

Week 12 - 4th Quadrant Practice - Befriending what you have named the Enemy within

Last week we worked on learning to turn inward so that there is a witness to your human condition. Just observing without judgment, is the reality of who you are that is always connected to God and is of the same substance as God. It is the little god within the Big God. It is the Big God within the little god. From this place of witness, the qualities that are brought into relationship with your humanity is Love and Truth expressed as Compassion and Wisdom in relationship to every aspect of your humanity. And so, we bring that internal frame of reference or focus to the part of you that is identified with the external and focused on the external. In this way you stop expecting everyone else to be God to you and meeting your needs and tending to your feelings. Learning to state our feelings and needs and then expecting someone else to tend to them is still living in an external frame of reference. We do not get aware of and learn to express our feelings and needs so that others help. We do it to grow up and learn to meet our own needs and tend to our feelings.

Until there is a witness, there is nothing to bring to the relationship. You are alone with your misery begging the world to help.

Assuming you have all developed some capacity for self-reflection and self-introspection you need to know what it is you are called to related to with compassion and wisdom.

The Higher function of dualistic thought is wisdom and intuition, and the higher function of feelings and needs is the capacity for Compassion. Compassion and Wisdom are the function of the Soul/Higher Self/True Self.

The aware Soul knows its connection to the Spirit of Love and Truth and so is able to relate to all lower levels of Self with compassion and wisdom and knows what these qualities are. This is the recognition that,

“Yes, I am the whole mountain!” And the whole mountain is sacred - from the deepest darkest valleys to highest most rarified air at the top. It is all me. And I can relate to every single level with wisdom and compassion rooted in Love and Truth. Because I see it all, I can move with ease up and down the mountain tending to what is needed at every level of my being. I do not seek to live at the top disconnected from all lower levels, and I will help all lower levels to climb the mountain by descending down to them with only compassion and wisdom. I am the mountain and I am the Sherpa.

You cannot become the Sherpa of your own life, until you have ascended and descended many times and learned from the outer Sherpa what is required at each and every level and step of the journey, physically, mentally, emotionally and relationally. But finally, you will be the one who is aware and attentive to every step and what is required, no matter where on the mountain you find yourself.

So what does the Sherpa, or witness, or True Self or Inner Guide need to be able to see and attend to?

All the pitfalls, dangers and obstacles going up and going down.

I am going to give you a map of what your inner Sherpa needs to see and what she/he needs to bring to that condition that is recognized. It is very simple but profound if you study it deeply. I will give a broad heading and then invite you to examine beliefs, behaviors, attitudes that would indicate the lower self's struggle and what the Higher Self can bring to that condition.

The very ground of your human existence is shame. From the moment of your incarnation you will, in perception only, start identifying with the external world. And this you must do in order to survive in this medium or realm of existence. The experience of identification with being a mere vulnerable mortal is the experience of shame. You are born to it and it is the ground of your being mortal. You do not, as a young little being, know yourself as Spirit. You cannot because all your attention is not on where you internally came from, but on externally where you find yourself. Now you have an external frame of reference - all attention is focused on getting needs met externally because you cannot yet do anything for yourself.

Shame is the experience of this vulnerable, exposed, disconnected, alien and bad feeling inside of you that is exacerbated by your socialization that demands an external focus or the danger of not getting survival needs met. Shame is not guilt. You are not guilty for being born. Shame is inevitable experience from the beginning. Or if you like, it is the Fall from Grace (Love), into another realm of existence. The story of Genesis is all about this Fall from Grace. This is not a moral judgement or punishment. It is a description of the experience in consciousness of finding yourself in this human condition of helplessness and suffering.

After your birth you will be subjected not only to the cellular shame of involuting into matter, but the shame of judgment, correction, control, power and hatred that will be heaped on you by the world.

