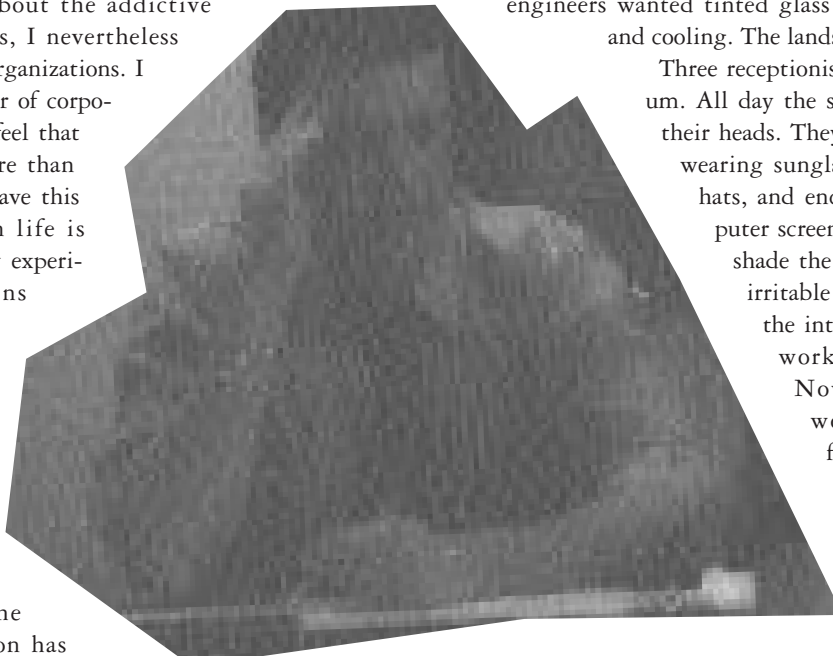
Three receptionists sat in the atrium. All day the sun beat down on their heads. They have resorted to wearing sunglasses, large straw hats, and encasing their computer screens in cardboard to shade the glare. They were irritable and cross due to the intense heat and the working conditions.

Now, these three women were the first people prospective clients met upon entering the building. The receptionists

and the atrium were the firm's advertisement for the type of architectural work they offer!

As a last resort, the firm erected three large beach umbrellas over each receptionist to shield her from the heat. A prospective client confided to me that he thought he had the wrong address when he entered the building. "I thought maybe I had mistakenly walked into some kind of upscale travel agency, where the agents dress for the beach!" The company's motto was, "We design environments for people!"

Workaholic organizations cannot keep their priorities straight. Without clear direction from their mission they make everything hard. The simplest tasks become onerous because they have no clear path. Think of the toll on employees and customers alike.



CRISIS MANAGEMENT IS THE NORM

Workaholic organizations leap from crisis to crisis. The crisis infuses a false energy into people. It creates an environment in which the usual rules are suspended and extraordinary processes take over.

In connection with the crisis orientation, it is necessary to look at the role of stress-management seminars as one method by which workaholic organizations protect their addiction. Ordinarily, stress-management is a training workshop in which employees are given instruments to measure their degree of stress. Then they are introduced to theories of stress (such as fight-flight), taught relaxation techniques, and counseled about the importance of nutrition and exercise in reducing stress. The dominant message is, "You are responsible for taking hold of your life and handling stress." Never do stress workshops point to the origins of stress in the organization: management and the workaholic corporate culture. Subtly, stress workshops imply that the employee is to blame for being stressed out. Yet, a large amount of stress actually comes from management policy, style, and climate—all of which are heavily laden with crisis.

Besides the danger inherent to workers and organizations in the crisis mode, there is a deeper question. Why is it that people must be pumped up to do their work? Why does the organization feel it has to do something to them to get them to perform? Why isn't the mission of the organization, combined with the skill of the employee and the cooperation of co-workers, enough?

I believe that in healthy organizations the challenge of their mission and the integrity of their process is enough. They don't need techniques for interesting people in work. The environment provides sufficient real events (some of them crisis) that there isn't a need to make artificial ones.

Workaholic organizations are crisis-ridden and crisis creators. This is because the addictive process is a process of confusion. The crisis serves to keep everyone busy and away from asking those deeper questions that could lead to recovery and healing.

NO BOUNDARIES, NO RESPECT

Workaholic organizations know no limits. Sometimes they get greedy. They launch projects that are ill-prepared. They follow the crowd. Immersed in the illusion of control and perfectionism, they have no respect for themselves. Their lack of respect extends to workers.

A boundary is a line. When an organization respects boundaries, it knows the difference between itself and something else. And it doesn't enter something else unless invited.

The workaholic organization and the workaholic employee have very flimsy boundaries. The major complaint of

work addicts' families is that work spills over into every area of domestic life. There are no boundaries protecting them from the addict's fix. The major complaint of employees in workaholic organizations is that the organization has no respect for their personal, private lives. The workaholic organization expects to be first in your life and acts accordingly. There are several technologies that facilitate the invasion of the corporate into the private.

The telephone and electronic mail are both ways of contacting employees day and night. For the work addict, these two technologies are the paraphernalia of the addiction. You can be kept busy and you can keep others hopping by the use of electronic mail (a device on which you can leave messages twenty-four hours a day and pick them up at your leisure) or by calling them on the phone. As time becomes our most precious commodity, we find more people needing cellular phones so they are never away from phone contact. Several corporations have had to develop policies to regulate electronic mail, because they found the workaholics in the company were using it day and night. Other employees could not enjoy a holiday without anxiety that an important message was waiting.

Developing clear boundaries, knowing when to say, "No, you can come this far but no farther" is a crucial aspect of a workaholic's recovery. Organizations also have responsibilities in this area. It is not their prerogative to run rampant into every minute of an employee's life. They have a responsibility to set boundaries for themselves and to respect others' rights to a life separate from work.

WORKAHOLIC CHARACTERISTICS IN THE ORGANIZATION

Many of the characteristics found in the individual work addict are also found in the workaholic organization.

Organizations usually suffer *multiple addictions*. If workaholism is the primary, unquestioned addiction in the company, one can be sure there are backup addictions supporting it. Many companies use alcohol and food to take the edge off the pain of working so hard and to reward people for their extra effort. Some organizations are in an addictive relationship with certain suppliers and refuse to dump them even when more qualified and economical alternatives exist. Money addiction goes hand in hand with work addiction. Obsessing about the bottom line of the financial statement and putting profits before quality and people all contribute to the addictive nature of the organization.

Almost all workaholic organizations are into some form of *denial*. Their denial takes the form of boasting about productivity while remaining silent about the effects on people. They alter the financial data so it does not look as bad as it is. They are *dishonest* about their products and their place in relation to competitors. Like the individual work addict, who struggles with *self-esteem*, the organization can have trouble seeing itself honestly. These organizations

exaggerate their successes and brood over failures. They are *self-centered*, believing that everything that happens in the world economy and their own markets is a direct assault on them.

Workaholic organizations are *judgmental* about themselves. They overreact to changes, seeing each one as a crisis, not an opportunity. Compulsive organizations look outside themselves to understand their process. They frequently look for others to blame rather than take responsibility within. Workaholic organizations are *punishing* organizations, and it is dangerous for individuals to own up to mistakes. Consequently, everyone is shifting blame to someone else. Moreover, workaholic organizations use *external measures* as the sole criterion of success. Feeling good is related to doing tasks well. In this paradigm, learning is one-dimensional. It is always about external success.

Workaholic organizations *never relax*. They resist stepping back to evaluate or reconsider a direction. They feel driven. Employees joke about working half-days—8 A.M. to 8 P.M. Work-addicted organizations define success in terms of change and the new. Recently a man in our training group wore a tee-shirt that proclaimed, “When you are standing on the edge of a cliff, progress can be defined as taking one step backwards.”

The workaholic organization does not understand this concept. They are frequently in *crisis mode*. In fact, crisis is a way of life in these companies. Crises are used to suspend the usual corporate rules and to get extra effort out of people. Initially, the crises are sporadic. As the company sinks further into its work addiction, crises are part and parcel of the usual operating procedure. People begin to define the crisis mentality as normal and as “just the way it is around here.” Crisis is only one form of control for these organizations. Control pervades the company. The workaholic pace controls workers; the unrealistic deadlines control quality; and fatigue eventually controls the final output. Finally, these qualities lead into the *perfectionistic* organization.

I dare say, many of us would like to see more quality coming out of American corporations, but perfectionism may not be the way to go. In the perfectionistic organization, humanness is not allowed to flourish. Work is repeated over and over until just right; rarely does the workaholic organization discriminate between projects that should be done “just so” and projects that can be let go. The margin for error is exceedingly slim.

Finally, workaholic organizations experience little internal *intimacy*. Most relationships are superficial. Feelings are not allowed and are rarely expressed openly. Exceptions to this are fear and anger, two feelings that are used to intimidate and motivate others.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS TO OURSELVES?

Workaholism has become so common, so accepted in the society, that we do not realize we are in a pot reaching

the boiling point. Moreover, the very nature of the addictive process is to numb our awareness of the addictive process itself. So, the longer the pot heats up (the addiction continues), the more unlikely it is we have the needed resources (presence of mind) to jump out.

Increasing numbers of social commentators have begun to note our growing disengagement from our own dilemma. They give us a better idea of why we tolerate workaholism so willingly.

