

DISTINGUISH IN YOUR OWN MIND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY.

LOSS OF A SENSE SPIRITUALITY IN AN AGE OF SCIENCE AND CYNICISM

The report of the group for the advancement of Psychiatry interpreted mysticism as an intermediate phenomenon between normality and psychosis.

I know of no place where reductionism and psychological myopia are more rampant in today's world than in the existing field of mainstream alcoholism and drug abuse treatment programs report high degrees of recidivism and still focus almost entirely on the negative, sick, or fragmented aspects of the person--viewing the entire condition through the lens of identification with the disease and dysfunction, not only for the addict, but for all his family members. Grof

We lack a spiritual language

We lack of distinction between individual self and Self.

Joseph Campbell—"one of our problems today is that we are not well acquainted with the literature of the spirit; we are much more interested in the news of the day and the problems of the hour—we no longer listen to those who speak of the eternal values that have to do with centering our lives.

The first difficulty we meet in discussing anything concerning the feeling function is that we have no adequate vocabulary to use. Where there is no terminology, there is no consciousness. A poverty-stricken vocabulary for any subject is an immediate admission that the subject is inferior or depreciated in that society. Sanskrit has ninety-six words for love; ancient Persian has eighty)", Greek three, and English only one. This is indicative of the poverty of awareness or emphasis that we give to that tremendously important realm of feeling. Eskimos have thirty words for snow, because it is a life-and- death matter for them to have exact information about the element they live with so intimately. If we had a vocabulary of thirty words for love and matters of feeling, we would immediately be richer and more intelligent in this human element so close to our heart. An Eskimo probably would die of clumsiness if he had only one word for snow; we are close to dying of loneliness because we have only one word for love. Robert Johnson The Fisher King and the Handless Maiden

THE SELF-CENTERED PERSONALITY

"My will be done"

1. Is intent of self glory.
2. Is concerned about what others think of him and craves admiration.
3. Is rigid, self-opinionated.
4. Cannot stand criticism.
5. Desires power over others; uses others for own ends.
6. Looks for the easy way.
7. Considers surrender weak and cowardly.
8. Tries to be self-sufficient.
9. Feels that life owes him certain things.
10. Is over sensitive, feelings are easily hurt, nourishes resentments.
11. Springs back slowly and painfully from disappointments.
12. Depends on material possessions for happiness.
13. Indulges in self-pity when things go wrong.
14. Needs praise and publicity for his good deeds.
15. Is more tolerant of own character defects and intolerant at the short-comings of others.
16. Seeks freedom from responsibility.
17. Loves those who love him.

THE HIGHER CENTERED PERSONALITY

"Thy will be done"

1. Has true humility.
2. Does not need the approval or acceptance of others to feel ok.
3. Is flexible.
4. Accepts criticism and usually benefits from it.
5. Is devoted to the common good.
6. Is willing to put forth effort.
7. Is willing to give up to win.
8. Is aware of his need for God and for other people.
9. Realizes that life owes him nothing. Readily forgives others.
11. Has capacity to rise above disappointment's and can use them creatively.
12. Realizes that happiness is wanting what you get rather than getting what you want.
13. Bounces back when things go wrong.
14. Works well with others; can take second place.
15. Is dedicated to self-improvement and able to "Live and Let Live."
16. Accepts the reality of responsibility.
17. Loves without expecting anything in return.

The Twelve Promises

We will know a new freedom and a new happiness.

We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it

We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.

No matter how far down the scale we have gone-we will see how our experience can benefit others.

That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.

We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows

Self seeking will slip away

Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change

Fear of people- -and- -economic insecurity will leave us.

We will intuitively know how to handle problems that used to baffle us.

We will find that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves. from Alcoholics Anonymous p. 83-84

THE TRANSMUTATIONS

"Controlling is holding on; transforming is release!"

Transmutations are not controls. They are literally "turning the other cheek," looking in the direction of the positive side of a previously- held negative quality. As stated earlier, the Higher Self can only work with the positive. It only sees Truth. To it, the negative quality is now and always was an illusion. In other words, to your Higher Self, the negative never even existed.