As you start on your ascent of the spiritual mountain that you are, you are learning and getting more and more aware of what is not loving, and then also about what is loving. You are gradually through many ascents and descents finding the truth that you are the whole mountain, you are a soul. You are connected to the Highest Consciousness of Truth and Love. You can bring this awareness to the suffering of your climbs up and down the mountain. Once you realize yourself as the whole mountain and you are able to bring yourself into loving relationship with every struggle along the way, every fall, every obstacle, you will start to feel very big and as if the struggles that absorbed and demanded your attention on the way, become very small. They do not go away, they are just subsumed under your vastness, your own infinite Love and Truth.

So, let's examine what you as a mature soul needs to bring to your human condition. These categories are, of course, overlapping with each other. The ground of ego functioning or physical life, is fear and shame. The actual ground of your being is Love and Truth. Integration (or salvation) demands that every aspect of your being that you try to ignore, cut off, disavow, keep in the dark, must be met by you with this all embracing love. As you examine the two columns beneath it is imperative that you read them as what needs to happen INTERNALLY. You must bring Self-Acceptance to your Shame, you must bring Openness to Growth to your Closedness to Growth. You are not getting rid of anything. You are not changing or controlling anything, you are not replacing something for something else. Nothing goes away. But as inner relationship strengthens in love and trust and truth, so the past sufferings seem so much less powerful in your life.

Enlightenment is bringing the true nature of your soul into relationship with all the suffering and defenses you have been absorbed in for most of your life.

We are going to go into some detail for each of the outlined qualities so that you can more readily observe and recognize them within yourselves. We will start with Self-Reflective and Externally focused because we started with this distinction last week.

Mature Soul

Self-Acceptance

Internal knowing of intrinsic value
Self-respect
Knows inner dynamics of self

Openness to Growth

Awareness
Truthfulness
Congruence

Self Reflective

Internal focus of control
Internal frame of reference
Introspective
Inner searching for dynamic

Self-Empowerment and Responsibility

Self-control over defenses
Good boundaries
Proactive and thoughtful
Expresses Self honestly

Creativity

Self-expression
Being in flow

Unconditional Love

Caring for self and therefore others
Compassion (suffer with) for self and others
Kindness
Unconditional acceptance

Interdependency

Intimacy
Both/and

Unitive Thought

Sees the big picture
Sees interconnectedness and oneness
All is embraced in Love within (and so without)

Ego Functioning

Judgment and Shame

Internal sense of badness, failure, inadequacy
Self judgment and hatred
Unaware of inner dynamics of self

Closed to Growth

defensiveness
pretense and emotional unawareness
Incongruence

Externally focused

External focus of control
External frame of reference
Reactive
Blaming others for inner unaware dynamics

Control and Power over

Acting out defenses
Diffuse and/or rigid boundaries
Reactive and mindless
Aggressive, passive, passive/aggressive expressions

Perfectionism

High achievement
Doing

Conditional Love/Caretaking

Unaware conditions placed on giving care
Sympathy/Overidentification
Being "nice"
Unaware conditions placed on acceptance

Dependency/Co-dependency

Enmeshment and disengagement
Only self or other

Dichotomized Thinking

Focuses on one part
Sees world in discrete parts
Only the good deserve love and the bad should get punished within (and so without)

Self-Reflective

Looking outwards has got to be turned into looking into oneself. Discovering yourself provides you with all you are, were meant to be and all you are living from and for. ~C.G. Jung

Those who reflect on their own conduct add to themselves ~Nhdrash Rabbah

A person who is self-reflective has an awareness of and trust in their own intuition, perceptions, feelings, needs and thoughts. They are aware of God within as well as God beyond themselves. Decision making includes this internal awareness. They are able to be open and carefully consider what others say, listening for the voice of God in them. They accept or reject what is said or done based on their own internal beliefs and values.