The most knowledgeable writer on the issues of addiction and society is Anne Wilson Schaeff. She shifted our perspective from addiction as a solely individual pathology to the fact that there is an underlying addictive process in the society at large. This underlying addictive process supports individual addictions and is larger than individual addictions.

Schaeff observes the society and concludes that not only does it support addictions, it actively promotes them. One has only to look at advertising, listen to music, and observe the political scene to be aware of the truth of her observation.

Futurist Harlan Ellison, who stars in ads for the Geo line of auto imports from General Motors, made a similar point in a speech before the Western States Advertising Agencies Association:

Your children use drugs, and you told them to do it. You've been pushing chemicals on TV for years. “Can't sleep? Take a drug. Not happy? Take a drug.” Where in the world did people get the idea that it's smart to get in a car and go fast? To get in a 4-by-4 and tear up virgin land? You told them to do it. As much as you are subject to the whims of your deranged clients, you rule the world. You have the reins to the most powerful medium in the world—television. And the only people who can afford to advertise on television are the lowest common denominator of goods.

Schaeff believes that the norm for the society is the addictive process. It is not that we have a society that is relatively healthy and off to one side is a small pocket of addicts who are dysfunctional. No, the society itself operates out of an illusionary reality, which it calls reality but is really an addictive process. Why is this so? Schaeff says it is so because the best adjusted person in our society is the person who is not dead and who is not fully alive—the zombie, the numb.

If you are dead, you cannot do the work of the society; if you are fully alive, you resist many of the processes of the society. When you are fully alive, you let yourself feel the pain of living in an environment where we pollute our water and air, where we risk nuclear annihilation, where relationships are fragmented, and so on. Schaeff realizes that

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Whole Parenting

Sooner or later, defeated and frustrated by all attempts to achieve wholeness as completeness, we are ready to welcome a different idea—the idea of wholeness as oneness.

Like waves on water, leaves on trees, beams from the sun, islands on the earth, everything including ourselves and our children can be viewed two ways. Superficially they appear to be separate, isolated, vulnerable, complete things. But looking deeper we find a oneness between each appearance and its underlying source of being: the island is really one with the earth, the leaf with the tree. Every aspect of the whole expresses the whole in unique ways, and the relationship of each to all others is harmoniously governed by the underlying reality with which each is one.

Polly Berrien Berends, is a child specialist and author of seven books. The following is an excerpt from her book "Whole Child, Whole Parent." Copyright by Polly Berrien Berends. Printed with permission from HarperCollins Publishers.



For us then *the quest for wholeness becomes not to acquire, not to accomplish, not to complete our selves—but rather to discover what it is with which we are one, so that we can go ahead and be one with it.* Parenthood is neither the having of children nor something we do to children. Parenthood is a time when we are pushed to discover the nature of the whole and our oneness with it. It is a time when both our mistaken ideas about who we are



and truer ones are brought to light. There is so much that is beautiful and good to wake up to. Our children drive us toward this awakening. We begin ignorantly with what seems to be two or more separate selves having and doing to each other and trying to get wholeness from each other; but, life forces us to look deeper for the fundamental reality from which we derive our uniqueness and which alone can govern us harmoniously in relation to each other. So we say *Whole Child/Whole Parent* instead of *Whole Parent/Whole Child* to indicate that our wholeness already exists and is not something to be given or forced upon or gotten or taken from each other in the future—but rather now upon now, awakened to.

What? No Books on Child-Rearing?

The best thing to read when trying to raise a child is the child. Maybe it is even more important that we learn to read ourselves. Most of the time when we try to read books that tell us how to deal with problems we get problems. Problems are very contagious.

Look how easily our children catch them from us.

The trouble with most problem-solving books for parents is that they start with the idea that the child has a problem. Then they try to tell us how to fix the child or else, after blaming the parent, they suggest how we can fix ourselves. It is better to think that there are no problems, only ignorant beliefs and their symptoms. We experience problems because we have certain beliefs that don't work. We try to make them work but they don't because they are false. We are only ignorant. But we are not ignorant because we haven't read the right books; we are ignorant because we haven't discovered the right questions.

In the beginning our children don't have any problems. They simply reflect our ignorance, just as a thermometer registers a fever. There is nothing you can do to the thermometer that will change the illness. You can shake down the thermometer so that the fever doesn't show, but the fever itself is not affected. Likewise even if we can shake the symptoms of error out of our children (and sometimes some of us in frustration do literally shake our children into obedience), nothing will



have happened—at least nothing constructive. The problem is not in the child any more than the sickness is in the thermometer.

When a man who has had a fever becomes healthy again, he can put a thermometer in his mouth and it will not register a fever any more, only health. That's how it is with our littlest children. If we become healthy, they will stop registering ill health as symptoms.

Now the interesting thing is that *we* don't *have* problems either. We are only ignorant of truth. Actually ignorance is a positive step for most of us. We have to move from the wrong ideas we are certain of (ignorance of ignorance) to knowing that we don't know (conscious igno-

rance—receptivity). Once that occurs, understanding comes rapidly for there is nothing to interfere with it.

But we must not *blame* ourselves for not knowing or for having wrong beliefs which are reflected disharmoniously in our children. If we already knew all that we needed to know to raise our children harmoniously, we probably wouldn't be having children. Perhaps it would even be invalid for us to have children then. Children are children so they can become adults; parents are parents so they can become understanding (which is the same as loving). Learning seems to be the point of it all.

Likewise we must not fear that we can wreck our children with what we don't know. The thermometer isn't sick just because somebody's fever is registered on it. Neither is the baby. As a matter of fact, until the child is about two years old there seems to be a sort of grace period in which the symptoms of error disappear in the child the very instant the errors are corrected in the parents' thought. All this time the child is becoming more and more self-aware, and sooner or later he begins to take on the parents' errors in the form of his own mistaken beliefs. But even then, perhaps even more then, the crucial progress has to be made in the consciousness of the parent, and it is really a kind of condemnation and trespassing to think that the child must be fixed.

Recognition that parenthood is even more for the parents' growth than for the child's also helps us to ease up on our children. From this standpoint we can look at the child as a sort of hand mirror in which we can perceive and improve our mental image of ourselves and life. It is necessary to know how to look into the hand mirror and to understand clearly its significance. Our children are not images of our selves but of our thoughts about ourselves. The image itself cannot be faulted or corrected, nor can we even fault or correct ourselves as causes of the image. In this mirror we do not see either our true selves nor the true self of the child, but only the reflections of our beliefs about ourselves and about reality. So we must not view what we see with fear or guilt or blame or any thought that gives reality to the image. The image has value only in that it signifies to us what we do not know about reality. Otherwise it is of no consequence. To try to correct the child is like putting a lipstick smile on the reflection of an unhappy face in a mirror. To correct or try to change ourselves is like putting a lipstick smile on the unhappy face itself. Both actions are absurd; only the knowledge of something truly happy can transform the face and the faces reflection with a genuine smile.

Our children need to be comforted, cared for, encouraged, trained, protected, instructed, reprimanded, forbidden, and prevented. But we must also have regard for them, for their right to be wrong or, more correctly, for their ability to learn to be right. Where their mistakes are not dangerous to themselves and do not impinge radically on the rights of others, we must allow them their freedom. We

must respect their privacy as much as we must respect the privacy of a complete stranger, an adult with whom we have no family ties whatever. This isn't just being nice; anything else is a denial of truth and of the child as a truthful, competent being.

Sooner or later he must consciously seek truth as we are doing. When this time comes (rarely before adolescence), he must have confidence that truth is and that he can perceive it. If we are constantly fixing our children (in effect affixing error and lack to them), they will not have this confidence. Instead they will think of themselves only as needing to be fixed—or needing “a fix.”

The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the householder came and said to him, “Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?” He said to them, “An enemy has done this.” The servants said to him, “Then do you want us to go and gather them?” But he said, “No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.”

—Matthew 13:24-30

The field is each man's consciousness. The seeds are truthful, fruit-bearing ideas; the weeds false, hindering ones. We are all the sowers striving, servants sleeping, and reapers discerning. The enemy is ignorance passing for knowledge. The farmer is the One Mind. The harvest is the reunion of the individual mind with the One Mind in consciousness. For us “the time for the harvest is now.” The time for our children is also always now, but that is their business, theirs, and the farmer's. With regard to our children, as parents we must simply tend to the wheat.

T H E P A R E N T A S M O D E L

Insofar as we approach everything for what it has to teach us (rather than what should or shouldn't be or what is pleasing or displeasing), we reinforce our children's innate conviction that life is a learning place and that learning is our purpose in life. If seeing what is governs the parent, it will govern the child as well. Then harmony and wholeness take place because seeing beings are what we really are. To be really seeing is the same as to be really alive. The children of learning parents are resilient, creative, interested, and efficient in their learning and they are comparatively free from experiences of hurt and failure in relation to others because they are not learning to compete or please but to understand.

THE PARENT AS BEHOLDER

Insofar as we behold our children as seeing beings rather than as pleasing/displeasing or succeeding/failing ones, it becomes evident to us that they are both good (lovable) and learning (intelligent). They are neither obedient nor disobedient, neither smart nor dumb, only relatively aware or unaware, ignorant or understanding. A benefit of this for the parent is freedom from reactions of fear and anger, pride and guilt, credit or blame, and, in their stead, a growing firsthand appreciation of infinite goodness, beauty, order taking place. A benefit to the child is the preservation of his sense of worthiness. The beholding parent recognizes that a sense of worthiness is the child's greatest possession and so protects it by never calling it into question. Beholding means "holding to being." We constantly uphold the child in consciousness in the light of what is. The beholding parent is able to be both patient and firm in a nonpersonal way.