Consequently, when one's energy is no longer being dissipated in negativity, activities (outer or inner) that block or distort the authentic activities of the True Self, the positive quality just naturally emerges and begins expressing itself. Some of the signs that one is truly being guided by the Higher Power, rather than merely verbalizing it, are the following observable changes:

Fear is transmuted into courage. Fear is an ego defense based on illusion. Once we look our fears squarely in the face, we find that they are simply negative expressions of positive traits trying to express themselves. When we understand the nature of these fears and clear up the wrong thinking they represent, we will begin risking new action and opting for innovative choices. For instance, I fear you because I think you are more important than I (illusion); transmuted, this becomes the courage to express my own equal importance. I fear a situation because I believe I'm a bad person if I fail (illusion); transmuted, this is the opportunity to accept my weaknesses and my Strengths realistically and to follow my own path, not someone else's idea of it- Or, I'm afraid to look at a part of myself, because if I acknowledge It I will have to see myself as "bad" (illusion); transmuted, this becomes the

chance to see myself as I really am—partially unawakened and still needing more experiences to become enlightened. Once we really get the picture of who we truly are, self-doubt diminishes and fear becomes an irrelevant concept. When Life comes in on us, we go inward and find the key.

Self-Pity and blame are transmuted into personal responsibility. Seeing ourselves as "victims" of our situations is a debilitating point of view based on illusion rather than Truth. We are totally responsible for our personal circumstances and for the people we attract to us. These external forces in our lives are merely reflections of our inner state of mind and our current level of understanding—Learning to say "I chose to do this, given the options I felt I had, or "Here's how I set this one up" means freedom. Can you see how this works? Because we have created our past by our moment-by-moment choices, it follows logically that we are also creating our future by the choices we make NOW. There is a direct relationship between Cause and Effect, and we, not someone else, are setting the chain in motion with our every thought, feeling and action. And there is no blame. If we hadn't needed the experience, we wouldn't have chosen it. Conscious action (personal choice) rather than unconscious reaction (putting ourselves to sleep and allowing "fate" to Choose for us) is the key to freedom. Blessed relief from the shackles of victimhood.

Powerlessness is transmuted into Self mastery. As we begin to experience ourselves as having chosen our lives, realizing we are perfectly free to make any changes we really want to make...in our thinking, our feelings, or in our actions... depression cannot be maintained. Our Spiritual Will becomes operative, directing us now toward Self-Mastery. A sense of joy and fascination replace feelings of impotence and fear. We now begin directing our lives toward *events* that lead to purpose and meaning, moving further and further away from dominance by the little *ego* self ("selves"). Feelings of isolation fade as we "lose ourselves" in the whole of community.

Passion is transmuted into Compassion. When one becomes involved in the art of Self-creating, passions become our teachers. They lead us to the outside world where we've been looking for something we cannot find. Passion gets caught up in diversity, absolutizing every little experience it involves in, thinking each is essential. Now *we realize there is another way. We can turn inward. When we do, we begin seeing* ourselves through the eyes of acceptance rather than the voice of judgment. And love is there. We can understand, as we look deeper and deeper, how *we've* gotten where we are, and we can comprehend the hardness of our life, the sadness of our mistakes. We develop compassion the place where emotion and realization merge. As we develop this for ourselves, it begins spilling out to others. We love and *see* others as we love and *see* ourselves. Compassion is feeling, but it is not ego-involved feeling. It stands on the sidelines and weeps for humankind. Then it moves in and acts where it can, but for others, rather than emotional "highs" aimed at our own gratification. It draws diversity back into itself, realizing the unity behind it all.

Self-preoccupation is transmuted into Aspiration to Serve Humanity. And now we have the tools for serving others. We feel for ourselves and we feel for Life. But *we've* learned that gratification comes from within, not from all the various and sundry objects and people in the outside world. *We've* tried that already, hardly leaving a stone unturned. It simply doesn't work. Perhaps it is original in self-defense that we turn to serving others for our means of true gratification. But it is a kind of work that

eventually leads us beyond ourselves and we learn a Truth: I am only truly joyful when I am experiencing myself connecting with my brothers and sisters through mutual sharing, love and purpose. Giving myself away seems to give me back to myself tenfold.

