

THE JEWEL OF SUFFERING: ON THE WAY TO COMPASSION

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Nancy Petchersky and William C. Lane for their many gifts of cultural heritage, talents of singing and writing and allowing me to act out my role in their lives.

And, to Clark E. Moustakas, whose acknowledgement of and respect for the heuristic investigative process as applied to phenomenological experience, affords the individuality of the human spirit its honorable place in the process of both deep engagement with, and ultimate synthesis and expression of the experiential arising from personal encounter with a given phenomenon, that I believe has earned itself a permanent and viable place in the empirical scientific investigative process.

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There is little recognition given to the advantages and uses of adversity, pain and suffering in relationship to compassion. In the fields of psychology and New Age spiritual teachings, and even the burgeoning field of transpersonal psychology, greater emphasis is placed ultimately on the eradication of pain and suffering as definitively undesirable. This dissertation is the result of a 10—year investigation performed by this author, with himself and 15 research participants into the nature of compassion.

Questions as to whether or not compassion is solely an empathic emotional response to external influences of perceived suffering and pain, either in the world or in one's self and whether compassion can be taught and learned. Another question was posed as well as to whether or not compassion is a pre-inherent force within man exclusively developed and generated through a state of identification and derived by way of experienced self-recognition afforded the person through a process of self-investigation. These questions were taken up therapeutically and addressed by the primary researcher, in adherence to

self-investigative processes and procedures of the American psychologist Dr. Clark E. Moustakas, and engagement with various forms of creative arts and the uses of multi-media genres, intense meditation and spiritual practices, administered psychotherapy and physical therapy, and posed to the 15 participants in the form of a research questionnaire. Examination of the topic in the light of this curriculum conveyed a plethora of emerging ideas, that in the main revealed a strong lean toward the probability that compassion is indeed an innate quality residing in the individual and that the realization of this emotion is heavily dependent on the patency of the interior neurochemical empathic pathways and on external influences, especially experienced during childhood, and is inclusive of the individual's overall inherent mental and emotional constitution. External causes discovered through this method of research support the teach/learn portion of the theory and are considered by this researcher, as outcome of the findings, to be of only partial import to the overall study its self.

Key words: Compassion, conflict, empathy, engagement, healing, innate, pain, suffering, and suspension.

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PREFACE

The purpose of this dissertation is to introduce the reader to alternative views regarding suffering and pain, as it relates to concepts of compassion. It is important that the reader be aware, as well, of the importance of developing an evolved nomenclature to facilitate the developing awareness that accompanies this ever-evolving phenomenon of compassion currently presenting its self to the Western cultures previously influenced primarily by more Eastern spiritual teachings—as it arises out of the experience of the ever-increasing willingness to embrace suffering.

Throughout my life I have struggled to articulate the feelings and concepts emerging from my interactions with the phenomenological world. Too, I have sought to be true to my present understanding of my experiences with the added intention that all verbal and non-verbal explication of the personal be qualitatively honorable to the authenticity of the experiential. I have very often found existing contemporary language in general, lacking in sufficient substance toward achieving my task. A better term for describing the function of which I speak is *linguaging*; A term used by Werner Erhard and borrowed from Martin Heidegger (1959) There is the experience then of linguaging one's self into elucidative form and expression.

So often what one says and what one thinks is incongruent. The turning of a word or phrase is often enacted without the slightest concern for whether or not it serves that which the person is attempting to convey.

I am not alone in my endeavor at authenticity. At times the question of terminology has presented much concern for many other scientific researchers, which has

resulted in the creation of a plethora of nomenclatures. Unfortunately, similar sounding terminologies can mean quite different things and vice versa. It is often the case that more than one term is employed in a single study to uncover the same meaning of an idea or an object. This is especially true when the *descriptives* pertain to phenomenological experiences of a personal nature. Sometimes multiple terms are used interchangeably and sometimes they are not; sometimes the meanings of different terms are explained and sometimes their meanings are assumed or even imposed. These differences can become limitations to attempts at the subjective and authentic communication of the personal. Possibly, pre-existing non-applicable references can become impediments to genuine growth in the understanding of one's personal experience. I myself, have never allowed myself to subscribe to the acknowledged symbolism offered by anyone claiming absolute authority as to their meaning or those who idly in mutual accord with existing collective acceptances of their meaning. The appearance of a bear in a dream may not mean the same for me that it does for you.

Likewise the promotion of symbols and their pre-supposed meanings may hinder a person who seeks to understand their intent, from discovering for elves that which is significant and exclusively their own.

In a world, which at present, is being steadily inundated by hitherto undisclosed, potentially enlightening views leaning toward a profounder concern for the well-being of all living things, could this be accompanied by a transitioning from the need to retain and reiterate worn out descriptions of formerly held beliefs, ideologies, and ineffective paradigms, to that of pursuing a deeper and more effective vocabulary wherewith to explain the essential, formerly inaccessible cognitions of our inner realities? In my

opinion it is important to experiment with these authentic reflections of personal understanding obtained by one, by presenting them to the reader, who stands to personally benefit from a newly formed paradigm into which they may step, and discover for themselves the worthiness of their use.

In their published review “Personal Epistemology: Nomenclature, Conceptualizations, and Measurement.” Jeremy Briell, et al. (2011)

Terms alone do not always clarify conceptual distinctions and mean little apart from their implementation. Our line of argument here is that distinct terms are necessary where major conceptual differences exist. We will argue of personal epistemology, as Pajares had of teachers’ beliefs, “that research studies would be well served by ... reasoned choice[s] commonly understood and consistently employed. A host of research lines, each employing preferred nomenclatures and interpretations, belong to this field, which is collectively known as “personal epistemology” Pajares (1992, pp. 307—332) — the umbrella term notably employed by Hofer and Pintrich (1997) in their extensive review. It is well known to the reader familiar with personal epistemology that this field struggles with fundamental and persistent issues regarding nomenclature, conceptualization, and measurement. Our ultimate objective is to clarify the construct so that the reader may better apprehend its significance to cognitive flexibility. (2011, Briell, et al, p. 7)

To extrapolate words from an existing nomenclature comprised of symbolic forms depicting the essences of experiences gone by is to act in disservice to a present and real experience one should be seeking to decipher a new. Novelty is natural creativity,

without it we have only the past to rely on. It is fallacious manipulation to seek among the skeletons of depictions past for symbols into which we can only fit our present experience for lack of willingness and ingenuity perhaps, to get at the heart of any experience by the use of one's own ingenuity.

Yet, man submits himself to this manipulation daily. Few make an effort to uniquely apprehend the personal essence of a feeling, of a thought, or an idea who, rely upon a given nomenclature to suffice in attempting to explain the experience or for that matter, the origins of a given phenomenon.

Most neo-spiritual propaganda is filled with pre-formations into which the reader is expected to incorporate their own experiences and adapt himself to the—fit—to—measure conceptualizations they represent. In order that we might truly understand the un-seeable, and generally un-definable, I believe it is best that the seeker be willing to venture into so-called uncharted waters and “show the creature to himself.” (Shelley, 1818) The problem is not just with the person's reliance on already existing nomenclature to describe his temporal experiences, rather, it is for lack of immediacy, perhaps, that he is not yet aware of the importance of re-examining words and seeking personal understanding, and his relationship to them and to his concept of life.

This in no way means that we separate ourselves from the collective or disregard that which we experience collectively, perhaps even, that and which we hold dear, but, rather that which we contribute to the whole be the product of our own inquiry and deliberation into the nature of things.

In “On The Way to Language”, in his chapter entitled Dialogue between a Japanese and an Inquirer, Martin Heidegger (1889—1976), proposes that language and being as one in the same, (p. 6—.)

Regarding the practice and use of collective *linguaging*, appropriation and contribution, Heidegger’s words, in harmony with my own, are here translated:

Thus “ereignen” (Ger.) comes to mean, the joint process by which the four of the fourfold [?], are able, first, to come out into the light and clearing of truth, and thus each to exist in its own truthful way, and secondly, to exist in appropriation of and to each other, belonging together in the round dance of their being; and what is more, this mutual appropriation becomes the very process by which the emergence into the light and clearing occurs, for it happens through the sublimely simple play of their mutual monitoring. (Heidegger, 1971, p. xx.)

Hence, in search of deeper personal and individual understanding into the nature and origins of compassion, I have striven to maintain a connection with my inner compass of recognition in addressing the subject when speaking for myself. (Throughout this dissertation the reader this writer has used the first person singular/plural in reflecting the results of his researched as he was given permission to do by the Academic Committee). In all other cases I have respected the individuation of ideas as illustrated by others and in their own words.

CHAPTER 1

“What is to give light must endure burning” —Viktor Frankl

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation addresses the predominantly outward directional focus of attention being given to the phenomenon of compassion prevalent in our Western societies today.

Presently, the existing literature pays little consideration to the purposes, and causes for pain and suffering attributed to the human condition. Moreover, present studies either focus on the mapping of emotions such as empathy in the more scientific research, and the causes and conditions of the troubles deriving from the human ego. With regards to the phenomenon of compassion most literature points the individual’s attention predominantly towards outer behavioral practices such as that of the Golden Rule and doing good deeds, instead of setting him upon a personal and inwardly directed path, as a means of developing what I term to be, the more organic form of compassion. The distinction I am making here is that compassion, as we are currently capable of understanding it, is in fact pity, sentimentality, sympathy and lesser forms of empathy parading as compassion and that organic compassion is an innate force generated from within the individual as a state of being.

Such a journey would require the individual to venture up to the point of having to face their more glaring and often hidden unseemly character traits and beyond. It is

therefore, no wonder that a deep self-investigative method of reflection as a means to this end is generally rejected.

Background of the Problem

It is by way of no altruistic impetus that I have come to drawing a conclusion of the hypothesis that there is a difference between that which we call compassion and compassion of an organic nature rather, it is by way of painful and personal experience.

Thus, an event from my own experience may enlighten the reader.

At the age of 46 I wound up in a hospital bed in Berlin, Germany suffering from failing kidneys and the effects of two potentially terminal diseases. I asked myself how I had come to such a state. I knew then through the recognition of prevailing pessimistic attitudes which I had been entertaining for many years, that I would have to reexamine my life and hopefully live long enough to begin anew. This was no easy task. A year later I moved to Montreal, Canada and, very unconsciously found myself attempting to re-create the life I had previously led in Berlin, not realizing that this was not what was being asked of me by way of the illnesses under which I was suffering.

I had to make a change in earnest. In the same year planes supposedly coming from Al Qaida forces in the Middle East, toppled the twin towers in New York City to the ground. The way in which I responded to the “attacks” proved to me that something was awry within my psyche, and that I would have to be more focused on my journey of self-investigation for these sentiments frightened me. As I witnessed via television, my response had been that of being pleased about the whole situation. After all, I was tired of living abroad and witnessing how the Americans appeared to be getting their noses up

into the business of other nations as I thought then at the time, always with the agenda of exploiting others. Yes, I was pleased, and for a brief moment saddened that more buildings had not been toppled—the Americans would not learn from this lesson; I knew. I discovered much later that my adverse sentiments regarding my own U.S. American nationality were reflections of attitudes developed in my childhood in response to the abuse I had experienced at the hand of my parents in my family unit of origin.

With this event behind me I headed out for isolation and retreat in the desert of Palm Springs, California, where I began a Heuristic Research project on myself of self-examination, where I could address the void in me where compassion was not to be found. I was compelled to dig deep, by the very remembrance of the dis-compassionate way in which I had responded toward the events that had taken place on September 11, 2001. I thought I had known what compassion was, felt it, exuded it, expressed it well up until this moment; all my spiritual training reflected this as being bare fact, however, my spiritual training, so to speak, had only given me a way of being untouched by and disengaged from the world. Unwittingly, protection had been my agenda and not true intimacy and connectivity as I had thought.

As I began my journey I became aware that I was actually quite a narcissistic person. My students and patients I had sought to influence that they might reflect my own ideals, thereby becoming reflections of validation of myself.

I had indeed sought to protect myself from deep feelings hidden away in my subconscious that when glimpsed for any brief moment had always made me recoil with self-disgust and fear. These were not feelings I wanted to approach let alone complete. True, I would respond to atrocities, whether personal or occurring in someone else's life,

with pity and a there—but—for—the—grace—of—G-d—go—I attitude and even momentary empathy, but this was not compassion.

Compassion is a phenomenon that appears in the world when called forth by the witnessing of suffering by others or the becoming aware of one's own. Many scientist and laypersons alike in the field of psychology, philosophy, and sociology have taken this theme up as a primary focus of their research. Scientific studies are performed regularly with great success in the realm of brain-mapping those areas of the brain that are most activated when excited by outer impulses of witnessed injustice, unfairness, and the perpetration of abuse. This translates into studies in Game-theory, children's play-studies, monitoring of Buddhist monks in meditation practice, self-compassion and the studies presently being performed that focus on shame and vulnerability and the roles these two play in the development of connectedness.

There is a great need, I believe, in our culture for individuals to become aware of the gifts of adversity and the value of hardship. By investigating the inner regions of being we might become better able to access the healing power of compassion.

I am inevitably drawn to Socrates' bold statement that "The unexamined life is not worth living." Socrates (c. 470 BC–399 BC) quoted by Plato (c. 427 BC–c. 347 BC.) I always found the idea intriguing so much so that long ago, I made an attempt to enter upon a journey to the inner self with fervor.

Who likes however, to look at their own failings, character defects and shortcomings? The answer is that practically no one does, unless, however they are forced to, by some serendipitous moment of realization that they are somehow not truly alive. By alive I mean living with a sense of purpose and meaning, with access to a power

within themselves that they can use to shape and mold their lives according to their deepest desires. In fact we prefer to avoid pain as readily as possible, in spite of the unavoidable fact that every sentient thing experiences pain. We run hither and thither in an attempt not to have to experience the discomforts of bodily aches and pains. We seek to escape emotional upset by numbing ourselves through pleasure-seeking means, attempting to avoid, as briskly as possible, any challenging emotion that might disrupt our preferred point of view of how life should be, with the swift antidotal coining of the phrase, this too shall pass, and soon, please.

In Freudian psychology, the pleasure principle is the instinctual seeking of pleasure and avoiding of pain in order to satisfy biological and psychological needs. Specifically, the pleasure principle is the driving force guiding the id. (Snyder, C. R., Lopez, Shane J. 2007, p.147) and (Carlson, Neil R., C. Donald Heth, 2007, p.700)

Context of Suffering

In my observation it has become clear to me that we all suffer and that we all experience pain; on this fact no one can be divided.

All sentient beings experience pain. All sentient beings suffer. It is the providence of this, our planet earth to which we are bound by virtue of its gravitational pull, and held to its service as it whirls through space.

Likewise there is no escaping the stress factor attributed to all living and growing things. Through the esoteric teachings of the masters of ancient wisdom, we become informed that the planet earth is the planet of pain, karmically speaking. Alice Bailey

(1880—1949) and Dr. Douglass Baker (1922—2011) illuminate the question of pain with the following:

The sons of God, who know and see and hear, (and knowing, know they know) suffer the pain of conscious limitation. Deep in the inmost depths of conscious being, their lost estate of liberty eats like a canker. Pain, sickness, poverty and loss are seen as such, and from them every son of God revolts. He knows that in himself, as once he was before he entered prisoner into form, he knew not pain. Sickness and death, corruption and disease, they touched him not. The riches of the universe were his, and naught he knew of loss. (Bailey, 1925, p. 532)

Further, in her books *A Treatise on White Magic* (1934) and *Discipleship in the New Age*, (1955) Alice Bailey writes:

A word about pain might be in place here, though I have naught of an abstruse nature to communicate anent the evolution of the human hierarchy through the medium of pain. (Bailey, 1934, pp. 533—534)

The devas do not suffer pain as does mankind. Their rate of rhythm is steadier although in line with the Law. They learn through application to the work of building and through incorporation into the form of that which is built. They grow through appreciation of and joy in the forms built and the work accomplished. The Devas build, and humanity breaks, and through the shattering of the forms man learns through discontent. Thus, acquiescence in the work of the Greater Builders is achieved. Pain is that upward struggle through matter, which lands a man at the Feet of the Logos. Pain is the following of the line of the greatest resistance and thereby reaching the summit of the mountain. Pain is the smashing

of the form and the reaching of the inner fire, Pain is the cold of isolation, which leads to the warmth of the central sun. Pain is the burning in the furnace in order finally to know the coolness of the water of life. Pain is the journeying into the far country, resulting in the welcome to the Father's Home. Pain is the illusion of the Father's disowning, which drives the prodigal straight to the Father's heart. Pain is the cross of utter loss that renders back the riches of the eternal bounty. Pain is the whip that drives the struggling builder to carry to utter perfection the building of the Temple. (Bailey, 1955, p. 531/3)

Herein, we hear echoes of Cabbala, the broken shards and the helpmates of entities in parallel universes delivered in a somewhat poetic pictorial display. Nevertheless, from this, we can ascertain that there is something substantial to the idea that being a sentient creature does not come without the price of pain. True, this is not for everyone to consider.

“Pain is an experience shared by all living things on our planet” (Baker, 1975 p. 89)

The uses of pain are many, and they lead the human soul out of darkness into light, which is also very true for the phenomenon of compassion, for this connectedness is a healing of the belief in separation. Authentic compassion pulls us out of the experience of captivity and connects us with all living things in such a way that complete integrity of purpose and deed, is restored. So it is out of a sense of bondage into liberation, out of agony into peace. “That peace, that light and that liberation, with the ordered harmony of the cosmos are for all the sons of men” (Bailey, 1955, p. 533) —that we fulfill our purpose here on earth.

Pain has a limiting function as well. The problem of limitation is closely linked to that of liberation and the activity of liberation is contingent on action; the deliberate and intentional action one exerts of his own inertia, (Michael Polanyi, 1966, pp.44—45) and turning away from comfort seeking.

In *The Stress of Life* Selye, (1907—1982) states, “Stress too, which is akin to pain in that it is known to be anxiety producing, differs from other physical responses in that stress is stressful whether one receives good or bad news, whether the impulse is positive or negative. (Selye 1978. p. 57)

Stress can also become distractive, and when people become distracted they are less likely to be empathetic (Morelli and Lieberman, 2013 Pursuit of Happiness.).

All living organisms experience suffering, by virtue of an all-pervasive nervous (sentient) system they possess.

Suffering calls forth, evokes, and inspires authentic compassion. Thich Naht Hahn, (1926—) a Buddhist monk from Vietnam, spoke these words at a conference given at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 2008; “Compassion is what we are here to experience; the unifying quality of all sentient beings. Without the recognition of suffering the pain we all experience, in ourselves and observably in others, we would never come to know compassion.”

Context of Compassion

Compassion is an innate entity and emerges when evoked, but an emotion which, is covered over with fears of intimacy and isolation, hindered expression by unresolved traumatic experiences of childhood and adolescence, failed social indoctrination, or

remains hidden under grandiosity borne of false self-beliefs of inadequacy and the never—good—enough idea of measuring up in a competitive world, will find no means of expression save that the suffering he witnesses around him force him to respond, either apathetically or empathetically.

Most of us are unaware of traumatic experiences we have endured from childhood that run and compel us or of the scars that we all bare either knowingly or unawares, of the all too ubiquitous system of indoctrination experienced by us all as children and young adults (Daniel Meckler, Ph.D. 2013, New York).

“Who desires out-right to face within themselves the secretly held beliefs of inadequacy, victimization and unhealthy forms of narcissism?” (Alice Miller, 1981, p. 87)

Few can attest to never experiencing these conditions, at least to some degree, in their lives and most would admit that every child experiences to some extent, the traumatic consequences of the neurotic indoctrination process we all must endure in our modern times. (Pressman and Pressman, 1997)

Furthermore, few of us are aware of an inherent propensity we possess toward narcissism and the imbedded feelings of inadequacy and the not—good—enough thoughts they foster. Unwittingly, these distressing emotion-inducing frames of reference in the individual become projected out onto the world around us. (Keppe, 2000, pp.19—21, p. 115.)

Self-knowledge is the keystone of compassion; in my opinion it is the indispensable requisite to the experiencing of an awakened sense of compassion in its

truest form. Any other means than by the self-investigative process in my estimation, leads to the expression of pity, sentimentality, sympathy and distorted forms or lesser forms of empathy, all posing as compassion. These lesser forms of expression all, having their origins in the self-same bio-electrical-emotional centers in the brain and registered in the heart and solar plexus, do not possess the ultimate power of healing upon which this dissertation's intentions are focused.

The attitudinal adoption of the commitment to accept nothing at face value, to question everything, to examine self, regardless of the limitations of such a practice, continual clearing away of the past and being authentic with one's self is no guarantee that we will avoid suffering, we may suffer greatly for to be 'compassion—ate' is to feel with, even the most intense joy can be painful. Such a practice can develop in us an ability to hold the suffering we experience in the world and within ourselves in such a way as to transmute it into a type of energy that is able to un—see suffering, thereby seeing into existence a preferred and fearless state of connectedness with all living things. True, such an intense form of self-investigation is not a process required of everyone. However, if we are to move beyond the all—too—often misconstrued ideas regarding compassion toward the more genuine form of organic compassion, and its healing effects, such a journey is indispensable.

Blocks to Self—Investigation

For the purpose of elaboration on the magnitude of the necessity of undertaking an individual self-investigation process, I have drawn upon more distant authors and schools of thought that, hopefully, will find reinstatement in our present-day research.

This dissertation is the result of the past 11 years of work, of searching and finding, of knocking and being bid to enter and asking over and over again, who Am I really? Why can I not feel the authentic emotion of compassion? It is my conviction that in the therapeutic process of analysis and pertaining to the inevitable transference/counter-transference process that arises, safe passage is only ensured when the analyst has dealt with his or her own inner sprites, that they can guide the *anysand* into and through the labyrinth of inevitable pain and suffering of being human toward awakened acceptance and compassion.

The saving graces of practiced creativity using various genres of Expressive Arts Therapies, Yogic practices, and trans-personal forms of psychotherapy have all played a crucial role in my own individual progress.

Thesis

In the experience of organic compassion we acquire the power to eradicate suffering by thinking it out of existence through the living of an integral life imbued with the realization of each individual's connectedness and kinship with all living things. Therefore, the focus on the importance of self-investigation, the uses of adversity; pain, suffering, discomfort, and shame are the means whereby we release from within the contrived constructs for living life, the imprisoned compassion, thereby promoting the transformation of the context in which we live with our selves and with others. The context in which the self-examiner can best achieve such a transformation from that of existing at the level of suffering as effect, to that of being compassion—at—cause, is one of initially residing in isolation and seclusion from outer influences. Using myself as test subject I constructed a reclusive environment best conducive to the carrying out of the

study. Utilizing an adapted format of the phenomenological-investigation model, and the heuristic research methodology guide designed by Clark Moustakas (1990), I discovered hitherto unexamined effects within my psyche that had barred me from the experience of an organic compassion that subsequently blocked a prospective experience of intimacy.

The fact that people in Western cultures primarily seek freedom from pain and instantaneous relief from suffering by the employment of rather quick fix remedies, evidenced in the prevailing multi-million dollar self-help industry, is proof enough that the inner realms of being, where shame and self-deprecation reside, are not territories desirable to habitation.

Finally, on occasion over the years' duration of this self-investigative process, I was naively reproached for having chosen the context of isolation as a vehicle to self-actualization with the following rebuttal: The very essence of self-actualization denies the need for union with others and implies that one can have a sense of self as being independent. In the eyes of those whose vision has narrowed in on the connotation of the word intimacy, the methods used for this investigation have herewith nevertheless been proven efficacious beyond expectation. The following quote referring to the heuristic process from Moustakas resonates well with the idea of such an undertaking, "The self of the researcher is present throughout the process and, while understanding the phenomenon with increasing depth the researcher also experiences growing self-awareness and self-knowledge. Heuristic processes incorporate creative self-processes and self-discoveries" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 9)

The following quote from Andrew Boyd sheds a vivid light on the significance of being connected and the risks of vulnerability that compassion poses,

Many of us have set out on the path of enlightenment. We long for release of selfhood in some kind of mystical union with all things. But that moment of epiphany, when we finally see the whole pattern and sense of our place in the cosmic web can be a crushing experience from which we never fully recover. Compassion hurts. When you feel connected to everything, you also feel responsible for everything. And you cannot turn away. Your destiny is bound with the destiny of others. You must either learn to carry the universe or be crushed by it. You must grow strong enough to love the world, yet empty enough to sit down at the same table with its worst horrors. To seek enlightenment is to seek annihilation, rebirth, and the taking up of the burden. You must come prepared to touch and be touched by each and everything in heaven and hell. (Boyd, 2002, p. 89)

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Formulation of the Problem

Holding to the objective of an unbiased observational literature review, it is given to me to dawn the cloak of the collective conscience in expressing the following thoughts, with the one caveat: It is my opinion that individuals are not the originators of ideas rather, they are those through whom ideas of the collective conscience are given voice. (Durkheim, 1996) It is not the individual, who is herein being noted or critiqued, rather the ideas he or she represents and with which he or she has deeply engaged himself or herself. Those whose ideas I have chosen to review are representative of only a few of the more beneficent minds engaged with the subject of compassion and its seat of origin, in the Western world today. It is my sincerest desire and personal assumption that we as a collective are advancing toward a more munificent mind-set.

There are four directions from which we must approach the study of any humanly generated phenomenon. Pertinent to this particularly topic of inquiry being that of compassion, I have drawn from the following areas that presently comprise the bulk of research being conducted that present us with perspectives from the following angles. 1) Child development: Nurture/nature, 2) Spiritual/Religious, 3) Psychological, 4) Self-research-methodological.

Buddhism and the Dalai Lama

We will now take a close look at compassion, and arguably its close colleague suffering; that which blocks the expression of this emotion and the remedial procedures for recovering access to organic compassion; phases necessary to the understanding of

compassion in its organic form and to this purpose, facilitated by the process of inquiry as it has been proposed in Chapter 1.

Let us begin with His Holiness, a title prearranged for him at birth, the Dalai Lama (1935), Tenzin Gyatso, 14th Dalai Lama, one of the most revered public figures in the world today advocating Love and Compassion. He has traveled throughout the world, literally, promoting the idea of a free Tibet, the country by which he was originally chosen to be its spiritual leader. Suffering is no new phenomenon to the Dalai Lama who under rule of Mao Zedong, who provoked an uprising in Tibet who in 1959 as the only way to remove the Tibetan ruling class and enable him to carry out the same revolutionary reforms of land and society as in the rest of China, forcing the Dalai Lama to leave Tibet while the Chinese communists overran his country, eventual settled in Northern India where he now resides when he is not traveling. He has since become one of the world's most popular spiritual figures.

His Holiness the Dali Lama comes from a long lineage of Dalai Lamas who aside from being leaders of the Chinese province of Tibet, have also functioned as the principal spiritual guide to many Himalayan kingdoms bordering Tibet, as well as western China, Mongolia and Ladakh. The literary works of the Dalai Lamas have, over the centuries, inspired more than fifty million people in these regions as well as many in the Western Cultures. Those writings, reflecting the fusion of Buddhist philosophy embodied in Tibetan Buddhism, have become one of the world's great repositories of spiritual thought. (Verhaegen, 2002, p.6)

The Dalai Lama's own suffering has informed his way of viewing the world around him. It is no wonder then that he has, with a great measure of authority, stated

over and over again the importance of compassion. He has studied the precepts of and the conditions for, the generation and cultivation of compassion in our modern world. “My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness.” (Majupuria and Majupuria, 1988, p.12)

From The Dalai Lama’s *Harvard Lectures on the Buddhist Path to Peace* (1988)

Jeffrey Hopkins quotes the Dalai Lama as having stated, “I feel that the essence of spiritual practice is your attitude toward others. When you have a pure, sincere motivation, then you have right attitude toward others based on kindness, compassion, love and respect. Practice brings the clear realization of the oneness of all human beings and the importance of others benefiting by your actions” (Hopkins, 1975, pp.10—100)

Hopkins quotes further "I believe that in the 20th century, humanity has learned from many, many experiences. Some positive, and many negative. What misery, what destruction! The greatest numbers of human beings were killed in the two world wars of this century. But human nature is such that when we face a tremendous critical situation, the human mind can wake up and find some other alternative. That is a human capacity.” (Hopkins, 1975) I add here another alternative —a more beneficent alternative.

“The Great Vehicle path requires the vast motivation of a Bodhisattva, who, not seeking just his or her welfare, takes on the burden of bringing about the welfare of all sentient beings” (The Dalai Lama, 1988, p.1)

In speaking on the quality of compassion and man’s responsibility regarding compassionate practice, John Makransky, professor of Buddhism and Comparative Theology at Boston College who also serves as a senior faculty advisor and lecturer for Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche's Centre for Buddhist Studies at Rangjung Yeshe Institute in

Bodhanath, Nepal, who is a scholar of Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, examines in *Compassion in Buddhist Psychology*:

The idea of compassion in the three leading traditions of Buddhism, In early and Theravada Buddhism, compassion is a power for deep mental purification, protection and healing that supports inner freedom. In Mahayana Buddhism, compassion becomes the primary means to empower and communicate a non-conceptual wisdom in which self and others are sensed as undivided. In Vajrayana Buddhism, unconditional compassion radiates forth all-inclusively as a spontaneous expression of the mind's deepest unconditioned nature" (Makransky, 2012, p. 1)

To the idea of cultivation, and echoing that similar thought, the Dalai Lama says, "We may reject everything else: religion, ideology, all received wisdom. But we cannot escape the necessity of love and compassion." (His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 2012. P. 1)

In Buddhist psychology, compassion is thought of as being a form of empathy.

Christopher K. Germer and Ronald D. Siegel write the following in *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy*, (2005) on Compassion and Wisdom in Psychotherapy,

We sense others' suffering as being like our own and naturally wish them deep freedom from it. A compassionate mind, as opposed to a cruel and angry one, is understood as being much more closely attuned to our actual condition. Thus, compassion is informed by the wisdom that understands our basic situation: the inner causes of our suffering and our potential for freedom and goodness. From a Buddhist perspective, compassion with wisdom is the foundation of emotional healing. Compassion is also characterized as a mental capacity that, when

cultivated and strengthened it empowers all positive states of mind as we awaken to our fullest human potential. Further he writes, "In Buddhist psychology, the patterns of our experience unfold based on our habits of intention and reaction." (Mankransky, 2012, p. 1)

All experiential phenomena have at the back of them, mind as their predecessor, mind as principal, and they are intelligently complete. The intentions of those who practice the code of compassion are varied. Believing ourselves to be in the know as to what intentions Mind encourages, we miss the purposes and the means whereby suffering activates possibly, the already innate quality of compassion leaving us to simply live and express this quality, not seek to get somewhere by practicing it.

The following attitude reiterates in spiritual code the Bodhisattva Student when facing the choice along the path of enlightenment whereby he can decide to enter into so-called Nirvana or choose to remain in the world of the sentient-living and assist in lightening the heavy burden of all who suffer, until suffering is eradicated. Upon having ascended the several levels of study and having increased their understanding through the stages of Dharma practice:

The bodhisattva feels within himself the awakening of the great art of compassion as he utters his ten original vows: to honor and serve all Buddhas, spread the knowledge and practice of the Dharma, to welcome all coming Buddhas; to practice the six Parametas: To persuade all beings to embrace the Dharma, to attain a perfect understanding of the universe, to attain a perfect understanding of the mutuality of all beings, to attain perfect self-realization of the oneness of all the Buddhas and Tathagatas (being, one who has thus gone" —tathā—gata— or

one who has thus come) in self-nature, purpose and resources; to become acquainted with all skillful means for the carrying out of these vows for the emancipation of all beings; to realize supreme enlightenment through the perfect self-realization of noble wisdom, ascending the stages and entering Tathagratahood. (Suzuki, et al. 1983, pp.149—163)

Here the Bodhisattva has arrived at the crucial juncture in his progression and is then able to leave this worldly plain altogether, but considers those beings still suffering and the good that he could bestow and offer it if he were to remain.

While the Dalai Lamas' and others' just noted, dedication to the awakening of consciousness to suffering and the cure of love and compassion are noble and deliver much with which we can presently identify, they fail to address the need for self-investigation and the possible benefits whereby we might gain by picking up our wounds and working with them in order to awaken the compassion of which they speak.

Ancient Wisdom and the Fourth Ray

From a more Esoteric school and Ancient Wisdom point of view, we can on the flip side of the same coin inhabited by compassion find that suffering and pain have their merits.

