

**Transpersonal Psychotherapy
Graduate Certificate**

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The Pathwork of Self-Transformation

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Introduction

At this stage of my personal growth, feeling my emotions and their stages of intensity, my loneliness seems to have re-emerged, or spiralled into position ready to be dealt with again. The Guide, channelled through Pierrakos, says that,

Through the gateway of feeling your loneliness lies your capacity to have fulfilment, love and companionship. (Saly, Thesenger, 1990, pxvi)

In the depths of my loneliness I do not feel fulfilled or loved, nor do I have any type of companionship with anybody or anything, even with G-d. Within my loneliness sits immense sadness, anger, and fear. Fear of being left out, fear of failing, fear of being lonely for the rest of my life. Anger at myself, for being so miserable and selfish. Sadness that everything seems so hopeless. This is not how I envisaged this part of my life. Sometimes, in this frame of mind, it is the negativities that take me over. The feelings of fulfilment, love and companionship are smothered by the negativities that influence me. Without mature love I am never truly fulfilled and am never truly in companionship with anything except my fear.

Through the gateway of feeling your fear lies your security and safety.
(Saly, Thesenger, 1990, pxvi)

Security and safety comes from trust – trusting yourself to be able to love maturely. But how do we do this? Why is it so hard to rid ourselves of all these things that hold us down and stop us from truly loving? Stopping us from being who we really are? And anyway, who are we really? In spiritual work we are often told that we are ‘love and light’, but we are seldom told, if at all, that we are also hatred and darkness. Are we not the sum of our totality? This means that we have to take into account ALL of ourselves, including our negativities. Most psychologies and New Age spiritual practices inadvertently discourage us, ‘from taking full responsibility for our negativities’ (Saly, Thesenger, 1990, pxv). Also in these same approaches, we are allowed to blame someone else for our negativities; our parents, past lives, oppressive societal norms (ibid, pxv). Very rarely, even in the great religions, do we own our negative aspects but give them over to G-d, Christ, the Church, or our guru.

So, I again feel this loneliness and fear. Now, how do I enter the gateway of these emotions to

discover the treasures that lie beyond?

The Pathway

All my childhood I longed to travel and have adventures. It was a passionate longing that truly inspired me to go and explore the wild world. However, there was also a longing to become more worldly, more intelligent, more attractive, and less dumb than what I believed I was. I wanted to impress people. The need to improve myself was on one level egoic, but on another level an expression of a much deeper longing. It was an intuitive feeling that, '*another, more fulfilling state of consciousness and a larger capacity to experience life must exist*' (ibid, p2). I went in search of this 'state' like young Pacifal in search of the legendary Knights of the Round Table. I literally climbed great mountains of ice and traversed the mightiest, longest rivers on the planet searching for wisdom. However, on these journeys I was trying to make myself the best person I could possibly be, simply to impress. All those journeys through the landscapes of my own ego and my own soul brought me face to face with the confusion of my existence. I stared my inadequacies in the face and thus began my search for inner peace. However, the dualistic nature of the longing for peace caused confusion and contradiction. And it still does. How can I find peace in myself if I have this longing to find perfection? The desire for perfection and the act of searching for it contradicts the fact that peace comes from letting go of pre-conceived notions and accepting life as it is – to become still in the reality of what 'is' instead of chasing the illusion I desire so much.

Pierrakos' Pathway Lectures stress the importance of recognising and owning your own negativities. This parallels Jung's insistence of exposing the shadow and integrating it with the ego in order for the soul to become conscious. On my journeys I tried to run away from my negativities, however I only succeeded in running into them. I looked at them, but only really scratched the surface. I admit now, my work is still split between trying to impress, and finding inner peace. It's a struggling confusion between head and heart.

Like shadow work, overcoming egoic negative behaviours can be achieved simply by becoming aware of them and just watching. Reacting to painful situations with rage and complaining is the result of avoiding that pain and the subsequent feelings around it. If we can overcome the fear that this pain will annihilate me, or the feeling that this pain will never end, and 'just let the pain be... without playing games' (ibid, p4), to just watch it, then it will,

...release powerful creative energies to increasingly work for you in your life and open the channels to your spiritual self. Feeling the pain will also yield a deeper, fuller, and wiser understanding of the connections between cause and effect.