Exaggerated Mood Swings are transmuted into Serenity.

And now I can work with the Law of Polarity and neutralize its energetic force- I can use it rather than it using me. Before, I was a victim of my moods, going from depression to elation. depending what the outside world brought into my consciousness. Now I am in the driver's seat. I can use my moods, my feelings, my highs or my lows for experiencing the full gamut of my humanness. And when I start going too low, I can remember who I really am and get outside my absurd preoccupation with self. I can serve. I can be still. I can pull toward the center. When I feel elated, I can enjoy it fully, not needing it to last, but appreciating the moment for what it has to offer. My faith is now in the process of life itself: I know other true moments of joy will occur; I don't have to hang onto this one. And I feel serene. All of it is OK--even the hard times. They are taking me exactly where I need to be, showing me what I need to know.

Fragmented Knowledge is transmuted into Wholistic Truth. While we are still dominated by our little egos, we fall in love with our ideas and our ability to become an "expert" in various segments of reality- I may recount to you great academic victories in the art of loving - without knowing the slightest about the nature of love or of the human being experiencing it!

Fragments of truth teach us half-truths, or no truth at all. Learning to see the whole picture of the nature and purpose of something within the life context of a human being can lead to great leaps of wisdom. It is the difference between the scientist and the wise man- A scientist can be a wise man; but a wise man is never merely an objective investigator of facts.

Role-Playing is transmuted into expressing one's authentic nature. Until we know who we are, we play roles, trying on first this one, then that. And often, we discover we are filling our lives with meaningless pap, involving in events that have nothing to do with the development of our true Essence. Once we are on The Path, we begin showing the world who we really are, even if this True Self looks different from others. We develop the courage to be who we are.

Desire for external "things" is transmuted into seeking Self-knowledge.

And this, of course, is the transformation. Once we truly begin seeking Truth, our teachers appear in varied forms, and since Self-knowledge is by its nature transforming, we are on our way. No longer is our energy so tied up in searching for things to gratify our sense of identity; we are finding our true identity, the most exhilarating safari we will ever take, the journey Into Self.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TREATMENT PROGRAMS

Clients who are on The Path, being guided by their Higher Power, do not benefit from programs, even AA groups, who are still focusing on the negative. They must avoid being stuck in talking about the past, their fears, mistakes, diseases, etc. and instead focus on programs

that teach about the Self, how to go within, and how to live positively and healthily in the world. Recovery programs become discovery programs!

Seekers are no longer working on staying sober; the energy has gone out of the desire to take drugs. They are searching for Truth, and determined to find it! A non-Seeker cannot recognize a Seeker. But Seekers can recognize each other. Seekers must be strong enough to resist the criticisms of non- Seekers (for they do appear "different" and are often misunderstood by non-Seekers). They must accept this reality and search out persons of like mind for support. Seekers are Transformers.

from Jacquelyn Small, *Transformers: The Artists of Self Creation*, p.239-245

CHARACTERISTICS OF MENTALLY HEALTHY PEOPLE(SELF- ACTUALIZED) FROM MASLOW

They feel comfortable about themselves.

They are not bowled over by their own emotions - by their fears, anger, love, jealousy, guilts or worries.

They can take life's disappointments in the stride.

They have a tolerant easygoing attitude toward themselves. They neither underestimate nor overestimate their abilities. They can accept their own shortcomings. They have self-respect. They feel able to deal with most situations that come their way. They get satisfaction from the simple everyday pleasures of life. They feel right about other people.

They are able to give love and to consider the interests of others. They have personal relationships that are satisfying and lasting.

They expect to like and trust others and take it for granted that others will like and trust them.

They respect the many differences they find in people.

They do not push people around nor do they allow themselves to be pushed around. They can feel they are part of a group.

They feel a sense of responsibility to their neighbors and fellow human beings. They are able to meet the demands of life.