THE PARENT AS PREPARER

By perceiving the child as a seeing being we understand that while we do not have to make our children learn or be happy, we do have a role in making way for the learning child. This relieves us of the enormous burden of thinking we can make or break our children. It relieves the child of being pushed or prodded ambitiously or "spoiled" and distracted by materialistic overindulgence. Now we realize that the way to be loving and educate our children is through recognizing, making allowances for, and facilitating the learning child in his learning. With such an understanding both greater freedom and discipline are possible.

THE PARENT AS MAINTAINER OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We can take a cue from the teaching of Maria Montessori about this. She saw that the way to facilitate learning is to set things up in such a way that the child can find and reach and select whatever he needs to help himself in his learning—as much as possible on his own. Looking at the home as a learning environment, it is helpful to keep two objectives in mind: access and invitation are one; freedom and order are the other.

Access and Invitation. With the youngest children, this may depend on such simple means as providing a low table for the child's work or a stool from which to reach the sink, setting up a bottom drawer of kitchen things he can and may easily get at, providing a bookshelf which displays the inviting covers of the books rather than just the narrow spines. Especially with older ones, access often means simply helping them find time for everything worthwhile. Partly it means not distracting them—for example by constantly switching on the television to bring them under control. Setting aside space and time for quiet learning and

creative enjoyment is part of access and invitation. Older children are relieved and happy to make and keep to schedules, rather than being constantly reminded and scolded. Keeping the dictionary and encyclopedia near the dining table is another concrete example of access and invitation.

Freedom and order. Freedom and order are two sides of the same coin. In Montessori classrooms, the "prepared environment" is one in which everything has an intelligent place and in which there is an intelligent (and intelligible) procedure for maintaining this intelligent order. Children are taught simply that they may play with anything whatsoever in the room (as long as someone else is not using it) and for as long as they like, but when they are finished, before taking out anything else, they must return it to its proper place. The beauty and simplicity of this is stunning. It can be applied beautifully to the orderly home.

THE PARENT AS TEACHER, GUIDE, AND COMPANION

Notice how low on the list comes the place of parent as teacher. While willingness and availability to help our children learn should never be denied if genuinely needed and sought, it is best for both parent and child if the child is allowed to learn on his own whenever possible. This means not neglecting but being present in a somewhat removed way. Rather than either leaving the child alone or over-directing her, the seeing parent recognizes various ways of participating in her learning. If you think of learning as a path, you can picture yourself walking beside her rather than either pushing or dragging or carrying her along. *Overseers* only in a spiritual sense, we participate in our children's learning mostly thorough seeing beyond, appreciating, respecting, encouraging, and celebrating whatever it is that they are trying to learn. Only sometimes and less and less do we actually instruct or help or demonstrate—and then as nonpersonally as possible.

Once my son came to me with a math problem that he could not solve. He had filled two sheets already, but he could not solve it. He explained the problem to me, but my background was such that I couldn't even understand the problem. When I did understand it, I still had no clue as to how to approach it. Whom could we call that would know how? One call was made, but no one was home. "Anyway," my son admitted, "we're supposed to do it ourselves." Well, he could go to school and say that he had not been able to do it.

But then realizing that there was no other mind to rely on I remembered the One Mind. I thought, he does not know how to solve this problem. I do not know how to solve this problem. But he does not have to rely on himself or on me or on anybody else. The only mind there is can reveal to my son what only it knows. "I have confidence that an idea for solving this problem will come to you," I said. "Let's sit down here and see." We sat at the kitchen table and waited. I read. In a minute he picked up his pen-

cil. In another minute he shouted, "Ob!" and began to write furiously. When he came home from school the next day, I asked about the problem. Was his solution correct? Did any other students solve it? He answered yes to both questions. "But you know what?" he said. "I was the only one in the whole class who got it the short way."

There is one mind which is fulfilling itself as individual consciousness. Intelligence and love take place strictly between individual consciousness and reality, not between personal minds. While neglect is tragic, by far the more prevalent parental error is well-meant trespassing.

THE PARENT AS SUPPLIER

Most of our assistance should not be given in the form of toys at all; but where toys are appropriate the main guideline for what and when is reach. Month and age criteria are uselessly arbitrary and part of a detrimental tendency to question the unique perfection of our children and compare them (and ourselves) with each other. The time to introduce a toy is when our children are in fact or in principle reaching for it. It is most useful if we can see beyond their reach to the ultimate principle being sought. Their desire to walk is the quest for freedom; their love of bright pictures and music is a quest for beauty; their urge to speak is the quest for truth and meaning; their wish to be held is the quest for love. If we appreciate that principle is the central issue, we need only watch our children to perceive what is most helpful, and when. The child whose essential spiritual perfection is constantly beheld in his parents' consciousness will concentrate raptly and develop speedily, securely, and happily. At the same time, such parents are readily inspired with the right idea for the right activity or toy at the right time. Toys must be introduced as fruits of, rather than substitutes for, understanding. Partly it is a matter of improvising, partly of literally offering our children tools instead of toys. Mostly it is a matter of providing a good work/play environment, both spiritual and material.

WORTHINESS

A sense of worthiness is a child's most important need. The American self-made-man ethic says that we are what we make of ourselves. This is an improvement over the Old World class systems which said you could never rise any higher than your father. But the implied converse—that you are nobody until you prove yourself to be somebody—is troublesome. The suggestion is that our self-worth depends on external measurements—such as money, power, and popularity. On a child's level, worthiness is often measured by good behavior or achievement.

Comparisons are always being made between ourselves and others, between our children and others' children. Whenever these comparisons favor others we tend to feel unworthy or ashamed. This also has a serious effect on our

human relationships. As long as we measure our worthiness in relation to others, we are constantly at odds with each other. It may be subtle, but often we are either putting others down or feeling put down by them.

I know two teenage children who always seem to stand out in a crowd. People often comment on how natural they are—how attractive, assured, and graceful. Their particular family is a highly cultured European one with a long tradition of high social standing—tempered nicely by the more democratic American viewpoint.

While teenagers frequently seem self-centered, awkward, and ill at ease, these two are poised and good-humored. They excel academically, yet they appear to be free from both fear of failure and excessive ambition.

How is this possible? They have never had reason to question seriously their abilities or essential value. Evidently they experience almost no need to prove themselves. They try to do everything with excellence, not to prove anything, but because excellence befits them.

A sense of superiority is not the same as a sense of worthiness and both of these children have had to develop a higher regard for others. But watching them it is easy to appreciate the value of growing up without questioning one's essential worth.

How can we raise our children to have such a sense of worthiness? Just recognizing its importance is helpful. But there are several concrete areas in which we can cultivate an attitude of confidence in our children's worthiness and convey it to them.

FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE

Basic to an awareness of self-worth is a sense of competency. This is less a matter of achievement than of not doubting our capability to begin with. If we perceive our children as capable, so will they. An old Anacin ad showed a young woman protesting, "Mother, *please!* I'd rather do it myself!" The mother was hanging onto the headache of trying to run her grown daughter's life. Having a parent like that was a headache to the young woman.

A four-year-old I know will tackle anything with assurance and stay with it. She is also unusually comfortable with adults, starting up conversations with the refreshing poise of those children you see on "Candid Camera." One evening I was invited to her home for dinner and the mystery of her assurance was solved.

After eating, the child was excused to prepare a surprise dessert. She had a tall step stool which she lugged around the kitchen, climbing up to open first this cupboard and then that one, choosing the ingredients for her "surprise."

There was no fanfare, no anxious glances from the watchers at the table. Once she consulted her mother in

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Our Shadow Side

R O B E R T J O H N S O N

We all are born whole and, let us hope, will die whole. But somewhere early on our way, we eat one of the wonderful fruits of the tree of knowledge. Things separate into good and evil, and we begin the shadow-making process; we divide our lives. In the cultural process we sort out our God-given characteristics into those that are acceptable to our society and those that have to be put away. This is wonderful and necessary, and there would be no civilized behavior without this sorting out of good and evil. But the refused and unacceptable characteristics do not go away; they only collect in the dark corners of our personality. When they have been hidden long enough, they take on a life of their own—the shadow life. The shadow is that which has not entered adequately into consciousness. It is the despised quarter of our being. It often has an energy potential nearly as great as that of our ego. If it accumulates more energy than our ego, it erupts as an overpowering rage or some indiscretion that slips past us; or we have a depression or an accident that seems to have its own purpose. The shadow gone autonomous is a terrible monster in our psychic house.

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The civilizing process, which is the brightest achievement of humankind, consists of culling out those characteristics that are dangerous to the smooth functioning of our ideals. Anyone who does not go through this process remains a "primitive" and can have no place in a cultivated society. We all are born whole but somehow the culture demands that we live out only part of our nature and refuse other parts of our inheritance. We divide the self into an ego and a shadow because our culture insists that we behave in a particular manner. This is our legacy from having eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden. Culture takes away the simple human in us, but gives us more complex and sophisticated power. One can make a forceful argument that children should not be subjected to this division too soon or they will be robbed of childhood; they should be allowed to remain in the Garden of Eden until they are strong enough to stand the cultural process without being broken by it. This strength comes at different ages for different individuals and it requires a keen eye to know when children are ready to adapt to the collective life of a society.