It's the nature of harmony through conflict. The fourth ray is the ray of humanity. Pain and suffering are the karma of the planet Earth. Its karma is different from other planets and other planetary systems, in that pain is its planetary karma; this is of great importance when reflecting on individual purpose. This all has to do with the aspects of the 4th ray. (Personal communication Lane, D. and Zimmermann, D. May 2013)

Briefly, the 4th ray, in the 7 ray system of emanations of the greater being (G-d; Higher Power, etc.) and its manifestations according to esoteric teachings, is thus clarified: The Seven Rays is an occult concept that has appeared in several religions and esoteric philosophies, since at least the 6th century BCE, of the Aryan (Indo-European) peoples in both Western culture and in India, and is representative of the fracturing of the One Light, as in the case of light reflected through a prism. (Open Commons. 2013)

The esoteric teachings of The Ancient Wisdom regarding the Ray 4 enlightens our understanding as the dichotomy between compassion and suffering which is hypothesized as follows,

The fourth ray is also a ray of struggle! For harmony, by definition, is created out of disharmony. It is also a ray of emotion, for the experience of harmony is an emotional response. The process of aligning and creating beauty from chaos is the process over-lighted by the Fourth ray. Thus, it is supremely the ray of the artist and [artistry]. But because this ray always sees both sides of every question, it is in contrast with the ray of indecisiveness, of vacillation, of not knowing what to do next.

This energy stands symbolically at the center of the seven and is the magnetic relation of opposites, the point of harmony, bridging, and mediating amidst conflict, pain, and struggle in a sense, the fruition of the duality rooted in the Second Ray, The Ray of Love and Wisdom. (Baily, 1971, p.147)

“The fourth Ray stimulates creativity, art, and beauty, and is characterized by sensitivity to color and sound. Discrimination, quickness, and a searching for perfection

reside here. The intuitive, relational force is strong in this ray, which evokes life, love and understanding." (Barber, S. 2010)

Much of the confusion regarding compassion centers on the idea that man necessarily creates limitations, which he attempts to surmount in order that his soul may advance forward and ever upward in its evolutionary processes.

Buddhism and Pema Chödrön

Another popular advocate for compassion is the Buddhist monk and teacher on Buddhism, Pema Chödrön (1936—), who is a notable American figure in Tibetan Buddhism who was a disciple of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche (1940—1987), an ordained nun, author, and teacher in the Shambhala Buddhist lineage Trungpa founded. A prolific author, she conducts workshops, seminars, and meditation retreats in Europe, Australia, and throughout North America. She is resident teacher at Gampo Abbey, a monastery on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, Canada. In clarifying Buddhism for the seeker Chödrön asserts, "Buddhism is not so much a religion as it is a way of life. It marks no divide between the sacred and the secular. And when you get serious about it, Buddhism touches everyday experience." (Moyers, B. 2006.)

The focus of Cordon's teaching centers primarily on the quality of impermanence, which is, in my opinion at least here in our Western society, regarded with frenetic avoidance. She addresses the subject of compassion as follows:

Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity. (Chödrön. 2007, p. 36)

Further, Chödrön insists, “We base our lives on seeking happiness and avoiding suffering, but the best thing we can do for ourselves—and for the planet—is to turn this whole way of thinking upside down” (Chödrön, 2007. P.37)

When we touch the center of sorrow, when we sit with discomfort without trying to *fix* it, when we stay present to the pain of disapproval or betrayal and let it soften us, these are times that we connect with bohdichitta,” the enlightened—mind; is the mind that strives toward awakening of compassion for the benefit of all sentient beings. (Chödrön, 1993, p. 140.)

Similar to the Dalai Lama, Chödrön reminds the learner of the necessity for understanding compassion and that the road towards its expression depends upon acceptance of life’s foibles, trials, and unseemly propensities of character, however the student is not given otherwise a means where he might accomplish this, save for that of being in acceptance and “Turning it upside down” as she proclaims. Thus far we have no charted course for navigating the emerging landscape of darkness arising from the practice of bohdichitta, in a practical and systematic sense, rather the practitioner is given the simple invitation to be compassionate and accepting with others and with oneself. Nowhere are we otherwise informed of how we are to navigate the murky abyss of the subconscious.

Remaining with the supposition that the counter portion to compassion is suffering, Chödrön does however take up this subject in her book *Start Where You Are: A Guide to Compassionate Living*, (1994) when she directs our attention to the need for doing the work in the following description and with the following warning:

Life is glorious, but life is also wretched. It is both. Appreciating the gloriousness inspires us, encourages us, cheers us up, gives us a bigger perspective, and energizes us. We feel connected. But if that's all that's happening, we get arrogant and start to look down on others, and there is a sense of making ourselves a big deal and being really serious about it, wanting it to be like that forever. The gloriousness becomes tinged by craving and addiction. On the other hand, wretchedness—life's painful aspect—softens us up considerably. Knowing pain is a very important ingredient of being there for another person. When you are feeling a lot of grief, you can look right into somebody's eyes because you feel you haven't got anything to lose, you're just there. The wretchedness humbles us and softens us, but if we were only wretched, we would all just go down the tubes. We'd be so depressed, discouraged, and hopeless that we wouldn't have enough energy to eat an apple. Glorious—ness and wretched—ness, need each other. One inspires us, the other, softens us; they go together. (Chödrön, 1994. p. 68)

Buddhism and Thích Nhất Hạnh

We discover similar offerings and clarifications in support of the growth of compassion with several other writer-researchers' works for example of that of Thích Nhất Hạnh (1926—), a Vietnamese Zen Buddhist monk, teacher, author, poet and peace activist who heads the Plum Village Monastery in the Dordogne region in Southern France. Nobel laureate Martin Luther King, Jr. nominated Thích Nhất Hạnh for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1967 for his passive and peaceful resistance advocacy during the Viet Nam war. Thích Nhất Hạnh travels internationally giving talks and retreats. He coined the term “*Engaged Buddhism*” in his book *Vietnam: Lotus in a Sea of Fire*, (1967) Thích Nhất

Hạnh is still active in the peace movement, promoting non-violent solutions to conflict. He himself had suffered immensely while living in his home land Viet Nam during the Viet Nam war in that he watched so many of his family members and countrymen/women, being slaughtered before his eyes.

Engagement with self and all living things is the cornerstone of his teachings, which have its roots in Buddhist tradition. In addressing suffering his application of the Buddhist mindfulness posture permeates his entire teaching structure. However, it does not look profoundly into the value of suffering, rather it points the pupil single-mindedly toward the importance of compassion as it relates to being in the now. “Waking up this morning, I smile. Twenty-four brand new hours are before me. I vow to live fully in each moment and to look at all beings with eyes of compassion.” (Thích Nhất Hạnh, 1999, pp. 10—45)

Thích Nhất Hạnh states with child- like simplicity, “The seed of suffering in you may be strong, but don't wait until you have no more suffering before allowing yourself to be happy” (Thich Nhat Hanh, 1999, pp. 20—95). He speaks of the causes for suffering in the same uncomplicated fashion, “People suffer because they are caught in their views. As soon as we release those views, we are free and we don't suffer anymore.”(Thich Nhat Hanh, 1999, p. 20—95)

His is a straightforward message: “Through my love for you, I want to express my love for the whole cosmos, the whole of humanity, and all beings. By living with you, I want to learn to love everyone and all species. If I succeed in loving you, I will be able to love everyone and all species on Earth. This is the real message of love.” (Thích Nhất Hạnh, 2007, p.21—62)

Scientific Views

It is into this arena of Buddhism, by way of the Buddhist adept, both professional and lay, that the neuro-scientist and neuropsychologist are now researching with the intentions of learning more about the compassionate self, as it is generated in meditation and at Meta levels.

Steve Fleming/Richard Davidson Interview

One such research scientist is Richard (Richie) Davidson, (1951—). Richie Davidson is professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of Madison Wisconsin and Founder and Chair of the Center for Investigating Healthy Minds at the Waisman Center. His specific ongoing research interests include the neural bases of affective and anxiety disorders; emotion and cerebral asymmetry; functional brain imaging studies (PET and fMRI) of depression and anxiety disorders, individual differences in functional activation of emotional circuitry and their relation to affective style, emotion regulation and vulnerability to emotion related disorders. Of interest to us here is his work on the subject of relations between the central circuitry of emotion, emotion regulation, and peripheral biological processes relevant to physical health and illness; neurobiology of emotion, as well as emotion regulation in non-human primates, neural substrates of affective abnormalities in autism; neural bases of meditation.

Davidson, was very much influenced in the early 1970s by (Baba) Ram Das, (1931—), a former professor at Harvard, American contemporary spiritual teacher, author of the seminal book *Be Here Now*, (1971) who is known for his personal and professional associations with Timothy Leary at Harvard University in the early 1960s, and for his travels to India and his relationship with the Hindu guru Neem Karoli Baba,

(—1973) as well as for founding the charitable organizations Seva Foundation and Hanuman Foundation.

Richardson reveals in a personal interview what eventually led him to his present work.

At the time that I first met Ram Das he was really past the psychedelic era and was convinced that we can do things with our minds for which we don't need any chemical or catalyst, that we can change our mind through systematic practice of meditation and other related kinds of traditions. When I first met these guys they struck me as being extraordinarily kind, gentle, humble people and it was their demeanor that impressed me most, not the content of what they were talking about but just who they were as people.” (Fleming, 2013, p.1)

At the time, what impressed Davidson the most was the duration of meditation practice by those he met in Sri Lanka,

In Sri Lanka I was able to meet people who are contemplatives, who spend their lives training their mind and familiarizing themselves with their minds. Of course the word "meditation" comes from the Sanskrit "root" which in part means familiarization. These were people, who were utterly familiar with the operation of their own mind, in ways I think are not common in the West, because they just spend so much time doing it. I then went off to India and had my first taste of intense meditation practice. This is kind of like meditation boot camp where we were in complete retreat meditating for more than 12 hours a day. It's very difficult to go through an experience like that and not really feel that your mind can be powerfully effective. (Fleming, 2013, p.2)

A major focus of his current work is on interactions between prefrontal cortex (the brain region implicated as being associated with planning complex cognitive behavior, personality expression, decision making, and moderating social behavior, considered to be the orchestrator of thoughts and actions in accordance with internal goals) and the amygdala, (said to perform a primary role in the processing of memory and emotional reactions) and their function in the regulation of emotion in both normal subjects and patients with affective and anxiety disorders.

This candid interview, which took place in 2013, expresses fully terms that we all can understand. The process of mapping the brain with the purpose of deriving needed data, not only to discover whether or not empathy and compassion are innate, but as to the validity of whether they can also be and if it can be observed as well, in people who have not practiced meditation extensively.

Steve: I know part of the thrust of your research is not just to understand the neuro-anatomy of emotion; to sort of figure out why things happen the way they do, but actually to give us the tools to do something about it and it comes back to your early experiences in meditation, to that ancient practice of mindfulness that contemplatives have practiced for the millennia. Is there now a science of mindfulness?

Richard: I think there is a growing scientific basis, or foundation for this. Mindfulness has been defined in different ways, but one of the popular teachers of mindfulness, who first established mindfulness based stress reduction, Jon Kabat-Zinn, defines mindfulness roughly as paying attention on purpose, non-judgmentally.

Richard: “And when a person practices that kind of attention-stance, the brain in fact has been shown to change.”

Steve: How do you determine that from a neuroscience perspective?

Richard: Well, the best way to determine is with a longitudinal study, where we can actually take people and randomly assign them to a condition where they learn mindfulness and have another group be a control group and test the individuals before they receive any training, then test them after they've received training and practice for some period of time, then see how their brain has changed. Those experiments have been done, we actually published in 2003 what I think was the first randomized control trial of mindfulness based stress reduction and its effects on brain activity, as well as on other biological characteristics and we in fact showed that eight weeks of practicing mindfulness meditation in otherwise meditation naive individuals led to a significant change in their brain function and in their behavior. In that study we also measure aspects of their immune system and find that those changed as well.

Steve: So what's changing in the brain after eight weeks of meditation?

Richard: Well what we found was changed was that the pre-frontal cortex gets tweaked a little bit and becomes more active, particularly on the left side, which may promote more of a resilient kind of emotional style. It's exactly the kind of pattern that conforms to what I call resilience. (Davidson/Fleming, 2013, p. 1)

This is the work with which our interest in understanding compassion and how (and where) it is generated in the individual is most concerned. With a tremendous scope of attention paid the brain and its functions as it relates to behavior the most fascinating

focus of his work as it connects with compassion is that of working with monks, originally at the behest and encouragement of the Dalai Lama himself and specifically Matthieu Ricard, co-investigator and a longtime participant in the ongoing research study led by Davidson that monitors a subject's brain activity and the impact of meditation on pain regulation.

Davidson's and his colleagues report, published in *Psychological Science*, a journal of the Association for Psychological Science, 2013, investigated whether training adults in compassion would result in greater altruistic behavior. They wanted to know if training a subject in compassionate mindfulness would result in related changes in neural systems underlying compassion and the centers in the brain most incorporated with the function of meditation and more specifically compassion focused meditation.

Findings have shown it likely that adults can be trained in the art of compassion. Davidson rejoices, with regards to those findings observed by both he and his colleagues, "The fact that alterations in brain function were observed after just a total of seven hours of training is remarkable" (Fleming, 2013, p.2.)

So far the public, through Richardson's work, is gaining greater understanding as to the neuro-chemical responses in the brain: components and location, comprising the processes and responses to stimuli generating compassion in specific brain regions.

Looking more closely, we can find in the work of Franz De Waal, correlations with other members of the primate kingdom that suggest that compassion is an end effect of the more primal emotional quality of empathy and that this emotion is in competition, with more aggressive and malevolent ones.

Currents Running Against the Mindfulness Training

Through The Eyes of Franz de Waal

Franz de Waal, (1948—) is a Dutch primatologist and ethnologist. He is the Charles Howard Candler professor of Primate Behavior in the Emory University psychology department in Atlanta, Georgia, director of the Living Links Center at the Yerkes National Primate Research Center and author of numerous books including *Chimpanzee Politics* (2000) and *Our Inner Ape* (2005.) His research centers on primate social behavior, including conflict resolution, co-operation, inequity-aversion, and food sharing.

Taking the quite opposite view from economists and anthropologists, who love to postulate differences between humans and other animals, his research into the innate capacity for empathy among primates has led Waal to the conclusion that non-human great apes and humans are simply different types of apes, and that cooperative and empathic tendencies are continuous between the species. His belief is, here by the following quote, from his book, *The Age of Empathy* (Waal, 2009)

We start out postulating sharp boundaries, such as between humans and apes, or between apes and monkeys, but we are in fact dealing with sand castles that lose much of their structure when the sea of knowledge washes over them. They turn into hills, leveled ever more, until we are back to where evolutionary theory always leads us: a gently sloping beach. (Waal, 2009, Para .5)

De Waal's larger goal of understanding what binds primate societies together rather than how competition structures them is to learn the role that empathy plays in the structuring of fair-play behavior.

He has, along with his students worked extensively on researching the quality of fairness exhibited by capuchin monkeys. Their combined efforts led to the creation of a video on inequity aversion (Waal, 2008). Among capuchin monkeys that has gone viral over the Internet. The most recent work in this area was the first demonstration that given a chance to play the Ultimatum Game, chimpanzees respond in the same way as children and human adults by preferring the equitable outcome.

The inspiration for his work came during an experience he had while visiting a local zoo:

I went to a zoological garden as a kid, and I was able to observe a baby chimpanzee I discovered that chimpanzees are very power-hungry. I wrote a book about it. At that time a lot of the focus on animal research was on aggression and competition, I figured that the whole picture of the animal kingdom, humanity included, was that deep down we are competitive and aggressive and that we're all out for our own profit, basically. In the process of doing all this work on power and dominance and aggression I discovered that chimps reconcile after fights. At the time, much of the research was pointed toward competition and aggression in the primate species, all about winning and losing.” (Waal, 2009, Para, 6)

He then set out to prove this to be otherwise. In an experiment that takes a closer look at innate characteristics of fairness verses us—verses—thinking, by genus—human, de Waal writes:

Us—versus—them—thinking comes remarkably easily to us. In one psychological experiment, people were randomly assigned different colored badges, pens, and notepads and simply labeled the “Blues” and the “Greens.” All

they were asked to do was evaluate each other's presentations. They liked the presentations given by the people with their own color designation the best. In a more elaborate fabrication of group identity, students were assigned the roles of guards and prisoners in a prison game. They were supposed to spend two weeks together in a basement at Stanford University. Six days into it however, the experiment had to be broken off because the "guards" had become increasingly arrogant, abusive, and cruel and the "prisoners" started to revolt. Had the students forgotten that it was just an experiment and that their roles had been decided by the flip of a coin? (Waal, 2000) See also: *The Experiment*, (Scheuring, 2010)

Further he writes "The Stanford Prison Experiment gained notoriety when it came to light, that American officers had tortured detainees in Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison" (2006, Para. 8)

The reporter, Dagher, (2010) said in an interview:

Apart from the similarities with brutality and sexual undertones in the Stanford Prison Experiment, the guards and the prisoners at Abu Ghraib were of different races, different religions and spoke different languages. This made the dehumanization even easier. The general responsible there, for the military police, Janis Karpinski said, "I had been ordered to treat the prisoners like animals." (Waal, 2006)

De Waal explains additionally that the in-group always finds reasons to see its self as superior, and through his research he has discovered that this is definitively true of Apes.

The most extreme historic example of this tendency is, of course, Adolf Hitler's creation of an out-group. Depicted as less than human, the out-group enhances the solidarity and self-worth of the in-group. It's a trick as old as man, but the psychology may in fact precede our species. Beyond just the identification with the group, which is widespread in animals, are two other characteristics we have in common with chimps. The first, as we have seen is that of a loathing of the out-group to the point of dehumanization. The gulf between in-group and out-group is so huge that aggression falls into two categories one contained and ritualized within the group, the other all-out, gratuitous, and lethal between groups. (Waal, 2008, Para, 10)

“It is presumed however, in the case of human beings that compassion, if cultivated in the individual, would insist that we view our neighbors, with our apparent and acknowledged differences with an attitude of equanimity, acceptance and understanding.” Suggests, Karen Armstrong, in her book *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*. (2010)

The circumstances and conditions, under which compassion is invoked however, tend to imply that we are born with both good and evil traits. That we can choose which receives center stage, is dependent on the prevailing criteria as a determining factor, either unleashing, calling forth, inherent empathy or aggression. Given orders to do harm, the question remains, how would one responds. Compassion is an out-cropping of empathy. If one cannot feel this emotion does that mean that they are without the ability to choose? It is proclaimed that psychopaths lack the capacity to empathy. Does this imply that all those who cannot exhibit compassion as well, are psychopathic? Respective

of the conditions and setting, taking the inherent emotion of empathy as a given, can we remain unbiased? (Singer, 2013)

A Brief Perusal of Older Ideas

Stanley Milgram, (1933—1984) who taught social psychology at Yale and Harvard Universities before becoming a "Distinguished Professor" at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and who, received the Ford Foundation Fellowship, an American Association for the Advancement of Science Socio-Psychological Prize, and the Guggenheim Fellowship, addressed the issue of obeying authority regardless of the results. Between 1961 and 1962, he carried out a series of experiments in which human subjects were supposedly given more progressively intensified painful electro-shocks in a carefully calibrated series to determine to what extent people would obey orders even when they knew them to be painful and immoral, to determine how people will obey authority regardless of consequences. Because of the enduring significance of his findings, which in the last analysis revealed the surprising ease with which ordinary persons can be commanded to act destructively against an innocent individual by a legitimate authority, we can be assured that conditions and circumstances play definitive roles in whether we allow compassion to rule or deliberately shut all empathic systems down. (Milgram Experiment, 1966)

Surveying briefly, the predominant and shifting sentiments held and voiced over the past few centuries with regards to question of innate verses learned goodness, of whether goodness is something that must be learned, let us take a brief look at the differing philosophical views that have relevantly and particularly influenced our thinking on the subject.

Thomas Hobbes, (1588—1679), an English philosopher, best known for his work on political philosophy declared that since man in the "state of nature . . . has no idea of goodness [therefore,] he must naturally be wicked and that he is vicious because he does not know virtue" (Hobbs, 1650, p.38), therefore, born evil.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, (1712—1778) the Swiss philosopher, writer, and composer of the 18th century looked to a hypothetical State of Nature as a normative guide. Rousseau asserted that "uncorrupted morals" prevail in the "state of nature." (Jean—Jacques Rousseau, 1766, loc. 37)

John Locke, an English academic and doctor who is best known as one of the primary founders of the English and peer-assistant philosophy in his published essay *An essay concerning human understanding, and thoughts concerning education*, revolutionize the thinking of many people concerning how humans develop and learn. Locke was considered an empiricist because, in his view, what we become is the result of our experience with the environment. He challenged the pervading view that humans come into the world with many preformed notions and skill.

He coined the phrase: "Children are born as *tabula rasa*, or blank slate." In his view, a child can develop any skill or any personality depending on how the world and other people influence them. At the time that John Locke made his influence upon society known, people had been progressing from having no concern for children at all, to perceiving them as being born evil and requiring society to redeem them. Locke took this progression one step further as he argued that children are born neutral and society molds them. In this model, humans are seen as passive, reactionary organisms, just like

machines. Locke has said: “ Like machines they are inherently at rest and stable. They react only to stimuli from outside themselves.” (Watson, 2002, p. 22—23)

This latter opinion has held the most dominant sway over our slowly shifting views regarding the question of goodness and evil for quite some time, but it does not stand firm in the face of the present research being undertaken with children for example, on the phenomena of: preference, fairness and equality.

From The Psychological/Scientific Perspective

Psychologist Karen Wynn, (1962—) director of the Infant Cognition Laboratory in the Psychology Department at Yale University explores the cognitive capacities of infants and young children. In her study infants were habituated to events in which a “climber” character made attempts to climb a hill. On the third attempt the climber was either, aided by a “helper”, who pushed the climber from behind, or was pushed down the hill by a “hinderer”.

Infants were then asked to reach for their choice of either the helper or hinderer character. In another part of the experiment, infants were habituated to the same display and then saw the climber approach either the helper (an unsurprising action) or the hinderer (a surprising action).

When given a choice to reach for one of the characters, infants predominantly chose the helper characters, suggesting that the two characters had established impressions based on the actions each character had made towards the climber. Measurements in looking time showed that the 10—month—old infants looked longer at the circumstances when the climber approached the hinderer, following the violation of expectations principle. Six—month—olds looked for an equal

amount of time at both situations, despite showing a preference for the helper characters in the choice task. This suggests that while 6—month—olds may be capable of establishing their own social evaluations, they may not have yet developed the ability to infer others' evaluations. (Wynn, et al. 2007, pp. 450, 557—559)

The implications of her foregone study have been discussed as follows:

Referring to the possible implications that Wynn and her colleagues studies may eventually have on the developing social canvas of our global societies, the notable philosopher of bioethics Peter Singer wrote of these studies that, “ They have upset the previous wisdom, associated with such stellar figures in psychology as Sigmund Freud, Jean Piaget, and Lawrence Kohlberg, that human moral development is the product of our rearing and our culture.” (Singer, 2005)

Wynn and her colleagues have suggested that a babies' tendency to prefer pro-social individuals may arise from an adaptive dimensions within the matrix of the brain to detect decent candidates for mutual interactions, and to prefer these individuals to those who may be more likely to act in selfish and self-interested ways or seek renege on social contracts. “The research suggests that the ability to evaluate an individual based on behavior may serve as a foundation for moral thought and action.” (Singer, 2005, para.2)

This research neither refutes nor confirms the possibility of inherent mechanisms at work in the human consciousness with regard to empathy and the definitive propensity he possesses toward fairness at work in the human psyche. What it does however infer is that when qualitatively observed there is nothing to imply that empathy is necessarily a learned attribute.

Studies being performed in the field of Game-theory have yielded promising results as to the possible relatedness of empathy and the ability to feel the emotions of another, i.e. emotional contagion that imply the existence of innate compassion.

Tania Singer (1969—) is a social neuroscientist and psychologist at Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences in Leipzig, Germany. Her research aims at increasing our understanding of the foundations of human social behavior. Implementing an interdisciplinary approach, she and her team investigate the neuronal, hormonal, and developmental foundations of human social cognition, social and moral emotions such as empathy and compassion, envy, revenge, fairness, as well as, emotion regulation capacities and their role in social decision making.

Singer explores avenues of training people for compassion, and new paths for social neuroscience, including the merging of neuroscience, economics, and psychology.

She has demonstrated through her early work published in her 2004 paper *Empathy for Pain* that empathy is an emotion that has its origins seated in the brain and that it can be aroused within one by observing the explicit expression of pain exhibited by another.

Singer too, has performed extensive studies into the subject of empathy through the use of fMRI-imaging and like Davidson has discovered that there are specific regions in the brain that register suffering and generate the feeling of empathy. She views compassion as being first generated by empathy, which in her view is compassion's precursor, spontaneous and simultaneously vibratory in response to suffering, whereas compassion is the generated will to take action to alleviate another's suffering.

An important quality of the outlined mechanisms in the study is that they mostly rely on automatic processes. We represent the goals of others in terms of our own goals, without even being aware of it. Without thinking, the perceived feelings of others automatically activate brain networks that also represent our own feeling states; we automatically share other people's feelings. Thus, as our own feelings and emotions are important determinants of our motives, our behavior may be automatically other-regarding unless we inhibit the other-regarding impulses. Therefore, empathic concern may establish a link between the ability to predict others' motives and the nature of own motives, that is, other people's emotions may partly shape our own motives toward them. To provide an example: if shown a picture of a mal-nourished child with a swollen belly, many people empathize with this child and are therefore willing to incur cost to help the child (e.g., by donating money to charities that operate in third-world countries. (Singer, 2005, p. 8)

Is this not compassion?

Referencing the Game Theory Nash equilibrium, the study of which is of great interest to Singer, in that this is the arena in which economics, fairness and predicting outcomes come into play, she states:

The 2004 study suggests that there are individual differences in empathic abilities. Therefore, the hypothesized link between empathic abilities and the prediction of other players' motives and actions suggests a testable prediction: people with stronger empathic abilities are better predictors of others' motives and actions. Moreover, the hypothesis that empathy enhances other-regarding behavior in

combination with the existence of individual differences in empathy suggests that people who exhibit more affective concern are more likely to display altruistic behaviors.”(Singer et al. 2005, p. 8)

Sighting that we exhibit empathic faculties both cognitive and physiological that are observable through (fMRI) imaging, Singer exerts that her research has far reaching implications in relation to compassion training because it reveals both correlated areas in the brain to be enhanced, the pre-frontal cortex and the amygdala, as referred to earlier in this chapter, which is an encouragement for further investigative studies. (Singer, 2010)

Tania Singer’s studies give conformation to the theory that empathy is a given and natural and organic component inherent in man, yet it first, must be awakened, as indications from the Compassion Training research conducted by both Richardson and Singer have exhibited. (APPENDIX E.)

Franz de Waal includes other mammals in this proposition and Davidson reveres compassion as a seed that is in need of nurturing which is quite the similar view held by our more spiritually inclined advisors. These representatives all offer us food for thought as to the existence of empathy; whether inherent; innate, evoked or inspired yet, what of compassion, is it not as well, innately inherent in man?

Before seeking to answer this question and if it is so as I assert, the question arises once again “what stands in the way of this compassion obtaining expression?” One possibility as mentioned in CHAPTER 1, is that the bridge to compassion might be in the investigation of the very areas and characteristics of our subconscious one generally aspires to avoid.

Psychological Perspectives

If compassion is organic it must be present at birth, albeit in its undeveloped form. It is difficult to claim with exactness whether a child is born with compassion or not, yet less difficult if we first examine the state of the child in his formative stages and conditions.

We begin this section by reflecting on the prioritization of Sigmund Freud's, (1856—1939) protocol of the instinctual drives-survival mechanisms—developed early on in a person's life, e.g., the psychic energy that is used to run the psychological processing of the individual which he called—the Libido, and the need to reduce the discomfort brought on by creature-needs or drives, such as hunger or elimination, which he termed the drive-reduction model of motivation. Furthermore, Freud believed the organism adapts to the demands of the environment, as well as the biological demands of the organism. Freud claimed there to be two main drives that the human being possesses; Eros-based on the striving for sexual pleasure, survival, and reproduction. For Freud, the sexual drive pervaded most of our motivations; the other was Thanatos—the drive based on striving for complete static equilibrium of all bodily functions, and ending in death. This drive he viewed as destructive and aggressive toward others. Freud called the source of the Libido, as well as the Eros and Thanatos drives, the id (or the [it] in the original German). The id is thought to be the person's unconscious or animal nature) with which a person is originally born. The processes of the id are amoral, irrational, and unrealistic, subsequently means—to—end relationships are not taken into account. Investing Libido energy is an unconscious process in meeting our needs, appearing first in infancy, this process he termed the primary process thinking. Sometimes we do not meet our needs

through these processes, but we can exert an attempt by what is known as fantasizing about the pleasure of having the need fulfilled in our fantasy thinking, though not in reality for example when a baby is hungry she sucks at nothing or imagines she is sucking milk. This fantasizing is a compensation process called wish fulfillment. This entire primary processing is based on the Pleasure Principle, which in Freud's view entailed the basic drive we have to seek pleasure and avoid pain. This is considered to be the state of humans at birth, a state that is non-adaptive or able to meet most basic needs without some developmental changes occurring and is highly dependent on environmental influences. (Watson, 2002, pp. 22—23)

I have not gone so far as to bring into this study Freud's theory on the development on secondary process thinking of the ego and the super ego (personality-self) which, relate to the personalization of parent standards process, because I am more erstwhile concerned with processes and conditions of an inherent nature of the individual, those innate qualities that connote the commonly shared attributes in man. Together we will discover whether the processes stated above have any bearing on the substantiation of compassion as being an inherently imbued trait, in need of being learned or development, or both.

One of the major effects thought to have great influence on our psyche from birth, or even prenatal, are the inter—entity—relationships formed and developed between the infant and the primary care giver upon whom the child must depend for its sustenance and survival.

The arena which may be the most illuminating of ones understanding into the origins and capacity for compassion is revealed through the research conducted by the

two psychologists John Bowlby (1907—1991) and Mary Ainsworth (1913—1999) into the essentials of child development. Focusing in on the child's pre-natal/post-natal attachment to its mother/father /caregiver, the two contributed immensely to the field of child psychology with their development of a working model from which all caregivers can take heed, with what they termed the Attachment Theory. Drawing on concepts from ethology, cybernetics, information processing, developmental psychology, and psychoanalysis, Bowlby formulated the basic tenets of the theory. He thereby revolutionized our thinking about a child's tie to the mother and its disruption through separation, deprivation, and bereavement (to which little attention had been apportioned before the early 1950's). Mary Ainsworth was known for her early and first major study of emotional attachment, which she coined "The Strange Situation," which was the precursor to the Attachment Theory. Ainsworth's innovative methodology not only made it possible to test some of Bowlby's ideas empirically, but also helped expand on Bowlby's existing theories and is responsible for some of the new directions in which the research has since developed. Ainsworth contributed the concept of the attachment figure as a secure base from which an infant can explore the world. In addition, she formulated the concept of maternal sensitivity to infant signals and its role in the development of infant-mother attachment patterns. (Watson, 2002, pp. 22—23)

Attachment theory illustrates the dynamics of long-term relationships between humans. Its most important precept is that an infant needs to develop a relationship with at least one primary caregiver for social and emotional development to occur normally. Attachment theory shows how much the parents' relationship with the child influences development, and it is an interdisciplinary theoretical study encompassing the fields of

evolutionary, and ethological psychology. Caregivers' responses lead to the development of attachment patterns; these, in turn, lead to internal working models, which will guide the individual's later perceptions, emotions, thoughts and expectations in future relationships. (Bretherton I, Munholland K.A., (1999).

In Cassidy and Shaver's *Handbook of Attachment*, (2010) the conditioning one receives as a child may determine his ability or inability, to empathize with another or acknowledge the suffering of others. (Cassidy and Shriver, 2010, 89—114)

All those who have experienced suffering to some extent or another, and I cannot imagine any sentient being that has not, would veritably agree that there are varying degrees of suffering. However, in matters of healing I believe there are no such gradations. Foremost the efficacy of healing depends a great deal more on locating and identifying the plaguing problem, accepting and addressing just what is so belonging to the problem, then secondly, withstanding the temptation to succumb to the apprehension rising up from the odiousness of the problem and daring to dig deeper, below the surface of the obvious. If we can do this with our selves, as well as others in the face of suffering, we may then affirm that yes, there may be as many causes for suffering as there are people, yet our attempt at alleviating suffering we might discover, there is but one solution.

We will now take a look at a few of the more ubiquitously shared psychological, causes; that in my estimation have been exhaustively acknowledged and impractically investigated until recently, grounds for suffering.

Therefore, it gives us good reason to ask what it is that people are so afraid to examine within themselves, in the hopes that by so discovering some answers they might

gain the needed awareness to overcome the fear that dogs their footsteps toward the embodiment of compassion.

Norberto R. Keppe, (1927—) holds degrees in philosophy, social science, psychology, business administration and psychoanalysis and is a graduate of Viktor E. Frankl's (1905—1997) School of Vienna. Keppe worked for 28 years at Hospital das Clínicas of São Paulo, Brazil where he founded the Department of Psychosomatic Medicine. Formerly, Keppe was Professor at the School of Medicine of the Catholic University and the University of São Paulo; the School of Social Work of the Catholic University of São Paulo, and at São Caetano University. In his private clinic in São Paulo he practices his own established form of psychoanalysis Analytical Trilogy. Analytical Trilogy is the development of Integral Psychoanalysis, unifying science, philosophy and theology.