They do something about their problems as they arise. They accept their responsibilities.

They shape their environment whenever possible; they adjust to it whenever necessary. They plan ahead but do not fear the future.

They welcome new experiences and new ideas. They make use of natural capacities.

They set realistic goals for themselves.

They are able to think for themselves and make their own decisions.

They put their best effort into what they do and get satisfaction out of doing it.

General Goals and Steps in Ego-Oriented and Transpersonal Psychotherapy

EGO BASED 1. Seeking relief from suffering.

2. Recognizing, facing and experiencing feelings Learning to tolerate frustration.

3. Working through and sorting out fantasy and reality.

4. Beginning to work on life issues and change belief systems.

5. Realizing that I prevent myself from getting what I want and need

- TRANSPERSONAL*
1. Perceiving new and more possibilities
 2. Recognizing and experiencing observer self.
 3. Maximizing freedom of choice (assumed ethical)
 4. Feeling empathy regarding and compassion for others.
 5. Becoming able to perceive the oneness of all being.
 6. Becoming a co-creator of my life.

God is omnipotent, and man is His image and likeness and his dominion over all things. This is the inspired teaching, and it is intended to be taken literally, at its face value. "Man" means *every* man so the ability to draw on this power is not the special prerogative of the mystic or the saint, as is so supposed, or even the highly trained practitioner. Whoever you are, wherever you may be, the Golden Key to harmony is in your hand now. This is because in scientific prayer it is God who works, and not you, and so your particular limitations or weaknesses are of no account in the process. You are the channel through which the divine action takes place, and your treatment will really be just getting of yourself out of the way. Beginners often *get* startling results at the first time of trying, for all that is absolutely essential is to have an open mind, and sufficient faith to try the experiment.

As for the actual method of working, like all fundamental things, it is simplicity itself. All you have to do is this: STOP THINKING ABOUT THE DIFFICULTY, WHATEVER IT IS, AND THINK ABOUT GOD INSTEAD. This is the complete rule, and if only you will do this, the trouble will disappear. It makes no difference what kind of trouble it is. It may be a big thing or a little thing may concern health, finance, a lawsuit, a quarrel, an accident, or anything *else* conceivable; but whatever it is, just stop thinking about it - that is all you have to do.

The thing could not be simpler, could it? God himself could scarcely have made it simpler, and it never fails to work when given a fair trial.

Do not try to form a picture of God, which is impossible. Work by rehearsing anything and everything you know about God. God is wisdom, Truth, inconceivable Love. God is present *everywhere*; has infinite power; knows everything; and so on. It matters not how well you may think you understand these go over them repeatedly.

But you must stop thinking of the trouble, whatever it is. The rule is to think about God. To be continually glancing over your shoulder, as it *were*, in order to *see* how matters are progressing is fatal, because that is thinking of the trouble, and you

must think of God, and of nothing *else*. Your object is to drive the thought of difficulty right out of your consciousness, for a *few* moments at least, substituting for it the thought of God. This is the crux of the whole thing. If you can become so absorbed in this consideration of the spiritual world that you really *forget* for a while all about the trouble concerning which you began to pray, you will presently find that you are safely and comfortably out of your difficulty, - that your demonstration is made. from The Golden Key by Emmett Fox

SOME ADDITIONAL QUOTES AND IDEAS

"It is but giving your little private convulsive self a rest and finding that a greater self is there." James

"I have no doubt whatever that most people live, whether physically, intellectually or morally, in a very restricted circle of their potential being. They make use of a very small portion of their possible consciousness. .much like a man, who, out of his whole body organism, should get into the habit of moving only his little finger...We all have reservoirs of life to draw upon, of which we do not dream." William James

You can only apprehend the Infinite by a faculty superior to reason, by entering into a state in which you are your finite self no longer-in which the divine essence is communicated to you. This is ecstasy. It is the liberation of your mind from its finite consciousness. Like can only apprehend like; when you thus cease to be finite, you become one with the Infinite. In the reduction of your soul to its simplest self, its divine essence, you realize this union, this identity. Plotinus