It is interesting to travel about the world and see which characteristics various cultures affix to the ego and which to the shadow. It becomes clear that culture is an artificially imposed structure, but an absolutely necessary one. We find that in one country we drive on the right side of the road; in another, the left. In the West a man may hold

hands with a woman on the street but not with another man; in India he may hold hands with a male friend but not with a woman. In the West one shows respect by wearing shoes in formal or religious places; in the East it a sign of disrespect to wear shoes when one is in a temple or house. If you go into a temple in India with your shoes on you will be put out and told not to come back until you learn some manners. In the Middle East one burps at the end of a meal to show pleasure; in the West this would be very bad manners.

The sorting process is quite arbitrary. Individuality, for instance, is a great virtue in some societies and the greatest sin in others. In the Middle East it is a virtue to be selfless.

Students of a great master of painting or poetry will often sign their work with the name of their master rather than their own. In our culture, one brings to his or her own name the highest publicity possible. The clash of these opposing points of view is dangerous as the rapidly expanding communication network of the modern world brings us closer together. The shadow of one culture is a tinderbox of trouble for another.

It is also astonishing to find that some very good characteristics turn up in the shadow. Generally, the ordinary, mundane characteristics are the norm. Anything less than this goes into the shadow. But anything better also goes into the shadow! Some of the pure gold of our personality is relegated to the shadow because it can find no place in that great leveling process that is culture.

Curiously, people resist the noble aspects of their shadow more strenuously than they hide the dark sides. To draw the skeletons out of the closet is relatively easy, but to own the gold in the shadow is terrifying. It is more disrupting to find that you have a profound nobility of character than to find out you are a bum. Of course you are both; but one does not discover these two elements at the same time. The gold is related to our higher calling, and this can be hard to accept at certain stages of life. Ignoring the gold can be as damaging as ignoring the dark side of the psyche, and some people may suffer a severe shock or illness before they learn how to let the gold out. Indeed, this kind of intense experience may be necessary to



show us that an important part of us is lying dormant or unused. In tribal cultures, shamans or healers often experience an illness that gives them the insight they need to heal themselves and then bring wisdom to their people. This is often the case for us today. We are still operating with the archetype of the wounded healer who has learned to cure himself and find the gold in his experience.

Wherever we start and whatever culture we spring from, we will arrive at adulthood with a clearly defined ego and shadow, a system of right and wrong, a teeter-totter with two sides.¹ The religious process consists of restoring the wholeness of the personality. The word religion means to re-relate, to put back together again, to heal the wounds of separation. It is absolutely necessary to engage in the cultural process to redeem ourselves from our animal state; it is equally necessary to accomplish the spiritual task of putting our fractured, alienated world back together again. One must break away from the Garden of Eden but one must also restore the heavenly Jerusalem.

Thus, it is clear that we must make a shadow or there would be no culture; then we must restore the wholeness of the personality that was lost in the cultural ideals or we will live in a state of dividedness that grows more and more painful throughout our evolution. Generally, the first half of life is devoted to the cultural process—gaining one’s skills, raising a family, disciplining one’s self in a hundred different ways; the second half of life is devoted to restoring the wholeness (making holy) of life. One might complain that this is a senseless round trip except that the wholeness at the end is conscious while it was unconscious and child-like at the beginning. This evolution, though it seems gratuitous, is worth all the pain and suffering that it costs. The only disaster would be getting lost halfway through the process and not finding our completion. Unfortunately, many westerners are caught in just this difficult place.

BALANCING CULTURE AND SHADOW

It is useful to think of the personality as a teeter-totter or seesaw. Our acculturation consists of sorting out our God-given characteristics and putting the acceptable ones on the right side of the seesaw and the ones that do not conform on the left. It is an inexorable law that no characteristic can be discarded; it can only be moved to a different point on the seesaw. A cultured person is one who has the desired characteristics visible on the right (the righteous side) and the forbidden ones hidden on the left. All our characteristics must appear somewhere in this inventory. Nothing may be left out.

A terrible law prevails that few people understand and that our culture chooses to ignore almost completely. That is, the seesaw must be balanced if one is to remain in equilibrium. If one indulges characteristics on the right side, they must be balanced by an equal weight on the left side. The reverse is equally true. If this law is broken, then the

seesaw flips and we lose our balance. This is how people nip into the opposite of their usual behavior. The alcoholic who suddenly becomes fanatical in his temperance, or the conservative who suddenly throws all caution to the wind, has made such a flip. He has only substituted one side of his seesaw for the other and made no lasting gain.

The seesaw may also break at the fulcrum point if it is too heavily loaded. This is a psychosis or breakdown. Slang terms are exact in describing these experiences. One must keep the balance intact, though this often requires a very great expenditure of energy.

The psyche keeps its equilibrium as accurately as the body balances its temperature, its acid-alkaline ratio, and the many other fine polarities. We take these physical balances for granted but rarely do we recognize their psychological parallels.

I regret the prevailing attitude at present that goodness or sainthood consists of living as much as possible on the right hand, the good side, of the seesaw. Sainthood has been caricatured as an image of the all-right person, the person who has transferred everything to the perfect side of his personality. Such a condition would be completely unstable and would flip immediately. The balance would be disrupted and life would be impossible.

The fulcrum, or center point, is the whole (holy) place. I agree that we must relate to the outer world with the refined product of the good side, but this can be done only by keeping the left side in balance with the right. We must hide our dark side from society in general or we will be a bloody bore, but we must never try to hide it from ourself. True sainthood—or personal effectiveness—consists in standing at the center of the seesaw and producing only that which can be counter-weighted with its opposite. This is far from the sentimental view of goodness that has been set up as our ideal.

Of course we are going to have a shadow! St. Augustine, in *The City of God*, thundered, “To act is to sin.” To create is to destroy at the same moment. We cannot make light without a corresponding darkness. India balances Brahma, the god of creation, with Shiva, the god of destruction, and Vishnu sits in the middle keeping the opposites together. No one can escape the dark side of life but we can pay out that dark side intelligently. St. Anthony paid for his beatific vision by night horrors—visions of evil parading before him. He bore the tension between these opposites and finally came to that superordinate insight that we can truly call sainthood.

Most people presume that they are the sole master of their house. To acknowledge and then own one’s shadow is to admit there are many more sides to us that the world generally does not see. Dr. Jung tells how he first intuited the presence of “another” in his psyche.

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YOUR Past is Not Your Future

When I came out to my waiting room, I was immediately struck by the sight of my new client, Mel. A physically large man—very tall and remarkably obese—Mel dwarfed his wife, Betty, who sat next to him with her arm linked in his. Mel's eyes were closed, and he did not open them when I introduced myself and extended my hand in greeting. Betty took my hand, and the look in her eyes told me volumes about her struggle. She politely introduced herself, then Mel who made no move to acknowledge my presence. His deliberate refusal to recognize my being there was a powerful indicator of Mel's emotional pain.

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Getting him to stand up and follow me into my office was only the first of many challenges to come. Betty stood first and gently pulled on Mel's arm in a nonverbal command to stand. After a while, he did. I wondered how she managed to get this huge man out of the house and to my office. I watched Mel closely, waiting to see when he would open his eyes to find out where he was going. He never did.

Betty nudged him along and led him slowly to a large armchair in my office. Again, she signaled Mel to sit. He fell gracelessly backward into the chair, with his eyes still closed. Here was this deeply troubled man I was supposed to help, and he had yet to make a sound or establish eye contact with me!

B E T T Y T E L L S M E L ' S S T O R Y

After only a moment, in a tired voice, Betty began an obviously oft-repeated monologue. She described Mel and all he had been through. Watching Mel as Betty spoke, I could not help but notice the steady stream of tears that rolled down his cheeks. I gingerly placed a tissue in Mel's fist; he passively accepted it, but didn't use it. Betty noticed Mel's tears and my little effort to comfort her 60-year-old husband, but she just kept telling Mel's story.

Betty described his serious heart attack of not quite a year ago. He had undergone immediate quadruple bypass surgery, and from the moment Mel woke up after the surgery, his behavior was as I saw it now in my office. He rarely spoke or even opened

his eyes. Each day, all day, he sat in a chair at home and cried.

As Betty continued her narrative, I asked questions occasionally, directing them to Mel. But he made no move to answer, so Betty answered for him.

Mel had been seen by quite a few psychiatrists and psychologists, two of them while he was still in the hospital. His unresponsiveness frustrated them all to the point where they withdrew from the case and referred Mel elsewhere. I hoped I could help him.

Betty went on with Mel's history. A hard worker all his life, Mel took great pride in his job as a factory supervisor. He had worked hard ever since he was a teenager, rarely calling in sick, reluctant even to take vacations. His marriage to Betty had been of the stable-but-seesaw type—lots of rough arguments, lots of tender making up. They never even considered dissolving the marriage. Mel had wonderful plans for their retirement, about three years down the line. (They'd take their motor home all over the country at their leisure.) Now, it seemed that their dream belonged to a different lifetime, one totally unrelated to the hell of the past year. As Betty described the retirement plans, Mel moved in his chair, as if positioning himself to say something, but he didn't.

C A N Y O U M A K E A D I A G N O S I S ?

What do you think is going on inside of Mel that would account for his deep depression? Pause and answer that question before you read on. It's important that you do, because your answer will show how tuned in you are to the main theme of this chapter.