You can recognize this quality within yourself by recognizing your ability to:

- Think carefully before answering questions, with specificity, depth and clarity not using catch all phrases like “fine,” or clichés
- Give responses that indicate the capacity to ask questions of self ,such as, “What am I feeling/thinking/needing/perceiving?” “What is motivating my reactivity?” “How is my emotional state memory?” “What are my values, really?” “Why do I obey rules externally?” “Which ones do I reject?”
- “Which ones do I accept?” “What are all my options?”
- Have an observer self that is reflected in speech - E.g. “I heard myself say....” “I asked myself...” “I found myself thinking....”
- Understand the emotional effect of your behavior on others
- Own mistakes, apologize, offer restitution, compensation for wrongs done and learn different ways of relating
- Do not blame God, external factors or others for one’s own misfortunes and mistakes but sees cause and effect in a very large organic and interdependent way
- Own and take responsibility for personal actions and decisions
- Listen more than talk internally and externally
- Can express feelings, needs, beliefs and values, actions and see the interconnectedness of all these inner aspects of self.
- Relates to inner self, knowing that emotion and need must be acknowledged by oneself and related to with acceptance and compassion
- Relates to defenses that arose from feelings and needs with understanding and firmness
- Sees that current behavior is often only a conditioned response to disavowed feelings and needs in memory
- Recognize anything that is not respectful or honoring of self and set appropriate limits
- Able to say “no,” to anything that violates one’s own boundaries and values
- Listen to others being fully present to their inner feelings and needs without judgment or anxiety
- Communicate in an authentic, congruent and genuinely caring way

When I was young, when I burned with the love of God, I thought i would convert the whole world to God. but soon I realized that it would be more than enough to convert the people who lived in my town, and I made an effort for a long time, but was not successful. Then I realized that my agenda was still too ambitious, and I

focused on the people in my household, but I could not convert them either. Finally, I realized: I must work on myself, if I'm really going to have something to offer God. But I didn't even accomplish this.

~Hayyim Halberstram of Zans

Externally Focused

People who are externally focused are at the level of being emotionally dependent on externals, situations or people to feel good or bad about themselves. Decisions are made out of fear of others and need for approval, attention, praise etc. from others. Because they are dependent on externals, they also see others in the same way, as dependent on them for help. They are at the stage of still having difficulty reflecting on their own inner reality and trusting this for the basis of decision making.

You can recognize this level by noticing the following in yourself:

- Addiction to externals to mask feelings and feel better - over consumption of alcohol, and drugs or food, busyness, shopping, other people and relationships, high achievement and climbing the corporate ladder to name just a few external compensations. Focus on wealth and status
- Trying to guess what the other person is thinking, feeling and wanting from you so you can meet their need
- Expecting others to read your mind and making wrong assumptions about their feelings, needs and thoughts
- Trying to give the "right" answer to a question instead of looking inside
- Decisions based on what others need, want or demand
- Language that is blaming and indicates focus on the other - E.g. "He makes me so mad...." Statements that indicate everyone and everything else is to blame for the mess the world is in - the church, the government, the schools, our friends and partners etc.
- Lack of awareness of internal beliefs that contribute to internal emotional states. Feelings are the result of "something or someone out there," and can be helped by "something or someone out there changing to meet our needs the way we want them met."
- No sense of inner agency in decision making in relationship to others
- Feelings of powerlessness and helplessness with an accompanying inability to see options
- God is "out and up there," rewarding "good" behavior and punishing "bad" behavior (projection of the inner dynamic)
- Disconnected from emotions and needs and not recognizing them as memory states
- Discomfort with change - depend on external structure, doctrines, routines and practices to feel secure
- Discomfort living with "not knowing"
- Give advice, rescue, judge, try to control others, caretake, help and interfere
- Inability to listen and put one's own agenda to one side
- Judgmental
- Feel special or devalued and have no intrinsic sense of self value

There is nothing so rare as an act of your own. ~Henry Thoreau

Exercise:

See if you can start recognizing these ego functions within yourself and bring your Self-reflective, loving and accepting self to embrace the function that has served you so well for so long. This means growing bigger, so that the function becomes very small within you. Now you are learning to be your own Sherpa on this path.