Resulting from a long standing study performed over the 28 years of his active — practice in the various hospitals in Sao Paulo, Keppe formulated his version of a whole— person—therapy; his Trilogy, based on the recognition for the need to therapeutically address the areas of the individual on an integral bases: Feelings (Love), Thought (reason) and Aesthetics; of Society: Theology, Philosophy and Science (and the Arts); Of God: Divine Trinity, The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost. (Keppe, 2000, p. 18)

His work predates that of Ken Wilbur's, who is an American Neo-Platonic writer and public speaker. Keppe's focus is directed toward the total health of the individual and the pathological disturbances back of so much of the individual's suffering. He is the creator of a new scientific field called Psycho Social Pathology, the study of the

relationships between psycho-pathology and social-pathology, i.e., synthesized as psycho-social therapy and applicable to a wide range of human endeavor.

In his psychology, Keppe has achieved something refreshingly old-school to our modern-day transpersonal approach to psychological discourse: a methodology and theoretical platform that treats the human being's inner life, the life of the soul. "The inner life of the human being is immense, eternal, profoundly rich and divine." (Keppe, 2000, p. 24)

The importance of Keppe's work rests on his recognition of what he believes to be the two major causes back of much of the psycho-somatic illnesses prevalent in the world today, namely envy and projection.

Freely defined, envy is as being a feeling of discontented or resentful longing aroused by someone else's possessions, qualities, or luck; more actively classified, it is the desire to have a quality, possession, or other attribute belonging to someone else. This experienced feeling of discontent is the progenitor of much of the world's social as well as individual malaise.

Blinded to this fact by the frenzied feeding of our desire observable in the Western world at any rate, the individual is subject to have his attention drawn first to the pathological affects, and linger long in the realm of denial, of his condition, believing rather perhaps, that the origin of his physical ills are of a pathogenic, not mental-emotional, nature.

"Envy, is part of the definition of narcissistic personality disorder: narcissists feel contempt for those whom they really envy." (Mason and Kreger, R. 2011, p. 132)

In addressing what Keppe believes to be a predominant cause of man's discontent Keppe writes:

The more good we receive, the greater our resistance to recognizing it. In psychotherapy this fact becomes glaringly evident, for in acknowledging the good received, the person would at the same time have to admit their cunning opposition to goodness, truth and life, and in order not to admit their malice, they also deny the good they themselves possess.

The main reason we should accept goodness is that it is a beacon that illuminates all the bad attitudes that exist in the world and in those willing to analyze themselves. (Keppe, 2000, p. 155)

Moreover, to the subject of envy and its' effects he writes:

If envy is the act of not wanting to see, and if it blinds the envious person to the world, (to its problems as well as its beauty), how can it be seen by the envious individual? And if everyone suffers from this terrible "feeling," how can we improve our psychological and social life? Humanity must resolve this great dilemma if it is to regain sanity. (Keppe, 2000)

Keppe asserts that projection is an automatic extension of envy and that it is the primary determinant of illness:

If envy is not conscientized, [brought to consciousness; Keppe's term] we will automatically project, which means that if we do not see the problem in ourselves, we will transfer it to someone else. This being the case, I believe illness begins with the process of projection, and the greater the projection, the sicker the person. A person who projects is sick; a person who interiorizes is healthy. If I

externalize; that is, project what I am (my feelings, thoughts, attitudes, state of mind) onto another person, I am, in fact, inventing a fantasy, a delusion that will be difficult for me to recognize. This is the process by which the mentally ill typically harbor illogical thoughts, ideas out of touch with reality. And it is here that the question of ethics arises, because those who project deny the truth, unwilling to admit how they really are. (Keppe, 2000, pp.19—21, 115)

However overconfident Keppe's proclamations may appear in that he applies these to all of mankind in general, they are nonetheless undeniably indicative of his more explicit desire to heal mankind as a whole, beginning with the individual; ergo his intent is of compassionate origin and points our thought toward the need for self-investigation.

Dr. Brené Brown is a research professor at the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work at University of Houston, Texas. Over the past 12 years she has conducted long-term studies with her students and with volunteer patients in her private practice on the phenomena of shame and vulnerability.

A public speaker, she is notably clear as she explains in depth, with a Southern-hospitality-like presence and the candidness of a high-quality empathic therapist, the complex psychological conditions of shame, vulnerability, scarcity and narcissism.

Specially focused on issues of shame, narcissism to self-efficacy, the causes of social projectionism plaguing our society on the whole, Brené Brown inspires the listener to dig deeper. Dr. Brown's special contribution to the field of psychology is her ability to translate the more technically clinical jargon used by many clinicians working in the field and conveys it to the everyman in such a way so that they might better identify.

Eschewing obscurity in her teaching, she spells out for the listener the difference between shame and guilt.

Somewhat dissimilar to John Bradshaw, (1933—) who as an American popular psychologist, educator, counselor, motivational-speaker and author of the late 1980's, early 1990's, who worked in the field of addiction, and who stressed the need to demystify shame, Dr. Brown has not only determined the sources of shame that undermine our sense of self, she has awakened many people to the facts of their own misguided reliance on false remedies with which they seek to cure themselves of shame so that they might experience greater intimacy and connectedness through what she calls, Wholehearted Therapy.

Dr. Brown arouses sufferers to journey to the core of their individual and social concern related to the question of self-esteem by emphasizing what she believes to be essential to mental and emotional health namely, the empathic analysis of the truth that no one is alone in their struggles, that we all suffer from feelings of inadequacy, and shame and thoughts of scarcity at one time or another and more emphatically, that the road to health need not be a solitary sojourn.

Elucidating the misunderstanding of the difference between shame and guilt is where her work with a patient begins, she writes:

As we work to understand shame, one of the simpler reasons that shame is so difficult to talk about is his vocabulary. We often use the terms embarrassment, guilt, humiliation, and shame interchangeably. It might seem overly picky to stress the importance of using the appropriate term to describe an experience or emotion; however, it is much more than semantics. (Brené Brown, 2012, p. 56)

Brown emphasizes the need for accuracy in defining terms especially when they are nouns and pronouns because as I too believe, a great deal of suffering surfaces by the false labialization of ourselves, other people and things, including situations.

Her admonishment to teachers and parents is as follows: "I believe the differences between shame and guilt are critical in informing everything from the way we parent and engage in relationships, to the way we give feedback at work and school. (Brown, 2012)

It is crucial to be conscious of the words we choose to use when stating something as fact, about others and ourselves, or in describing a state of feeling and emotion. Often times, we use catch phrases that may not even apply to the moment. If we are trying to be half-way honest in our communications, we cannot avoid the fact that generally the way in which we self-talk is the way we talk about others, if only in thought. Brown presents this thought clearly:

How we experience these different emotions comes down to self-talk. How do we talk to ourselves about what's happening? The best place to start examining self-talk and untangling these four distinct emotions is with shame and guilt. The majority of shame researchers and clinicians agree that the difference between shame and guilt is best understood as the difference between "I am bad" and "I did something bad" i.e., guilt= I did something bad; Shame= I am bad.

For many of us guilt and shame are hidden aspects of our selves, to which we can often be oblivious. Moreover these intense feelings are also blocking us access to our personal and genuine wounds, behind which, I have come to trust, are in the nature of unresolved pain.

Research indicates that parenting is a primary predictor of how prone our children will be to shame or guilt. In other words we have a lot of influence over how our kids think about themselves and their struggles knowing as we do that shame is positively correlated with addiction, depression, aggression, violence, eating disorders, and suicide, and that guilt is inversely correlated with these outcomes, we naturally would want to raise children who use more guilt self-talk than shame.” (Brown 2012, p.89)

It follows that we need to separate our children from their behaviors. The difference between you are bad and you did something bad is self-evident.

Important to observe from an individual standpoint is the fundamental way in which shame keeps us blocked off from our deeper thoughts and feelings, virtually to the extent that we go unconscious to our own self-compassion as well as compassion toward other beings. Opening up to our inner life, the authentic actual and non-manufactured has its’ advantages. Though the troubled areas of personality and the self-talk used to conceal the shame may appear insurmountable and give one the feeling of reverting instead of moving forward, the effort we apply is worth it once we move through the secrets and distorted story we tell.

Owning our story can be hard but not nearly as difficult as spending our lives running from it. Embracing our vulnerabilities is risky but not nearly as dangerous as giving up on love and belonging and joy—the experiences that make us the most vulnerable. Only when we are brave enough to explore the darkness will we discover the infinite power of our light. (Brown, 2012, p. 89)

Much like that of the heroin addict who, in an attempt to overcome his addiction, goes on methadone for the rest of his life, the average man attempts to overcome his endless cycle of addiction to unworkable paradigms of self-preservation by telling himself and others more bogus stories about himself instead of looking inward and confronting his demons by using the shame as a catalyst to the revealing of that which most likely turns out to be a natural need overgrown with weeds.

One driver at work behind the propensity to conceal his wounds from himself and from public view is the sense of scarcity in our culture. At least theoretically, scarcity supports the shame-based mechanisms at work within the individual and pretty much sums up the whole of Dr. Brown's message and work as well as my own proposition with regards for the necessity for man to self-investigate, rather than project and perpetuate his defects of character onto others:

Scarcity doesn't take hold in a culture overnight. But the feeling of scarcity does thrive in shame-prone cultures that are deeply steeped in comparison and fractured by disengagement. (By a shame-prone culture, I don't mean that we're ashamed of our collective identity, but that there are enough of us struggling with the issue of worthiness that it's shaping the culture.)" (Brown, 2012, p. 76)

Over the past decade, I've witnessed major shifts in the zeitgeist of our country. I've seen it in the data.

Listing a few of the more profound trauma inducing events of the recent past Brown writes,

I've seen it in the faces of the people I meet, interview, and talk to. The world has never been an easy place, but the past decade has been traumatic for so many

people that it's made changes in our culture. From 9/11, multiple wars, and the recession, to catastrophic natural disasters and the increase in random violence and school shootings, we've survived and are surviving events that have torn at our sense of safety with such force that we've experienced them as trauma even if we weren't directly involved. And when it comes to the staggering numbers of those now unemployed and underemployed, I think every single one of us has been directly affected or is close to someone who has been directly affected.

Worrying about scarcity is our culture's version of post-traumatic stress. It happens when we've been through too much, and rather than coming together to heal (which requires vulnerability), we're angry and scared and at each other's throats."

Asserts Dr. Brown as she speaks further on her resulting findings.

It's not just the larger culture that's suffering: I found the same dynamics playing out in family culture, work culture, school culture, and community culture. And they all share the same formula of shame, comparison, and disengagement.

Scarcity bubbles up from these conditions and perpetuates them until a critical mass of people start making different choices and reshaping the smaller cultures they belong to. (Brown, 2010, p. 146)

Formulating what she believes to be a proper method with which to approach the issue of scarcity thinking, she poses the following question and suggests we do the same:

1. Shame: Is fear of ridicule and belittling used to manage people and/or to keep people in line? Is self-worth tied to achievement, productivity, or compliance? Are blaming and finger-pointing, norms? Are put-downs and name-calling rampant? What about favoritism? Is perfectionism an issue?

2. Comparison: Healthy competition can be beneficial, but is there constant overt or covert comparing and ranking? Has creativity been suffocated? Are people held to one narrow standard rather than acknowledged for their unique gifts and contributions? Is there an ideal way of being or one form of talent that is used as measurement of everyone else's worth?

3. Disengagement: Are people afraid to take risks or try new things? Is it easier to stay quiet than to share stories, experiences, and ideas? Does it feel as if no one is really paying attention or listening? Is everyone struggling to be seen and heard?

In light of the present overwhelm of experience emphasized in the traumas most of us endure, whether we are aware of the fact or unconscious to it, or endeavoring to go, or remain, unconscious to it, the need for self-awareness is made more apparent when I ask myself "What is it that stands in the way of me allowing compassion to play the healing role in my life that it invariably can when I engage myself with my own suffering?"

If the answer is shame, an aversion to intimacy, self-unworthiness, contemplating the possibility of self-compassion might then be an appropriate option. First, the individual will have to admit to being traumatized by his family of origin, his society on the whole and by causes and conditions at that root of his sense of disconnect.

"We're called to "dare greatly" every time we make choices that challenge the social climate of scarcity. The counterapproach to living in scarcity is not about abundance." (Brown, 2012, p.28—29)

The compelling question deserves yet to be answered: Do we all suffer from traumatic stress?

Getting to the heart of that which blocks our view to the more essential reality of self, we must next look at the conditions, however temporal yet prevailing, from childhood that have left many a person emotionally and permanently traumatized, in matters specifically of the care, rearing and indoctrination of the child.

Therefore it is only fitting to draw the reader's attention to the work of Alice Miller, first from the perspective, as taken up by Daniel Mackler, Ph.D. a strong proponent of her work, specifically, *Drama of the Gifted Child*, (Alice Miller, 1980)

Daniel Mackler is a former psychologist of ten years in New York and director of the documentary *Take These Broken Wings*, (2008) on recovery from schizophrenia without medication. In 2011 he produced the documentaries *Healing Homes and Open Dialogue*. (Mackler, 2011) Both films are dedicated to the enlightenment of professionals as well as potential patients, to alternative treatment programs for psychosis. He is a strong advocate of the formation of withdrawal programs targeting the withdrawal from neuroleptics, (antipsychotic drugs.) He is also the co-author with Matthew Morrissey, of the book *A Way Out of Madness: Dealing with Your Family After You Have Been Diagnosed with a Psychiatric Disorder*, (Mackler, 2010) as well as co-editor, with David Garfield, MD, of *Beyond Medication: Therapeutic Engagement and the Recovery from Psychosis*. (2008.)

Like Alice Miller, Mackler believes wholeheartedly that most of our psychological problems can be traced back to childhood trauma and too, that most all of us are in denial with regards to this probability.

Little babies have perfect spirits; they know truth. They inherently understand it and they love it. But, their parents hold some degree of denial and that causes conflict with the child because the child desperately wants and needs to be real. The horrible rub is that his parents desperately need him to be just like they are. For a little child this is torture because it goes totally against what all his instincts are telling him, which is to be one hundred-percent real, honest and one hundred-percent in connection with the spirit, so right away he comes into conflict with his parents and their needs, their unresolved emotional needs, there need to lie. The result of this is that every child that comes into the world has to go through this transitional conflict giving up parts of himself in order to fit into his family system, in order to fit into the world and the needs of his parents and this is traumatizing for a child; traumatizing in one hundred-percent of the meaning of the word trauma, its emotionally overwhelming, it's totally intense and, it's full of horror and misery and terrible, terrible pain. I am often very alone in expressing the idea that little children go through emotional trauma just by the proposition of fitting into the denial of their family system because this traumatizing process is so incredibly common and it is the norm, it's ubiquitous, everybody goes through it, so that in our society it's not even considered a problem or rather it is considered the pink elephant in the living room—that all little children are going through emotional trauma in their families but it's so common that nobody wants to address what it means. (Lane/Mackler, personal conversation, June 2013)

Mackler believes as many people have voiced and believe, that people shouldn't be having children until they've worked out their own inner issues, until they have totally

worked on and out their own denial. In this way, he believes, there would then be no forcing the child to squeeze into the little box of denial that the parent has unwittingly prepared for them.

The second thing he notes, that what this means, namely, is that it is first the parent themselves who need to look at what happened to them in their childhood, deal with that first—admit to and investigate the unhealed sides within themselves, their own history of trauma and pain, before bringing children into this world, as opposed to working out their uncompleted traumatic experiences on their children. After all the cycle of inflicted pain repeats and repeats until someone along the chain of pain and the denial, breaks through with the command that the buck stops with them—so the phrase is commonly coined.

A strong promoter of Alice Miller's work, (Alice Miller, 1923—2010), Mackler believes that her book, *Drama of the Gifted Child* succinctly illuminates the blind areas in the field of psychology to date, although there have been many books written in the recent past on child abuse. The reason her work is of such importance is that it is all geared toward those causes back of the conditions noted earlier in this paper attributed to Brown's concerns, and why she focuses so greatly in her research, for results she has of late: aversion to intimacy, the scarcity syndrome, shame and vulnerability; ultimately charging unhealthy narcissism as being a key instigator. She is relentless.

The following 21 points comprised by Alice Miller, as to how emotional blindness is created, are a validation to the problems proposed by the researchers cited above:

—The newborn child is always innocent. —Each child needs among other things: care, protection, security, warmth, skin contact, touching, caressing, and tenderness. These needs are seldom sufficiently fulfilled; in fact adults often exploit these needs, for their own ends i.e. their own suffered traumas from child abuse.

—Child abuse has lifelong effects.

—Society takes the side of the adult and blames the child for what has been done to him or her.

—The victimization of the child has historically been denied and is still being denied, even today.

—This denial has made it possible for society to ignore the devastating effects of the victimization of the child for a very long time.

—The child, when betrayed by society, has no choice but to repress the trauma and to idealize the abuser.

—Repression leads to neuroses, psychoses, psychosomatic disorders, and delinquency.

—In neuroses, the child's needs are repressed and/or denied; instead, feelings of guilt are experienced.

—In psychoses, the mistreatment is transformed into a disguised illusory version (madness).

—In psychosomatic disorders, the pain of mistreatment is felt but the actual origins are concealed.

—In delinquency, the confusion, seduction, and mistreatment of childhood are acted out again and again.

—The therapeutic process can be successful only if it is based on uncovering the truth about the patient's childhood instead of denying that reality.

—The psychoanalytic theory of "infantile sexuality" actually protects the parent and reinforces society's blindness.

—Fantasies always serve to conceal or minimize unbearable childhood reality for the sake of the child's survival; therefore, the so-called invented trauma is a less harmful version of the real, repressed one.

—The fantasies expressed in literature, art, fairy tales, and dreams often unconsciously convey early childhood experiences in a symbolic way.

—This symbolic testimony is tolerated in our culture thanks to society's chronic ignorance of the truth concerning childhood. If the import of these fantasies were understood, they would be rejected.

—A past crime cannot be undone by our understanding of the perpetrator's blindness and unfulfilled needs.

—New crimes, however, can be prevented, if the victims begin to see and be aware of what has been done to them.

—Therefore, the reports of victims will be able to bring about more awareness, consciousness, and sense of responsibility in society at large.

(Miller, 2013)

Alice Miller was a Swiss psychologist who wrote extensively on the topic of parental child abuse. She is noted for her objective co-solidarity of the child and the

child's perspective. Much of the psychology today still looks at the child and his behavior resulting from abuse as perceived through the eyes of the parent or society. In her books, Alice Miller took a departure from psychoanalysis, alleging it as being similar to the practice of poisonous pedagogies.

Miller extended the trauma model in therapy to embrace all forms of child abuse, including those that were commonly accepted (such as spanking), which she again called poisonous pedagogy, a non-literal translation of Katharina Rutschky's. (1941—2010.)

Alice Miller used the concept to describe child-raising approaches that, she believed, damaged the child's emotional development. Miller claimed that this alleged emotional damage promotes adult behavior harmful to individuals.

Miller's rejection of psychoanalysis, was made tangible when she cancelled her membership of both the Swiss Psychoanalytic Society and the International Psychoanalytic Association, because she felt that psychoanalytic theory and practice made it impossible for former victims of child abuse to recognize the violations perpetrated on them and to resolve the consequences of the abuse, as they "remained in the old tradition of blaming the child and protecting the parents." (Miller, 1987.)

From this proposed causal perspective we are able to better understand and identify the underlying features of the shame based landscape upon which people exist. By acknowledging the abusive treatment received in childhood, unmistakably apparent in light of its more obvious malevolent effects, a fact evidenced by the great amount of literature existing on the subject, we gain a more hopeful explanation as to the reasons for many of the deep-seated feelings of self-inadequacy, low self-efficacy, and the causes of disconnect and the lack of desire, or absolute inability to experience the emotion of

compassion. It is important to remind ourselves that inquiry into such tentative are requires viewing from different perspectives. W. G. Sebald, writes in *The Rings of Saturn*, (1995) “The greater the distance, the clearer the view—one sees the tiniest of details with the utmost clarity. Fear and terror often bar the one who wishes to explore his darker nature, for becoming able to see that the very messy issue of rampant and ignorant—scar—inducing child-abuse still as of old a fact in our day, might be the canker necessitating excision. (Sebald, 1995, p. 19)

In other words it may not be the shame itself that requires inspection but the causes residing at a deeper level that are rooted in the unexplained, irreconcilable recollections, buried or indirectly active through some present practice of behavior, that when directly addressed and aired could lead us to that place where compassion and suffering indeed become reconciled.

It is easy then to imagine that most people fear greatly, venturing beyond the realm of blame one carries toward the parent or one’s self, when to do so would demand of the individual that he feel his own shame and possibly have to admit to the supposed causes back of his or her own suffering, whatever they might be.

In this arena of darkness that seems to exist beyond the portals of admittance and acceptance, the opportunities for synthesis in body, mind, and spirit appear promising. With an appropriately assisted expedition through the labyrinth of the wounds acquired in childhood at the abuse dispensed one can begin to heal the trauma that separates and estranges us from one another.

Alice Miller, writing on the possible malevolent outcomes of an abusive childhood un-reconciled, and the mal-parenting paradigm that to this day refuses to

budge, to the extreme in the case of Hitler, she presents an analysis of the man in her book *For Your Own Good*, and, articulates the long entertained dreams of revenge and upon which the damaged individual someday, most probably will act out, subsequently and justly the cause for examination of this issue in every instance:

Of course, [this] interpretation is not written for people who consider dreams "airy nothings" and the unconscious the invention of "a sick mind." But I could imagine that even those who do know something about the unconscious might look with misgivings or indignation upon my attempt to try to understand Hitler's actions on the basis of his childhood experiences, because they would rather not be forced to think about the whole "inhuman story." Yet can we really assume that the dear Lord suddenly conceived the idea of sending down to earth a "necrophilic beast," as Hitler is described to have been by Erich Fromm. (Miller, 1990)

“How can we explain that these two well-meaning (Hitler’s parents) stable, very normal, and certainly not destructive people gave birth to the future "monster," Adolf Hitler?” (Fromm, 1964, p. 413)

In referencing the concept of victim become perpetrator she writes:

I have no doubt that behind every crime a personal tragedy lies hidden. If we were to investigate such events and their backgrounds more closely, we might be able to do more to prevent crimes than we do now with our indignation and moralizing. Perhaps someone will say: But not everyone who was a battered child becomes a murderer; otherwise, many more people would be murderers. That is true. However, humankind is in dire enough straits these days that this should not remain an academic question. Moreover, we never know how a child will and

must react to the injustice he or she has suffered; there are innumerable "techniques" for dealing with it. We don't yet know, above all, what the world might be like if children were to grow up without being subjected to humiliation, if parents would respect them and take them seriously as persons. In any case, I don't know of a single person who has enjoyed the existence of this respect.

Signifying with the following caveat further that not all criminals have suffered abuse in their childhoods, the reader might consider the possibility of a tender soul, too ill-equipped to handle the cruelty of a psychotic world is also subject to emotional and psychological distortions of perception.

It is totally inconceivable that a man who as a child received love and affection from his mother, which most Hitler biographers claim was the case, would have suffered from these sadomasochistic compulsions, which point to a very early childhood disturbance. But our concept of mother love obviously has not yet wholly freed itself from the ideology of "poisonous pedagogy." (Miller, 1990, p. 30)

Summarization of her analysis of Hitler and his childhood, concede but definitively avers that we shall not look away from the possible link between childhood experiences, either negligent or abusive and it's possible long-term effects on the individual:

Readers who interpret my treatment of Hitler's early childhood as sentimental or even as an attempt to excuse his deeds naturally have every right to construe what they have read as they see fit. People who, for example, had to learn at a very early age "to keep a stiff upper lip" identify with their parents to the extent that

they consider any form of empathy with a child as emotionalism or sentimentality.

As for the question of guilt, I chose Hitler for the very reason that I know of no other criminal who is responsible for the death of so many human beings. But nothing is gained by using the word guilt. We of course have the right and the duty to lock up murderers who threaten our life. For the time being, we do not know of any better solution. But this does not alter the fact that the need to commit murder is the outcome of a tragic childhood and that imprisonment is the tragic sequel to this fate. (Miller, 1987, p.32)

As far as self-investigation is concerned as possibly being a more deep-reaching approach into the un—and sub—conscience of the individual and in light of the propositions just expressed, it stands to reason that this is no easy task, for the shame itself will block the sojourner at every step along his path, for this reason a help meet is needed.

Dr. Miller in her book *The Drama of the Gifted Child* (1980) explains with proudest alacrity the pending jeopardy such a self-research can provoke.

Thus he spent his whole life searching for his own truth, but it remained hidden to him because he had learned at a very young age to hate himself for what his mother had done to him. (...) But not once did he allow himself to direct his endless, justified rage at the true culprit, the woman who had kept him locked up in her prison for as long as she could. All his life he attempted to free himself of that prison, with the help of drugs, travel, illusions, and above all poetry. But in all these desperate efforts to open the doors that would have led to liberation, one of them remained abstinently shut, the most important one: the door to the

emotional reality of his childhood, to the feelings of the little child who was forced to grow up with a severely disturbed, malevolent woman, with no father to protect him from her. (Miller, 1980, p. 155)

The rogue culprit as I see it, standing guard at the threshold of self-discovery is the fear of feeling, (either complete joy, or grave sorrow) which explains what I consider to be the down side of blind adherence to pseudo-science, pop-religion and pop-psychology today, one is given permission to meander along the outskirts of the darker realms of his person, and linger in the realm of simple acceptance and observance without ever being encouraged to do the real work, namely that of walking through hell to get to the gold.

Close to home Dr. Miller's words remind the reader:

There is an art of not experiencing feelings. A child can experience her feelings only when there is somebody there who accepts her fully, understands her, and supports her. If that person is missing, if the child must risk losing the mother's love of her substitute in order to feel, then she will repress emotions. (Miller, 1980)

Further on the limits of childhood responsibility, Miller explains:

Many people suffer all their lives from this oppressive feeling of guilt, the sense of not having lived up to their parents' expectations. This feeling is stronger than any intellectual insight they might have, that it is not a child's task or duty to satisfy his parents' needs. No argument can overcome these guilt feelings, for they have their beginnings in life's earliest periods, and from that they derive their intensity and obduracy. (Miller, 1980)

In service to my theory of self-investigation as an essential means toward a more expressive organic compassion, and because it fittingly applies to my proposal, it may be interesting for the reader to learn that both Alice Miller's and Daniel Mackler's consecrated efforts to illuminate the issue of child abuse, its unsuspected prevalence and permanently damaging effects, is predominantly driven by both their obvious attempts to resolve and reconcile their own relationships with their abusers, namely, each their mother, (as expressed by Mackler himself and evident in Miller's powerful engagement with the subject.) This is one of the few pessimistic evaluations Mackler offers in his critique of Alice Miller and her work in a critique of her limits and strengths.

In the same YouTube critique Mackler points out in referring to Alice Miller's research on Hitler, documented in her book *For your own Good* (1990) he says:

She makes the point that the most extreme monster in the world was not actually born evil, he was born like all of us, or created like all of us, which is perfect, and the horrors that he experienced, the traumas he went through as a child and adolescent, are the causes for him having become evil (Mackler, 2009).

In contrast to Miller's non-insistence that would-be—parents first investigate their own wounds before having children, Mackler insists most emphatically that they thoroughly address their own issues of child abuse experienced at the hand of their parents, before having children (Mackler, 2009).

Similarly applicable is Miller's cautionary assurance to professional caregivers and therapists, the potential difficulties that arise in the transference-counter-transference process of psychotherapeutic practice.

If, when engaging with a patient, the therapist finds himself in reaction to the patient's presentation of anger and aggression, and the therapist himself is incomplete with his own traumatic wounds stemming from childhood abuse and has not dealt with having suffered at the effects of projected narcissism in his own experience, the therapist thereby becoming reactive, will be ineffective in his treatment and the patient will not be beneficially served. This quality of healer, heal thyself is in fact, that to which Miller is referring in her book *Drama of the Gifted Child* (1980) the gift is the suffering transformed and put to use in service to another. Could childhood trauma, borne by virtually everyone who breathes, be the very gift—in—disguise awakening man to his inherent compassionate self? With myself as test subject the answer is emphatically yes! In part, this turned out to be the so regarding the response resultant of the study participants in this study, and the answers to my inquiry they presented in the questionnaire they received addressing the same themes.

Eclipsing the less in-depth directives posited by many pop-pseudo-spiritual-psychologist of our day, Clark Moustakas, an American psychologist and one of the leading experts on humanistic and clinical psychology, (1923—2012,) comprehensibly emphasized throughout his proliferate writings the importance, function and purpose for inquiring deep into the phenomenon of everything and anything especially within one's self. In his thought, everything was worthy of question and nothing ought to be accepted at mere face value, especially one's perceptions and experiences irrespective of whether it has already been investigated or not. It is also very clear to me that Dr. Moustakas was concerned with the starting point from which one begins his investigation and he appears to have concluded, through personal self-inquiry, that, that point of starting resides within

the individual first, then can the inquiry be extended to deriving data from others and their personal experience of a given phenomenon. Based on this invitation to dig deep, I used the methods and processes of inquiry outlined in his book “Heuristic Research, Design, Methodology and Application” in conducting this present study. Moustakas personally received his share of deep suffering when his daughter was lying in a hospital where the prognosis given him by the doctors there offered little hope of her recovery. Moustakas writes of this as being the launching point that prompted what would become his approach to the investigation of further phenomenon which was in the following case, that of loneliness, which he takes up in his influential book entitled *Loneliness* (Moustakas, 1961, pp. ix—93)

Accept everything about yourself — I mean everything, you are you, and that is the beginning and the end—no apologies, no regrets. How else is one capable of reaching the depths of his own being, however, if he is not willing to be alone with his thoughts however unacceptable they might seem to be when discovered. On the rewards of self-inquiry he writes:

“When a person acts without knowledge of what he thinks, feels, needs or wants, he does not yet have the option of choosing to act differently. (Moustakas, 1995)

“Why this backwardness, since exposure is necessary to ensure the avoidance of the [evil]? Because people like you better when you tell them their virtues than when you tell them their vices.” (Eddy, 1867. p. 14)

CHAPTER 3

“How can we write of unseen realities, hint of unheard concepts, or even demonstrate the practicality of inner truths, without disturbing the slumbering Self within.” (Roads, 2003, p. 27)

INTRODUCTION

When first I began this phenomenological study I was aware only of a personal inability to connect with others on a deep level. At the time, the subject of my inquiry had been intimacy, which I feared I was incapable of experiencing.

Initial engagement with the topic of intimacy however, revealed much deeper lying problems. I discovered that the issue of ineptitude to intimacy which, I considered to be menacing to my every attempt to form interpersonal relations between myself and another, was only a resultant end effect of hidden more malignant traits of shame, avoidance of suffering, the subsequent distaste I held toward compassion, and more ironically an aversion to vulnerability. Early into the study I learned that I was not only unwilling to feel compassion, I was mysteriously incapable of generating the emotion in the slightest, though I longed for the connectivity.

Therefore I commenced with the focus of the present research, exclusively on the emotion of compassion.

Being now certain that I had identified the point of inquiry worthy of dedicating as much time necessary to investigate it fully, I constructed methods and means whereby I might be able to uncover its mysteries and hopefully discover more about myself and what stood in the way of my being able to express this emotion.

It was not until I began my studies at the university that I realized the methods I had been applying to the process of investigation into the topic of compassion for the previous six years, with the exception of the incorporation of the additional 15 study subjects, had been in the manner similar to that of the phenomenological research methodology and processes suggested by Clark Moustakas (1990).

Once the decision to go into solitude had been met, the charge of formulating the structure best suited to that of deep interior work began. This was no easy task, for the need for validation and connectivity with others reigned strong, especially considering that I was now in the place of knowing no one, with all previous ties having been abandoned. Prominent in my mind was the fact that I needed, beyond all doubt, to become intimate with myself like never before and in my heart I knew I would have to find out what I was all about, for this, I would have to be alone.

The one consolation to the prospect of isolating myself, were the lines from Anthony Storrs' (1920—2001) book titled, *Solitude, A Return To The Self*, (1988) on the subject of solitude, he writes, "It is widely believed that interpersonal relationships of an intimate kind are the chief, if not only, source of human happiness. Yet the lives of creative individuals often seem to run counter to this assumption" (Storr, 1988, p. ix) Furthermore he gives a list of a few people whose lives reflect this assumption, e.g., "Descartes, Newton, Locke, Pascal, Spinoza, Kant, Leibniz, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, and Wittgenstein" (Storr, 1988, p. ix) the knowledge of whom, though of little consequence to this dissertation, was encouraging at the onset of my project.

Research Design and Methodology

Notwithstanding the fact that I had become unenthusiastic about my perspectives and was therefore quite aware that I had to take this inner journey in order to answer the question of compassion, I carried within me still, deep-seated anger toward myself, with the accompanying thought that I had sorely failed in spite of all my previous spiritual practices. Those practices had, in the end, not saved me from becoming ill. Therefore, my internal frame of reference at the onset of my journey was that of wanton self-esteem and a sense of unworthiness.