Ready to go on? Did you answer that Mel was feeling sorry for himself or that he was unable to adjust to the reality of his heart attack? Do you believe he was grieving for the loss of his health or career or that he was unable to deal with issues of his own

mortality? All of these are reasonable ways to explain Mel's depression.

Are any or all of these explanations correct? The answer is "yes, but..." But... they are not central to what is going on with Mel. One fundamental pattern called future orientation is controlling his experience. A future orientation is the ability to relate to the future as though it were as real and immediate as whatever is going on right now.

You are not born with this ability. You learn and practice it as you mature. Those who have a well-developed future orientation use it automatically, like walking or talking. But this happens *only* if parents or other significant people in your life serve as examples for you and encourage you to develop the ability. They do so by requiring you to plan ahead, anticipate consequences of your actions in detail, and have a variety of specific goals short-term, intermediate, and long-term. Too few people sense the importance of specific goals because they are caught up in day-to-day living.

Many schools of thought emphasize the importance of the here and now experience, of being present in the moment, of living life one day at a time. These viewpoints are well-intentioned and often quite sensible. However, if you are so caught up in what's going on *now*, you might do things that seem okay at this time but will be disastrous later. For example, it's certainly exciting to meet and fall in love (or lust) on a whirlwind weekend—but then to rush off to Las Vegas and get married. The probability that such a couple would still be married in 25 years is slight.

How now oriented can people be? Consider this pattern in the context of the way we treat our planet. How farsighted do we have to be to realize that poison spewing from smokestacks now will eventually harm us all? How much vision does it take to know that destroying the irreplaceable rain forests, at the current rate of 90 acres a minute, will some-

day have a negative effect on the rest of the planet? Tens of millions smoke cigarettes *now*, never thinking of the harm that can result later.

WHAT YOU CAN PREDICT

Not everything is predictable, of course, but many things are. Future orientation is not an *either/or* characteristic. For example, you can be quite future oriented in your work and be very here and now in your relationships. Without a refined ability to think ahead, life becomes only the present moment, and if the present moment seems terrible to you, depression is far more likely to occur.

Some people are more past oriented. Such clients will tell me they have no idea what they'll be doing next week, but they can recall in great detail every past hurt, including slights at recess in second grade. Too strong an emphasis on the past or the present can cause or aggravate depression. The same is true if you are future oriented or goal oriented to the point of mishandling current situations. In general, though, the lack of a positive future orientation is most likely to be associated with depression.

I believe that imbalances in orientation of any sort open the door to depression. Placing too much emphasis on the past or on the present, for example, leaves the future an underdeveloped dimension. That leads to hopelessness and negative expectations for the future, based on what's going on now or what happened before. The future is much more than just a continuation of the past or the present, but it's all too typical of depressed thinking to see the future only as more of whatever is depressing you right now. Don't let yourself fall into that trap.

This is why I focus your attention on the pattern of future orientation. Rehashing your past does nothing to help you relate positively to the future and all the good things you can bring about. The value of understanding your past is limited and is only



worthwhile if it helps you identify the things you must learn to do better.

HOW SUICIDE IS TIED TO A SENSE OF THE FUTURE

What does future orientation have to do with suicidal feelings? Plenty. Suicide has been called the permanent solution to a temporary problem. Why do people do it? I've worked with many suicidal people over the years, and it's obvious to me that these people did not truly want to die. Rather, their emotional pain was so great that they felt it was impossible to endure it anymore. Suicide is

not a wish to *die*. It's simply seen as a quick way to end the suffering. When such seriously depressed people have the will and courage to develop a plan for a positive future and commit themselves to working at the plan, the suicidal feelings dissipate. What seems hopeless rarely is.

Suicidal intentions are a sure indication of a poorly developed sense of positive future orientation. Anyone who contemplated committing suicide had to anticipate a future devoid of all hope, a future bounded by the same intensely painful feelings of the moment, in the same, or even more hurtful circumstances. Thinking of the future in this way stifles development of positive motivation that comes from wanting to attain worthwhile goals. Wanting to stop the hurt or wanting the depression to go away are not goals. They are merely wishes.

Stopping the Misery Parade

Imagine having an unlimited opportunity to tell of hurtful incidents in your life. At what point, if ever, would you decide to stop focusing on the past and start thinking about a different and better future? Be specific about how you would know when the time came to look forward and not backward.

IS YOUR VIEW OF
THE FUTURE
DEPRESSING YOU?

Let me get back to that first meeting with Mel, the man I described earlier. The most response I got from him that first day was a grunt or a nod. I knew he was listening, of course, but he couldn't, or didn't want to, expend the effort required to talk to yet another "shrink."

At our second meeting, I left Betty in the waiting room and saw Mel alone. I didn't ask questions or require that he respond to me in any way. Instead, I began to describe some of my clients, their problems, and how their mistaken ways of looking at things caused them pain. I emphasized the common theme of people so caught up in concerns of the moment that they inadvertently made bad decisions for the future. I told Mel about one fellow who dropped out of high school so he could buy a flashy car; I described a young woman who planned to marry a bad risk just to get out of her parents' house; plus lots of other going-nowhere stories. After several of these stories, Mel opened his eyes and looked directly at me for the first time. He said, "I'm going to die." Then he started to sob uncontrollably.

Does that tell you most of what you need to know about Mel? Whatever the details of his life, his depression clearly stemmed from the belief continually spinning around in his mind that his life was over. With no future, in *his* mind anyway, Mel is sitting in a chair, literally waiting to die. Now, if *that* isn't depressing, what is?

If Mel thinks about the future at all, it's overrun with images of his being dead, or nearly dead. He knows his heart is bad and death can come at any moment. To him, that means he can't go anywhere or do anything because of the unknown (but surely

negative) effect it will have on his heart. So Mel sits and waits.

Now come with me into the strange world of depressed thinking. Why didn't Mel's cardiologist assure him that he was fully recovered from the heart attack? He did! But Mel didn't believe him. Why doesn't Mel read the good news about living a normal life after a heart attack? The fact that other people play tennis, take trips, go back to work, and *live* only depresses Mel more. Why? Because *they* may be able to do those things, but Mel is sure *he* can't. Why not explain to Mel that he would reduce the risks of another heart attack by becoming active and eating carefully, rather than sitting around all day and getting fatter? Because Mel *knows* that his number will come up no matter what he does.

MAKE HOPE
PART OF YOUR
THINKING
PATTERN

Are you getting a sense of how closed the depressed mind can be? Can you relate to how Mel's thinking patterns work against his feeling better? What about *your* patterns? One of the most prominent features of depressed thinking is hopelessness—an expectation, a premonition that the future holds only negative possibilities. You know, I'm sure, how powerfully expectations influence what eventually happens. When you are hopeful, you think things can work out for the better—in *the future*. And they usually do.

TAKE CHARGE
OF CHANGE

Changes occur no matter what you do. The idea is to control the changes and to seek out deliberately changes that will help you deal with life better. It's not enough just to change; the change must be deliberate and headed in a *specific* direction.

One change for you to seek out

Visualize Your Possibilities

Remember the classic story *A Christmas Carol*, by Charles Dickens? In it, Ebenezer Scrooge is a miserable miser hated by all. And only when he is visited by the Ghost of Christmas *Future* does he realize the dire implications of continuing on his negative path. Scrooge changes his ways for the better when he envisions himself being remembered badly in the future.

Take some minutes of silence each day to close your eyes and quietly reflect on things you can do today to make your future brighter and happier. Build in yourself the expectations that can lead to better times ahead.

involves expectations and future orientation. First you need to realize that motivation ebbs and flows in *all* people. For depressed people, the motivation to change is either buried in a sense of hopelessness or is frustrated by a lack of knowing *how* to make things better.

One way to start making things better is by learning to think beyond the current moment in a realistic manner. Another way lies in learning that changes really *do* occur when you do things differently. As you develop more positive and realistic expectations in your life, self-destructive indifference and lack of motivation will undoubtedly give way to an interest in learning how to achieve your goals.

WHAT DO YOU
WANT FOR THE
FUTURE?

If I could wave a magic wand and eliminate depression from your life forever, what would you do with your future? Think about it for a moment. Is there something you feel a need to experience or something significant you really want to accomplish? What is your purpose in life?

That is one of the most profound of all human questions. For some, life is filled with deep meaning and purpose. Others only see life in terms of day-to-day existence, something to get through, nothing to strive for.

Viewing life as purposeful bears directly on the depression experience. For one thing, everyday life can be overwhelming for those who read too much into simple and random events. On the other hand, those who see little if any meaning in life's events may be sacrificing insight into patterns that could prevent or minimize future pain. Obviously, we need to find a balance between thoughtful consideration of what happens to and around us and indifference to what goes on in our lives.

We also need a sense of purpose to provide motivation and the will to endure beyond immediate suffering. I can think of no more gripping example of this observation than psychiatrist Viktor Frankl's experiences in the Nazi concentration camps during World War II, as described in his book *Man's Search for Meaning*. Frankl couldn't help but notice how differently individual prisoners reacted to the brutal conditions. All were starved, beaten, humiliated, and sick;

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

The ability to set positive, realistic goals and work toward them is fundamental to feeling good emotionally.

It's important to be future oriented in a way that also permits a meaningful contact with your past and present.

It is distorted thinking to see the future only as more of the same.

A well-developed sense of future orientation opens the way to a higher rate of success in predicting the result of your actions. You can learn this sense for the future, and you get better at it with practice.

You don't need to focus on the past to establish important and realistic goals for the future. In fact, looking to the past could be a mistake.