We all possess in fact a secret, wonderful faculty of withdrawing from the changes of time into our inner being, into our self denuded of ourselves under the form of changeability. This perception is the innermost, most individual of experiences, on which depends everything which we know and believe of the supersensual world. This perception convinces us that something *is in the true sense of the word, while everything else merely appears.* Fredrich Schelling

I've often wondered why that part of the journey is necessary, and right now it seems to me that this ego that we spend years building up and putting into place is our gift back to our Creator so that these primal necessary desires and yearnings can be transformed. Will becomes transformed into Love. The will to live, the will to know, and the will to feel become love of truth, love of life, and love of God, which is inseparable from love of self. Jacquelyn Small Transformers: The Artists of Self Creation.

Millions of persons long for immortality who do not know what to do wit themselves on a rainy afternoon.--Susan Ertz

"The soul should always stand ajar, ready to welcome the ecstatic experience."--Emily Dickinson

"If of thy mortal good thou art bereft, And from thy slender store ~1 two loaves alone are left, Sell one and with thy dole Buy hyacinths to feed thy soul"- -Persian poet, c.1300

Live in the present,
Do all the things that need to be done.
Do all the good you can each day.
The future will unfold. - -Peace Pilgrim I

Go slowly, breathe and smile."-- Thich Nhat Hanh

"The only thing you ever have to offer another human being, ever, is your own' state of being." I -Ram Dass

"Normal day, let me be aware of the treasure you are. Let me learn from you, love you, bless you before you depart. let me no pass you by in quest of some rare and perfect tomorrow. Let me hold you while I may, for it may not always be so. One day I shall dig my nails into the earth, or bury my face in the pillow, or stretch myself taut, or raise my hands to the sky and want, more than all the world, your return. --Mary Jean Irons

"Your duty is to BE; and not to be this or that.--Ramana Maharshi

"Everywhere people are straining to set aside time for things that are felt to be humanly important: beginning with loved ones, enjoying nature, studying ideas, or engaging in some creative activity. And more and more it is becoming a losing battle. There is no issue, no aspect of human life, that exceeds this in importance. The destruction of time is literally the distinction of life. --Jacob Needleman

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not *see* the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will *never* do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are *ever* with me, and you will *never* leave me to face my perils alone. Thomas Merton Prayer from Thoughts in Solitude

Sometimes life just doesn't make sense, try as *we* might to make sense of it. Sometimes all *we* can do is help each other out gently, without judgment. Ken Wilbur, In Memorium

When I stop looking for Heaven Always beyond me
I find it waiting just Inside.

When I am no longer looking for Heaven In the sky
I find heaven on Earth.
Indeed Heaven is waiting on Earth.

It always has and always will As soon as I am ready.
I will no longer be apart from myself
And Heaven will no longer be apart from Earth. from The Magical Child Within YOU Bruce Davis, PhD

Prayer for Protection and Boundaries

I am whole I am filled with light;
I am perfect I am filled with light; I am surrounded by the pure white light of Christ.
Nothing but good shall come to me; Nothing but good shall go from me; I give thanks; I give thanks; I give thanks.

Signs of Inner Peace

A tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than in reaction to fears based on past experiences.
An ability to enjoy each moment for what it is.
A loss of interest in judging other people--or oneself.
A loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others. A loss of interest in conflict.
A loss of the ability to worry.
Frequent episodes of appreciation.
Contented feelings of connectedness with others and with nature.
An increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.
An increased susceptibility to love extended by others as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.
Frequent attacks of smiling.
from Dianne Aprile's column in Courier Journal originally published by the Furrawn Center. an Indianapolis addiction-recovery center.

TO LET GO

To let go does not mean to stop caring: it means cannot do it for someone else.

To let go is not to cut myself off: it is the realization I cannot control another.

To let go is not to enable: but to allow learning from natural consequences. To let go is to admit powerless: which means the outcome is not in my hands. To let go is not to try to change or blame another: it is to make the most of myself.

To let go is not to "care for": but to "care about." To let go is not to fix: but to be supportive.

To let go is not to judge: but to allow another to be a human being.