Still it is with an attitude of trust that I preceded. This trust became my tuning fork throughout the introspective process. The trust template was of a three-dimensional composition, with a fourth being the more contextual to the three, they translate as follows: A) Ask and you shall receive. B) Seek and you shall find, C) Knock and it shall be opened unto you, all exercised within the context of patience.

Taking Up The Research Questions

Subject to the fact that I could not feel compassion, I addressed the question of whether or not I would have to learn compassion or, was compassion an innate quality with in me to which I was blocked access needing only to be awakened, in more detail thus:

- If I could not experience compassion, why not?
- Is there a prerequisite to man's knowing organic compassion?
- If so, what is it that is requisite?
- If there is a prerequisite, as might be suspected by way of observation that

there exists a great deal of misunderstanding and interchangeability between the terms, pity, sympathy, sentimentality and the various forms of empathy appropriated to the

emotion of compassion—would this not then, lead one to suspect that compassion resides deeper in the individual than the nature of these terms can rightly reflect?

- How then to go about an inquiry into the nature of compassion?
- If in this realm of duplicity in which one abides, and in which we contend with the concept of compassion, shall they not then also take up the concept of suffering.
- Assuming that all sentient beings suffer and experience pain, by virtue of their five corporeal senses, and observing that suffering is the invocator of compassion, it stands to reason that compassion is itself an outward expression of the identification with suffering each and every one of us who can feel can experience.
- Was I not in touch with my own suffering, incapable of identifying with the suffering of others?
- As an individual is, by virtue of his individuality, incapable of being inside another individual, he is therefore incapable of experiencing, first hand, the pain experienced by others.

David Smillie, (1971) discusses the two different approaches to the world and the resultant differences in perception of that which is real. Viewed from two different points of view, which, differ significantly.

Each of us knows the world in which we live from two broad perspectives. The first is a personal point of view deriving from our own unique experiences and our perceptions. From this orientation no experience can ever be fully shared and communicated, since it is inevitably embedded in the unique and personal life of the experiencer. We may strive to awaken such an experience in others through the use of words or to share the experience in communication, but the experience

is complete in its self. No categorization or translation or temporal manipulation can recreate the experience in public form. (Smillie, 1971, p. 64—77)

The Various Methods of Inquiry

Emotional resonance is, one frequency vibrating in tandem with that of one with another, the so-called sharing of pain is precluded by the function of identification, identifying with the suffering in another. One must have prior-ally experienced, to a similar extent, the pain another has felt first, and within him self before one can claim to have experienced that resonance.

Thus the engine behind my investigative work became the reasoning that suffering is the generator back of compassion, even though the suffering I observed in the world did not deeply touch me.

The following steps reflect the procedure that acted as a safe structure within which my query was to be worked out.

With this internal frame of reference, of the 3 trusts factors, as mentioned above in place, I performed the following daily regimen as the method of self-inquiry into the nature of the topic. A) Journaling, B.) Reading pertinent literature, C) Meditation, D) Mindfulness practice, E.) Practice of: Yoga, Qi Gong and other forms of physical therapy, F) Creative Art Therapy, and G) Engaging weekly, with a Jungian oriented coach, and the reliance on the instruction supplied me by a Christian Science practitioner.

(APPENDIX: A: Tertiary Adherences.)

Heuristic Processes, Procedures and Methodology As Generated By Clark E. Moustakas Ph.D.

Heuristic processes, procedure and design were fist incorporated at the time of my initial engagement with the topic for the specific purposes of this dissertation, yet the

daily practices applied to the investigation possess preceding my doctoral work were maintained throughout the ten—year span to the completion of the work.

At the onset of the process, which I have already shown, it is important to rely on the initial feedback one derives from having directed the introspective questioning process with ones' self. As demonstrated above in the introduction, one obtains the clarity of focus of the primary question by further questioning ourselves on the main point of inquiry, e.g., yes, I thought at first the problem was that of intimacy but soon discovered that the inner conflicting stirrings stemmed from more deeply rooted fear of vulnerability and the incapacity to compassion as registered by my initial response to the 9/11 incident noted in chapter 1 of this paper. Moustakas says of this process:

Through exploratory open-ended inquiry, self-directed search, and immersion in active experience, one is able to get inside the question and become one with it thus achieving an understanding of it. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 15)

He refers us to Salk, (1983) who he notes for further clarification, as having called it a kind of identification with the focus of the investigation or “The inverted perspective” which he describes as follows, “...but very early in my life I would imagine myself in the position of the object, in which I was interested...picturing myself as a virus or a cancer cell.” (Salk, 1983, p.3)

This statement recalls me to a time when I at the age of eight or so would find myself staring at a scene or a person and imagine myself living in that environment or being that person; my whole body would go into shutter-mode and my eyes would momentarily go in out of focus upon the object before my vision until, for a brief moment I had a body-experience of being them and living there; similar to the experience one has

when attempting to discover the 2D image embedded in a 3D digitally generated picture by focusing the eyes in and out of focus until the embedded 2D image appears known as the *Magic Eye* (1991).

Self-Dialogue. As for Self-Dialogue, one is reminded not only of Brene Brown's reference to the internal frame of reference of entertaining thoughts of not—good—enough, or the scarcity—world—view—model, but this writer is informed by Moustakas, that personal attitude is revealed in the self-dialogue a person exercises. It is requisite to the investigative process that one maintain an attitude of openness “Heuristic inquiry requires that one be open, receptive and attuned to all facets of one's experience of a phenomenon, allowing comprehension, and compassion to mingle and recognizing the place and unity of intellect, emotion and spirit.” Moustakas, (1990, p.16)

One might consider Tacit Knowing comparable with intuition and yet, it is taken up most emphatically by both Polanyi (1983) and Moustakas (1990) at greater length when describing the investigative process. In the *Tacit Dimension* Polanyi writes,

All knowledge consists or is rooted in acts of comprehension that are made possible through tacit knowing: we can know more than we can tell. (Polanyi, 1966, p. 44—45)

In an example Polanyi posits, that one can recognize a person's face, but not know how they know that face. How do people know and recognize a face? Do they know it like they know anything else, or do they know something through an implicit – pre-knowing? To further illuminate the idea of tacit knowing by way of depiction; Plato presents in his dialogues between Socrates and Meno, while endeavoring to define virtue and its origins, the idea of immortality of the soul, the theory of knowledge as

recollection (anamnesis), which Socrates demonstrates by posing a mathematical puzzle to one of Meno's slaves who possesses little knowledge of the problem and is assumed to practically know nothing of how to solve it, whereupon the slave boy in solving the mathematical problem presented him, indeed proves that there is such a thing as a pre-knowing or precognition, demonstrating the distinction between knowledge and true belief. In Polanyi's words, tacit knowing is comprised of two types, one is subsidiary as in recognition of factors that draw ones immediate attention, in other words to the obvious, such as whether conditions and someone's hair color for example. The other is the more subtle factor or as he calls it, focal, that which is unseen or invisible. Moustakas (1990) reiterates Polanyi's further sub-sectioning of these two types, which will be elaborated upon further in Chapter four when the results of this study are addressed: the first is skill; a combination of both the subsidiary and the obvious protocol of feet on the peddles, hands on the bars, and so on, and the focal less obvious unseen qualities of the required self-esteem and confidence needed to maintain ones' balance while in motion. The third is the way we feel our way through a darkened room or brush our teeth without having to look. The fourth is "speculative skill, such as that of playing poker and estimating by way of explicit body gestures and the observation of ones' habitual actions belie the motives and calculated moves of the opposing player. And this leads us directly to the concept of...(Moustakas, 1990, p. 87)

Intuition. Intuition can be thought of trusting one's sense of a thing, whether false or true, be it fettered or unfettered by speculation, is a skill, developed through repeated action taken based on that trust. The bridge between the explicit and the tacit is the realm of the between, or the intuitive. From the observable in intuition, one utilizes the internal

capacity to make inferences and arrive at knowledge of underlying structures and dynamics. Intuition makes immediate knowledge possible without the intervening steps of logic and reason (Moustakas, 1990, p. 54).

Indwelling. Indwelling, in terms of the heuristic process, is a turning inward to seek a deeper more extended comprehension of the nature or the meaning of a quality or theme of human experience. One becomes attuned to whatever appears in thoughts, feelings and impressions and even glimmerings or fleeting awarenesses. In the heuristic process of indwelling one seeks to understand the nature and meaning, for example, of compassion.

Focusing. Focusing, in the context of heuristic research, does not mean the myopic spotlight-lighting appropriated to the function of singling out one item from many for investigation, rather it is as Douglass and Moustakas (1985) signifies with their meaning of the term, that of recognizing themes and the compiling of individual parts that serve to connote a particular patterning. “Through the focusing process, the researcher is able to determine the core themes that constitute an experience, identify and assess connecting feelings and thoughts and achieve cognitive knowledge that includes “refinements of meaning and perception that register as internal shifts and alterations of behavior.

(Moustakas, 1990, p. 51)

Through journaling and weekly, rereading my journals I became more and more agile in assessing the related facets directing my awareness to formulative patterns. (See, fig. 5) Moustakas specifies further in defining what exactly in his view heuristic research is:

The heuristic researcher is not only intimately and autobiographically related to the question but learns to love the question. It becomes a kind of song into which

the researcher breathes life not only because the question leads to an answer, but also because the question itself is infused in the researcher's being. It creates a thirst to discover, to clarify, and to understand crucial dimensions of knowledge and experience. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 43)

In addition to the type of Internal Frame of Reference referred to in CHAPTER 3, Moustakas's version refers to the necessary empathic approach to the interview process, which I take to mean is applicable, either in the investigative research setting, or that related to the preferred attitude in the therapist patient relational and interview setting. To know and understand the nature, meanings and essences of any human experience, one depends on the internal frame of reference of the person who has had, is having, or will have the experience. Only the experiencing person by looking at their own experiences in perceptions, thoughts feelings and sense can validly provide portrayals of the experience. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 26)

The Phases Of Heuristic Research: Immersion; Incubation; Illumination; Explication; Creative Synthesis And The Validation Of The Research

The following categories connote the fulcrum of steps pertaining to the development of and emergence of the personal organic experience unfolding in the individual when, during, and after full engagement with, in this case, the phenomenon of compassion.

Initial Engagement: I have supplied the reader with an exemplification of the process of initial engagement in introduction portion of this chapter whose nature is self-directive and introspective. Moustakas explains this phase thus:

Within each researcher exists a topic, theme, problem or question that represents a critical interest and area of search. The task of the initial engagement is to discover an intense interest, a passionate concern that calls out to the researcher, one that holds important social meanings and personal compelling implications... during this process one encounters the self, one's autobiography and significant relationships within a social context. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 27)

This is, as well, indicative of the process of self-dialogue necessitated by the intense desire to thoroughly investigate any phenomenon, for it is, I reiterate, only by way of personal experience in tandem with the shared experience of others, that any particular phenomenon is verifiable.

Immersion. During the immersion phase the context of this phenomenological query took the form of the aforementioned regimen journaling, Creative Art Therapy, the reading pertinent literature, meditation, practice of: Yoga, Qi Gong and other forms of physical therapy and eventual engagement with an emotional/spiritual coach on a Day-to-day basis with the accompaniment of clinical therapeutic assistance crowning this study to date. Each of these rendered the function of both primary and secondary value. A) Journaling added insight into on-going progress as well as offering a disciplinary quality in practice of showing up to the relationship between researcher and the journal. B) The literature offered possibilities of deep expansion of mental capacity at the same time supplying the opportunity for synchronicity, which became the cognitive indicator of maintaining directional focus on a continuous line of thought. C) Meditation acted as a means whereby this researcher could safely scale inner regions of emotion and yet maintain a greater level of detachment where the function of observation could reign. Not

only did it offer respite from the active mind but created openings in imagination through which novel—idea could enter.

D) For purposes of this study the physical practices of yoga, qi gong and other forms of physical fitness were primarily adopted for one of the additional effects parenthetically resultant of deep meditation, that is, of relieving the body of shored up tensions, too, the function of these somatic practices are likely to supply the researcher with a the necessary cathartic jolt providing access to more calcified emotions. E) Forms of creative arts furnished an explicative method of investigation by creating the arena for images derived from the interpretation of dreams, of a profounder quality, to be translated onto canvas or into sculptured forms, serving the purpose of giving voice to ideas formed in the subconscious. Incidentally, the creative process in context of this study was rather slight on joy and most times even, a painful process, F) Checking in weekly with a Jungian oriented couch supplied the forum in which I could present the quandaries that presented themselves by the acting out of particularly undesirable behaviors. The work with a Christian Science practitioner on a random, bi-daily basis, assisted in keeping a pan-spatial perspective on habitual and erroneous thinking patterns in which I commonly found myself getting stuck.

A multi-correlative, inter-mingling of the facets of this regimen and the following phases were enacted concurrently throughout the duration of the investigation.

Incubation. Incubation was articulated within the interchangeable function of meditation and journaling naturally culminating in the form of sculpture, refurbishing pieces of furniture or a painting, as often was the case, as an outer expression resulting from the interpretation of a dream. Additionally, to endorse a period of incubation is to allow for

the cajoling of thoughts and ideas as the results of incremental phases of more active work to have their time of silent nourishment, support, and care that produces a creative awareness of some dimension of a phenomenon or a creative integration of its parts and qualities.” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 29.)

This period otherwise known as fecundation or ripening is vital to each new stage of development of the self-investigative process, in that it awakens within the researcher further dimensions of the tacit variety supporting the unfolding of deeper inquiry and offers firm assurance that one’s directional outlook is on target allowing for greater illumination, which may itself even be revealed only incrementally. This period should be allowed the greatest levity. Here, Viktor Frankl’s contribution on the subject:

There are certain activities that simply cannot be commanded, demanded or ordered, and as it happens, the triad "faith, hope and love" belongs to this class of activities that elude an approach with so to speak "command characteristics." Faith, hope and love cannot be established by command simply because they cannot be established that will. I cannot "will" to believe, I cannot "will" to hope, I cannot "will" to love— and least of all can I "will, to will”. (Frankl 1948, p. 16)

The Concept of “Illumination” In case of this study, proved to be illusive, which will be discussed further in the “results” section of this paper. Moustakas (1990) states:

Illumination is a process that occurs naturally, [ergo, the implication here is that the researcher can not push conclusions,] when the researcher is open to tacit knowledge and intuition...it's a break through to conscious awareness of qualities and clustering of qualities into themes that are inherent in the question...and possible awakening to new constituents of the experience... and, may involve

corrections of distorted understandings and disclosure of hidden meanings.

(Frankl, 1976, p. 29)

Moreover, and I repeat, this phase can become one of confusion, however it is completely necessary that the researcher remain flexible, reflective without conscious striving or concentration, and the modification will occur. Moustakas (1990.) What can occur is that which is commonly referred to in secular terms as “Ah Ha” moments, when, for example you discover additional features in another’s character to exist to which you were previously blind, that now present that person to you as being more multi-dimensional than they had appeared to be before.

The next phase that of explication is a naturally induced one. Formulation and articulation is a natural impulse, and it does not matter if all the data has yet been compiled or not, only that the researcher allow for this occurrence. In the case of this researcher, I discovered that the act of writing down all my thoughts as they occurred to me opened broader portals of insight and lead to a natural expression of further questioning and deeper qualitative research. Moustakas (1990) explains:

A comprehensive elucidation may also include the recognition of new constituents, and themes. In the explication process the researcher utilizes focusing, indwelling, self-searching, and self-disclosure and recognizes that the meanings are unique and distinctive to an experience and depend upon internal frames of reference. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 31)

Furthermore on this internal process he imparts:

The process of explication requires the researcher to adjust his focus and practice intense indwelling on the topic at under investigation. Only after several years of the examination of this topic did I begin a formulation of ideas worthy of being presented to participants whose insight and experience would eventually contribute to the resulting whole of the study. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 58)

Creative Synthesis. Having become thoroughly acquainted with the data derived from and throughout the investigative process over this ten—year research, the constituents, qualities, and themes resulting from the processes in hand, I commenced with the process of seeking out dominant themes presented by the research participants and gathering data obtained over the 8 months interviewing period. I then, had a firmer sense that a large enough picture was forming, perhaps not yet complete but expansive enough, to draw vivid conclusions regarding the topic of compassion and answer conclusively the question of whether or not compassion is of an innate origins or if it can or must be learned. Moustakas says “The creative synthesis can only be achieved through tacit and intuitive powers, it is essentially inspired and enabled by the preparatory steps of knowledge of the data, a period of solitude and meditation and focusing on the topic and the questions.” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 31)

Validation Of Heuristic Research: Methods Of Collecting, Organizing and Synthesizing Data

To the purpose of validating the procedures and the processes within the heuristic structure it is paramount that the research monitor results as they occur as well as apply instruments of measuring resulting out comes by addressing the data objectively.

In case of this study the first and on-going method of testing progress was that of mood observation, generated by thoughts, feelings and emotions. For the assessment of

daily progress I performed weekly monitoring of the daily journal entries. The second method was the incorporation of the "Big Mind Process" (Glossary.), instituted by the Zen teacher Dennis Merzel, otherwise known as Genpo Roshi. Big Mind is a specific technique that merges Western psychological techniques, specifically Voice Dialogue therapy with Buddhist concepts of self and mind. Merzel says of the Big Mind concept, "Each of us has innumerable voices, or aspects, within us. To get a clearer picture of how they operate, think of yourself for a moment as a large corporation with many, many employees. How many? Nobody knows." Ken Wilber expresses the usefulness of the process as follows, "We at Integral Institute have found this process to be so effective and profound, that we have made it a central part of our programs, seminars, and Integral Life Practice," Dennis Menzel, 2007. In the process one identifies such inner voices to which Menzel gives such name as: The Controller, The Protector, and the Punisher, etc.

The above-mentioned techniques are excellent for monitoring fluxes in daily disposition, patterns, reoccurrences and mental states, especially for the purpose of self-observation.

In order to assess these I asked the question, have you felt this way before? What were you doing when this or that feeling surfaced? Which voice were you entertaining at the time for example, was the authoritative controller occupying center stage? Who was in charge? This line of questioning is both figurative and literal.

The second method of daily monitoring was achieved by daily attendance to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings wherein this manner I could monitor my progress by accessing presently entertained attitudes, as to their intensity, gage quality of acceptance

or rejection of people, and observe ideas and feelings showing up personally and use these as a means of feedback.

I measured mood by observing my inner dialogue in response to others in attendance, was I super critical, ambivalent, concerned and detached, did I identify or was I closed to others? Did I feel shame or joy, was I willing or unwilling to be vulnerable? Upon reflection, after leaving a meeting did I consider myself the victim or did I mentally contemplate revenge toward another who I fancied to have slighted me in any way? Did I come away angry or was I calm? Had I been willing to connect with others? Over all, what were the feelings that arose during attendance? These questions could only be answered by being in the presence of other people.

Study Subjects and Research

A. A questionnaire was given each participant in the 15— person study. The questionnaire comprised a formulated Priory question and 8 secondary questions. (See appendix 3.)

B. The following secondary questions were posed in addition to the formal Question: how do you feel for, or against perpetrators? How do you respond to others in need? At what point do you feel compelled to act upon your feelings on behalf of the person who suffers? Do you recognize the difference between, pity, sentimentality, sympathy and the various forms of empathy? Was the understanding you have of compassion and the feeling you identify as compassion, learned or do you experience that it is an emotion that you were born with? Does age play a role in your ability to empathize or feel the emotion of compassion? Do you feel connected with “other” when

you recognize another suffering in any way? Or, do you feel separate or above or below or helpless?

C. Each participant received a participation release form offering the option of having their name included in the findings section of this paper or not. In general and for purposes of honoring anonymity most entries are not qualified with the participants name.

D. Data Measuring Instruments. Assessment of the answers to both the primary and secondary questions presented in the questionnaire and telephone interviews was carried out as follows: 1. A tally of the responses to both forms of the positively posed questions and the negatively posed questions, was established by adding the final number of the responses to both and based on the criteria of differentiating those who knew the difference between pity, sympathy, and various forms of empathy inclusive of overall tone of manner in answering the questions as being that of a sentimental or public opinion induced altruism, for example, “shouldn’t everyone be, or isn’t everyone compassionate?” or “everyone should love their neighbor, shouldn’t they?” per-wrote exclamations.

2. The following categories were created into which were placed the number of responses: a) Those who believed one must know themselves and their own suffering before being capable of experiencing organic—genuine compassion; b) Those who did not believe in such a prerequisite condition to the experiencing of organic—genuine—compassion. c) Those who believed that compassion must and can be learned and taught, d) Those whose experience it had been that growing compassion is a simultaneous outcome of maturation i.e., comes with age; and e) That compassion cannot exist in the individual unless that one has first suffered themselves. f) Also weighed are the responses

to the question of whether not one could consider compassion for the perpetrator in cases of abuse. The last category was created in the interim while undertaking the investigation, as it had, early on, often presented itself during the course of the interviews proving to be relevant, g) Noted were those who differentiated human suffering from animal suffering i.e., animal abuse; omissions or deletions. Special attention was paid to the assessment of differing data coming from those who are especially devout practitioners of a particular religion or spiritual practice and that derived from those interviewees whose views are of an atheistic nature.

3. Moustakas (1990) suggests at this stage of the data handling process that the researcher approach the material in the following manner:

The next step requires a return to the original data of the individual co-researcher. Does the individual depiction of the experience that the data from which it was developed? Does it contain the qualities and themes essential to the experience? If it does, the researcher is ready to move on to the next co-researcher. If not, the individual depiction must be revised to include what has been omitted or deleted, and what are or are not essential dimensions of the experience. The individual depiction may also be shared with the research participant for affirmation of its comprehensiveness and accuracy and for suggested deletions and additions.
(Moustakas, 1990, p. 52)

4. My own assessment of the individual participants could now be added and assimilated to the data derived from the participants and the subjective evaluation of my own experience with the topic, i.e., level of honesty from which, I felt, each participant was sharing or offering themselves to the interview process or subtle resistances to

addressing tentative themes. Tacit assessment was the last and final applied measurement which was framed within the question of whether or not, and if so, how much and to what extent, the interview process influenced me, and the interview participants.

5. The qualities relating to compassion and subsequent suffering as well, were weighed in with the experience I had extrapolated from my personal subjective research, carried out over the past ten—year period resulting in discovered correlations between both the resulting data from my own process and that of the participants.

6. After I used what had been acquired from periods of immersion countered by periods of rest and reflection regarding the data, “until the universal qualities and themes of the experience are thoroughly internalized and understood” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 52). Further he notes:

The composite depiction includes all the core meanings of the phenomenon as experienced by the individual participants and by the group as a whole...the individual portraits should be presented in such a way that both the phenomenon investigated and the individual persons emerge in a vital and unified manner. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 52)

For a summarized version of Clark’s heuristic methodology for data collection and analysis, (APPENDIX C.)

7. Synthesis and assessment of the collected data including resulting themes emerging from the over all study are addressed in the following: CHAPTER 4.

Additional practices may be substituted or used for the deepening process inherent in data collection template presented in this chapter, however, none of these proposed, may be eliminated or side-stepped. One of the intrinsic features of this process of investigation is that of working counter to propensities incurred through Western

socialization paradigms, such as, quick fix, immediately please, this too shall pass, secular and non-secular psychology, the heuristic formula requires that the researcher be with, intensely engaged and extremely intimate and vulnerable to and with the topic under examination.

Mundane influences continually pull at the conscious mind blocking it from becoming engaged with the subconscious or to confront influences streaming in from collective archetypes. If one is painstaking in their approach to discovering the nature of a particular phenomenon for themselves, they may open a door to novelty, and its potential contribution may make a powerful impact on the life of both the individual as well as the collective whole, encouraging, and perhaps validating heuristic inquiry as a way of life.

CHAPTER 4

THE ACCUMULATED DATA

Spirituality is recognizing and celebrating that all beings are all inextricably connected to each other by a power greater than all of us, and that our connection to that power and to one another is grounded in love and compassion. Practicing spirituality brings a sense of perspective, meaning and purpose to our lives. (Brown, 2010, p. 67)

Restatement Of The Study Questions

To the purpose of maintaining consistency in the presentation of the following research question, received by all co-researching participants in this study, no alterations to the original have been made, and are here re-stated in the original formulation.

Is it necessary to know oneself in order to facilitate the experience of having compassion for others and does this compassion allow for a deeper acknowledgment of kinship with all life? The terms of my question, as I am using them, mean: can one really experience true compassion by studying others or must one first know themselves, in order to truly empathize with another. Or is it not necessary to know oneself at all, but observe in the world around them all that they see, and thereby experience the idea of compassion?

Does engaging yourself in a study of self, and getting to know yourself, lead to greater understanding of the world around you, and if so, does this understanding, generated from within, create the capacity in you for a deeper experience of intimacy and empathy, love and compassion for all living things? On the other hand, does self-study

leave you more isolated and disconnected from the world around you? What is your experience of the subject overall?”(David Allan Lane. February, 2013.)

Concepts of Separation

The dis—ease that arises from the delusion of separateness is the ultimate suffering of which the Buddha taught and is the root cause of every personal and societal ill. At the heart of this misperception of reality is the inability to recognize the basic interconnectedness of all human beings, to their society, and all living things. Others too, such as Mary Baker Eddy, the discoverer and founder of Christian Science, the channelers of The Course in Miracles and Jesus Christ himself, (alleged), have all asserted that all living creatures are not, nor have we ever been, separate from the creator or all that is created.

The misperception that we are separate, viewed in the light of this discourse and its findings, turns out to be a perpetuation of the idea that we should not feel separate. It has also been made apparent through my encounter with the study participants that there is a strong possibility that the cause underlying a belief in separation is the fact that we are sentient beings, experiencing the world through our five corporeal senses. There seems to be a standard expectation that these senses should experience nothing outside of the pleasurable, when in fact feeling what the senses do; what the senses cognize can often be quite painful.

Throughout the period of this study, over and over again, through my own process of self-investigation, and by that performed with the study participants, it was revealed, that there exists a particular tendency to the striving for perfection into which there can fit

no concepts of the indefinable or not yet completely formed human, and above all no suffering.

From the suffering or pain however, there is no escaping. Especially if the sentient being under investigation is human and definitely not if the phenomenon he is being requested to examine is compassion.

During the course of a Heuristic study questions inevitably arise as to the nature of subjective observation. Deciphering the factual from the conjectural is challenging. Personally, there is some mechanism within me that does not want to speculate. I prefer provable fact to estimated judgment. However, it is the very nature of heuristics to deduce from a study into the nature of a given phenomenon that such and such is probable or not, through the process of observation and ones personal experience of that which is observed. Perhaps I am nervous, that the reader will view me as one projecting my expectations toward a matter and voicing merely my disappointment or approval of the present findings. At times this may be the case for I am human after all and it is in my nature to *conject* and judge. Nevertheless, I have earnestly sought within the context of those questions presented in the questionnaire to remain as objective as possible.

Ideas Adopted

From the interviewees I gathered, for the most part, that there is a sense of idealism toward doing the right thing that drives them. That which caused me to become suspicious of what they shared with me; as to whether what they were sharing was truth for them or mere wishful thinking, were preconceived notions of my own, set by my having known the participants personally, or through their writings, all of which colored my assessment of them and in constricted from the sensations I experienced in my

dealings with them. It inevitably became clear to most of us that, one may profess to be and do a particular thing and that this is often times, quite different from that which one actually does, or are capable of doing. Often too, one may profess to be or do something, in an *act as if* manner in the hopes of eventually becoming that which they profess. This is in part, the nature of learning. Throughout, I was made aware, by an observably expressed incongruence of the actuality of one's experience of true compassion in contrast to the lesser forms of caring. When I registered slogans and hallmark expressions of how one should be kind to his neighbor for example, I would cringe.

I couldn't help but suspect that they did not know the true meaning of what they were professing or that these ideals had been hard won through any effort on their part to either understand the meaning of the words they were using or that they had ever engaged themselves with their own suffering. Many claim to know themselves without the slightest inclination of the auto-motoric impulses at work within them and how their thoughts, speech and actions affect other people.

A Desire To Be Heard

The few, three or four, who impressed me the most were those whose manner and art of encounter with me expressed a reflective and thoughtful nature, not in what they professed, but in what I would call a manner of being. I could tell immediately who had done the inner work and who had not. Eighty percent of the co-researchers were experiencing for the first time, by way of the interview process itself, the nature of engagement with the topic of compassion, let alone in connection with the prospect of self-investigation.

What I am saying here is by no means an implication that people, in general, are insincere in their efforts toward being kind. Kindness is definitely needed in our world. The question still remains however, even after this investigation, as to that quality of compassion that might possibly become expressed in the world, when it is derived from the result of our focus of investigation that has been directed toward self-discovery and not conjured into existence by a pre-suppositional dictate from a collective, a collective that instinctually seeks the easiest road of least resistance to a practiced altruism.

My own inner work did bring about an altered state of awareness with regards to compassion. My own discoveries of personal hidden and denied, painful experiences and un-clarified trauma, brought out into the light and handled, emphatically altered my perception of the world around me, and the people in it. I cannot imagine demanding that another behave, as I would expect them to in order to assuage my own guilt or insecurities. I can no longer imagine putting anything in my body that suffered in any conscious and sentient way. NO animal products enter into this body. Likewise any vexing form of interchange between myself, and another can be undergone in full confidence and trust that whatever the problem there is always a solution that will serve all involved parties. I can experience compassion arising in me and not act on the impulse to run from it when it becomes too strong to bear. Perhaps this is a newly developed experience of Tonglen that affords me to do so. I can take it all in, I imagine myself to be the universe, large enough to contain it all, and exercise the power to bless it, and allow whatever the suffering, to flow back out in to the world. I am left with gratitude for that suffering that has come to me in service to a greater awakening of compassion within myself and potentially in the world.

Further on in this chapter I make suggestions for what I believe would be an appropriate and potentially promising study focused solely on the function of the self-investigating process, with compassion as its primary goal.

Condensed Version Of Results And Findings

1. There is cause for dissociation and disconnection. Fact: closeness and intimacy result in feelings, and feelings can be painful.

2. “If you only knew with what discrepancy I view myself and that on the contrary, how I would like to be viewed, you would not want to know me.”

3. Compassion is innate; compassion is hidden.

4. Compassion must be called forth.

5. Suffering is, the company that compassion must keep in order to be expressed more potently.

6. Without suffering and pain there would be no “calling forth” of compassion.

7. Connection and engagement with others and with life itself, create the potential pain required for the expression of compassion.

8. No—connection—with, no—engagement—with others, results in no pain, save for the pain of isolation. Compassion is aroused through the awakening of the preliminary—empathic—centers of activation in the human biological organism, by observed suffering of pain or joy, both transmissible.

9. Isolation, dissociation from aspects of self or other, from both inner and outer influences, and disconnection is the protective facility the entity creates as a way of avoiding possible pain and suffering.

10. Vulnerability is preliminary to intimacy.

11. Possible and perceived experiences of pain and the avoidance of such, creates the need for violence, discourse, disharmony, chaos and negative confrontational measures to insure contact, albeit void of responsibility.

12. Once contact is made projections are focused onto the other and assimilation can begin.

13. Understanding requires engagement.

14. No engagement, no compassion.

15. Pity is a good example of distancing ones self from perceived, and possible recurrences of painful memories and the further possibility of being wounded.

16. As to whether or not compassion can be taught and learned, the consensus tends toward the affirmative. However, no amount of teaching, either with definitions or examples can be assumed in substitution to the actual experience of compassion, they are, and must remain, merely informative, promissory, and provisional directives to preferred behavior, which is most likely intended to increase awareness of its existence.

Religious And Fundamental Views

I felt saddened and found it unfortunate that the three participants who supposedly held strong moral ideals left with the sense of feeling un-empowered. I sensed strongly, too, that although they would like to be manifestations of the ideals to which they themselves aspire, they knew not themselves, for how could they if they had never been on an inner journey and embraced what they found there? And knowing that I do that critical judgment stems from a lack of self-love and self-acknowledgment even a base of self-condemnation, I could do no more than feel pity for them, for such was the odiousness of their self-righteousness. Therefore, I myself could not get past their

expressions of adopted beliefs that man should “Love Thy Neighbor as Thy self” and “There But For the Grace of God go I’s”. Nevertheless, I could see in them a genuine desire to be helpful toward others.

Pain And Suffering Within The Context Of Compassion

Through this study I have come to suspect that all of life is G-d expressed. The vehicles necessary for this creator to recognize Its Self as acknowledged, is, in this realm, achievable through the extension of the five (six) corporeal senses.

The impressions received through these senses can be pain inducing. When experienced at any level of greater depth, these experiences can cause the individual to disconnect, ergo, the idea of separation. If someone or something else experiences the pain, that is a tolerable state of affairs, but not for the observer to have to experience the pain inducing impressions himself; that is a different story.

