

What is Therapy?

I suppose there are as many definitions of what therapy is as there are therapists. I offer the following definition as my own personal bias, based on my own personal experience, philosophy of life and natural inclination, which may mean that working with me is not a good fit, depending on your own experience, philosophy and current goals. The best therapy happens when two people have the same goals and understanding of how to achieve them.

Philosophically I believe that life is to be enjoyed in the full experience, and knowing, of your own intrinsic worth as an expression of all that is good, loving and powerful. I believe that the purpose of life is to fully realize this state of consciousness in your own lived experience - not to merely believe it as a nice idea. I believe it is to live in inner relationship with all aspects, ages and stages of our humanity with compassion and wisdom, the human expressions of Divine Love and Truth.

In order to reach this state of consciousness, it is necessary to first become aware of everything that is not held in the consciousness of love and truth- and that includes every *unaware* aspect of your personality that is rooted in fear, shame and need that developed during the socialization process. Recognizing what happened in your childhood does not mean blaming - it means seeing, naming and understanding so that YOU can take responsibility and change yourself. This does not mean, necessarily, embarking on remembering everything about your childhood - although in some instances, this is helpful. It *does* mean introspecting about what you do now in your present life, examining the motives, understanding the painful consequences of reactive actions taken, and seeing how to break the habituated patterns of thoughts, feelings and needs that continue to cause unhappiness in your life. There is no-one that is exempt from suffering the feelings of depression, anxiety, shame - they are a normal and necessary part of development. However, it is a stage of development in which people often get stuck - sometimes for life - believing that there is something wrong with them and feeling helpless in knowing what the problem is or how to be free of it, or how to relate to this condition with awareness and love.

Very often people believe that their suffering is caused by something external to themselves and mistakenly embark on a lifetime of trying to change other people and their external world which is, of course, as effective as banging your head against a brick wall.

It takes humility to recognize that, not only do you not cause other adult's feelings and reactions, but also that you cannot change other people's feelings and reactions. Nor do other people *cause* your feelings and beliefs - these all preceded whatever you believe someone "does to you." Other people merely activate or trigger what is already alive in you. The only thing that you have power to change is yourself. The only relationship you can change is your inner relationship with yourself. No matter what the world offers you, no matter how other people treat you, the focus must be on your own inner response and your own choices of how to respond. Once the focus shifts to how the other person or the world needs to be different, you are forever caught in a prison, the sticky web of your own mind and you will **never** be free.

Therapy, therefore, is **the process of introspection** into your own belief system which is intrinsically bound up in your own feeling state and needs that lead to your own choices of behavior. It is the process of learning to accept what you discover about yourself **without judgment**, without an internal fight, but with grace, humility and good humor. It means inner relationship with all that is so very human and finite with the part of you that is infinite love and truth. It is about the relationship internally, with the part that is finite and human with the part that is infinite spirit. This can become an exciting inner journey of self-discovery and ultimately freedom from suffering.

I see my own role as being merely a companion on a part of the way. As long as you want me to be that companion, I may point out pitfalls on the road, offer suggestions as to how to not fall down ravines, challenge you when you want to go on fruitless, time wasting detours (like blaming others, fantasies that wealth will solve the problem etc.), encourage you to keep walking through the dark night of the soul, question you in ways that help you seek inner answers, shine a flashlight if you cannot see something and teach you how to

read the road map to get to the final destination. Ultimately, however, the journey is yours and you will walk most of it alone. I cannot walk it for you. The work has to be done by you. Your life is your responsibility - a precious gift to be used to reach your fullest potential as fully divine in human form.

To allow me to walk a part of the inner journey and be a witness to the miracle of becoming is the greatest privilege that anyone can bestow on me. May you all be blessed with the courage and integrity it takes to look inside, search for options for internal relationship with yourself and see new ways of living life fully and richly. In so doing you become a blessing to the world.

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