Suicidal feelings are a distortion of reality because they spring from a hopeless assumption that things cannot get better. They can.

Motivation is directly related to expectations of success.

A sense of purpose is tied to goals for the future. With it, you can endure what would otherwise seem impossible to handle.

Depression is often the result of letting yourself be trapped into a situation to accommodate others. You must make choices according to your own values and abilities.

Global thinking—a lack of detailed plans, with no order of priorities—leads to feeling overwhelmed.

Know your own preferences and limitations so you can avoid situations that would work against your nature. For example, if you want a lot of control over your career, don't join an organization that requires blind obedience.

Global thinking prevents you from seeing the need for a realistic and specific sequence to attain your goals. If you know what you want but not how to get it, don't give up. You can learn what you need to know for success.

yet some people managed to endure while others quickly died. What made the difference? Frankl's answer was purpose.

Frankl himself was separated from his wife at the start of their imprisonment, and he had an intense desire to live so they could eventually be reunited. Notice that Frankl had a purpose, plus the conviction that the

current horror would end in time, permitting the longed-for reunion.

A FRESH ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FUTURE

Frustration, anger, and pain come from the feeling that things are hopeless, and they are the stuff depression is made of. I have focused your attention on the role played in depression by a sense of the future and the influence of this sense on other aspects of your life. But you need a healthy balance in relating to the past and present, as well as the future if you are to feel good and avoid depression.

Hopelessness springs from the lack of a realistic vision of what you can attain in life. You sink into your own feelings of despair at the very time you need to go outside of yourself and patiently learn to do what others seem to do so easily. If your path to success is blocked, don't come to a dead stop; try to discover a new path.

Neither you nor I can change your past. But tomorrow hasn't happened yet. What would you like to have happen? What about next week, next month, next year, and the years after that? The things you do now, today, lead to what happens tomorrow and all the tomorrows that follow. Use the skills you've learned to develop a positive and realistic future orientation. All the good things in your life will come from doing things both inside yourself and out in the world that make your life worthy in your eyes.

A positive future orientation is the starting point for developing everything else you need to defeat depression. Learn all you can learn, and you'll look back one day on how you turned your life around for the better. *Plan on it.*

From the book "Free Yourself From Depression." Copyright 1991 by Michael D. Yapko, Ph.D., published by Rodale Press. The book is available from your bookstore or from the Milton Erickson Institute of San Diego, 380 Stevens Ave., Suite 208, Solana Beach, CA 92075.

Reviews



BY RICHARD HOLMES

Banished Knowledge: Facing Childhood Injuries

By Alice Miller
New York: Anchor Books, 1990
\$10.00 Paperback

In 1988 Alice Miller said her official farewells to the psychoanalytical establishment. She refused to accept its dogmatic methodologies any longer. Although her *Banished Knowledge* includes a scathing critique of the Freudian edifice, Miller is most intent on breaking down the barriers of repression that blind most human beings to their past, especially if painful or tragic, and that are rooted in the psychoanalytical tradition. Freud's impact on western civilization has been monumental, but it is an impact, she argues forcefully, that must be eliminated and then countered with a rude reawakening.

Child abuse is a worldwide phenomenon. All kinds of mind-numbingly ignorant reasons have been given for the most horrendous abuses, but Miller notes that parents are frequently either excused or defended at great length for giving in to severe inner compulsions that they could no longer control. That is a psychological dynamic that she attacks throughout the book.

It is still not my aim to reproach unknown parents, but I am no longer afraid to entertain, and express, the thought that parents are guilty of crimes against their children, even though they act out of an inner compulsion and as an outcome of their tragic past.

I cannot imagine that any murderers or criminals do not act out of an inner compulsion. Nevertheless they are guilty when they destroy or mutilate human life.

It should be noted that not only does Miller set out to topple Freudian theoretical structures, but she touts highly an alternative therapeutic approach based on the work of Swiss therapist J. Konrad Stettbacher. This therapy, which Stettbacher applied to himself for years, involves unwaveringly honest efforts to discover and experience the traumas of our youth and eventually to perceive clearly with the

eyes of a child the damage our parents caused through their own ignorance. Four steps are essential: "(1) describing the situation and one's sensations; (2) experiencing and expressing emotions; (3) querying the situation; and (4) articulating needs." (Emphasis is the author's.)

These four steps, though sounding simple enough, require enormous courage, Miller writes. Why? Because admitting to ignorance that cultures over the world have sanctioned and perpetuated since antiquity compels us to gain access to our worst suffering and to break through the "taboo" against knocking parents off pedestals of idealism.

A powerful cultural commandment is buried beneath layers of repression—"Thou Shalt Not Be Aware." Miller contends—and studies have borne her out—that every child abuser has been an abused child, too. Every parent who victimizes a child—whether through "pedagogy and cruelty," incest, physical mutilation, or moments of unrestrained violence—has been victimized by his or her parents.

No therapy can afford to reinforce repression and justify denial any longer. Evidence for child abuse is right before our eyes, but our eyes are clouded by ideological cataracts. The principle of "Help Rather Than Punish" is invalid, Miller argues. "In the entire professional literature covering child abuse there is hardly any mention of the fact that parents beat their children to keep their own traumas repressed." Yet studies searching for causes persist. "These studies," she reasons further, "give the impression of someone who puts on very dark sunglasses in bright sunshine and, flashlight in hand, goes looking for something that bystanders have no difficulty seeing."

When Alice Miller renounced psychoanalysis, she threw away the sunglasses and the flashlight, redirected her gaze inward, and learned of her own tragic experiences as an abused child. So despite what one might think after reading what is assuredly a controversial book, she is not pleading a case for lifelong punishment of parents. Rather, *Banished Knowledge* is her heroic and compassionate quest to impel all parents to walk through an initiatory fire of guilt, pain, purification, and, hopefully, a transformation of character. But, foremost, the guilt must be admitted and experienced, she is saying, or the repression will return and

"humanity's greatest crime" will be committed again and again... to no end.

Sacred Paths: Essays on Wisdom, Love, and Mystical Revelation

By Georg Feuerstein
Burdett, New York:
Larson Publications, 1991
\$14.95 Paperback

Among many Americans there is a considerable degree of ignorance and unconscious resistance regarding the topic of Yoga. At its most basic level, the ignorance is largely due to people not accessing good information that amplifies on the simplistic view that Yoga is merely contorted humans reciting an assigned mantra. The unconscious resistance, which is endemic among those people who unfortunately relegate spiritual topics to airy-fairy realms, is possibly linked to a latent disbelief in many of the media reports about remarkable Yogic controls over autonomic functions and to misreports that ignore a cultural context and pass on fragmentary interpretations of such seemingly difficult concepts as non duality, reincarnation, sacred sexuality, and so on.

Georg Feuerstein will not only inform us about Yoga but will possibly transmute our ignorance and resistance into a deeper understanding. The twenty-six essays in *Sacred Paths*—a book I cannot recommend highly enough—are indeed models of scholarship but, most important, they give one the distinct feel of having been written by a person who is a Yogic practitioner himself and has benefited from experiences of "direct intuition."

Besides Yoga, he explains with striking clarity the two other major (and as he puts it, "magnificent") spiritual traditions of India, Vedanta and Tantra. This book is not just a Yogic's-eye view of Hindu spirituality, though; it is a finely-wrought spiritual instrument, which reflects what Feuerstein maintains is the most important message of Yoga, as written in India's most popular scripture, the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "Yoga is balance (*samatva*)."

In other words, I recommend the book as a preeminent example of how far one's spirituality can be mirrored in a print medium. The book itself is balanced, written from a Yogic point of view. Every delusion about Yoga and Hindu philosophies that we have clung to will likely peel away by layers after reading its two hundred fifty pages.

It is a book that should be studied in order to understand knowledge—especially that which is transmitted through spiritual traditions—in a truly experiential sense.

Feuerstein: "'Knowledge is power.' But is it? I think this popular maxim is grossly misstated. Nevertheless, knowledge that leads to self-understanding is invaluable, because it is self-understanding that empowers us in a certain sense. It empowers us to live a life that is not dictated by the mechanisms of our unconscious. And this is what

Yoga, Vedanta, and all other spiritual traditions are ultimately concerned about."

And this is what *Sacred Paths* is ultimately concerned about. Reading it, you might be drawn towards the ideal of "living liberation," which involves a realization of "Selfhood in the midst of daily life." Yoga is not withdrawal, except when temporarily necessary; it is engagement in life through our bodies, meditation, moral practices, breath control—again, yoga is balance. Yoga is not impractical; in fact, Feuerstein, in his essay called "The Practice of Eco-Yoga," refers to political activation as sometimes imperative, if its expression derives from our inwardness. Yoga is definitely work on oneself. For instance, he offers this advice from the same essay: "Cultivate self-understanding by scrutinizing the motives behind your spiritual odyssey, and be willing to recognize and work with neurotic tendencies masquerading as spiritual ideals."

And my advice? Read this book and work towards your own living liberation and that of every resident on this planet. Accept Georg Feuerstein's invitation to learn and understand.

When Technology Wounds: The Human Consequences of Progress

By Chellis Glendinning
New York: William Morrow
and Company, Inc., 1990
\$18.95 Cloth

Chellis Glendinning conducted a two-year research project that involved interviewing forty-six "technology survivors" and delving into the extensive literature on the relationship between various technologies and their effects on the physical and mental health of people subjected to risk of exposure. The book, *When Technology Wounds*, is a conscientious and informative outgrowth of her timely research.