However, pain is inevitable and compassion will have her day, have her expression; in other words it seeks expression and there is only one way in which to grant her the wish; either by the person making themselves vulnerable or by conflict. Either way compassion will be expressed. It is the proof of our connectedness and cause for a compromised conscience. Gurdjieff, the Russian philosopher said: “There is little in the way of spirituality that can be achieved without suffering in life.” (Gurdjieff, 1999, p. 47)

In answer to this Baba Ram Das explains:

But at the same time, if you are going to proceed on the journey you must sacrifice suffering. You hear the dual nature of it. You have to have suffered because the suffering is what burns through you and deepens the compassion and opens the door. Suffering brings you closer to the mystery. At the same moment if

you hold on to the suffering and grab at it and sort of wallow in it or cling to it, it stops the journey. (Ram Das, 2008)

Confrontation and encounter and the background of relatedness:

In her book *Daring Greatly* (2012) Brene Brown, explains the power and the necessity for offering the assurance to someone who is grieving or suffering loss or pain of any kind that he or she is not alone. This reflects one of the aspects of compassion. In the following example this principle is shown through a framework of a call to action for all of us who want to do something to support veterans returning from war. “Dare greatly and take actions that communicate to veterans or military families, [anyone in pain,] that they are not alone. Actions that communicate, “Your struggles are my struggles. Your trauma is my trauma, your healing is my healing.” The process of healing is generated as well, by engaging in the fashion as I have just mentioned, with one’s self. (Brown, 2012, p. 157)

Kristin Neff, who has developed an assessment scale of self-compassion used by many therapists, clarifies the quality of compassion in the following way: “Compassion is, by definition, relational. Compassion literally means, “to suffer with,” which implies a basic mutuality in the experience of suffering. The emotion of compassion springs from the recognition that the human experience is imperfect” (Neff, 2011, p. 87) and (Appendix D)

The pain I feel in difficult times is the same pain that you feel in difficult times. The triggers are different, the circumstances are different, the degree of pain is different, but the basic experience is the same.

Internal Frame Of Reference

When I first began the Heuristic journey of inquiry into the phenomenon of compassion it was with the sole intent of becoming a better person. I was well aware of the many troubling aspects of my character. I had come to refer to them as nuisances, rough edges, and outright blocks against me having my life the way I idealized it could be. I was plagued by jealousy, bouts of depression, and a feeling of anxiety when I thought on the possibility of the impending doom, which was, as I later discovered, not of a fated future, rather an ever present motor driving me from behind, further into the ultimate fulfillment of a self-fulfilling prophecy of death.

The ever-present fear that accompanied my existence was not a hindrance, in fact, fear was my partner, the driving force that urged me onward to Puritanical, power, and materialistic success, with one major caveat; what I really wanted to have was spiritual power and success. In my mind this desire ran contrary to my fear motivated goals. It seemed to me that all the people I witnessed and knew who desired spiritual success were all looking for some materialistic manifestation to feed their own sagacity and low self-esteem. They were, in my book, not willing to face their own humanity. Even, it appeared, they seemed to be striving to attain a state of complete denial of their humanity and ascend to some heavenly place with money in their pockets which they had collected on earth while having lived these marvelous lives, even if it was at the expense of other people. *Heuchlers* as I called them, the German word for hypocrites. It all seemed selfish to me and I wanted no part of it. So I studied the teachings of the mystics. I sought out writers on spiritual matters who I felt were sincere and who seemed to have no ultimate agendas other than being of love and service, which by the way, frightened me somewhat

as well. For many years I walked a two-forked road between material advancement and spiritual destiny.

I fantasized that one—day I would become known for my great altruism, as a contributor to the world with hopes of becoming all the while, a great escapist.

But, alas, it had been me, myself standing in the way of becoming anything of the kind belonging to such a nobler path of truth.

As I wrote before in this paper, when I became ill with kidney failure and some other illnesses I would rather leave in the hands of my sense of a higher power, and owing to my Christian Science understanding, not expose the knowledge thereof to the greater public, I knew that the “jig was up” —to use the vernacular—and I was going to have to transform my life.

It was with a sense of shame at having failed at the game of life, as if life had been a game, a very serious one at that, that, I embarked upon this heuristic journey. In my mind I had failed at maintaining health, failed at a spiritual life intended to keep me healthy, and I had failed to make a name for myself as an entertainer, teacher and altruist.

It had become apparent to me, I had no real concern for others, and I owed this to a lack in my ability to generate compassion for others. Self-compassion had become a question as well, was I not simply being defensive by not allowing, what I called, derisive and vexing people into my life? Was I not actually self-centered and self-serving, as I accused others of being? Was I not cut off from the world in my castle of isolation? Certainly, up until the time of collapse I had helped a lot of people fulfill their dreams, but didn't I desire acknowledgement for this and recognition for my talent as a teacher?

Had it not indeed been all about wanting to be seen? I discovered through this process that I wanted both. I wanted to be invisible, and I wanted to be seen.

Early into the self- inquiry process I realized that I frankly did not want anyone to get close enough to see how utterly devious I really was, how selfish and how frightened I was of losing my cloak of invisibility and most of all and on the contrary, how absolutely necessary it was for me to experience the feeling of being loved and having my love mirrored backed to me in the eye of my beloved; the beloveds then were captives of my projected ideals of what love is, never an open door for others to enter through as themselves.

To the reader I state here that these are not exaggerations of trumped-up self-criticisms, they are fact and it is by way of the self-investigative process; a search for an understanding of compassion, of which I now report, that I am able to correctly perceive things as they were, and now as they are.

At all times and under all circumstances, overcome evil with good. Know thyself and God will supply the armor of divinity the wisdom and the occasion for a victory over evil. Clad in the panoply of Love, human hatred cannot reach you.

The cement of a higher humanity will unite all interests in the one divinity. (Eddy, 1876, p. 571, sec.15)

Up until the time that my health failed me, I had not been completely honest with myself. I had become trapped within the confines of ideals and dictates I had previously refused to adopt. Nonetheless, I was being driven by the desire for money property and prestige. I had become trapped in the mechanicals of being and living. I felt confined by

the realm of my own self-imposed constructs based on fear, that compelled me to either do that which I would not do, and hindered me from doing that which I would.

In practical terms, at age of 48, I had come to the close of a Siddhartha-like phase of my life (Herman Hesse's interpretation of the "being in the world stage" of Master Buddha's enlightenment process), a lifestyle which had entailed the acquisition of things, misguided carnality, mistaken and contradicting values based on fitting myself into the world of business, independence to the point of isolation, "going for my dreams," striving for holiness and all the while seemingly void of any depth. That an end to this phase had been terminated by failed health shocked me to no end, that in spite of all my spiritual endeavors, initially intended to keep me healthy, I was now indeed, facing death.

Personal Journey: Findings

During the initial engagement of self-inquiry I reexamined a number of the many popular, for profit, quick fix, healing elixirs on the market, all of which had indeed afforded me valuable awareness in their own way in years past. These were temporal however. Out of respect for these and with deference to those who may in some way profit from them, I will not here mention any of them by name. For the most part they had all left me empty and had only promoted more disquiet in me. They had been but fingers pointing toward the moon and not the moon its self. They had, I realized, assisted me in merely getting over, whatever discomfort had prompted me at the time I used them. They did not bring me to myself; to become acquainted with the deeper aspects of my humanity would have been too painful and might have even disturbed the manufactured, functional world I had created for myself. In that world I was pretty much prone to go for my heart's materially based desires that included the struggle for success and the

proverbial "make a name for myself" and ultimately attain immortality. But, I was not happy, and I had to admit that all of the striving for self-improvement, underlined by the desire to impose myself onto the world and procreate myself to fame and acknowledgement had resulted in a state of being far from that of happy.

"Happiness is a by-product of living a life of meaning with purpose."

(Frankl, 2007)

Hence, I set out to discover some as yet indefinable purpose to my life.

Eschewing all previously entertained pop psychology and pop spirituality, and divorcing myself from all the previously encountered self-help, moneymaking machinery of popular programming, from which I had drawn but worldly strength, and in which I had come to have little faith, I embarked upon a journey that I hoped would result in a connected and genuinely compassionate life. I could not will myself to compassion nor could I will myself to study these any longer. What I did retain from them all became fodder for the work that lay ahead. I assimilated what I could from them and embarked upon the search for the meaning of compassion, as I instinctively felt the lack of this to be inherently at the root of a stunted capacity to connect intimately with others.

Once I had made the decision to examine my life in a new and more fearless way, I quickly began the period of profound inquiry. The more sincere my line of questioning the higher there arose a desire to know and understand more. I was after origins; or as close proximity thereto, the experience of which I sensed all the while could best be discovered by way of engagement with applied metaphysics. This appealed to my sensitivity for mysticism.

There were a few lines of study from which I retained enough assimilated understanding with which to bare the journey that lay before me. Even though I was letting these go, one by one, and had promised myself to pick them up again in the future, when I had more of an authentic self with which to address them. I had learned that there were common viable truths inherent in their teachings that might still serve and support me along my path. I had faith that whatever I had not yet grasped from them would eventually be revealed.

There were three areas of study that had impressed me most, that supplied me with the potential for truth; upon which I could continue to rely.

Previous engagement with the discourses presented in “A Course in Miracles” had taught me that I could be one hundred percent assured that as a human being I possessed the propensity to project erroneous images out on to the world, borne of a false belief in separation of self from others and the world on the whole, as existent outside of myself.

I had learned not to take another’s version of truth on authority and to do the work and discover for myself. Thereby, I had become more critical of claims as to what G-d is or isn’t, what he wants or how I should or should not view him. Not believing everything I see and hear, as a practice, helped me to slowly discover an inner individual compass that I have come to trust.

Christian Science: Findings

The teachings of Christian Science were more challenging, yet, at the time, more immediately applicable to every day living due to the purely Christian tenets and the relentless demand on the individual to practice the un-seeing of error that called me to be

one-pointed in purpose and practice the Golden Rule, as second to none after “loving G-d with all one’s heart and soul.” However I discovered in these teachings, interpreted by Mary Baker Eddy, who considered herself to have been chosen to bring enlightening interpretation to the words of Jesus and the understanding of their true meaning, dichotomies with which I could not reconcile.

Scientific Statement of Being:

There is no life, truth, intelligence, nor substance in matter. All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation, for God is All-in-all. Spirit is immortal Truth, Matter is mortal error. Spirit is the real and eternal, matter is the unreal and temporal. Spirit is God, and man is His image and likeness. Therefore man is not material, he is spiritualm

(Eddy, 1876, p. 124: 15—24)

How could the Scientific Statement of Being in one breath declare Christ teachings able to explain G-ds’ relationship to man; declare that G-d is All-in-all and that all is good, and in that same breath exclude anything appearing to be unlike this template, as being erroneous and false-the human idea of body as well. It seemed to me as, I investigated deeper and deeper into the teachings, that that which was true from my understanding was that there is no separation between G-d and man, none whatsoever. If G-d is All-in-all then this includes everything, all that we label good, bad right and wrong, ugly and beautiful, made of the same consciousness of the creator. Impersonally grasped, I ought to reject anything. It appeared to me through insights garnered from my Buddhist practice that the more correct pretense for me to hold in order to gain a truer understanding and be affective in the world, a purpose I entertained and had chosen long

ago to be my path, was to view everything equally, with no gradations of value placed on anything; all being of equal use in the grander scheme of a much bigger picture than I believe myself ever capable of understanding, toward which I remain impartial, unbiased and of which I maintain indiscriminate acceptance.

The discrepancy, in my understanding, led me to let go of my Christian Science practice. Subsequently I was losing faith in the one thing I had hoped would show me the way to health. Ultimately I had come to a place where I could no longer rely on outside teachings. I instinctively felt that any answers I was going to obtain were to be found in all of the aspects of my being, all the unexplored pain, the unexamined wounds from child-hood, all the undiscovered gifts, if there were any, and acquaintance with a mind that was uniquely mine and not filled with adopted and digested beliefs and ideas not necessarily my own.

Yet, as I have discovered for myself, through this line of deferential thinking there is nothing invaluable in the universe. The feeling that accompanies this idea is that of personal solace and joy, and a healthy regard for the suffering endured by all sentient life. Too, I have learned that I need not fret for having never been able to manufacture the feeling of forgiveness, for I have come to know through experience that through the medium of increased understanding, flows eventually, in equal measure the compassion for another that in no way implies the condoning of actual or imagined harm done.

Here I confer upon the reader a relevant quote from Mary Baker Eddy, the discoverer and founder of Christian Science.

Taking Offense:

There is immense wisdom in the old proverb, "He
That is slow to anger is better than the mighty." Hannah

More said, "If I wished to punish my enemy, I should
Make him hate somebody."

To punish ourselves for others' faults is superlative
Folly. The mental arrow shot from another's bow is
Practically harmless, unless our own thought barbs it.
It is our pride that makes another's criticism rankle, our
Self-will that makes another's deed offensive, our egotism
That feels hurt by another's self-assertion. Well may we
Feel wounded by our own faults; but we can hardly afford
To be miserable for the faults of others.

A courtier told Constantine that a mob had broken
The head of his statue with stones. The emperor lifted
His hands to his head, saying: "It is very surprising, but
I don't feel hurt in the least."

We should remember that the world is wide; that there
Are a thousand million different human wills, opinions,
Ambitions, tastes, and loves; that each person has a differ-
ent history, constitution, culture, character, from all the
Rest; that human life is the work, the play, the ceaseless
Action and reaction upon each other of these different
Atoms. Then, we should go forth into life with the smallest
Expectations, but with the largest patience; with a keen
Relish for and appreciation of everything beautiful, great,
And good, but with a temper so genial that the friction

Of the world shall not wear upon our sensibilities; with
An equanimity so settled that no passing breath nor
Accidental disturbance shall agitate or ruffle it; with a
Charity broad enough to cover the whole world's evil, and
Sweet enough to neutralize what is bitter in it, de-
termined not to be offended when no wrong is meant, nor
Even when it is, unless the offense be against God.

Nothing short of our own errors should offend us. He
Who can willfully attempt to injure another, is an object
Of pity rather than of resentment; while it is a question
In my mind, whether there is enough of a flatterer, a fool
Or a liar, to offend a whole-souled woman

(Eddy, 1888—1896, p. 223).

This is a great ideal toward which to strive, yet such equanimity of which she spoke, in my mind, requires a deep awareness of the self, not simply in practice but in action inspired by authentically aroused understanding of myself in relationship to others.

Esoteric Sciences: Findings

“The point to understand is that we do not study the ancient wisdoms in the hopes of escaping this world, but rather in order that we can live in both worlds more fully” (Lane/Baker, personal communication, February 1987).

In a similar ardor Karen Armstrong submits this thought:

“Mythology and science both extend the scope of human beings. Like science and technology, mythology, as we shall see, is not about opting out of this world, but about enabling us to live more intensely within it” (Armstrong, 2008, p. 2)

Esoteric wisdom, grounded in the ancient Tibetan teachings, is a tradition of ancient esoteric spirituality known as The Ageless Wisdom tradition, these, are said to have been channeled through Alice Bailey from a Tibetan disciple Djwal Khul, variously known as Master D.K., as his name is generally written. It is through these teachings that I have invariably come to understand the significance of the philanthropic preparation of the individual personality, that which is most commonly referred to as the ego, to become transformed into being of invaluable service to, and the realization of the Soul's purpose. Perhaps this is the reason most Westerners mistakenly regard, however with spiritually motivated endeavor, the addressing of the ego, as being a thing that ultimately and preferably is in need of annihilation. This is misleading on all accounts for as long as one is in this physically manifest form people will possess an ego. In what better manner, can man stand in service to his fellows than in offering them the possibility of a soul encounter, facilitated through a wholly awakened personality.

I recall my Christian Science teacher once suggesting to his students that man stands and acts as ambassador of heaven in this earthly realm, as representatives of truth won through understanding, and as examples, the model of which is man-realized. (G-d realized as man; my teacher's words). I strive daily to exemplify this admonishment notwithstanding the clumsiness with which I sometimes bare the challenges presented me here in this horizontal realm.

Throughout my research, the more stable my understanding of the esoteric teachings grew, the more applicable the insights into the age old questions with which my mind has been consistently occupied even to this day; they were and are, " Who am I? " "Where do I come from? " "What is my soul's purpose?" Such was the cosmological and suppositional stance from which I worked daily, during the course of this investigation.

The results of inquiry executed along these lines of thought are three-fold. Paramount is the sense of the probability of many more dimensions of existence than my mundane senses can cognize. Secondly, I cannot cognize anything that does not exist within the sphere of my own cosmological composition, and that the more I participate in the world and allow myself to be vulnerable to the resulting adversities inevitable in a life not yet outlived, the more I experience of the rising compassion within me.

Thirdly, having listened to the experiences of others who have lost loved ones and my own reflection on my own losses, it seems to me that when one's role has been played out in both their immediate sphere to which one belongs, and in a greater sense to the whole, that entity in human form departs. Remembered in thought, for word and deed, and kept alive by whatever form of progeny with which that person has left us.

The Artist's Way: Findings

The functional beneficial day—by—day practices presented by Julia Cameron, in her course *The Artists' Way* (1992) is a twelve—week creativity recovery course that afforded me relentless possibilities for therapeutic catharsis.

Having represented and facilitated her work in Berlin, for seven years, I had developed habitual artistic practices that had become indelibly entrenched. I incorporated

these practices into the self-investigative process on the nature of compassion. From the moment I began my research every artistic creation became a cathartic experience.

Along with the first and most constant practices presented in the Artist' Way is that of daily journaling. One is to write at least three pages each morning before the "critic" as Julia Cameron calls it, starts in with its precarious jabbering and before the desires to accomplish the days' tasks that lie ahead, crowd out the voice of one's inner knowing.

The second maintenance task is daily walks and weekly visits to someplace yet unexplored. These are intended to create the space through which spontaneous thoughts and creative ideas can flow.

The remainder of the creative practices she presents, are to be lived out through whatever creative genre to which one is drawn, and in whatever the medium one wishes to work. At the onset, I have to say, seldom for me was it, that an artistic act was carried out without pain. Joy, though fleeting, came only at the time of completion.

To best explicate my findings derived from this study on the phenomenon in question, this author, will begin with, what for him, are essentially novel insights brought about by the practices noted in the chapter on methodology in this paper.

Into the darker realms of the psyche where the hidden and repulsive reside;

I have always found creativity in the form of painting, sculpting and writing, cathartic and frightening. One may wonder why I engage myself in the practice of creating something, supposedly out of nothing. It is a matter of compulsion. I can no more not work in the genres listed in CHAPTER 2, than I can refuse to see that which is being presented before my eyes and refuse to see it for what it is.

I work with synchronicity in entering daily into my world. A dream, an overheard word or expression picked up during the course of my daily living, an impression derived by watching a movie, or an impulse arising from within that urges me to document its meaning in form.

Three episodes stand in striking relief as examples of catharsis while seeking to understand compassion.

The Wood—Horse

The first is that of a moment when I spent 3 weeks removing layers of paint from a beautifully and intricately carved image of a horse, which stood 2.5 feet tall. I had taken on the project not only for its beauty and the pre-vision I beheld of the eventual finished project after stripping, I saw this piece as representative of the asserted horse-like qualities of my Chinese horoscope I was born in the year according to the Chinese calendar, of the wooden horse. This work was going to be my way of engaging myself with the qualities and significance of the horse. At first the layers of paint came melting off the surface but as I approached the level of the wood its self the job became much more challenging and I found myself quite often frustrated and irritated.

The expense of energy eventually, became too high for me to find joy in the work as the demand for perfection became greater the more intricate the removal of the paint became. I finally took the entire 20—pound object and placed it in the bathtub. Using a steel brush I began to clash myself in opposition to the tenacious remaining paint sticking to the crevasses. I became increasingly aggressive and extremely angry and I began cursing my mother. The anger grew into rage, and soon I found myself, screaming at the top of my lungs at the image of the horse in the tub with each successive stroke of the

steal brush. Furious after several minutes of outburst, I had to declare the work incomplete. I knew I was going to have to work on my submerged feelings of bitterness toward my mother.

Gradually I presumed the work of paint removal. Soon I came to understand that I had never really accepted the truth that my mother had abandoned me, that she had rejected me into an orphanage, and though she had taken me back after a year and a half's incarceration, continued to subject me throughout my childhood and way beyond my departure from the family at age sixteen, to her abuse. My father crossed over in 1995. In the creative and engaging setting with the wood horse, I was becoming increasingly angry with myself, for continuing to overlook my own feelings, while continually attempting to win her approval and acceptance, that I had chosen for so many years to dumb myself to a profound fact that the price I was paying to solicit the validation so that I would not have to feel the shame of having not accepted myself, was intimacy with others. In my mind, I was not as pure as I thought I had to be in order to be acceptable, either in the eyes of G-d or man.

The horse eventually became pure wood without a speck of paint. I added a wooden sphere up under its raised—in—prance—striding hoof to signify the victory over self-blindness to these facts, revealed thought the refurbishing process of the wooden horse. (Fig: 1).

YOU—Must Turn

The other occurrence was one of a more significantly proverbial nature. I had been having conversations with a Christian Science practitioner for a couple of years beginning from the onset of my time in Palm Springs. The practitioner and I had been

talking about the impatience I exhibited whenever we talked about the more tenaciously clinging defects of my character and my deep desire to correct them. As I have reported I was quite isolated during my sojourn there and I felt secure in the fact that it was not only myself with whom I could confided my progress. At this time I was still quite self-willed. When is the healing going to occur? Why am I so alone in my own world? Will I ever get it, what is compassion, why can I not feel it? What is joy? Disparaged at the thought of ever being able to experience joy, because I was so screwed up, I often found myself in resignation of a prognosis of healing. I was still trying to learn a trade, faux finishing, perfumery, aquatics teaching, all so that I could keep control over my own survival. One day, she told me that I had the power to correct them if I would become willing to look at and engage myself with the erroneous thoughts about myself that lay much deeper in my thinking. She then asked me whose mind was doing the thinking here? I told her I thought it was my justifying mind and that I had come to rely upon this mind for support in moments of decision-making. Knowing that I had exposed myself as a non-trusting soul, I asked, well, how do I know when it's the mind of G-d I am thinking with or when it's my mind? She answered wisely, "oh, you'll know."

A couple of days following our discussion and like a dream within a dream, I dreamt that one of my cats was trying to get into my clothes closet. I asked her calmly, not to do that. This was the tone in which I had come to speak with my animals over many years, because I had vowed long before to practice reverence toward animals and was still learning how to give them the benefit of the doubt when communicating with them no matter what they did. In this dream however, I was becoming stern with her. My other cat was walking in the background, oblivious to our exchange and I told him I

would feed him soon. Still in the dream, and no sooner than I had laid back down to return to my sleep the first cat came running up the stairs to inform me that there was something very important downstairs she wished to show me. When I arrived at the foot of the landing and turned to look at the stairs, she was slowly descending the stairs. Out of her head was growing an olive tree, with three Hebrew letters hanging fruit-like from three of its branches. I tried to decipher them and blurted out what I thought it meant. She, the cat, then spoke to console me, you, must—turn; the —you— being strongly emphasized. In the branches of the tree was a white dove with its wings spread open and welcoming, not in such a fashion as that of beckoning, rather of announcing my possibilities.

That same day I set about to replicate all that I had seen, onto a six by almost three-foot canvas. Not knowing what the three letters meant, I had to look them up. It came to the abbreviated form for which I used the following abbreviation read from right to left: shin, dalet, mem. (Fig: 2)

I came to discover a clarification of this phrase in Deuteronomy 30: 1—6, of the Bible, King James Version. In a certain ethereal way I took the depiction to be an offering such as in the form of a promissory note that I would be deeply rewarded if I kept to the path of my inner journey. I did not realize just how much pain I had yet to experience and how deeply I had hidden the secrets, I then sensed, when once uncovered could render such far-reaching rewards.

Earth Steward

This third experience of feeling compelled to express outwardly an inner transition came to mean through a dream.

Subsequent to the ten—year period of self-searching and examination into the theme of suffering, compassion and the emotional matrices of adversity that prevent compassion access to fuller expression, and around the time of preliminary interviews with the co-researchers commenced, I had a dream.

The dream occurred during a very challenging phase at which I had arrived in what had then been a three—year term of psychotherapy. I had been in what I felt to be at the time, a state of suspension with the writing of this dissertation, the processes I was personally undergoing its result and deliberating over the idea of synthesis.

There had, as is to be expected, been a great deal I had already experienced in my 59—year presence in this world, and engagement with the topics of compassion, and self-faced traumatic experiences of the past, had created in me, a strong impulse to make sense of it all; I suspected still that all of it could be of good use in assisting others in surmounting similar challenges as I had.

I was also thinking in terms of alchemy and the idea that something totally unique might be born of the work I was doing. But, I thought, “Where is the philosophers’ stone needed to turn all of it into useful gold?” the answer did not come to me immediately, however, I supposed that, perhaps the experiences of suffering and pain might just fit the bill. I had often thought this in earlier times but I had never taken the initiative to approach what I called the darker sides of my nature until I had begun the process of self-examination.

In the dream a friend of mine who is a Shaman—healer comes to me bearing a tray hosting two slimy mounds. He does not speak, yet I intuit that this tray is being presented with a silent admonishment to, take care.

As my friend is leaving I stand staring at the two globs of whatever they are, on the tray.

I sense too, that it is precarious to mix them together, but not deadly. So, I take the risk, it's what I am tempted and compelled to do.

I take the more solid chunks of matter from one and combine them to the more smarmy solution of the heap displayed next to it.

I observe the exponential *chemicalization* process that then unfolds. No smoke like I had expected. Rather, the combined formulations begin to take shape and soon I can make out the definitive lines of a figure developing before me. As it reaches two feet in height and a half-foot in diameter, a clearly defined image emerges.

It is a figure of a Russian Cossack like form. Upon its head there is a helmet not unlike that en-figured in images of old English century gear. The features in the face are stern, remanding and benevolent. A headdress is falling down about the shoulders from the headgear. The shoulders of the image are broad and robust from which are hanging excessively long arms at the end of which are hands that care for the calves and the military type boots that cover them. The image is cloaked from shoulder to foot in a large thick woolen trench coat, around which is tied a large belt at the waste, buckled by a brass buckle into which is embossed an emblem I cannot quite decrypt. It appears to be a seashell. From this image appears to emanate a feeling of protection and care. The thought I am having is this is the Earth Steward of strength and guidance I have been awaiting. I place my hands about its waste and hoist it up to the level of a shelf above my head into which is already carved the exact image I hold in my hands but in negative relief into which I place the Figure. And I say: "It is done."

The experience of the dream, in my interpretation, was of the acknowledgement of my own innate abilities and powers. I entertained the conviction that as long as I continue on the path upon which I had embarked 10 years prior that all that is worthwhile within me would someday become more fully expressed.

In an attempt to better realize the indicators presented in this dream, I translated the image into the form of a clay model which I now here present to the reader. (Fig. 3:1—3:2.)

Usage of these creative arts practices has the capacity to reveal to the individual the contents of his subconscious will to become, thereby supporting the means whereby one uncovers habitual mechanisms unawares that indiscriminately shape and mold our lives and dominate our existence. Hegel (1770—1833) had this to say regarding the creative process:

Socrates appears before us as one of those great plastic figures, all of a piece, such as we are accustomed to see at his period—a complete, classical work of art, which has risen of itself to that height. These figures are not made, they form themselves completely into what they are. They become that which they will to be, and to conscious will, formed [himself] for his character and life's task. (Rank, 1932, p. xi)

Using the tasks found in Julia Cameron's book *The Artist's Way* (Cameron, 1992) was essential to uncovering hidden blockages to my understanding of self, eventually the principal instruments that brought my awareness to the trauma from which I had suffered as a child that lay at the heart of the indifference I projected outward onto the so-called external world. The following statement, from Ms. Cameron here, sheds light on the all

too ubiquitous, learned self-assessment conditions into which children are generally indoctrinated and from which many individuals unawares suffer still.

Most of us are not raised to actively encounter our destiny. We may not know that we have one. As children, we are seldom told we have a place in life that is uniquely ours alone. Instead, we are encouraged to believe that our life should somehow fulfill the expectations of others, that we will (or should) find our satisfactions as they have found theirs. Rather than being taught to ask ourselves who we are, we are schooled to ask others. We are, in effect, trained to listen to others' versions of ourselves. We are brought up in our life being qualified by someone else's standards. When we survey our lives, seeking to fulfill our creativity, we often see that we had a dream that remained only a glimmering because we believed, and those around us believed, that the dream was beyond our reach. Many of us would have been, or at least might have been, done, tried something, if...If we had known who we really were. (Cameron, 1997, p.10)

10—Day Retreat: Findings

Meditation: I have been a practitioner of the Zen style of meditation, commonly referred to within the Zen teachings as Zazen, or sitting meditation, since I was 14 years of age. At one point during the course of my six—year stay in Palm Springs, I carried out a ten—day period of retreat. The retreat embodied a prescribed schedule that I comprised, within which I planned to function and from which I hooped to uncover deeply rooted and hidden aspects of myself that might be standing in the way of being more at home in my body, in the world and help me to take more risks in my endeavors at intimacy.

Three mealtimes were prescribed throughout the day, between which, three meditation periods, of 45 minutes in length were followed by walking meditation, known as *Kinhen*, in the Zen tradition. I performed one—hour Hatha yoga sessions daily and allowed myself to do little else beyond sleeping nightly other than reading from a book entitled: *Self-Realization of the Noble Wisdom; The Lankavatara Sutra* that challenged my thinking. Meditation and intermittent sessions of yoga had been commonplace for a good many years, what I was undertaking was for me intensive.

As is the case during most meditation sessions I experience, the process of allowing thoughts to subside in appearing and rising during at least the first 20 minutes of meditation and the centering of the mind's focus between the eyebrows at that point which is said by the mystics to be the sacred square inch or considered to be the third eye, I reach a point whereby the breath becomes barely audible and the recognition of bodily sensations unnoticeable. During the course of this intensive retreat I found myself experiencing either visions unexplainable, not quite dream-like yet giving me the sensation of floating outside my body, and I would have such moments of being so heavy, very grounded, and void of imagination.

Blue Man—Child

In one particular session there grew before my inner-sight the vision of a being in a womb-like environment, a man—child, blue and cyanotic and without hair. I thought, wow, who or what is this. As I concentrated my focus on this image it seemed given to me to understand that this was a part, an aspect of myself, undeveloped and unborn. A feeling of deep sadness overcame me. The idea came to me that this unborn figure had been with me many years. I sensed by his unresponsiveness to my mental encouragement,

that he had registered all of my emotional experiences my life-long—from perhaps age 13, and that there was no response he could possibly make for the fact that he had all the while received impulses from me that he himself could not decipher nor assimilate. He was merely a receiver and a register, but of himself could not emanate emotion. I imagined too, that all my unresolved emotional responses to life were contained within in him, un-synthesized and inexpressible. For functional purposes in therapy, I gave this entity, or the image of this entity, the name of Michael, a name to which I have always felt myself drawn. (FIG.4)

This discovery, I felt, was of significant value, whether real or imagined, it is the bases of my latter felt desire to avail myself to psychotherapy.

Resultant of therapy, among the many things I have learned, I have for one discovered with regards to my mother, that what I suffered was indeed traumatizing and out of my control. I was undoubtedly left with confused emotions of anger, shame and the denial of my own needs, the abuse from my father, and more, all stemming from a childhood in which I did not, could not, muster and wield the power to fulfill my own needs, fulfill the needs of my parents, fix them, repair our home together, and make of myself a emotionally healthy individual by my own will power alone and function in the world without creating a fictitious persona through which I could manage to get my needs met. Cause for shame has diminished to a great extent and there has developed in me a desire and yet tentative ability to honor my own needs, better understand the limitations of others owing to the recognition of my own, and a will to discover the deeper nature of my being, through investigation of the subconscious and deep yearning to experience the feeling of connectedness with all I encounter in this life.

The following presentation of data is derived from the interview sessions with several of the co-researchers, which presented me with the noticeably recurring patterns and themes that ultimate in the complete findings of this study.

On a strictly personal note I use here the following reference, in order to illustrate the struggle and hopefully the solution to the problem of connectivity with my own experience, which might better awaken within the reader a clearer understanding as to the nature and relevancy of the conditions of compassion.

Communication And Connectivity

In many of my encounters with other people while living in the German society, I discovered that confrontation was the vehicle to initial connection. There were often situations in which another and I were testing each other in order to discover the boundaries of the other, perhaps born of a subconscious need to know where the other person stood. This was always rewarding. It is due to this art of engaging with others that I have been rewarded with the sustainable relations I cherish to this day. I now live in Los Angeles, in the United States. Simple engagement with people is seemingly impossible, or at best, remains simple, rarely in depth. In general it seems, at first encounter with another, and I admit to the generalization here, the boundaries are already preset. This author attributes this to an extreme sensitivity, for people fear that others will not respect their boundaries—so vulnerable is the human being. Confrontation is viewed as negative discourse. This may be an indication that they indeed want to be connected, and are in need of intimacy, but they are too vulnerable and too confused about what may be demanded of them if they are, that they would rather be left alone. My experience has been that it is therefore, like walking on eggs; the crack of one shell fragment can lead to

an explosive unleashing of dissociated anger. Nevertheless, this art of engagement often leads to a greater connection with others than that which had existed before.