(ibid, p4)

For instance, you will be able to see how this pain was created. The drama of the life situation is the cause of the deeper issue. For example, I am longing to touch and be touched by the women I adore, however, because I fear rejection my feeling of deep love for her switches from the heart to the head. I am then denied contact because she can feel that I am not coming from the heart, so I fall into a depression of immeasurable sadness. I feel the fear of loneliness and if I fight it then it turns into frustration and eventually anger. This is the effect. The cause comes from the fact, according to the Pathway Lectures, that my desire is false – that I am not taking responsibility for my present state. The more realistic state of my longing is the knowing that the fulfilment I desire lies within me (Saly, Thesenger, 1990, p3).

The fact that I am unable to hold onto my sense of fulfilment shows how distant I am from my true self – such a distance that not even my best friend will reach out and take my hand even in the most beautiful moments. In this situation my frustration, hence the grief beneath it, is enormous. It seems my life so far has had more physical isolation than contact. I remember in my mid 20's a time where I hadn't touched anyone for at least 18 months. Nothing even as small as a friendly hug could I give or receive. At the same time I yearned to be touched, held, loved, and adored.

The less contact (that) is cultivated, the more acute the longing for contact becomes.

(ibid, p93)

I am slowly learning that the fulfilment I desire lies within me. The pain of past rejection is so deeply etched in me that it will take some time to heal. I have to take more responsibility for my present state and constantly keep watch. The answers lie in the instant the confusion hits – the moment my heart and head are overpowered by the confusion of not knowing who I really am. Am I this, or am I that? I know my Petit Mal is triggered by the confusion between my head and heart. Beneath this confusion there is a fear that literally shocks me full of electricity.

Science says this shock originates in the brain, however I feel it originates in my emotional and/or spiritual heart. The shock is triggered by this deep-set fear. A sandplay I did at The Crucible a year or so ago, where I put in symbols representing my mother, father, and another women, also pointed to the fact that this energy of anger comes from my confusion between not being able to get to either women because my father is in the way. In situations where I am deeply angry I feel so much like my father. I seem to become him for that particular time of rage. It is the rage of a little boy wanting to be loved. My father's father was also distant and emotionally unavailable to his children too.

To watch this state further will help me understand it more. Insight will come, says the Guide, 'when you stop the inner fighting and resisting' (Saly, Thesenger, 1990, p4). It is obvious I haven't nearly stopped the fighting and resisting, however, Pierrakos encourages me to just watch. It will come closer to consciousness if I simply watch it, without attachment. The bliss I am seeking will come only when I have gone through whatever it is inside of me that prevents me from experiencing it, so the Guide tells me (ibid, p5). Perhaps the fear is the fear of rejection, which ultimately is the fear of abandonment – the fear of not being loved by anyone, including G-d.

The Guide, channelled through Pierrakos, says that there are three levels of human nature. The inner Higher Self, the central Lower Self, and the outer Mask Self, or the Idealized Self Image. The latter is the image that we create when we are children in order to attract the love we desire. To do so we desperately hide our darker, naughtier aspects of ourselves and create a mask to cover it all (ibid, 22). Hence, it reseeds into the subconscious. In the outer world we proudly wear our mask of 'goodness and light'. However, these standards set by the Idealized Self are impossible to live up to but you never give up trying to uphold them. And in so doing '...you cultivate within yourself an inner tyranny of the worst order'. By not fulfilling the dictates of this Image you castigate yourself, make yourself feel like a complete failure. The negativity then rears its ugly head. Because you have not yet owned your negative aspects, your shadows, then they end up being projected onto the outside world. (ibid, pp 24, 25)

The more we trust in the inner tyrant the more estranged we become from the Higher Self, which creates the confusion of not knowing who we really are. (ibid, pp 26, 27).