Glendinning, a psychologist, is a technology survivor too, having contracted a disease called systemic candidiasis as the result of taking the Pill and later suffering pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) caused by the Dalkon Shield intrauterine device. Twenty years of illness finally led to her wanting to tell the stories of other technology survivors who had suffered too. And, of course, she wished to warn people of technological dangers.

The information in the book is staggering. One cannot help but feel empathy for the sufferers and dread for those of us who might likewise have been (or are being) sent like canaries into a mine to test for pollution. Or who are not being told the full story about chemicals in our households and factories. Or about toxic wastes. Or about drugs. Or about anything that might be putting our bodies and minds under siege.

The always painful and sometimes tragic stories that these survivors tell should serve as powerful incentives for us to ask pointed questions and develop critical faculties,

where corporate, military, and government interests are concerned.

Glendinning lists these technologies as ones disrupting their lives: intrauterine devices, oral contraceptives, asbestos, pesticides, mercury in dental fillings, radiation in Japan shortly after World War II and at post-war nuclear test sites (Utah, Nevada, Pacific Islands, and other scattered points), the drug DES, cortisone drugs, antibiotics (often over-prescribed), polluted water near factories and dump sites, toxic art materials, toxic anesthesia gases, and Agent Orange in Vietnam.

Each story brings out the humanity of the sufferer. It is common, Glendinning notes, for each one of them to experience a loss of health, support, and heroism, and to be tormented by the uncertainty about the suspected connection between a technology and his or her illness, disease, or debilitating condition.

Other problems that cloud the issue, Glendinning acknowledges, are the usual absence of official governmental recognition of these connections, as well as raging scientific controversies. She also discovered that statistics are hard to come by because of a lack of commitment by anyone who represents the vested interests to offer documentation. But her persistence has prevailed. You will know that, notwithstanding the controversies, there are simply too many technologies under critical assault to dismiss as harmless. What facts she has been able to assimilate, as presented in her book, can only be denied at our future peril.

Perhaps her most poignant message, though, is that despite the many political, legal, medical, psychological, and educational obstacles that these forty-six victims (and thousands of others) must face, most of them are intent on seeking meaning in their lives through both self-help measures and spiritual means. Many disseminate information (the addresses of sixty-seven organizations are listed in appendix). Many have taken alternative medical routes. Many take political action. And spiritually, they develop a "sense of faith."

After enduring the many breaches of faith technology-induced illness can initiate, most survivors become too apprehensive to wish that problems will disappear or life return to normal. This faith is rather an active presence of mind. It is an experience of fullness in the here and now, enhanced by dismissing doubts and cynical thoughts that can extinguish what joy and meaning are possible.

The survivors who tell their sad stories are also, in a sense, heroes who offer us hope. But, as one survivor said, "We are in the break-the-spell-stage." In other words, we must not only empathize with their plights, but we must also focus our attention on the problems that technology often poses. In her remarkable *When Technology Wounds*, Glendinning has expanded our awareness on these most urgent concerns.

Inner Excellence: Spiritual Principles of Life-Driven Business

By Carol Osborn
San Rafael, California:
New World Library, 1992
\$17.95 Cloth

The rat race through the business maze has taken its toll on many fear-driven persons, hungry only for the reward at the end. The harder one works (runs tirelessly and obsessively through the maze), the bigger the reward. And the bigger the reward, they believe, the better life is.

Carol and Dan Osborn, executives of a top-notch public relations agency, also believed in that hand-me-down American dream. They believed until the dream turned into a stress-filled nightmare.

In *Inner Excellence*, a personal memoir of welcome insight, Carol Osborn recalls the turning point in their lives. "I couldn't think of a single individual in my fast-track pack of successful, upwardly mobile professionals who didn't look just as beaten as I felt. We were not fulfilling our potential—we were exhausting it."

Having had enough, Carol started a group called Superwomen's Anonymous; later she broadened the membership to include men, calling the newer group Overachievers Anonymous. Downward mobility became the norm and their rallying cry was "values before profits." No less than the *New York Times* had drawn attention to her spiritually infused business practices. Her living example of a new work ethic was winning converts.

But something strange happened; profits went up for the Osborns, despite their having cut down hours of work and pruning away many of their most slavish routines. At this point, Carol started formulating the seven principles that can transform not only lives and business, but also anyone who is a fortunate reader of her book. She shares her experiences, and those of others, demonstrating often through anecdotes how they endeavor to live up to the promise of Overachievers Anonymous, "that there has to be something more in life than success born at the expense of your personal and spiritual needs and values."

Carol researched mystical and esoteric lore and discovered inspirational images and thoughts that she envisioned as being carried over into the business world. The underlying strength of the book is her recognition that "heroic spirituality" requires a healthy balance of idealism and realism, meaning that one must, as she puts it, "meet life on life's terms," not curl comfortably inside a shell of quietism and perfectionism. In other words, she counsels against suppression of "internal conflict" if resulting in an unrealistic detachment from one's business interests and, more importantly, one's inner self in all its complexity.

Her seven principles are simple on the surface, but should be quite powerful and valid if practiced mindfully. For example, principle number one is, "Change your beliefs

about the nature of business and of life, and you will change how you manage your career." Self-evaluation, self-observation, and honesty are necessary components of this principle in order to discover the internal programs that govern, often unconsciously, one's assumptive world. Wisely, Carol knows that an "integration of spirit and success" cannot occur instantaneously; a long-term commitment is required for awareness to emerge through the mind's conditional clutter.

Other principles instruct us to surrender "illusions" of control and safety, to become aware of our fear-driven thoughts and behaviors, to accept our imperfect self as a starting point of learning, to appreciate life's lessons and offerings unconditionally, to trust our intuitive experience but know that mistakes (from which we can learn) will still be made, to face our every fear but act anyway, to allow that most sacred and alive place within our being to drive us, and to capitalize on even the worst of circumstances, not be victimized by them.

Carol Osborn, towards the end of *Inner Excellence*, challenges business leaders everywhere to "expand our definition of success to include spiritual qualities and life experiences that run counter to virtually every precept of American business philosophy." Otherwise, the course through the business maze will most likely lead to a self-destructive end.

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Whole Parenting

loud stage whispers. Agreement was reached that honey would probably taste better on yogurt than chocolate syrup. Before long, delicious individual desserts of yogurt, grapes, and honey began arriving at the table. Each had a cookie sticking up like a candle in the middle.

"Doesn't she ever try to go too far?" I asked.

"Sometimes," her mother answered. "And of course we do more complicated desserts together when there's time. But mostly she's happy with ice cream or yogurt. She fixes yogurt and bananas, yogurt and applesauce, yogurt and seven raisins. She likes experimenting with different combinations and she likes to make them look pretty."

Most revealing was the mother's surprise at my enthusiasm for the idea of child-styled desserts. "I never thought much about it," the mother said. "She likes doing it, so she's just always done it."

Never miss an opportunity to allow a child to do something she can and wants to on her own. Sometimes we're in too much of a rush—and she might spill something or do it wrong. But whenever possible she needs to learn, error by error, lesson by lesson, to do it better. And the more she is able to learn by herself, the more she gets the message that she's a kid who can.

I Q THE INHIBITING Q U O T I E N T

Retarded? Average? Gifted and talented? It's hard to say which is the more harmful label. All children are gifted and talented. There is only one mind, so all manifestations of intelligence are *given*. True intelligence is neither had nor not had. Intelligence is awareness of what really is. All judgments made in the light of what really is are intelligent. In counseling a blind individual, it became clear to me that real seeing is seeing the real. In that light, it was evident that by comparison to everyone else this individual was not so radically handicapped after

all. If real seeing is seeing the real and if the real is spiritual, then as long as we are judging by appearances we are equally blind. The potential for seeing beyond appearances is no less in blind individuals than in sighted ones. Handicapped people may be less handicapped than we think they are; likewise, "advantaged" people laden with ideas of self-sufficiency and superiority are more handicapped and weighted down than we recognize.

To quantify intelligence and locate it in somebody's physical head and call it himself (whether superior or inferior) is handicapping him. When you credit a child with having much intelligence, when you objectify intelligence as the child, you have interrupted that intelligence. You have changed the subject of his life from learning to self. It is like thrusting a mirror between a reader and his book. His own appearance interferes with his vision. When a child is identified as gifted and talented, he begins to think of himself as special. Being gifted and talented becomes an excuse for all kinds of license and suffering.

True intelligence cannot be gotten or done. It can only be obstructed or unobstructed. When intelligence takes place in an individual it is an event or coming to light of what really is. It is an awakening, a dawning or seeing. An intelligent event occurs when the tendency of reality to reveal itself is fulfilled in a moment of conscious realization. As the nature of light to illumine is fulfilled in individual seeing, so the intelligence is fulfilled in understanding. Intelligence is a universal force seeking expression through universal consciousness. When it takes place it is not a matter of credit or pride or success or personal virtue; it is a matter of freedom, joy, beauty to be rejoiced in and appreciated.

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Workaholic Organizations

we live in a society fraught with pain and contradiction and emptiness. The addictive process, she feels, puts a buffer between ourselves and those feelings. It takes us out of touch. We get so busy with our individual addictions that we don't have to move to the deeper questions. We lose ourselves and then we are malleable in the addictive society.