Self-investigation and the interviews with the research participants revealed the preconditioned need for chaotic and conflictive encounter before compassion can be in anyway pushed to the fore. The rules of engagement in my family of origin were that no one should ever pull the covers on the other as to the true nature of our collective story. Impulses beyond one's control and the fact that all emotion insists on expression, this was behind the great outbursts of anger and aggression, definitively belying a false sense of caring for one another. One could trust, that it was unsafe for anyone to express his or her needs, openly. It was baffling to me, that connection was nevertheless achieved.

In much of the present literature as I have already inferred, there is what appears to me to be a display of ideals for achieving a better life. Most of these, however, are presented in the form of behavioral rules of engagement, which may act as gateways to compassion, leading the individual to the recognition of compassion, when it stirs within them. They do not and cannot, in my opinion, directly awaken that compassion.

The study has revealed that if one is not willing to confront or be confronted by others one cannot be engaged. Those who cannot achieve engagement with others cannot benefit from the understanding that is attained in the process. Without this understanding, there can be no compassion. There can however be pity. Pity is a removal of one's self from the too close proximity to the observed conditions that suffering presents. Pity is the discounting of connectivity that exists, whether one is knowledgeable of this fact, or not. In other words, pity separates, condescends and blocks the possibility for connection and intimacy.

In fact, and in actuality, engaging with others, being open to the other, extending oneself in vulnerability to the world around them, is the substance that makes for the background of relatedness that levels differences between I and Thou (Buber, 1970, p.178).

Engagement with the other soothes the wounds of real or imagined hurts and differences, and enables correction of the feelings and beliefs of exclusion and separation.

Throughout the course of this study, I received the impression, from within and from the participants, as well as, all those who were curious in the topic on which I had chosen to write, and with whom I shared some of the processes, that the purpose for man here on earth is to experience compassion. Like love, it seems to be the goal and the means of transport to it. But, compassion is hidden. It is hidden behind all the unexamined stuff that gets stuck, put in place to the ends that the exact opposite from connection occurs.

It must be given room to breathe and grow. At times it must be coaxed and at others the misconstrued need for protection of self must be blasted through. I here add, what may receive extreme criticism in the end from more academic scholars than I am, that may be misconstrued for insanity, that even slaughter, massacre, genocide and abuse in its many other forms, may arguably and inadvertently serve to act as catalysts to the birthing of this often hidden attribute of compassion. This is to be witnessed more readily through the steadily advancing technological means of communication at our fingertips. With this expanded access and exposure one becomes privy to events occurring across our planet. Witness the price paid in the transpirations of the past century and the greater

connectivity resulting from the Second World War and the eventual breakdown in South Africa of the apartheid paradigm.

Most human beings long for bonding, they long for connection, and they long for intimacy, no matter how outward appearances may declare it to be otherwise. If people were to be in acceptance of the very human attributes existing in them, such as the ability to love deeply, the ability and capacity for great achievement, and on the contrary, more in acceptance of the mistakes they make, of their ability to intentionally, or unintentionally hurt others in the process of our encounters, and accept that they can be careless and callous, this would generate more self-compassion, and ultimately a compassion for one another's fellow sojourner and all living things, would become patent in the individual and collective reality.

Baba Ram Das once said in a Sat Sang (Buddhist phrase for communing and community,) I attended:

One of the things that make relationships so difficult is the way in which we protect ourselves from suffering — from our own and from each other's. Because when you love someone you don't want to lay your suffering on them and your fears. Also you are afraid if you open your heart too far their suffering will overwhelm you. Because when you look at the world, you just see suffering everywhere. (Ram Das, 1989)

In a more engaging tone:

If you scratch the surface of every person in this room, you will find there is some suffering. Some people who are walking around here smiling at each other and sitting down and having wonderful, gentle conversations, inside have very deep

pain and deep fear. But they have learned so well how to mask it from each other. The culture reinforces that saying “Don’t bring your pain to me. I only want your happiness. I’ll put up with a little of it but not much of it because you will scare me. (Ram Das, 2012)

Shame and guilt and feelings of not belonging are human proclivities that are as worthy of acceptance as any other, self-compassion might be a solution to the belief in separation.

Kristin Neff, who researched the occurrence of self-compassion over the last 10 years, says regarding the process of writing her book on Self-compassion:

Self-Compassion And Kristin Neff

Neff clarifies the improbability of generating compassion for others without first having compassion for one’s self.

I didn't want it to come off across as this perfect person telling other people how to be. I mean I have my flaws and weaknesses I need compassion for, just the same as anyone else. From the Buddhist perspective, and I think from many spiritual traditions, the idea is that the separation between self and other is an illusion, that in fact, we're all part of this big, interconnected, interdependent whole. So it wouldn't really make sense to have compassion for others and not our selves, because that would create an artificial separation (Neff, 2011, Para. 2).

On compassion from the Buddhist perspective she shares further:

Whenever Buddhists talk about compassion, it always includes all sentient beings: animals, other people, ourselves. There's no one usually excluded from the circle of compassion. A lot of people don't know how to be compassionate to

themselves because they aren't in the habit of doing so, but most of us do have quite well-developed skills in being compassionate, understanding, kind, supportive to those we care about. I really try to encourage people to use those skills, draw on what they know, but really turn it around and apply it to themselves. (Neff, 2011)

In—Service—To

The following idea that I have come to share with the reader that has developed in me over the past years of engagement with the concept of the purpose one plays in the lives of others regarding compassion and suffering, connotes the tenor of the understanding I presently entertain.

Bod Dylan wrote a song I once heard entitled, *Gonna Have to Serve Somebody*. I assume it has biblical connotations. Its' lyric inspires me to believe the following, pertaining to our possible purpose for inhabiting this realm with other sentient beings. Perhaps it will give cause for further reflection upon the probable efficacy and appropriateness for the expressed attribute of compassion:

You may be a state trooper; you might be a Young Turk,
You may be the head of some big TV network
You may be rich or poor; you may be blind or lame
You may be living in another country under another name.
But you're gonna have to serve somebody, yes
You're gonna have to serve somebody,
Well, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord
But you're gonna have to serve somebody." (Dylan, 1979)

The idea that we are all here, in one way or another, whether we want to be or not, charged with a calling to serve one another causes me to believe that each of us plays a role in our immediate individual world and the greater story of human evolution that can only be performed by us. Far-reaching though it may seem, with regard to that which serves to call compassion forth in the individual is the thought that the massive slaughter of animals taking place across the globe has the greatest potential to awaken in man this quality of compassion and that this is perhaps its sole purpose.

How willing are people to fulfill that purpose by playing their role, irrespective of whether I am aware of the details of the greater purpose, or not. How willing they are determines, I believe, the level to which, and the extent of, the inevitable suffering I may have to endure—be it now or later. Am I willing to allow others to act out their role in my life?

As mentioned earlier, I cannot pretend to possess knowledge of all the details encompassing the greater scheme of things; this is a relief.

Limiting Factors Revealed

The main challenge, during the interview process, was for the primary researcher to refrain from projecting his own ideas and sentiments regarding what he refers to as man's propensity to gullibility and his susceptibility to coercion. Yet, the stylizations and formulation of the interview questions were nonetheless leading and sometimes filled with personal intentions. The researcher, in his desire to ascertain whether or not and to what degree the participants themselves were awakened to their own suffering, brought about the development of an unavoidable tendency, within the interview process, to lead the participants response, causing the subjects to become noticeably self-conscious with

regards to their own experience of the emotion of compassion which resulted in the emergence of strong biases.

In particular, and in presentation of the research questions, the primary researcher reflected a tendency to imply his own bias in favor of his hypothesis that true compassion is only experienced by way of self-investigation. This was due to the perceived fact that 75% of the participants were unaware of the connection between suffering and compassion, or simply unaware of their own suffering altogether, therefore prompting encouragement that the participants "dig deeper". This quality was projected into the interview process, causing the primary researcher to over explain the research questions.

The primary researcher maintained attentiveness in spite of said tendency and refrained, when ever possible, from leading the subjects when clarifying the research questions.

He was therefore better able to listen for and hear the clear and novel personal tones arising from within each participant during the interview process.

The subjects engaged for this research project were not drawn from a very wide range of socio-economical strata, and therefore results did not reflect views of broader perspective or from the widest range of ideologies. The participants were gathered from the primary researchers familial pool, most being of Christian denomination, (6 participants).

Six other participants were selected for their well-publicized proclamations supportive of the primary researchers thesis. These had performed extensively, self-investigative study, allegedly resulting in transformation of previous more narrow-

minded views, handed down to them by society, altered by personal conflict and awarenesses derived through the self-examination process. These participants were drawn from a pool of New Age-quantum-physics aware individuals who are doctors, professors, and teachers and published writers. The limit here is that the primary researcher decided to challenge these participants more earnestly than he had those from his immediate circle of family and friends, with, and for whom he maintained a greater degree of tolerance, acceptance, and granted more patience.

This study does not address the issue of compassion and suffering of those who possess comparatively great wealth or great poverty. All participants had their basic needs for survival and basic pleasures consistently met in their day-to-day lives.

This author did not address the research question produced for this study to anyone who is presently active in the new-age movement or promoting the subject of compassion, whereby they could be viewed as "authorities" on the matter of compassion. In fact, three participants who have published works addressing the more esoteric aspects of glamor and illusion and its manifestations in our present day involvement, who did not directly approach the subject of compassion in their writings. This presented the drawback of having to converse, using their particular nomenclature and not in the language of the primary researcher, often prompting confusion within the question and answer process.

Lastly, there was not what this researcher would have regarded as a sufficient number of participants questioned on the topic to warrant enough concrete data resulting from the immersion process into the subject of compassion. For a broader scope into the

topic of compassion and suffering, a greater cross-section of participants chosen from all types of religious adherents, of multiple political allegiances and from a greater strata of financial classes would be required to achieve this.

There is much to be taken from the following quote from Viktor Frankl, when speaking on the comparability of religion to psychology when he said: I have learned and taught, that the difference between them is no more nor less than a difference between various dimensions. From the very analogy with dimensions, however, it should be clear that these realms are by no means mutually exclusive. A higher dimension, by definition, is a more inclusive one (Frankl, 1948). Thoughts and feelings entertained by people of all religions, of veritable mental and psychological states, may have presented more expansive results on the prospectus of suffering and compassion, the advantage of access to whom, this researcher was not availed.

Progressive Reformulation Of The Study Questions: Resultant Of Findings

In surveying the landscape of responses to the primary question proposed in this thesis: “Is it necessary to know oneself in order to facilitate the experience of having compassion for others and does this compassion allow for a deeper acknowledgment of kinship with all life?” there arose the deeper need for an extended, more far reaching understanding of what is meant by knowing one’s self and for determining how the meaning I was attempting to convey of compassion, which is that of being organic verses other forms that may more commonly become misconstrued with lesser qualities of concern for one’s fellow man, such as the inherent quality of empathy, or more implicit forms of pity, sympathy and sentimentality, how it is played out, both passively and actively in the world with which I and the co-researchers were engaged.

In its more explanatory form the question became: “Can one really experience true compassion by studying others or must one first know themselves in order to truly empathize with another. Or is it not necessary to know oneself at all, but observe in the world around them all that they see, and thereby experience the idea of compassion?” This was intended to emphasize my own predilection that compassion is one of the rewards of self-examination. Initially meant to encourage a process of deeper inquiry by the co-researchers, as was the effect in my own process, it often times had the counter effect of putting the co-researcher on edge. It was now being implied that without self-knowledge there was no way of knowing whether or not the experience one had of resonance with another’s suffering was genuine or superficial or was dependent on the level of self-awareness each co-researcher judged themselves of having attained in their life. It also implied that by sheer observance of another persons’ way of regarding compassion does not connote a direct and personal experience of compassion in the other.

Depending on whether, and to what degree, the individual co-researcher viewed themselves to be self-aware, I then presented the assumption that all participants had, in their own way, experienced suffering in their lifetime, made evident by my introduction of the qualities of empathy and intimacy, and the emphasis I placed on the directional quality of compassion, which was genuine, meaning organic, and generated from within, or propitiating and mimic oriented; adoptive from without. Thus I posed the extended version in the following form, “Does engaging yourself in a study of Self, and getting to know yourself, lead to greater understanding of the world around you, and if so, does this understanding, generated from within, create the capacity in you for a deeper experience

of intimacy and empathy, love and compassion for all living things?” On the other hand, does self-study leave you more isolated and disconnected from the world around you?”

Having posed, from the broadest of perspectives possible, the questions relating to compassion: having maintained the implicative idea of organic verses manufactured forms, and having readied myself for the process ahead, opened me up to a keener sense of listening. I had assumed the position of observer-receiver-maintainer on the course of inquiry, beholden to, but not imposing the inevitable preconceptions of compassion contradistinctive to empathy, pity, sympathy as response to suffering witnessed in the world and in one’s self, therefore and as I’ve mentioned before, this created an opening for the co-researchers that was wide enough to encourage the fullness of self-reflection and safe expression, and narrow enough for such focus of laser sharpness on the topic that presented opportunities for them to experience deep understanding of themselves as well.

To wit, one co-researcher, Carl, responded adamantly and emphatically to the question of whether or not self-knowledge is requisite to the expression and experience of compassion, by counter posing the question in the following manner “ Must one know themselves before they can experience compassion, can anyone truly know themselves?” “I cannot claim to “know” myself, but, I have definitely experienced compassion before, and at a very profound level.” His response was an unequivocally resounding, “No! I can’t know myself, therefore that is not true.” He was not open to prodding, and I resisted the impulse to do so. When I asked him if he would share his experience with me he bowed out. This is a man whose role is handling some of the administration of a very

prominent metaphysical teacher and author in the field of self-development, of whom Carl has been a long time student.

On the other hand it was commonly shared and generally expressed with eagerness by all other participants to greater or lesser degree that they were exceptionally grateful to have been asked to share on the topic because it forced them as well as invited them to take a close look at the phenomenon of compassion, something most admitted they felt they had to study up on and engage themselves with internally, prior to our interview session. Eighty percent had reflected deeply on the subject, their own experience, and had earnestly asked themselves, “What does this truly mean to me?”

At the onset, what began with an inwardly directed investigation process acted out upon the phenomenon of compassion, soon became the creation of a clearinghouse for unresolved trauma, unhealed wounds, and expressed attempts by each participant to dissolve deep-reaching issues created by long-standing notions of victimization and perpetration. Early on it became clear to me that I needed to pose the questions in such a way that the participants felt that clearing, so that their own unresolved issues could find expression, ultimately with the hopes on my part that their individual stories would add the qualities that benefited affirmatively to and justify the capacious topic I had set before them. As I witnessed such a bursting forth, of unsolicited expressions of painful or extremely joy-filled occurrences as stories shared by each participant, I could not deny that here was an opportunity for healing and completion inherent in the interview process itself.

Since pain and suffering hold the clues the individual’s particular blocks to growth, when one deals with pain in this most holistic fashion they not only stand to

outgrow it, but have used it as an instrument for healing, having recognized it as the accommodation to the compassionate life it really is and created the opportunity for intimacy and connectivity with all that our senses affirm.

Each account shed more and more light on the preceding and emerging data being issued by each participant. Because of this I had to remain mindful that each person's input had to solely be their own, not coupled with the feedback from myself or another and that it had to remain independent of them, no matter how similar or dissimilar in resonance it might be appearing at the time of the interview. Otherwise the collection of data and theme recognition would not have been a pure process.

The fact that I had been about the investigation into the subject of compassion already for ten years prior to the culmination of my efforts into the study at university, of which this dissertation is the final product, offered the advantage of receptivity, patience and a keen sense of over-view with which I could approach the topic with others, and thereby, incidentally and hopefully, enhance my own experiential understanding of the topic.

The following three excerpts, herein contained, allude to the abovementioned statements. Each research participant presents, in her or his own right, the possibility that we serve each other in the calling forth process of compassion, though seemingly in distorted ways, yet profoundly affective in achieving a heightened awareness of connectivity. Thus is the nature of the hidden power of compassion and the healing propensity it possesses.

Three Interview Excerpts

With the following interview excerpts our awareness is potentially increased by the probability that it is the very adverse conditions in which these participants persisted or endured, at a particular time in their lives, that the healing power of compassion was called forth.

Ulrika: My father's father was, a judge. In Germany around that time, from the error of the beginning of this century, when the children wouldn't obey, they would beat the children. I don't know if you're familiar with that but I was thinking about the way things were then in the schools and with the parents the teachers and the parents would beat the children. So when I was growing up my father, although he was a very loving father in one way, he cared for us, my parents were fleeing—he lived for the family. But, what he also would do is he would beat me. He would beat me terribly. He would beat me with his father's riding whip, which had metal at the end and around the metal was leather. And when that would hit my body blood would come. So he would beat me; he would beat me because I was intelligent, but when I didn't do enough homework, he would beat me. He would beat my sister too, but mostly me. I was the oldest and he would beat me so terribly. My thing was not to cry, but the pain was so excruciating but the blood came out on my back. One day when I was 15, he was still beating me then, and we hid the whip behind the closet and he found it and then he beat me again. He would beat me so long that I thought I would die. I thought I couldn't take it anymore. I wanted to die. Then one day he was beating me again, he would always say he forbid things, "and when I forbid something, that's it, I will never allow it.

So it was so terrible that the neighbors came and, begged him not to beat me. I was thinking of running away, or dying.

And one day I had not obeyed, and he started beating me in a terrible way, I was trying to protect myself with my hand to my back, the nail came out of my thumb and it was bleeding, and there was so much pain I opened the basement window, but this ground floor there was a window and I jumped out of the window and rolled and the snow. It was painful and I was filled with lots of hate. I wanted to come in and I wanted to look at him totally hateful and throw all my hate on him that I could. David, I opened the door, bleeding, I come in and I see my father snow white in his face, he had these two deep lines next to his mouth, he was like fainting, he was trying to get his coat and hat. The way he was walking was like from what right to left as if he was going to fall down at any moment.

Something happened in me, something happened. Suddenly there was a total stillness, total stillness like, the world stood still. There was a surge of understanding. I suddenly saw there is no cruel human being, no- that's not what human beings are. There's only misguided human beings or sick human beings. There is no bad human person. I could suddenly see this and I had this what you could call compassion going through me. I went over to my father, I took the coat from the hangar, I helped him put on his coat, I took the hat from the top, gave him the hat-there he was looking at me closing his eyes and nodding. I opened the door and he went out. I was never beaten again. Nobody in the family was beaten again.

I had this incredible insight, that—I can say, that is the only thing that I really know, that there's no bad human being. They are only either mentally ill, or misguided. They believe something. And that's my richest experience I've ever had, although it was so cruel and terrible on the outside. You understand that?

David: absolutely!

Ulrika: Later when I was in therapy, when I told this to the therapist, she did not understand—no one I spoke with about this, understood.

David: Yes! As we were talking earlier, when I was talking about compassion, and that possibly being the leveler that unites us all. Remember when I said that compassion has the power of leveling because it's something that unites us. It was during, and always as during the times I'm thinking about, or asking how is it that compassion can heal. The deeper understanding that came to me has been, it heals because we can't escape from it and it is our nature, the nature of every human being.

Ulrika: Exactly! That is exactly what I feel. It's our nature, and we all share that. It's just overlaid, by you know there are two kinds of parts to us, one is the conditioned ego identity—that which we think we are—which is only a belief of who we think we are. And the other one is our real nature or spirit and that by definition it's connected, it's connecting that's who we are. Another way of putting it is by saying we are love. Then that's what I experienced. In these glimpses I had that's what I experienced. And that's so beautifully put the way you said that because it's in our nature.

David: when I think about the tumultuous relationship my parents had with one another; the fighting and the violence, I often ask myself if it was not all so because, I mean, I do I know that all that fighting and the violence was not serving all who were involved, and in some way a healing agent in their own lives? I do I know that that all wasn't perhaps moving them both and us children to a higher level in some way. I mean if compassion is healing and in that context suffering has its work in awakening it?

And how do I know if the traumatic experiences that left the scars, have not set me upon paths of healing directly related to the healing of those wounds? Perhaps it was exactly that, which I needed in order that I might discover my own personal path. Through this I can see a connection, I see that suffering serves its purpose—to call forth the healing power of compassion. Somehow it appears that our present stage of development of humanity, all of the suffering we're witness to seems to be awaking a very deep compassion from within us, bringing us closer to our God—hood.

Ulrika: Oh, my goodness, can you just wait a minute—can you stay with that thought for a moment, I need to share something with you the synchronicity of this. I just got this from a student, [...] she's a beautiful student from Persia; incredible woman She's also in L.A. —and—you won't believe what she wrote, I want to, just quickly share this with you. This is very interesting. This is from a really wonderful person who's doing some really incredible things.

I would like to read to you something very brief she wrote: "As I read Ken Wilber and Doctor Vaughn, on transpersonal psychology. I think back on my journey and

the journey I have witnessed others taking. I do not believe that it is our duty or obligation to awaken others, for I have become to respect the journey each person must make. I believe in sharing my learning with those who seek my teachings. I am certain that each person is on a sacred path, no matter how it may appear on the outside. As I once said in a Yom Kippur service on this day—of—atonement and of forgiveness, let us pause and think of those who have harmed us. One who instantly comes to mind is Adolf Hitler. I ask you to consider for a moment that Hitler was one of our greatest heroes. As Jews, we have prayed for thousands of years. We prayed: Next year we will be in Jerusalem, but that has not happened. When did it finally happen? Only when the holocaust happened, only then was the world moved for an instant, in a marriage of politics and humanity, to return the Jews to their homeland. The world may not think of Hitler, as I do, and I am not for a moment applauding his atrocities acts against millions of people, but I also know, that such was his journey. Who knows what he discovered ultimately in his last moments. One thing is for certain—each must choose his or her, own learning. Few people understood what I meant that day. Surprisingly a young man later wrote about it in his rabbinical papers, as his moment of awakening. Now, isn't that amazing that you were talking about the role of Hitler. I had just received this and I had also just read something that Edgar Casey had said about him and his role. (Lane/Ulrika, personal conversation, August 2013)

By this, one is made aware that compassion's demands are to be known are insistent.

The following reveals in kind basically a similar timbre as that above, yet, with a slightly different effect on the individual interviewees. Both are speaking of the same man to whom they were married. Both experienced pain and suffering at the hand of this individual, yet the reactions and awareness resulting in them both are of quite a different quality.

Artis: Then I thought about your own mother, when I heard about her and I came into the apartment early one weekend and she was there and the chain was on the door and there was my husband with her. I had to go use the phone that was on the inside of the chained door. Jackie Gleason's "For Lovers Only" was playing, such low self-esteem I felt, well, it just hit me, that old adage "wasn't I enough?" I had baby Carol, your sister, in my arms and innocent little Nancy came around the back way as I was waiting outside for my brother in law to come back for me and take me to my sister's house, and she saw me and came up and asked me 'Oh. What a beautiful baby, can I hold her?' I said "don't touch her, don't." You know all that anger came rushing in, and over the blessed years to have been able to say, "she has done me a favor". That man had such a distorted life. I met his great aunt Aida, a little dark woman, in a shot-gun house, when we went down there when I was about seven or eight months pregnant. To have met her and seen that he had been raised in that environment, you know, we come into the world just so open and ready and all these adult things hit us. I remember the first date that I had with him. He said he thought I was someone else of a different character. And I said, "wasn't there anyone to help you, to tell you, to help you know that... and he got so angry, he left me in this restaurant, it was late at night, took off in the car, I

didn't know where I was in Detroit—especially as a Canadian, I was afraid of all Americans. To see the blessings, that's the study of Christian Science, where that whole—divine love takes over that human distortion of that small—el love, and that capitalized Love, divine Love comes in and gives you an objectivity and compassion—ah there's that compassion—where that comes in. You know I even paid the phone bill for his long-distance calls to Nancy when she was out in California visiting a cousin or a sister, or something, Because it really took, I could see objectively, what he was going through, what she was, so much younger, going through- I had suicidal thoughts, you know, at that time. Then Carol started crying in the bedroom. I was going to throw myself down on the... And then she cried. The next morning I saw this older woman who had been a widow for years, we shared the back—kind of walk—veranda where I was going to jump off, and I saw that I could have a future. If she could be independent and not need, then I could grow into that. And it gave me such a —I, m grateful. It gives you gratitude, compassion brings about a sense of gratitude—the two go together, compassion and gratitude. Because when you look at it through the eyes of Christ who gives us all—so suffered he for us; took on all the sin and the evil, and pain, that compassion is so necessary. (Lane/Artis personal conversation, July 2013)

Here we see a transformative state has emerged as a result of abuse.

In the following and third we see where the distancing effects of pity exemplify the outward projection of un resolved trauma affected from one upon the other and though, and in response to the abuse the individual considers herself to be nonetheless compassionate, yet remains, I suspect, at the effect of and emotionally stunted by the

mishandling of her own emotions, by not completely owning her own feelings, nevertheless, capable of deep emotion.

Nancy: You can't be all things to everybody. But give with your whole heart, and not feel guilty about not being able to do what you want to for another. Empathy is for all living things.

David: What about having compassion for ones' self?

Nancy: That is normally automatic. If you don't have love for yourself, you cannot give it to others. So, that is without saying.

David: What acknowledgment can you offer to the idea of having compassion for the perpetrator of abuse?

Nancy: For the one who harms others, you have pity. You pity him.

David: I have been discovering that when I feel compassion for another who is abusive, there is a bit of recognition of identity with him or her that I too, given the same set of circumstances might act out in a similar way.

Nancy: "Yes I agree with that. It's not bad to have pity. I had pity on your dad. I pitied dad, even when he hit me. I pitied him because of his upbringing. I knew of his upbringing. How cruel people were to him. It wasn't that he was brought up in a certain way of affluence or anything, and then took his aggression out on me, or people around him. How many times he said to me how much he loved his children. It didn't matter if the children didn't like what he did, he felt sad after words of what he had done. And, felt sorry what he had done, whether it was to his children or anybody else.

I had compassion for him and that's why I wanted to please him. You know, my life went through many, many phases. I always carried the compassion with me. Because I felt that was me. It was my middle name, so my middle name was compassion. Compassion just comes naturally to me. Everything that has happened in my life, it's like a maternal love. When you're a mother, a lot of people don't understand, because they don't have children but, those who do, understand Motherhood—it doesn't change your whole way of life: it transforms your very nature. You become like a dragon slayer, willing to do anything to protect your child, which sometimes you can't, because your husband comes first. That's what you learn by coming from an orthodox religion. You knew you would love your baby, but nothing prepares you for the intensity that comes with it. A mother calls it love, but she knows it's more than that.

So, I rejoice in all the miraculous gifts of children from God, which I feel all children come from God, it dwells in your heart and some times it gets so filled it just bursts for the fact that God gave you the ability to give birth.

Compassion for the justice and the equality, that comes with caring for others, and a chance to help people. You know the honor and the blessing. You go through life, as I say, having your heart broken more than once and it gets harder, but you know how to cope with it better.

When I said we should all be the defenders of the heart—a happy life is a life of continual generosity. We can't be everything to everyone. I see hypocrisy and I try not to be near it. I feel sorry for it. “

Here she begins to weep: I don't like to see siblings get at each other's throats. They need to love each other. And If I can't change them, it should be compassionate enough for one of my other children to step in where one might not know compassion and help them see what they are doing to their mother." Her crying subsides. " But, I am not God and I do not know the purpose for all things being as they are. (Lane/Nancy, personal conversation, October 2013)

One participant spoke of age as being the teacher of compassion. It may be.

Perhaps it is due to what I have witnessed in the world and that, over the expanse of a relatively long life, and what I have come to believe. The more I can embrace, acknowledge and synthesize my experiences within myself, the more connected I regard myself to be in kinship with all living things, whether this is imagined or not is irrelevant.

What cognition is not perceived and imagined?

One participant, Linda explained.

Linda: In answer to the first question, of whether or not one can only experience compassion, if they know themselves or have examined their lives I would say is it depends. On what stage you are a tin life, how old you are and what you've gone through. If you had asked me at twenty if I have to know myself in order to have compassion for others, Id have to say no. If you asked me now, the same question, I'd say, yes!"

David: and why would you now say yes?

Linda: "because with life's experiences you learn more compassion. There's kind of like different ways of be compassionate at different ages. Usually, when you are younger you're compassionate toward other people to say, someone who

needs your help, you go to help them and maybe at that time, you're not quite sure of yourself, and you say to yourself, oh, maybe that person will like me if I help them. When you get older you don't give a shit if they like you and go to help that person because it's the right thing to do; you do it out of the kindness of your heart."

David: So what about that part of knowing yourself. Are you saying that that compassion comes with age?

Linda: "Well yah. I mean you have to know yourself to have true compassion for others."

David: Why.

Linda: "because otherwise it's a false compassion. Just like I said with the example of when you're younger, you help someone because. Because, you'll get something out of it, or that person will like you, or that person will remember I helped them and then they'll own one, etc. You're more calculative when you're younger. Do I help this person? Were they at one time mean towards me? You have all these questions about helping others. As you get older you know what's right, what is the right thing to do. When one is younger they just don't know. They're still learning things. You're learning if you can really care about something, or a cause or a person. Just because someone tells you it's the right thing to do when you're younger, doesn't mean it's the right thing to do. You have to find out if it's the right thing, for yourself."

When asked if she differentiates between pity, compassion and empathy, she asserted that there is a strong difference between pity and compassion but on the subject

of empathy she appeared to be uncertain. I attribute this to the fact that empathy is the channel through which both must pass and in and of itself is more of a constitutional attribute.

David: How would you define the difference between pity, compassion and empathy?

Linda: "Pity is when you feel sorry for the person and you're not going to do anything for them. Compassion is when you really feel bad for a person and you try to help. Pity is: you don't get involved. Compassion is: you do get involved. People who ignore that fact of animals being killed and slaughtered, I pity them, because they know not what they do. There's nothing I can do for them if they're not willing to open their hearts to the truth. (Lane/Linda, personal conversation, September 2013)

The Pain of Connectedness

The more I sense this connectivity, the more I feel the pain of this connection, it is at the level of which was non-existent before I embarked upon the investigation of compassion. I am glad for the pain and it does tend to infer a closer observance of and imagined connectivity with a creator, higher power or G-d. This experience of being connected to and in part with all things is I now understand, is compassion itself.

Resultant of the findings, I have come to believe that each person is imbued with a measurement of a greater and a lesser light and that I was imbued with a lesser. But, becoming right sized, as is suggested in the Alcoholics Anonymous book, The Twelve steps and Twelve Traditions, (Anonymous, 1952, p. 122) more accepting of self as not being this or that, rather a very living, breathing transformative being; the composite of

many qualities, I sense that the light is equal in all living things. It appears to me that what determines the brightness of this light is dependent on, what degree the individual is consciously aware of that light. However, I am becoming more and more open to the possibility the light is the same in everything and everywhere present. It may be that humans have a choice as to the degree with which they shine. I believe that this rings true with regard to compassion as well. The medium of its manifestation needs to be cleared and made as when light shines through glass. It is my opinion that the clearer the glass the brighter the light.

Kristin Neff speaks on the right size-ness of which I am speaking, from the perspective of self-esteem:

It has almost become a truism in our culture that one must have high self-esteem in order to be happy and healthy. Psychologists have conducted thousands of studies touting the benefits of self-esteem. The main problem is that having high self-esteem requires feeling special and above average. This need to feel superior results in a process of social comparison in which we continually try to puff ourselves up and put others down. One of the most insidious consequences of the self-esteem movement over the last couple of decades is the narcissism epidemic. We swing wildly between overly inflated and overly deflated self-esteem, an emotional roller coaster ride whose end result is often insecurity. So what's the alternative? How do we feel good about ourselves without needing to feel better than others and thus falling into the narcissism/self-loathing trap? One answer is to develop self-compassion. Self-compassion recognizes that the human condition is imperfect, so that we feel connected to others when we fail or suffer rather than

feeling separate or isolated. It also involves mindfulness — the recognition and non-judgmental acceptance of painful emotions as they arise in the present moment. (Neff, 2011, Para. 1— 2)

Compassion appears to be both substantial and essential: acting as a connecting agent between people and possibly, all living things. It excludes nothing and is not alterable by my interpretation of it. It is unconditional.

It is challenging to imagine what each member of the human race would experience if there were no need to be anything other than, who and what one is. The feeling of connection we would experience if each one of us had the sense that the other had our back, so to speak. What a wondrous state of being it would be to know that everyone of us is encouraging the other person to do and be their best and fulfill whatever it is meant for us to fulfill and that each of us supported the other in achieving this. I like to think this is a possible future. Regardless of what's at stake whether it be the giving up of selfishness or losing our barriers, is of little concern in the light of this vision. Perhaps I am an altruist after all. Perhaps I am somewhat socialist as well. I still prefer to envision the possibility of being connected however that might feel, with all of life.