To let go is to not be in the middle arranging the outcomes: but to allow others to affect their destinies.

To let go is not to be protected: it is another to face reality. . To let go is not to deny: but to accept.

To let go is not to nag, scold, or argue: but instead to search out my own shortcomings and correct them.

To let go is not to adjust everything to my desires: but to take each day as it comes, and cherish myself in it. To let go is not to criticize and regulate anybody: but to try to become what I dream I can be.

To let go is not to regret the past: but to grow and live for the future. . To let is to fear less and to love more.

Even Lazier

A selection of reminders from the text:

We are equal beings and the universe is our relations with each other. What am I doing on a level of consciousness where this is real? ; Love it the way it is.

Love as much as you can from wherever you are.

Whether I am conscious of it or not, I am one with the cause of all that exists. Whether I feel it or not, I am one with all the love in the universe. Love is the only dimension that needs

to be changed. All states of consciousness are available right now. It's always within us to relate this way.

Enlightenment doesn't care how you get there.

Whatever you are doing, love yourself for doing it.

There is nothing you need to do first in order to be enlightened.

This too can be experience with a completely expanded awareness. I wouldn't deny this experience to the One Mind.

What did you think it was that needed to be loved?

When you learn to *love* hell, you will be in heaven.

Thank you, brothers and sisters, for letting my consciousness be at this place.

from Thaddeus Golas, Lazy Man's Guide to Enlightenment, Bantam, 1986.

THE TWELVE PRINCIPLES OF ATTITUDINAL HEALING

1. The essence of our being is *love*.

2. Health is inner peace. Healing is letting go of fear. 3. Giving and receiving are the same.

4. We can let go of the past and of the future.

5. Now is the only time there is and each instant is for giving.

6 We can learn to love ourselves and others by forgiving rather than judging. 7. We can become love-finders rather than fault-finders.

8. We can choose and direct ourselves to be peaceful inside regardless of what is happening outside.

9. We are students and teachers to each other.

10. We can focus on the whole of life rather than the fragments. 11. Since love is eternal, death *need* not be viewed as fearful.

12. We can always perceive ourselves and others as either extending love or giving a call for help.

from To See Differently, Susan Trout, Three Roses Press, 1992.

Acceptance

And acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing or situation-some fact in my life- unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God's world by mistake. Until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober; unless I accept life completely on life's terms, I cannot be happy. I *need* to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and my attitudes. from Alcoholics Anonymous p.449

Even though the terms sound similar there is a huge difference between being a Victim and Acceptance.

The Thirteen Statements of Acceptance

- 1) I have a drinking problem that once had me.
- 2) Negative emotions destroy only myself.
- 3) Happiness is a habit I will develop.
- 4) Problems bother me only to the degree I permit them to.
- 5) I am what I think.
- 6) Life can be ordinary or it can be great.
- 7) Love can change the course of my world.
- 8) The fundamental object of life is emotional and spiritual growth.
- 9) The past is gone forever.
- 10) All love returns two-fold.
- 11) Enthusiasm is my daily exercise.
- 12) I am a competent person and have much to give to others.
- 13) I am responsible for myself and others.

(Kirkpatrick 1984): from *Women for Sobriety*; adapted by Whitfield

"The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green earth in the present moment, to appreciate peace and beauty that are available now.. It is not a matter of practiced. We need only to find ways to bring our body and mind back to their present moment so we can touch what is refreshing, healing, and wondrous." Thich Nhat Hanh

The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook."--William James

"To affect the quality of day; that is the art of life."-- Thoreau

"When we get too caught up in the busyness of the world, we lose connection with one another--and on ourselves."--Jack Kornfield

"It is not doing the thing we like to do, but liking the thing we have to do that makes life blessed." Goethe

"Only when one is connected to one's own core is one connected to others. And, for me, the core, the inner spring, can be best be found through solitude." Anne Morrow Lindbergh

"Many of us spend our whole lives running from feeling with the mistaken belief that you cannot bear the pain. But you have already borne the pain. What you have not done is feel all you are beyond that pain." Bartholomew.