Unfortunately for great numbers of people, the experiences of ordinary life are experiences of racism, sexism, classism, ageism, adultism, abuse, loneliness, and meaninglessness. "Love and nurturing are necessary for individuals to become fully functional. Addictive behavior is an effort to deny the painful reality of their absence."

If ever a society wanted the perfect addiction, it is workaholism. It is the ideal response to the addictive society because it is an acceptable form of adaptation to an insane world. Just as family members adjust their behavior to the active addict in the family, the workaholic adjusts to the organization and the society. The adaptation may appear healthy and stable to the outside observer, but the stability is not the equivalent of functional behavior; it is merely a patterned response to a dysfunctional situation.

In the family, codependents look good. They are long-suffering. They hang in there when others opt out. They are loyal and understanding. Unfortunately, these very behaviors are undermining because they prevent the addict and the dysfunctional family from falling on their faces and getting the help they need.

In the addictive society, the workaholic is both addict and codependent. He or she suffers a disease and thereby continues support of addictive institutions. The institutions in turn are driven by scores of

workaholics, and also use them to stay in their dysfunctional process. The match is so complete that it looks to be a situation of equilibrium. Is it any wonder that those who are recovering from addictions seriously ask themselves if they are crazy upon encountering these workaholic institutions? In reality, if foreign competitors were creeping into US factories and spraying a numbing nerve gas at workers, they could not be more effective than the addictive process of workaholism.

The society needs workaholism to stay in the addictive process. Given the fact that the addictive process is cunning, baffling, powerful, and patient, it will develop even more sophisticated forms of addiction. Workaholism is surely one of those.

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Ecstasy

E C S T A S Y : A
N E W S T A G E

Why do we find this transcendent ecstasy such a difficult state to achieve? Perhaps because the concept is relatively new. The advent of Dionysus, the psychological archetype of ecstasy, represented a new stage in human development. The mighty Titans, first gods of the earth, had never seen his like and tried to destroy him before he even got started. He was the last god to be added to the pantheon of Olympus and the first to be torn down, which gives an idea of how new an acquisition he is for the human race. Let me illustrate this fragility with a parallel from another realm.

I am told that the color blue was the last to be added to our color sense and it is the one most often missing in color-blind people. The color blue is never mentioned in the Old Testament; and in all of the ancient Greek writings the color blue is never used. Even the Aegean, the most vividly blue of all the seas of the world, is

described by Homer as "the wine dark sea." A faculty that is so new and so easily lost means that the human race is only just evolving that capacity into something like stability. It is the same with the Dionysian experience of spiritual ecstasy. It was the last faculty to be added to our repertoire and the one most often missing and least in our control.

Some people burst spontaneously into a less violent, more genuinely ecstatic Dionysian quality. Such outbursts, however, are characteristically short-lived. Remember the hippie movement, which degenerated from the innocence of Woodstock to the violence of Altamont in the space of a year? We may envy people who quit their jobs, give away all their money, and try to commune with nature, but ultimately we will call them crazy and get on with our lives.

It is not enough to throw the whole society over and go dance naked on the beach. Such experiments, however well intentioned, are doomed to failure. We cannot simply move from the realm of rationality to the irrational realm of Dionysus and think that everything will be solved. This is either/or thinking. Jung has said that for us the choice is no longer either/or, but either-and-or. We must touch Dionysus; we must bring him back into our lives in a humanized form; or in denying him we will destroy ourselves.

This is the burden that is on us now. To keep the fine points of our patriarchal world—its order, form, care, and structure—and bring the Dionysian back in to enliven it without doing a flip-flop and going to pieces. Only in this way can we begin to move toward wholeness and joy.

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Living Your Dreams

sufficient emotional force and reality information as to require an immediate exit from the structure—as with the death of a spouse—cocooning will begin, and efforts to restructure will be futile. However, for a great many people and organizations, restructuring is the only acceptable format for dealing with intense change. They dread the thought of entering a full-fledged transition, which they perceive as failure, a waste of time, a loss of status, or pure terror. So they repeat the same patterns of achievement and decline from their past, often with decreasing passion and vision. Better they had gone with the river the other way, into a life transition. When you are overwhelmed by change and faced with losses beyond your ability to contain, you choose or accept the path that leads through a life transition. As you approach it, it feels like an impossibility, yet most everyone emerges from one with new life and perspective. Mircea Eliade, an outstanding teacher on myths and rituals, has written: “In no rite or myth do we find the initiatory death as something *final*, but always as the condition *sine qua non* of a transition to another mode of being, a trial indispensable to regeneration; that is, to the beginning of a new life.”

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Wisdom AD

Our Shadow Side

I had a dream which both frightened and encouraged me. It was night in some unknown place and I was making slow and painful headway against a mighty wind. Dense fog was flying along everywhere. I had my hands cupped around a tiny light which threatened to go out at any moment. Everything depended on my keeping this little light alive. Suddenly I had the feeling that something was coming up behind me. I looked back and saw a gigantic black figure following me. But at the same moment I was conscious in spite of my terror, that I must keep my little light going through night and wind, regardless of all dangers. When I awoke I realized at once that the figure was my own shadow on the swirling mists, brought into being by the little light I was carrying. I knew too that this little light was my consciousness, the only light I have. Though infinitely small and fragile in comparison with the powers of darkness, it is still a light, my only light.

—C. G. Jung. *Memories, Dreams, and Reflections*.

Jung had gone through a highly refined enculturating process, from his childhood in a rigid Swiss Protestant home to the severe discipline of his medical training. Long

hours of concentrated attention gave him a very focused personality. But this was at the cost of ignoring the dark and primitive aspects that appeared in his dream. The more refined our conscious personality, the more shadow we have built up on the other side.

This is one of Jung's greatest insights: that the ego and the shadow come from the same source and exactly balance each other. To make light is to make shadow; one cannot exist without the other.

To own one's own shadow is to reach a holy place—an inner center—not attainable in any other way. To fail this is to fail one's own sainthood and to miss the purpose of life.

Note:

1. Ego and right are thought to be synonymous in all cultures, while shadow and wrong are also to be paired. There is great cultural strength in knowing exactly what is right and what is wrong and to ally oneself appropriately. This is cultural "rightness," highly effective but very clumsy. When the Inquisition of the Middle Ages judged someone and often condemned him or her to burned at the stake, there had to be an unquestioned basis for such a decision. The fact that individuality and the freedom of belief were evolving in the Western psyche added fuel to this one-sided attitude. Fanaticism always indicates unconscious uncertainty not yet registering in consciousness.

Avatar AD

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Pilgrimage For Peaceful Self

which they can pledge allegiance in hope that they can find satisfaction and happiness. They will accept as "normality" what is actually a state of arrested development.

Those concerned with their own human potential will try to develop a new type of personal, rather than collective, power. As Jung said, "If I am sensible, I shall put myself right first." Such persons know that whatever is wrong in the world is in themselves, and if they learn to deal with their own fragmented, conflicting selves, then they have accomplished something real for the world.

Abraham Maslow was perhaps one of the first truly to understand the development process by identifying our needs as a hierarchical system with self-actualization, not self-fulfillment, at the highest level. In discussing the importance of working towards higher levels of development and actualization, Maslow states:

"We have, all of us, an impulse toward actualizing more of our potentialities, toward self-actualization, or full humanness or human fulfillment. This is a push toward the establishment of the fully evolved and authentic self... an increased stress on the role of integration. Resolving a dichotomy into a higher, more inclusive unity amounts to healing a split in the person and making him more unified. This is also an impulse to be the best... If you deliberately plan to be less than you are capable of being, then I warn you that you'll be deeply unhappy for the rest of your life."

For a plant or stone to be natural is no problem. But for us there are some problems due to our cultural conditioning. It sounds inherently wrong to suggest that to be natural and fully developed is something which we must work on, but that is the condition in which most of us find ourselves. Perhaps this discovery moved Goethe to write the

following verse, "Yes! to this thought I hold with firm persistence; The last result of wisdom stamps it true. He only earns his freedom and existence who daily conquers them anew." We often do not know who we are; therefore, we do not know how to be.

It is easy, though not necessarily very rewarding, to do or become something. It is not nearly as easy to be something. Being requires effort spent in introspection, self-discovery, and self-development. The struggle to be natural and authentic takes place within the person himself and requires a very different type of effort than we are used to. We are not looking for an escape from ourselves or a way of trying to prove our worth, but a creative expression of our true nature—our strong, sane center.

The search for the peaceful self can sound somewhat egotistical. Those who know themselves are often feared because they can no longer be easily controlled. There is also a widespread fear in our society of "flying too close to the sun;" you might get too happy, get burned, and fall down. You are supposed to think, "All this joy and ease is not normal. People are starving all over the world. It is bad to feel so good." In fact, most of us are so out of touch with ourselves that any extensive attempt at introspection produces many unexpected delights. Remember, you can never fly too high as long as you fly with your own wings.

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Deep Cultural Therapy

cially their quality of nurturance. It is quite true that nurturance is not the only context in which women function, but I consider the future lies in the nurturing role because it is a primary role for all things in relationship to one another. Nurturance is also a primary, if presently undeveloped, quality of men. My hope that this change will take place springs from the fact that the new context of the human is being participated in so extensively by women. Fortunately, we now have women in the law schools, the medical profession, religious seminaries, all branches of professional training, as well as the ecological movement. Women are activators of so many of the admirable things that are happening. Regarding my hope in the future, I would say the "future" is already happening. This movement is already in position; whether or not we will carry it through is up to us.

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