May Baker Eddy, speaks on the subject of substantiality as follows:

The universe, like man, is to be interpreted by Science from its divine Principle, God, and then it can be understood; but when explained on the basis of physical sense and represented as subject to growth, maturity, and decay, the universe, like man, is, and must continue to be, an enigma. Adhesion, cohesion, and attraction are properties of Mind. They belong to Divine Principle, and support the

equipoise of that thought-force, which launched the earth in its orbit and said to the proud wave, "Thus far and no farther." (Eddy, 1876, p. 124 sec.15—24)

The cumulative assessment of the other participants, and how I approached the subject of compassion with them, and how I incorporated what I discovered into the steady stream of data being gathered from the data derived from the personal investigative work, follows.

The following denotes the quantitative protocol used for assessing the data collected from the sessions with all interviewees and are based on my post interview reflective criteria considered by me at the end of each interview and obtained during transcription of the individual recordings. These connote the sub-issues and engagement with subsequent questions arising during the interview proceedings themselves.

Are there any occurrences in your life of which you might share of having experienced the emotion of compassion?

Measurements were achieved by correlating the frequency in appearance of the number of times the particular attitudes, shared by each participant relative to the given relative themes of suffering and compassion occurred. The basic subject established by this researcher centered its self on the study questions of organic innate compassion verses learned compassionate response.

70% reported in the affirmative. Often however, what they described as having been compassion - according to my clearly stated definition of compassion, (Glossary) — resounded often with more that of being what could be considered pity. 50% of the participants who expressed having felt pity on another were obviously unaware of the

dissociative nature of their pity. In the cases where a participant clearly mistook compassion as meaning pity I measured it to the following definition.

Used in a comparable sense to the more modern words "sympathy" and "empathy," pity means to have feeling for others, particularly feelings of sadness or sorrow. In insincere practice, pity can also have a more unsympathetic connotation as in feeling superior or condescending. (Wikipedia, 2013)

When asked about having compassion for perpetrators of abuse, 20% stated that they could not. 60% reported that because they themselves, had at one time or another been abusive toward people: children or others, or animals, they had compassion for the perpetrator but could not reconcile the ramifications of having been abusive to others, themselves. 10% admitted to never before having considered feeling compassion for perpetrators. The other 10% had been perpetrators in the past and held themselves in split allegiance to either victim or perpetrator, or both. If one could not recognize their own unacknowledged feelings of victimhood, these persons were less aware of the pity they granted the perpetrator and could not muster the emotion of compassion. With the exception of three or four people I interviewed, 60% of those who had undergone some form of self-reflection in their lives all clearly exhibited through their acquired understanding and in my observation that the capacity through which they expressed compassion had been achieved by way of the process of self-inquiry. Those, on the other hand who had rarely reflected on themselves and the lives they have lived appeared to lack a sense of altruism and compassion, and that which did get expressed during the interview process came in the form of pity and feelings of sorrow. I attribute this solely to the innate empathic capacities active within them. I myself did not come to the

understanding of the provable connection between suffering and compassion until the writing of this chapter. Up until then, it had remained merely a strong supposition.

Daniel, one participant speaking of the condition he sets as for whom compassion is warranted and when, stated:

I think it is interesting and complex because, in a lot of my writings and videos, it is very poignant that I am taking the side of the child, of the victim and the less powerful person, in the relationship. That is where my compassion is focused. I am not taking sides in the support of the perpetrator. I am putting my focus on seeing things through the eyes of the victim. And I don't think it helps at all, especially early on, for the victim in the process of healing to even consider so from that point to view of the perpetrator, at that stage it is not relevant, because the very act of being traumatized by the perpetrator has split them off from their own feelings. So, the first thing they would need to do is get their compassion and their empathy back for themselves. If they waste their time getting involved with having to feel compassion for the perpetrator it is a great way for them to bi-pass them ever having to feel compassion towards themselves. And, a lot of people do this- they get so involved with trying, in their desperation to not having to deal with the pain of being victimized, transfer the focus of their attention into manufacturing forgiveness for the perpetrator- so the deeper compassion they have the potential for having for themselves, they never get to...they end up splitting off, they end up projecting their potential compassion for themselves onto their perpetrators and getting lost in the dissociative bliss of forgiveness. This is the reason why, I very clearly take the position of the victim, the less

powerful person, so that person can heal and if they can heal, then, they can get to different places. (Lane/Mackler, personal conversation, August 2013)

The connection I presented between compassion and suffering was met with surprise by 30% of the participants, welcomed by 50%. 20% recognized no connection between personal suffering and how that might influence their capacity to compassion.

Observed from the perspective of tough love as one of compassion's additional qualities, one is able to experience that compassion is not about being nice or thoughtful. Saying "no" to a potentially harm-producing request, setting boundaries for the sake of another's good, standing firm against incoming abuse of any kind is, at times, the healthiest stance to take. Showing mercy in the case of euthanasia when called for, mercy in the slaughter of animals as long as the belief and practice of doing so exists, and mercy in leaving a person who is bent on self-destruction to fend for themselves, when not to do so would lead to the devastation of the many others involved. Loving-kindness commands of us, that we take a present situation and address it with the wisdom of the moment. It requires wisdom to understand that regardless of what one might desire in a particular moment it may not be healthy for all who are involved. If I love you, I am going to communicate to you even the unsavory stuff. I have witnessed within myself, in cases quite tentative that my capacity to love you is dependent on the following factors. Do I trust myself to be honest in taking the risk that may result in a transformed relationship, (not necessarily in an image to my liking)? Are you important enough for me to take that risk? And, do I honor myself enough to make the request for what I need, willing to responsibly assess your capacity to fulfill such a request, without shaming you, if you are not. The question remains, to what extent am I willing to bare a particular

phenomenon to engage me, and how genuinely honest and open can I remain throughout the duration of the experience.

A study participant, Andrew, imparts his own thoughts on compassion with the following:

Andrew:

His eyes are shifted outward across the panacea of suffering. His directional ability to experience compassion is generated through that which is observable only, at something that he witnesses on the outside. He himself could not acknowledge or admit to in all honesty, perhaps, recall having suffered himself. Nevertheless he considered himself to have experienced the transition from apathy to caring.

I think a lot of it depends on your upbringing, and mine was rather liberal during the civil rights movement.

Martin Luther King was a heroic figure of my early youth. I was born in 1962 and he was killed in 1968, and he was a person in my life who embodied compassion. And the idea of, I don't know if this was a Lincoln phrase or if it was Martin Luther, "expanding the circle of your concern" you know? Like he did that, and that seems like the right way to be in the world, to be concerned with the welfare of others and recognize unfairness and to fight it and to challenge it, not stand by while it happens under your nose. So I think I just got that when I was a kid. I was brought up in that. I went through my various libertarian influences. Back in the day we called it then neo-conservative foreign-policy phase. In my high school stage, where I wanted to be, I was pretty hard-ass turned hard-nosed. I believed in capitalism in a pretty hard way, and they were industrial statesmen,

not robber barrens, blah, blah. But I grew up when people were like that, and I myself was very planted in my own left-wing politics. And, that somehow got reconnected with this sense of taking the side of the underdog and that type of basically liberal attitude and so yeah, that's a piece of it.

So compassion can be woven into different world-views in different ways that the liberal view for example has compassion central to it. The conservatives will say "soft on crime" and "bleeding hearts" and all that kind of stuff, you don't have to be an extreme version of it, or whatever. You can still be tough-minded and be compassionate. That's a very important piece to my idea of compassion, (Lane/Boyd, personal conversation, August 2013)

Creativity and an exponential sense for self-compassion, incredible help-meets in uncovering what is real for me with the hope of one day developing my own voice on the topic as well. Little did I know in the beginning of the investigation that compassion itself would become my guiding compass pointing me, in all ways, toward my pure and Northern Star.

I found it necessary to be inclusive in my response and notation of the interviews between the individual co-researchers and myself.

It is appropriate here to include the thoughts on this subject from the Integral-Creative point of view expounded by Ken Wilber whose work for the most part, centers on the categorization of qualities and their functions:

As the novel comes into existence it is doing so in the form of evolution. As each new idea is expressed there is the creation of an ever-higher form of

consciousness. Each higher level includes that which is past (no longer novel), forming a higher inclusive quality of expression. (Wilber, 2012, loc. 20:15)

This inclusion process included, reminds us to the supposition that the limitations belonging to the previous form level are carried over and become the inherent catalyst to the manifesting of that higher level to an even more advanced expression, as I have quoted Michael Polanyi earlier in CHAPTER 2 of this document.

The attitude of complete openness between myself and the co-researchers; maintenance of receptivity, and suspension of biases created for us all the possibility in which an authentic background of relatedness and apparently deep inner searching and candid sharing could occur.

The following observations of the research participants, made during the study, when added to my own personal findings, with regards to the phenomenological relationship between compassion and suffering, human conflict and connectivity, are here presented.

The impressions I have derived from the past 10 years of focused work, and those resulting from the gift of engagement with the research participants have directed my attention to certain undeniable probabilities, here worth documenting.

The first is, as I mentioned before, with regards to what appears to be a pattern-external, chaos, conflict and disharmonious measures, behavior and outbursts, and the ensuing aftermath in the settling of the storm, seems to bring about the phenomenon of joining. This leads me to believe that the chaos in the world is ultimately the misguided attempt of individuals and nations at connection. Furthermore, I have registered the existence of compassion aroused in observance of abuse and tragedy.

After conflicts have come to an end or after these conflicting types of encounters have subsided, there has arisen an eventual sense of belonging in both involved parties, at least a sense of satisfaction resulting from the acts of engagement. It appears that even abuse serves, albeit in distorted ways, to bring people together—a type of taming, as it were, as if our animal nature requires a power dance in order to establish safety in the emergence process. Then after the dust has settled previous distances between forces become narrowed.

This infers that the intrinsic source of conflict could be need for joining, and that the establishment of compassion has been its central goal all the long.

Thus our attention is returned to the precepts of the fourth ray as taught in the Esoteric Wisdom model of constituent phases of man's evolutionary process. "Out of disharmony and chaos, creativity, art and novelty." (Barber, 2010)

There is a movie, released recently, that depicts this very thought quite well. It is entitled *Disconnect*, director Henry Alex Ruben. It reveals in no uncertain terms the functionality of conflict and the critical role it plays in the opening up of pathways of connectivity through which the eventual flow of understanding; compassion can commence. In the film there a lot of concepts, characters, action, and events, that come together to create a very complex and unique story. The main concept is that the more disconnected people become from one another and the world around them, the greater grows the need for and the more intense the conflict required in order return to a natural condition of connection. This phenomenon we cannot afford to overlook. (Ruben, 2012)

One's Role: End-Findings

Disharmony follows when we are not in acceptance of the respective roles we are meant to play in the life of another. Whether this is true or not can better be affirmed throughout the incremental gatherings of impressions, won by having taking distance from the myopic perspective and observing from a more all-inclusive angle, or form the greater panoramic perspective of the collective. Such has been the case in the formulation of this dissertation, that it is the product of hours and days of focusing on the phenomenon of compassion, through observation, immersion, distancing and often the suspension of the personal, that I was afforded a glimpse into the often enigmatic and sometimes misunderstood phenomenon.

At the beginning of my investigation I had never expected that compassion itself would become my guiding North Star compass, pointing me in all ways, toward myself, I believe that each of us possesses, intrinsically, an inner compass oscillating at a point of cohabitation of the manifest and the un-manifest the tacit nature of which is irrespective of training or acquired skill. I have come to see this tacit point acts upon the cognitive conscience in the individual, conditioning to be accountable to themselves and others in responsibly differentiating between that which is true and that which is erroneous, to the best of his ability.

I believe that, depending on the choices one makes this compass generates her response in the individual, either in the form of inner peace or by producing feelings of guilt or shame.

If one is inauthentic with regards to the knowing of right and wrong, it is the nature of this ever existing and already connected-self that indicates to the knower either, when and if one is off or on course. This point is usually referred to, in our culture, as

conscience, which incidentally expresses itself as comfort or discomfort in the body, depending on the integral condition of the individual.

This process is natural. This is our very existence and the recognition of it. There would be imaginably no more psychoses and no more neuroses if we could allow ourselves to be governed by it. In this way we would automatically trust and honor this compass of compassion if we could attribute it with trust, that trust that is informed by self-knowledge and self-wisdom.

It has become evident through this study that there is really no way to destroy the consciousness of an individual, no more than it is to stop the blood from flowing through his veins resulting from the pumping of his heart. If attention is not paid to the conscience, and one acts-out contrarily to it, we lose our balance. One tends to forget how to dance, how to flow, and becomes ever the more unconscious of not letting anyone discover that we are inherently vulnerable entities.

This study has created in me a greater understanding of diversity, a deep acknowledgement that I, and all who are here (and not here), have a purpose and are in possession of the power to heal. Whether the channel through which healing is achieved is compassion in the form of a helping hand, or through causing anguish and pain in the life of another. Everything in this world seems to occupy its rightful place in the greater scheme of things that people don't have to think as I do, or hold similar views as I, that all of life is a wonderful and awesome mystery, which I am privileged to investigate and discover for myself. Everything and everyone and my experiences shared with them, is part of me in some unthinkable way, my experiences with them have led me to the very place I now occupy.

I cannot affirm whether it is fortunate or unfortunate that there is suffering in the world, I only know that it has the capacity to awaken the compassion in me to which I would otherwise not be in the position to access. Whether there will ever be an actual undoing of the necessity for suffering, or whether that is even possible, I may never be certain.

I know that individual beings appear to act-with and -out upon one another in phenomenal ways. I believe I had never truly experienced the emotion of compassion before. I suspect there is a purpose to everything under heaven, to quote the Habakkuk insertion in the bible. I suspect, too, that the hell of which people so often irresponsibly speak, is born of misguided perceptions of our connectedness with all of life. I vibrate closely, with the suggestion made by Mary Baker Eddy as she has written in Science and Health, and I paraphrase here, that what ever one's beliefs and thoughts be at the time of a person's passing is the way they will continue to believe and be in whatever realm it is into which he or she passes over, from this realm to the next. In my own words, awakened is awakened, asleep is asleep, and no amount of dying will make this otherwise so.

I now know that I must keep focused on my bottom lines, so to speak. These are not written in stone, and yet, they are that which supports me in the sense of an inner guiding compass. My conscience is effected by what I have learned through this process and raised a bit to the present level of satisfaction and trust that I occupy my place in the bigger picture, as I believe it to be fitting. I know now that nothing is ever lost and that life is eternal, not temporal. And lastly, I am extremely grateful after what I have experienced and learned from others in this process. It is good to know that I do not

exclusively hold the task of healing the world and that healing takes place here within the scope of my own consciousness, not somewhere out in the world. It all begins and ends with me, as cliché as this sounds.

I know through my own efforts, not because it has been dictated to me as to how I should be, that I can not dictate to another as to whether what he does is wrong or right. I can best reach him and serve him in greater good by telling him how that which he does affects me. There is a danger in paying too much attention to what is wrong in the world, sick and distorted perceptions. These tend to increase when the perpetrator can attract the attention he or she craves, by another belaboring his or her faults. Yet, I will speak out. Be it right or wrong, I have forever been a whistle blower and a cover-puller, exposing perceived injustice to the world around me, especially when that which is abusive has gone unacknowledged or been ignored. I recognize, too, that when people think of themselves in unloving ways, it is because they either believe themselves to be despicable in some way, or they do not feel that they measure up to whatever it is that they believe is expected of them. This has been so for me, and I believe all human beings are prone to such thinking if they possess an acknowledged sense of conscience.

I sense that I am compassion. I live in it and it lives in me, and has been here all along. What blocked it had been my fear of entering into the realms of feelings and emotions that had, up until the time of this study, been too complicated for me to decipher. I thought that if I got too close to them, they would annihilate me.

The process of therapy has been very helpful in uncovering many of the hidden problematic areas, behind which, incidentally, were hidden a great many un-lived feelings such as joy and compassion.

I assert, too, that what man considers to be annoying human propensities, are all natural (existing in or caused by nature, not made or caused by humankind) and as such, should be regarded with the greatest brevity and attentiveness as to their origins, not preoccupy man with the setting of regulations with which to govern them, as if they were merely some undesirable base material to be removed from man's character. In man's mind there is cause for him to feel the need to protect himself through lying, cause to shield himself from the harsher elements in society that often drive him to doubt himself, by hardening his heart. There is just cause for him to fear his neighbor and avoid too intense a connection with them, considering that at any moment, in the heat of confrontation, the other may pull a gun and kill him, by avoiding intimacy altogether.

Man has good cause to consider the safety and preservation of his family in times such as ours, in which there is a great deal of uncertainty and unexpected change, before which he feels it necessary to arm himself.

Through my experience of the process of self-exploration acceptance had been but the initial stage in the development of my inner trust. I have been shown in the process that compassion is the great neutralizer of the need for protection from others, for by it my vision becomes clearer, I can see me in you, and you as me, both acting out our stories upon the stage of an incomprehensible nature, in which I have only to fulfill my role and embrace myself as accountable for my own contribution. It is not necessary for man to control his baser propensities, so to speak, when he is aware that these propensities within him/herself are all so natural. One does well, however, to investigate the nature of these driving forces. Such is the nature of this provisional attitude that will afford him the option of being at-choice and at-cause in the world, to play his role

committedly, and to be the compassion that is able to replace the inner drive toward perfectionism and protectionism. “Understanding the difference between healthy striving and perfectionism is critical to laying down the shield and picking up your life. Research shows that perfectionism hampers success. In fact, it's often the path to depression, anxiety, addiction, and life paralysis” (Brown, 2010, p. 56).

In my opinion, perfection *is* the natural state of any organic organism either at rest or undergoing transition. Compassion is the oil and the balm to all that it connects, one to the other, in a world that is faced, and forever will be, I believe, with the collateral damages resulting from the world of manifest form with subsequent problem conditions of duality and the belief of separation.

In the greater picture that has recently become the means whereby I become better able to cope, it is compassion that has affected the necessary transformation, both at the levels of causal (natural), attitudinal and attribute.

My thought is that compassion is principle, and as such is indestructible and not to be acquired from some outside locality and thereby assimilated, rather it is innate and awaiting arousal. Pain and suffering have proven to be unavoidable, yet so requisite to its genuine expression.

There is an understanding of suffering that you don't invite suffering into your life, but when it comes you use it and transform it. The extreme of it is the Christian monk who is saying, “God, God give me more pain. Give me more suffering because I want to get closer to you.” Ram Das recalls his teacher Maharaj ji asking, “Do you like joy,” and saying, “I love suffering – it brings me so close to God. (Ram Das, 2012)

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION

In cultivating compassion we draw from the wholeness of our experience—our suffering, our empathy, as well as our cruelty and terror. It has to be this way. Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity. (Chödrön, 2002, p. 74)

Pema Chödrön addresses here the all-inclusive value of honoring ourselves with compassion and creating what I call a background-of-relatedness with others.

There may exist different types of pain, degrees of intensity and experienced at the various, sensory levels of the physical, emotional, and psyche, yet in relation to compassion as to what degree, at what levels it is to be experienced, there is no measuring.

One experiences and expresses it, or he does not. It has been shown in this documentation of the findings derived from the study on the phenomenon of compassion, that compassion is not an emotional state of mind or body that can be manufactured or conjured. Compassion is rather, uncovered, called forth, and makes of the individual compassion itself. It has been shown, as well, that compassion is called into action by forces acting upon man in the form of perceived images formulated in the so-called external world or through the experiencing of his own perceived pain.

We have also discovered that pity, sympathy, and sentimentality are not the indigenous gradations of compassion and that empathy is the bio-mechanically induced precursor to the emotional state of compassion.

It has also been revealed that requisite to the expression of compassion, whether existing at the feeling level in the individual or outwardly expressed in the form of action intended to assist in the alleviating of suffering, is the perceived acknowledgement of suffering experienced by another.

It has also been shown, the probability that the degree to which one experiences compassion is contingent on his ability to identify or imagine himself in the similar state of experiencing he observes in another, and that this capacity to identify with another is determined by the experience of suffering the observer has registered and recorded within himself.

We have noted, too, that access to the personal experience of suffering within the individual can be either enabled or restricted, and that restriction takes the form of un-addressed and unexpressed, in-completed feelings or clusters of dwarfed emotions.

We have seen that certain constructs in society, generated as reaction to unacceptable behavior and its collective insistence on the designation of preferred performance of its individual members, can hinder the self-acceptance needed by the individual, in order that he may embrace that which he and others regard as his baser nature.

Brene Brown, adamantly suggests that we address the baser aspects of ourselves and that we cease shaming ourselves and others for expressing elements of our baser nature.

This clearly implies that we are perfect in the overall progression of our continual evolution, not finished beings and that no experience. No rejected part of ourselves, or emotion should be left behind in the process.

Therefore logic bids us to take a head-on look at how we treat ourselves, and others. It proposes that we address the dark embankments, the shores of confusing feelings and thoughts, flanking the margins of our inner emotional world. This can be done through any form of thorough, personal exploration. Clearing away the broken shards of refuse created during traumatic experiences in our past, and making use of these to create something new can be advantageous. Meeting the dark and blocked-off areas of our psyche where the hidden and undesirable parts of ourselves reside that still make their influences known in our present day existence, can be addressed and healed by engaging with a psychotherapist or taking a retreat as I have illustrated with my own story.

What way one chooses to take that sometimes odious, yet always rewarding journey is irrelevant. If one is to experience compassion, fully, one cannot afford to be in avoidance or denial or remain ignorant to his internal world. That which is emotional must eventually, by virtue of its creative nature becomes expressed. That which is hidden cannot remain so for long. And, I dare say, destructive forces will always become exposed in the light of truth, for truth (laws beyond our ken witnessed only through their after-effects) is insistent, and seeks to fill all space and anything that is kept secret will become exposed in the process of that filling.

It should be clear by way of these implications based on the findings in this study that one is not in the position to give, that which he does not have. In other words, if I have not done the work on, and with, myself, that which I think to be compassion being

expressed, is in actuality sentimentality, sympathy and at best pity. None of these possess the sole healing power of compassion itself.

Vulnerability is the key to intimacy and intimacy leads to understanding, and understanding connects, it is the adhesive and cohesive force that leads to the recognition of, believe it or not, desiring it to be so or not, our atonement as a race.

As for Love, which is not the specific topic of this dissertation, I know very little, and will not claim to, because my head is still so filled with hallmark representations of the concept. Neither do I care for forgiveness. As I perceive it, understanding is forgiveness. Here, I sense compassion standing more realistically in their place. Compassion is the acknowledgement and proof of our shared humanity.

Compassion, as Karen Armstrong points out, is more than the empathic emotions rooted in the limbic system of the brain. It is, as her research indicates, inseparable from man's humanity. Compassion is consideration, shu, as Confucius (551—479 BCE) is said to have regarded it to be. Armstrong relates in her book, *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*, (p.9) “ The first person to formulate the Golden Rule, as far as we know, was the Chinese sage Confucius [], who when asked which of his teachings his disciples could practice “ all day and every day” replied: “Perhaps the saying about shu (consideration). Never do unto others what you would not like them to do to you” (Karen Armstrong, 2010).

Arguments

We will now address the matrix and quality of compassion from the perspective of its proposed organic form. We will contrast this to forms considered to be of a

compassionate nature as they more often appear in the world, that merely suggest the condition of human connectivity.

Discourse on the subject is presented here in the form of question and answer, a manner in which the human mind naturally converses with itself, when inquiring into the nature of a given subject.

Q: If compassion is who we are innately, then how is it that there is not more of this emotion in the form of action witnessed in the world around us?

A: First, compassion is hidden behind a need to sustain the belief that we are, from one another, dissociated and separate. It is a generally accepted notion that we are separate entities all acted upon by some out side and separate force and independent of one another. That we are manifest in the world of form leads us to think in a dualistic reality: I, and Thou, of Thou, as it, out there. Martin Buber (1970) describes in his main proposition as the two ways in which we address existence. A.) In that of the "I" towards an "It", toward an object that is separate in itself, which we either use or experience, and B.) that of the "I" towards "Thou", in which we move into existence in a relationship without bounds. This latter is difficult to realize when the belief in separation is so strongly reinforced in the form of I and the objectified world around me as disconnected. (Buber, 1970, p. 178)

Second, compassion is called to the fore through the mechanism of shared biological sensory responses occurring throughout the empathic pathways in the human brain and the activation of mirror reflexes, physically exhibited by one responding to the cognized suffering of pleasure, or pain, in another.

Third, the awakening of compassion is encouraged through the process of perception. One perceives an event for example, and cognizes this through the pre-conditioned filters at the threshold of his interpretation facilities.

Fourth, this filtering system is unique to each individual yet informed by the collectively held beliefs in the society in which the individual exists. It is comprised of past memories of physical and emotional sensations previously experienced by the individual who then registers the incoming data as either being benign or potentially malignant.

Q: How is this process of perceived suffering unique for every individual? Are we not all human, after all, and in possession of the same feeling capacities, and don't we all feel and are we not all, subject to suffering in the same way?

A: Potentially, it appears that we all have the capacity to feel and experience suffering, whether induced by sadness or joy, for example. However, every person does not suffer in the same way or to the same degree. To what degree and measure is determined by the condition of his perceptive faculties. One person may be in no wise affected by witnessing the slaughter of an animal, and another, may see no harm in the loss of life as a casualty of war.

One's ability to exhibit compassion, borne of conscience, depends on the conditioning of his individual mental or emotional constitution. Whatever standards and values the individual possesses determine how he or she will respond when exposed to the suffering of others. As well, there is the lack of ability to the proper functioning of the empathic faculties in those who act without conscience, or in those who choose to go unconscious to the suffering of another or within themselves.

Q: If compassion is organic and innate, why does it not have a mind of its own and express its self regardless of whether or not the individual is awake to the perception of pain?

A: Because identification is the key that unlocks the door to compassion.

Q: What if an individual has not experienced pain or cannot remember ever having experienced pain, would they be able still, to experience and express compassion?

A: Contrary to personal belief, all sentient beings suffer and have suffered pain. They are either awake to this fact, or they have gone unwittingly or deliberately unconscious to it.

Q: How does one become unconscious to his or her own pain?

A: One can achieve unconsciousness through the process of denial. If at some point one has experienced pain, either emotional, physical or psychic and that experience was too much for the individual to bear, imposed through abuse or accidentally, it is possible through the process of justification and reasoning to convince themselves never to have endured pain in the first place. After the inducement of pain has ceased and some temporal distance has been achieved, one can train themselves to forget.

Q: If everyone experiences pain, then the memory of the experience must remain registered in the individual, either physically or in thought. If it is there in the person and suffering is the key to unlocking the door to compassion, why doesn't this process occur automatically?

A: It is the quality of recognition of his or her own suffering of any type of pain that triggers a natural compassionate response to the perceived suffering in another.

Q: Is this not empathy of which you speak?

A: No, empathy is a vibratory quality, the result of chemical responses in answer to outside stimuli and does not necessarily call the individual to take action in response to perceived suffering. Empathy points the way to the door behind which compassion exists. Identification must first ensue before the responsive mechanisms of action to the call of another's suffering can be charged.

If we take up the word in conversation, the term empathic, we find that it embodies the idea of projection of one's personality into the viewed object. In addressing the term "passion", we discover in part that it possesses at its root the idea of suffering or pathos. If we look at the root within the term of compassion and its meaning, we see the idea of "with" or "together" (con, Latin-root), that quality emerging as a whole awareness of feeling, suffer, and with, in combination with "compati" to feel pity. From com, plus "t" we get "pati" to suffer, equals to suffer with. If in the case of empathy, which implies a projection of internally existing response onto the object observed, we have a closed and removed loop, existing between I and the observable. When we apply the concept of "suffering—with" there is no distancing of myself from the object of my viewing, I am that person or entity, in the process of suffering or enduring, and I become compelled to action in the purpose of halting the inflicting cause of the suffering I am experiencing.

It is the connecting forces of identification triggering the impulse to action that connotes the difference between empathic and compassionate response.

To be affected with passion, "passionatus" in Latin, is equivalent in sense with "amorous". Therefore, in my experience, both from the sense of compassion deriving from the process of engagement with myself, and my own experience of suffering, combined with the impression of the data deriving from the interviews with others, the

experience of compassion can be likened unto the idea of the bearing of Love. Another interpretation of the idea can be viewed as the enduring of Love, bearing with Love, the pain of Love, the pain of suffering and the bearing of the connecting force of Love itself.

Q: Are you implying that Love needs to be beared?

A: I am implying this, yes. Personal experience informs me that compassion is the substance of bearing, essentially a bearing—with. This can be pain inducing.

Q: Is this why I avoid feeling compassion?

A: Often the recognition of another's pain and the subsequent organic response of compassion to it, can arouse the existential fear of annihilation or that of simply putting one's self in harm's way. Or, one may find that in recognizing the suffering in another stirs undesirable emotions within themselves that have not yet been addressed and which they may regard as unacceptable or too frightening to face. This is the reason I place the emphasis that I do, on the need for disclosure of one's own incomplete experiences of trauma or unresolved issues surrounding intimacy and protectionism.

Compassion has a humbling effect on the perceived sense of separation. It commands connectivity. I do not experience humility when I am doing all I can to maintain the constructs of separateness between myself and another. Willingness to be vulnerable enables me to let go of some of the separation-constructs and connect with other people.

Owning our story, can be hard, but not nearly as difficult as spending our lives running from it. Embracing our vulnerabilities is risky but not nearly as dangerous as giving up on love and belonging and joy—the experiences that make us the

most vulnerable. Only when we are brave enough to explore the darkness will we discover the infinite power of our light. (Brown, 2012, p. 30)

The maintenance of separation is also exhausting and can lead to a great deal of suffering. I have the suspicion, though, that any kind of suffering eventually leads one to connectivity with others.

Q: Are you saying that I have to be humble to experience compassion?

A: Accurate self-appraisal resulting from devout self-examination and the inclusion and acceptance of the baser self, and all its unseemliness is an automatic leveler of pride which is a self and other abasing feeling borne of shame and inaccurate self-assessment, producing the idea, once again, of separation. With acceptance and synthesis of the unavoidable qualities of our darker nature, compassion towards others and ourselves is awakened and afforded a pathway to expression.

Q: You have asserted that compassion is organic. Does that imply that there can be such a thing as inorganic compassion?

A: There is not such a thing as inorganic compassion. However, that which is often mistaken for compassion, in most cases is sympathy or an automatic empathic response to suffering.

By definition, as it has already been stated, there belongs to compassion the expressed intent toward taking action to assist the sufferer. It should be clear, the difference between feeling *with* another, the outward projecting of that feeling *onto* the object of observance and that of experiencing the urge to put one's self at risk in order that the individual being observed and with whom one is engaged, might be relieved of

his or her suffering. It is one thing to care about another and quite different a proposition to care for, and with, them.

Q: This reminds me of the concept of co-dependency. Isn't this something to be avoided?

A: "Co-dependency" entails quite different qualities than inter-dependency and inter-relatedness. It is one thing to lend a pole to a drowning person onto which he can grab hold, and quite another to lend him your arm when to do so might eventuate in a dual drowning. "Co-dependent" is a term that originated in the early 1980's within the organization of Alcoholics Anonymous to describe the effect of a person's alcoholic behavior on those closest to him or her, that caused them to become so much so attached and susceptible to the debilitating suffering of the alcoholic as to cause the development within themselves of their own pathological disordering, literally becoming, co-alcoholic or alcoholic with. The use of this term has been expanded to include the behavior of a person that is dependent on the behavior of another. It is advised that one should understand, that to be compassionate and act compassionately means to act with the one who is suffering in alleviating his pain, not *as* the one suffering.

Q: Could you clarify further the subject of separation and how compassion is expected to heal us of this belief?

A: As simplistic as the following may appear, the problem of separation may occur initially, in the function of com—mun—i—ca—tion itself. Perhaps the idea of there being another something or someone, outside of one's self, with whom he connects or engages himself, is a quality and function belonging to communication: infantile thinking perhaps, yet it is my theory that this simple process would be rendered

impossible if we thought for a moment that we were communicating with our selves, which I tend to believe is indeed the case. Perhaps this will become the eventual and worthy material of further investigative research into the phenomenon of compassion.

Q: Can I learn compassion?

A: Yes and no. One can utilize the ideals of compassion, suggested by another as a model toward which one can aspire, such as in remembrance of and adherence to the tenets of the Golden Rule. To the purpose of clarifying a great misnomer entertained by even the most astute thinker, namely, that one should do unto others as they would be done unto, and with regards to the Golden Rule, we do in fact, do exactly unto others as we do unto ourselves. Make no mistake, the hardened criminal who steals or murders, is doing unto others, as a means of punishment unto himself. When I am being loving toward myself, I automatically express love towards others. When someone says to me, in reference to another “Oh, that person should treat others the way he himself would wish to be treated,” I respond with the following: “Yes, they are.”