According to the Pathwork, as adults we have a compulsion to recreate and correct the past, mainly by subconsciously choosing to be in a relationship with people who reflect the immature aspects of our parents that we project onto them. The resentment we hold as adults is the resentment we developed as children against our parents. 'As long as the hurt, disappointment, and unfulfilled needs of your early years remain unconscious, you cannot come to terms with them' (ibid, p36). In this way we are attracted to people who reflect the ways of our parents. By so doing we try to correct the hurt that was done to us years, even a lifetime or more, before. All we want is the love we (consciously or subconsciously) know we didn't get as a child.

But of course this is an illusion,

The entire procedure is utterly destructive. In the first place, it is an illusion that you were defeated. Therefore it is an illusion that you can now be victorious. Indeed it is an illusion that the lack of love... is indeed the tragedy that your subconscious still feels it to be. (ibid, p37)

No matter how much we loved our parents or how much they loved us, a deep resentment exists which we remain unaware of, until it is seen and confronted. It was only in the March workshop that I began to own my lifelong resentment of being hurt by others. Ultimately boiling down to not receiving the 'mature' love I desired from my parents. Once this illusion is seen and dealt with the vulnerable child will mature into an adult who will no longer expect love to be given to them but instead always be able to give love without question. (ibid, p32).

In light of this learning we can say that our Lower Self, in all its ignorance, unconsciously 'chooses negativity, separation, egotism, fear, and distrust' (Saly, Thesenger, 1990, pxvi),

However since the lower self is ultimately a distortion of the one divine energy that animates the universe, it can be transformed back into its original life-affirming vitality. (Saly, Thesenger, 1990, pxvi)

This process of transformation begins with, '*experiencing the pain of now and the pain of then*'. The Guide insists that we have to look deeply into our current pain, see the emotions that

surround the feeling, and realise that it is the same hurt we experienced in childhood. As an adult we are experiencing the same pain of not getting the love we desired as a child. Realizing this illusion will then liberate us from the vicious cycle. (ibid, p40)

In the Guide's lecture on the God Image he mentions the 'inner confusion' that is felt by the child when she feels that in reality life does not correspond with the image of G-d that they created in their mind. This is the case of the child that experiences benign authority who imagines G-d to be forgiving, good, loving, and indulgent. Ultimately the child thinks that she can avoid self-responsibility because she thinks she can get away with anything. However, this illusion of 'cheating life' leads to inner confusion, 'generated by a chain reaction of wrong thinking, feeling, and action. (ibid, p48) This corresponds to my own inner confusion I talked about earlier.

On the other hand the child will imagine G-d to be a monster if their parents' ignorance and fear forbids anything and everything that gives joy to the child. This concept is also an illusion. Certain measures of both of these G-d images are manifest in all of us. It is a vital part of the Pathwork to dissolve ones own childhood image of G-d simply by recognising that it is the wrong concept.

The right concept of G-d is to think of It as, '*an electric current, endowed with supreme intelligence*'. The electric current moves through us – always. It is, 'among other things, *life and life force*' (ibid, p50). However, the wrong use of the power manifests all the negativities in our lives, which is a disconnection from the free flowing presence of G-d within, which is ultimately what all the grief of abandonment is about. I agree with this, having felt the difference between both the positive free flowing energy and the dark negative energy. My Petit Mal is both a bane and a gift to me. The condition is a measure of the intensity of my fear and distrust, but it is also a measure of the path I am travelling on my way to re-connect with G-d.

Conclusion

The Pathway Lectures teaches the, 'path of empowerment through self-responsibility', and like the Transpersonal, The Pathway demands, '*truthfulness with the self, exposure of what exists now, elimination of masks and pretences, and the experience of ones naked vulnerability*'.

(Saly, Thesenger, 1990, pp xvii, 9). I can see that what we learn and experience at the Crucible is very much grounded in these teachings by way of using the various modalities to succeed in meeting these demands. I found the book not only clarifying but also illuminating as to the constructs (or should I say, the de-constructs) of my life.

Having begun this essay in a state of depression, anger, and fear, feeling lonely and isolated, through the teachings of this book I have regained my hope and optimism that I am on the right path. I must remember that patience certainly is a virtue, and that love runs through me - always.

Bibliography

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