Furthermore, mere mechanical practice of the principle alone, however, remains a practice in acting “as if”. Such practice, void of tactile understanding, seldom brings one to actual experience, until that practice becomes a living breathing entity in its own right, informed of organic process. Acting as if has its uses. If one is not awakened thereby however to his suffering, or to the hidden pockets of unexpressed and painful emotion lying dormant within him, access to true compassion will remain hidden. When we cross the threshold of filtering defenses, informed by the clutter of un-faced pain and one’s failed attempts at dissociating themselves from it, it is the recognition that h/she is not alone, that we all suffer, by acknowledging the unifying characteristics of a shared

humanity, that the attribute of compassion can be activated at any time and without danger to the individual himself. “We cannot selectively numb emotions, when we numb the painful emotions, we also numb the positive emotions” (Brown, 2010, p. 70)

Learning compassion is this: The identification that we are all subject to mistake ourselves for something artificial, misjudge ourselves as being alone in the world, condemn our baser-nature, mistake ourselves for animals only, we run the risk of overlooking the possibility that everything is of a divine nature. The experience of trauma is unavoidable, the propensity toward shaming ourselves and others and the inescapable propensity to project our fears and misconceptions out on to the world are, in my opinion, part of the unfolding of a divine drama. So yes, learn as being, or learn from “acting as if”, we profit greater from the former.

Q: How can I teach compassion?

A: By clearing a path through any unexamined debris of the past, or by connecting with your own experience of pain which clears the way to the expression of this quality. Then allow yourself to be used by it.

A Heuristic Life

Approaching the phenomenon of compassion from a heuristic perspective can open up planes of consciousness and new dimensions to the human experience of At-one-ment with all sentient beings. The heuristic model used in the examination process into the nature of some singularity of which man pursues deeper understanding, requires the skills of patience, open-mindedness to that which is novel, original, innovative and different. It also requires a willingness to rest, albeit anxiously, in a state of not knowing,

to be uncomfortable at times, with others as well as one's self, and to apply, in earnest, an honest eye of observation and appraisal to all that might arise during the process itself.

Uncovering, discovering, and revealing the innermost causes at the root of suffering, that which greatly informs one's experience of compassion, can be freeing, powerful and exhilarating. Beholding such an attitude of investigation does, however, have its difficulties. The process itself is a living, breathing organism, subject to constant change, involving periods of floundering, focus and refocusing of loosely directed intention that remains requisite throughout. It is saturated with problems of being able to distinguish between that which is real to us, or another, or being at the affect of fancy, having ideas prescribed for one. It commands a willingness and determination to intimacy. Finally, it necessitates a resolute commitment to inquire ever further into the finer nature of every arising new insight, as if it were not the final word on the subject. This assertiveness is not easy to maintain for one whose inquisitive approach into the nature of any of life's wonders has too readily been appeased by findings obtained by another, who has by virtue of his or her own work of engagement involving a given phenomenon, arrived at their own conclusions.

To illustrate what I mean by the necessity of being open to novelty, which is in essence requisite to creativity and the forward motion of evolution—I loosely quote Ken Wilber and another teacher Mary Baker Eddy, who inform us that by beholding in thought the preferred idea of something not yet manifest in form, be it emotional, mental or physical, we need to have the understanding and determined belief that focused desire will resonate as a request whose answer resides in the same place as it does. The thought here is, that in order for a question to exist in the first place, its essential being-ness, in

the form of an answer, the quality from which it emerges, already exists. It is with this evidence of things unseen that man fashions the outward expressions of ideas. That being said, it is likewise incumbent upon the researcher of any given phenomenon to hold the open space for not knowing, a point my professor has often attempted to impress upon me, namely, that it is in the not knowing, emptiness, simply put, that the novelty, the unexpected, can emerge.

As challenging as this was, it was necessary for me to commit, unreservedly, to this way of approaching every new emerging insight, and in the case of every new encounter with the study participants, in order that I might maintain an objectively observational-stance in my assessment and assimilation of the data being presented, while watching for resonances within myself in every moment of our shared experience.

Proposal For Further Research

First: The prospect that compassion might be a quality, developed with age, was presented at various times throughout the course of this present study. This implies the need for a quantitative study to be performed to assess the possible validity of this supposition. My suggestion is that there be gathered, men and women of various ages and at the four major stages of maturation or aging processes of childhood, adolescence, adulthood and post seventy years of age.

Second: From the subjects, should be withheld much of the data derived from this present study accept, that they be asked to express their own and individual experience as to what they think compassion is, and be asked to describe their experiences in detail. The results should be tallied and added to the present findings existing in this report.

Third: Research, not only performed with long-term meditators such as monks and students of Buddhism alike, should be conducted, but with novice meditators, as well. Similar requests, as presented in the quantitative study suggested above, as to the personal meaning of compassion and accrual experience of compassion should be addressed to each participant.

Fourth: Similar to the investigative research as performed by the British author and commentator, known for her books on comparative religion (Armstrong, 2010) investigation should be carried out in the religious orders, though personally directing the subjects to answer the question of compassion not as professed by their religion, but solely regarding their experience of compassion as manifested within themselves, personally.

Fifth: Addressing different cultural groups with the question of compassion and how the individuals belonging to those groups perceive suffering will bring about more clarity on the topic as it relates to the findings presented in this dissertation. Outside of the scope of findings derived through my own approaches and the design of this dissertation research, there may be discovered completely different or slightly altered views on suffering and on compassion.

Sixth: There is need for research into the prospect of that which I propose of asserting that once, one is in touch with, and in acceptance of and has assimilated the components of their own suffering, that compassion is an automatically appearing phenomenon in all people.

Suggestions For Future Research Design

While this dissertation did address the subject of compassion, how it is generated, and the proposed methods for working through that which possibly blocks its expression, the findings here do not attest to the overall application of said methods, for every individual. Not everyone is a meditator, a spiritual inquirer, and moreover, few believe or can admit that they have indeed suffered, and not all are awake to the possibility that their lives have been in any way affected by trauma.

During this present study only three participants had openly shared with the primary researcher that they had themselves personally conducted programs for themselves, comprised of parameters and protocol, such as extremely long periods of meditation, weekend contemplations in nature and had undergone daily practice of journaling and physical fitness.

The data presented in CHAPTER 4, resulting of a ten—year inquiry into the nature of compassion and addressed within the context of the hypothesis that questions whether or not compassion is an innate quality existing in man, requiring only the necessary impulse in order to be awakened, or if it is rather, something that can be taught, learned or trained, herewith inconclusive.

With the exception of the conclusive data resulting from my own process of self-investigation into the nature of compassion and three other participants, Daniel and Paul and Ulrika, it was ascertained that the answer is conclusively yes, to both, but not conclusive with regards to the posed supposition that self-acceptance derived from self-inquiry is the only pathway to the organic quality of compassion. In view of the self-investigative work they themselves had undergone, which resulted in the expression of compassion at a profound level, differed in my estimation from the results presented by

the remaining 10 participants represented a broad mixture of assertions as to whether one need know one's self before he or she can know compassion and that of practicing the Golden Rule.

Compassion can be aroused in the individual through the witnessed suffering of another. How to be compassionate can be demonstrated, advised and presented to the would-be practitioner after which, he or she can model his or her behavior accordingly, that subsequently enable one to apply the prescriptions and thereby encourage the organic expression of compassion from within.

As for my theory that organic compassion is a direct result of individual self-examination and inquiry, there was insufficient evidence to prove this for lack of subjects who attested to their own experiences, having discovered compassion through the self-investigation process. In other words, there were but two subjects who had entered in upon similar paths of self-investigation who had used methods equivalent to those I had applied in my own process.

Therefore, I am strongly suggesting that a study be constructed and carried out focusing in on this missing feature, that which is, with strong probability, yet to be conclusively revealed. I firmly believe, that I and the three other participants, I have mentioned in the above paragraph may achieve, the desired assessment through a study that focuses solely on my assertion, which may bring about similar results to those obtained by me.

To this end, I propose the following methodology, application and processes as a skeleton model for the type of study that might afford us greater focus into the suggestion that organic compassion is not possible without knowledge of self.

The researcher may apply all of the applications and processes utilized by this primary researcher throughout his ten—year self—investigation program.

A) Journaling, B) Reading pertinent literature, C) Meditation, in its any number of forms, i.e. that of contemplation on the “Four Nobel Truths”, “Tonglen”, and the “Four Immeasurables” (see glossary), or in any number of different styles, be it,” Zen” or “Transcendental Meditation”. D) Practice of: Yoga, Qi Gong and other forms of physical therapy, E) Creative Art Therapy, in any genre, and F.) Disclosure to a “Sponsor” from any number of the self-help recovery programs, priest or psychotherapist on a regularly scheduled basis, with whom the participant is trusting.

Note: Throughout the course of this study three participants were singled out who admitted to having deliberately addressed the darker sides of their nature. One participant who I intuitively read as having undergone, at various stages in his life, periods of soul searching and reflection by immersing himself into the solitude of isolation, proved clearly that his increasing self-awareness determined his ability to act responsively in a compassionate way when faced with suffering, both with himself, and with others. This participant, at one point in his search, had undergone various types of psychotherapy. And had spent long stretches in sanatoriums throughout his life. He is currently a healing practitioner and publishes his research findings on a regular bases, from his continued investigation into the phenomenon of evil, “a psycho-spiritual disease of the soul that has been wreaking havoc throughout human history that Native Americans call Wetiko” (Levy, 2013, p. iii)

A couple of participants fearing the process self-investigative to entail selfish self-engagement shared openly, that they had no need for such focused self-absorption, as

they termed it. To investigate a particular phenomenon in the manner of which I herein suggest is not an easy undertaking nor generally thought of as a preferable in which to get to know one's self. Daily reflection, daily journaling, some form of physical therapy, expressive art practices, up to one to three sessions weekly, with a healing practitioner or therapist and long hours of reading accompanied by long periods of silence in isolation: This is not easy, yet this author has proven such processes to be quite rewarding.

Further Proposals for Extended Investigative Study

That this study on compassion did not achieve personally preferred results, which would have required that the study focus its attention primarily on the possibility of self-actualization and personal transformation as a requirement to, and as theoretical hypothesis for, the expression of compassion, it does however, establish with high probability, that suffering and the ability to suffer and transmute this shared experience of suffering into compassion, has been powerfully ascertained through the broader approach to the phenomenon of compassion which has been taken up in this study.

It is possible that with a more myopic approach to the investigation of the nature of that which blocks us access to our individual suffering, and in affect to our shared suffering, the knowledge of which is indispensably requisite to the needed condition of identification, the resulting findings would lead us to greater understanding overall, to the need of greater self-awareness and to encourage the acceptance of a heuristic method whereby anyone can achieve it.

The following is my suggestion for a planned heuristic based self-investigation protocol.

- A. Choose 50—100 participants from an array of cross-cultural, multi-racial, education and economic background.
- B. Devise a 6—month program entailing one weekend per month retreats during which participants check in with the supervising therapist and or assistant therapist in a private session and, in formulated groups no larger than 15 in all. Participants shall change group allegiances monthly, with a different facilitator and with unfamiliar co-participants.
- C. Objective: to address the hidden blockages to innate and essential feelings and emotions.
- D. At the very beginning of the study duration, inform each participant of the ultimate objective as being “To Awaken Compassion”.
- E. After commencement of the study and throughout never mention the ultimate objective again, unless the individual should address it him or herself.
- F. Responsible facilitators should be present throughout.
- G. The participants shall be reminded of their weekly practices and all artistic creations should be presented to the other participants of their assigned group at the weekend retreats.
- H. Observance of any shifts in relational behavior should be regularly monitored between the participants relating one to another.
- I. In week 12 topics of abuse, victimization, perpetration, suffering, self-treatment, and compassion shall be taken up in intense discussion.
- J. Having devised a scale connoting levels of progressive coming-to, in regards to compassion, this can now be utilized to assess as conclusively as possible

whether the compassionate state of each individual was hindered or enhanced through the process of self-investigation and to what degree.

It is important to note here, that the participants should not be exposed to any type of spiritual propaganda or presently held solidified views and opinions of what compassion is and how it is generated. Rather, in this study, it should be established by way of implication, at the onset, and be given the participant to understand the possibility that through the discovery and recognition of their own pain, their own suffering, their own trauma, and their own shame, and vulnerability, that these might be the vehicles by which the compassion, they have yet to experience, may be accessed.

Final Comments

One may discover that in other cultures suffering is not depicted with use of the same definitions used by those in Western cultures or those where the Buddhist views are absent. Compassion may, in some cultures not be a word used at all.

Beyond this, I welcome the members of the psychological community to test and retest for themselves the validity of my findings, and I invite the criticism necessary to the validation or dispute of the hypothesis herein contained and proposed, and in service to the community as a whole.

I would here like to add a word on spirituality:

There has been a particular sentiment strewn across the globe over the past couple of decades that has become a common response by many, to the question of their religion, and when asked, those who adhere to the proliferated slogan reply with, “I am not religious, I am spiritual.” As great an advancement this may be to the acceptance of spiritual ideas, concepts and teachings, I do not find that it suffices to fulfilling the need

for the active expression of compassion. After all, spirituality, like faith, if adhered to without works, is dead. The life of all living things deserves our loyal reverence, appreciation and, above all, the recognition that what we do unto others is that which we do unto ourselves.

“We can either emphasize those aspects of our traditions, religious or secular, that speak of hatred, exclusion, and suspicion or work with those that stress the interdependence and equality of all human beings. The choice is [ours]” (Armstrong, 2011, p. 22).

If we are adamantly and individually painstaking, with regards to our own development, leaving nothing in our subconscious neglected, disowned or unturned, and are attitudinally right with ourselves and consequently, all living things, this is the greatest service we can offer the race as a whole. I believe that complete ownership of our humanity rests in the recognition of our defects, as well as, our finer attributes of character. It matters not if we struggle with the common human dilemma of being driven to do, that which we would not, and seemingly thwarted by some unforeseen force in doing that which we would. This is but an unavoidable human propensity, sometimes appearing to have the upper hand in any given moment. We may make many mistakes, at least they are genuine, and we can set the ideal of a loving world before our sights, even though we know that here, in this realm of duality, there may always be conflict. Everything is in service to the other and is part and parcel of a sublime plan in which we only have to play our part to be rest assured that whatever that plan, there is nothing wasted in this universe and everything is in its rightful place.

Synthesis

How then, shall I tell the story of this man who once was extremely troubled and is now comfortable in a world he once viewed as being quite alien. Here, it is best to rely on simplicity.

I did my Siddhartha story in my early years, and right up into my mid-forties.

That life had given me the rewards of dreams accomplishment and still, had left me with a feeling of void, from which there issued murmurings of an ignored soul.

Saddled with impulses out of my control, dissatisfied and notwithstanding the fact that I had for so long avoided taking heed of, that which I have come to know as my soul, I reached a point where my body could no-longer support the demanding life style I had led.

Through a very long period of self-immersion I discovered that there had been many character traits and hidden demons formed in my childhood and during a very troubled adolescence, that had been left unexamined and out of which there had grown habitual behaviors unsuitable and reactions to life, inappropriate.

Once the journey through this labyrinth, the maze of the unexplored, commenced, each stage affording greater revelation, I could see that which the behaviors had been harboring and beyond to the places where many cherished erroneous beliefs had long resided.

Beyond this point lay the murky misconceptions of an unknown, previously unexamined, and unhealed emotional world, filled with gaping wounds. I had to take these up and become intimate with them, come to honor and accept them.

Having done so through an intense and isolated process of self-investigation, there began emotional healing. I discovered that shame and guilt were actually the gifts of

being human, at least in my case and, this became my gateway to emotional maturity and freedom. The very places I had never wanted to visit within myself, the very things I deemed shameful about myself, turned out to be my greatest treasures. They made me aware of my own humanity.

Self-acknowledgement has transported me to a greater and deeper quality of identification with others. Becoming intimate with all that I had once avoided within myself has awakened within me a sense of inextricable connectedness and kinship with others and, all of life. I know that I am never alone. These thoughts and feelings I can neither describe, nor fully explain.

The feeling of connectedness continues to assist in my understanding of things and helps me recognize an ever-evolving capacity to greater and greater vulnerability and subsequently the experience of that which I now believe to be compassion.

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GLOSSARY

Alchemy: is a form of chemistry and speculative philosophy practiced in the Middle-Ages and the Renaissance, which is principally concerned with discovering methods for transmuting baser metals into gold and with finding a universal solvent and an elixir of life. Alchemy is thought by most to be the functional application of any mystical power or process of transmuting a common substance, usually of little value, into a substance of greater value. In the context of this dissertation it is the process of combining individual experiences, which in and of themselves may appear to hold little meaning, that when combined with the rest of ones life's experience reveals in stark relief, a much greater purpose.

A•tone•ment: satisfaction or reparation for a wrong or injury; amends. In theology it is the doctrine concerning the reconciliation of God and humankind, especially as accomplished through the life, suffering, and death of Christ. In Christian Science it represents the experience of humankind's unity with God exemplified by Jesus Christ: At-one-ment, however, infers the concept of wholeness and unity of all living things; that there has never been a breach in the fabric of the whole that in any way is in need of mending, i.e., there can be no such a state as separation.

Big Mind Process: The "Big Mind Process" is a specific technique developed by Zen teacher Dennis Merzel that merges Western psychological techniques (specifically Voice Dialogue therapy) with Buddhist conceptions of self and mind.

Chemicalization: or, chemical reaction is a process that leads to the transformation of one set of chemical substances to another. Chemical reactions can be either spontaneous, requiring no input of energy, or non-spontaneous, typically following the input of some type of applied energy, such as heat, light or electricity. In the Middle Ages, chemical transformations were studied by Alchemists. In particular, they attempted to convert lead into gold, for which purpose they used reactions of lead and lead-copper alloys with sulfur. In the context of Christian Science: "If faith in the truth of being, which you impart mentally while destroying error, causes *chemicalization* (as when an alkali is destroying an acid), it is because the truth of being must transform the error to the end of producing a higher manifestation." (Eddy, 1876, p. 401:7)

Compassion: is often regarded as having an emotional component to it, though when based on cerebral notions such as fairness, justice and interdependence, it may be considered rational in nature and its application understood as an activity based on sound judgment. There is also an aspect of compassion, which regards a quantitative dimension, such that an individual's compassion is often given a property of "depth," and "passion." The etymology of "compassion" is Latin, meaning "co-suffering. More involved than simple empathy, compassion is commonly thought to give rise to an active desire to alleviate another's suffering. It is often, though not inevitably, the key component in what manifests in the social context as altruism. In ethical terms, the various expressions down through the ages of the so-called Golden Rule often embody by implication the principle of compassion: Do to others what you would have them do to you. Compassion is the natural organic effect of empathy on an individual whose capacity, to identify with the suffering of pain in another individual, that can exponentially become enhanced

through the process of self-acceptance and self acknowledgment of the individuals personal experience of pain.

Conflict: is a struggle for power, property, prestige, etc. When beset with incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands this results in what is termed mental struggle-conflict. Strong disagreement between people, groups, etc., that results often in angry argumentation. In the case of dramatic action in a drama or fiction; the opposition of persons or forces that give rise to conflict. In context of this dissertation the authors personal proposition that conflict is a common soliciting device toward connectivity.

Empathy: emotional response to witnessed, or imagined pain or suffering in another, activated by the Neuro-biochemical processes in the primate brain. Empathy is the precursor to awakened compassionate response mechanisms in the human (and other primates), which organically become activated through the facility of identification. Considered by most scientist to day, to be the end result or a process known as mirroring, which is an inherent biological tendency toward contagious responses occurring, usually unconsciously in the individual.

Engagement: within the context of this dissertation, engagement is the act of engaging or condition of being engaged facilitated through a promise, obligation, or other condition that binds, of a committed nature.

Essence: the basic, real, and invariable nature or the significant individual feature or features of a thing; a substance obtained from a plant, drug, or the like, by distillation, infusion, etc., and containing its characteristic properties in concentrated form, such as an alcoholic solution of an essential oil; a perfume; scent. In philosophy it is thought to be

the inward nature, true substance, or constitution of anything, as opposed to what is accidental, phenomenal, illusory example: the essence of being.

Heal: to make healthy, whole, or sound. To restore to health: free from ailment and bring to an end or conclusion, conflicts between people or groups, this is meant usually, with the strong implication of restoring former amity, settling or reconciling, as in case of disputes. It also means to be free from evil; cleanse; purify: to heal the soul. In context of this dissertation it means, correction of that which is erroneous: turning of a misperception for example to its actual state in awareness.

Innate: the quality of being, possessed at birth or inborn; essential characteristic; inherent. Quality of or produced by the mind rather than learned through experience as in, an innate knowledge of right and wrong.

Intimacy: the state of being intimate. To be intimate is to be closely familiar and usually affectionate or loving and personal in relationship with another person or group. Known as a close association with or detailed knowledge or deep understanding of a person, place, subject or thing; commonly attained through the condition of vulnerability.

Nascent state: the condition of an element at the instant it is set free from a combination in which it has previously existed. Also called nascent condition. In the context of this dissertation nascent is another and purer term for organic in connection with the term compassion, to connote its essential nature.

Organic: A living entity; as in made of, or relating to, and derived from living matter; Synonyms: harmonious, organized, coherent, integrated, coordinated, structured, orderly quality to living, live, animate, biological, biotic "organic matter" denoting a relation between living organisms characterized by continuous or natural development. Also

applied as natural qualifier in reference to "the organic unity of the integral work of art". This author is applying the term organic as being synonymous with living, live, animate, biological, biotic as in the expression: "organic matter". Too, the term is being used here to denote a compound or condition of containing carbon (other than simple binary compounds and salts) and chiefly or ultimately of biological origin as in "organic soils". As carbon in its truest soluble form, such as in the case of carbon 60 (a fullerene) has, in concurrence with other forms of carbon, the strong propensity to function as a bonding agent in the formation of life-essential and life-promoting constructs. In relation to the term "organic compassion" this researcher is proposing a possible, relevant connection between carbon-containing compounds and the natural occurrence of emotions-genuine in contrast to those manufactured by an individual void of clear understanding, as to the meaning of true compassion. The base compound comprising all living beings is carbon, which connotes its organic nature.

Pain: a biological/psychological reaction to physical, mental, emotional or psychic traumatic injury; as in the causing (someone or other living thing) mental or emotional physical pain; distress; laborious or careful efforts and infer assiduous care.

Pity: means feeling for others, particularly feelings of sadness or sorrow, and is used comparably to the more modern words "sympathy" and "empathy". When used insincerely, it can also have a more unsympathetic connotation of feelings of superiority or condescension. In ancient usage of pity, it is said of one that he or she must first have experienced suffering of a similar type, and the person must also be somewhat distanced or removed from the sufferer before a they can feel pity for another human.

Suffer: to undergo or feel pain or distress to sustain injury, disadvantage, or loss, or anything unpleasant: to endure pain, disability, death, etc., patiently or willingly: to suffer the pains of conscience, to endure and allow and bear pain. In context of that which this dissertation infers, suffering can entail the endurance or bearing of any intense and extremely pleasurable or un-pleasurable experiences, as in, bearing the pain of extreme joy or extreme sadness.

Suspension: expansion of the word suspend used in the context of this dissertation to connote: to keep from falling, sinking, forming or depositing; as if by hanging; to suspend solid particles in a liquid. To hold or keep undetermined: refrain from forming or concluding definitely: To suspend one's judgment, defer or postpone: to suspend the conviction of an idea. To remain open without allowing ideas to concretely form before all the data is collected.

Tonglen: Tibetan Buddhist form of meditation practice. In the practice, one visualizes taking onto oneself the suffering of others on the in-breath, and giving happiness and success to all sentient beings, on the out-breath. It is a training in altruism, the function of which is to reduce selfish attachment, increase a sense of renunciation, create so-called positive karma by giving and helping and to develop and expand loving-kindness and bodhicitta, (cognition of supreme knowledge otherwise known as wisdom).

Transmutation: To change into another nature, substance, form, or condition; as in the transmuting of previously incongruent elementals into a form of something such that they fit together harmoniously as necessary parts of a whole.

Trauma: Greek origin, 1685–95, pathology: a body wound or shock produced by sudden physical injury, as from violence or accident; the condition produced by this; traumatism.

In psychiatry; it is described as an experience that produces psychological injury or pain.

Four Immeasurables: (a) Loving-kindness, (b) Compassion, (c) Appreciative Joy, (d)

Equanimity: Loving-kindness, the first immeasurable, is the wish that all sentient beings, without any exception, be happy. Compassion, the second of the immeasurables, is the

wish for all sentient beings to be free from suffering. The third immeasurable is

appreciative joy. It is the wholesome attitude of rejoicing in the happiness and virtues of

all sentient beings. And, equanimity, the last of the four immeasurables, is the attitude of

regarding all sentient beings as equals, irrespective of their present relationship to oneself.

In practice one contemplates these, during meditation practice.

Four noble truths: are the central doctrine of the Buddhist tradition, and are said to provide a conceptual framework for all of Buddhist thought. They are:

1) The truth of (dukkha), -the term for suffering, anxiety, or dissatisfaction.

2) The truth of the origin of (dukkha). 3) The truth of the cessation of (dukkha). 4)

The truth of the path leading to the cessation of (dukkha).

Wetiko: coined by indigenous American people who have been tracking the same

"psychic" virus, that Paul Levy, author of 'Dispelling Wetiko', [ii], calls "malignant egophrenia", for many centuries and calling it "Wetiko," a Cree term which refers to a

diabolically wicked person or spirit who terrorizes others. The history of the world for the past 2,000 years is, in great part, the story of the epidemiology of the wetiko disease.

Wetiko/malignant egophrenia is a psychosis in the true sense of the word as being a

"sickness of the soul or spirit." (Levy, 2013, p. iii)

Zazen: In Zen Buddhism, Zazen (literally "seated meditation") is a meditative discipline Buddhist practitioners perform to calm the body and the mind, whereby they become able to concentrate enough to experience insight into the nature of existence and thereby gain enlightenment.

APPENDIX A

TERTIARY ADHERENCES

1. Trust my instincts.
2. Sit with the experiences resulting from the work. 3. Maintain a sense of affinity and resonance in openly approaching potentially helpful information, and not allow an attitude of should-do, or must-do, to dominate the work if and when they arise.
4. Whether aware of the significance of a particular occurrence or not, either in thought or in action maintain adherence to the process and trust that eventually its significance will be revealed. To these points Moustakas writes:

In addition to the significance of becoming one with what one is seeking to know, one may enter into dialogue with the phenomenon, allowing the phenomenon to speak directly to one's own experience to be questioned by it. In this way, one is able to encounter and examine it, to engage in a rhythmic flow with it-back and forth, again and again-until one has uncovered its multiple meanings. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 16)

5. Adhere to practices irrespective of influences coming from within or without that could potentially convince me that the work might be senseless and unimportant.
6. Intentionally seek meaning and at the same time allow whatever arises to *float* within me before putting it into a box with a specific label.
7. Strive to understand, take nothing for granted.
8. Daily journaling: documenting every event, every feeling accompanying a given event, dreams-and interpretations, and random thoughts.

9. Paying attention to significant synchronistic images and thoughts accompanying or arising out of a given experience and adapt it to an art form.

10. Maintain the adopted context of the 3 principles tested prior to the undertaking of the study: i.e., ask and it shall be given unto you, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you- and above all practice patience.

11. 18 study subjects: Chosen from a diverse range of cultural, economic, educational, intelligence ethnic and religious beliefs section from our culture: all posed the exact same questions and furnished with the same questionnaire and release form.

APPENDIX B
RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Date: March 28, 2013

Dear

Thank you for your interest in my dissertation research on the experience of “Self-Realization and the Phenomenon Of Compassion.” I value the unique contribution you can make to my study and am excited about the possibility of your participation in it. The purpose of this letter is to request your participation in my study on the enclosed topic and to secure your signature on the participation-release form, which you will find attached.

The research model I am using is a qualitative one through which I am seeking comprehensive depictions or descriptions of your experience. In this way, I hope to illuminate or answer my question: **Is it necessary to know oneself in order to facilitate the experience of having compassion for others and does this compassion allow for a deeper acknowledgment of kinship with all life?** The terms of my question, as I am using them, mean: **can one really experience true compassion by studying others or must one first know themselves in order to truly empathize with another. Or is it not necessary to know oneself at all, but observe in the world around them all that they see, and thereby experience the idea of compassion?**

Does engaging yourself in a study of Self, and getting to know yourself, lead to greater understanding of the world around you, and if so, does this understanding, generated from within, create the capacity in you for a deeper experience of intimacy and empathy, love and compassion for all living things? On

the other hand, does self-study leave you more isolated and disconnected from the world around you? What is your experience of the subject overall?

Through your participation as a co-researcher, I hope to understand the essence of the phenomenon as it reveals itself in your experience. You are being asked to recall specific episodes or events in your life in which you experienced the phenomenon we are investigating. I am seeking vivid, accurate, and comprehensive portrayals of what these experiences were like for you; your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, as well as situations, events, places, and people connected with your experience. You may also wish to share personal logs or journals with me or other ways in which you have recorded your experience-for example, in letters, poems, or artwork.

I value your participation and thank you for the commitment of time, energy, and effort. If you have any further questions before signing the release form or if there is a problem with the date and time of our meeting, I can be reached at: **XXX-XXX-XXXX**

Hand-written completed response to: **XXXX XX XXX XXXX**

Sincerely, David Allan Lane

APPENDIX C

OUTLINE GUIDE OF PROCEDURES FOR ANALYSIS OF DATA (As directed by Clark E. Moustakas)

1. In the first step in organization, handling, and synthesizing, the researcher gathers all the data from one participant (recording, transcript, notes, journal, personal documents, poems, artwork, etc).
2. The researcher enters into the material in timeless immersion until it is understood. Knowledge of the individual participant's experience, in detail and on the whole, is comprehensively apprehended by the researcher.
3. The data is set aside for a while, encouraging an interval of rest and return to the data, procedures which facilitate the awakening of fresh energy and perspective. Then, after reviewing again all of the material derived from the individual, the researcher takes notes, identifying the qualities and themes manifested in the data. Further study and review of the data and notes enables the Heuristic researcher to construct an individual depiction of the experience. The individual depiction retains the language and includes examples drawn from the individual co-researcher's experience.
4. The next step requires a return to the original data of the individual co-researcher. Does the individual depiction of the experience that the data from which it was developed? Does it contain the qualities and themes essential to the experience? If it does, the researcher is ready to move on to the next co-researcher. If not, the individual depiction must be revised to include what has been omitted or deleted, and what are or are not essential dimensions of the experience. The individual depiction may also be shared with the research participant for

affirmation of its comprehensiveness and accuracy and for suggested deletions and additions.

5. When the above steps have been completed for one research participant, the investigator undertakes the same course of organization and analysis of the data for each of the other research participants until an individual depiction of each co-researchers experience of the phenomenon has been constructed.

6. The individual depictions as a group, representing each co-researcher's experience, are gathered together. The researcher can enter into an immersion process with intervals of rest until the universal qualities and themes of the experience are thoroughly internalized and understood. At a timely point in knowledge and readiness, the researcher develops a composite depiction that represents the common qualities and themes that embrace the experience of the co-researchers. The composite depiction (in group depiction reflecting the experience of individual participants) includes exemplary narratives, descriptive accounts, conversations, illustrations, and verbatim excerpts that accentuate the flow, spirit, and life inherent in the experience. It should be vivid, accurate, alive, and clear, and encompass the core qualities and themes inherent in the experience. The composite depiction includes all the core meanings of the phenomenon as experienced by the individual participants and by the group as a whole.

7. The Heuristic researcher returns again to the raw material derived from each co-researcher's experience, and the individual depictions derived from the raw material. From these data, the researcher selects two or three participants who clearly exemplify the group as a whole. The researcher then develops individual

portraits of these persons, utilizing the raw data, individual depictions and autobiographical material that was gathered during preliminary contacts and meetings, contained in personal documents, or shared during the interview. The individual portraits should be presented in such a way that both the phenomenon investigated and the individual persons emerge in a vital and unified manner.

8. The final step in Heuristic presentation and handling of data is the development of the creative synthesis of the experience. The creative synthesis encourages a wide range of freedom in characterizing the phenomenon. It invites a recognition of tacit- intuitive awareness is of the researcher, knowledge that has been incubating over months through processes of immersion, illumination, and explication of the phenomena investigated. The researcher as scientist-artist develops an aesthetic rendition of the themes and essential meanings of the phenomenon. The researcher taps into imaginative and contemplative sources of knowledge and insight in synthesizing the experience, in presenting the discovery of essences-peaks and valleys, highlights and horizons. In the creative synthesis there is a free reign of thought and feeling that supports the researcher's knowledge, passion, and presents; this infuses the work with a personal, professional, and literary value that can be expressed through narrative, story, home, work of art, metaphor, analogy, or detail.

This presentation of heuristic research design and methodology has embraced beliefs, values, theory, concepts, processes, and methods that are essential to an understanding and conduct of heuristic research and discovery. (Moustakas, 1990, p.51-53.)

Additional parameters to heuristic research as applied to the individual-self-investigative process may be found in *Individuality and Encounter: a brief journey into loneliness and sensitivity groups* (Moustakas, 1971). *The Handbook of Humanistic Psychology: Leading Edges in Theory, Research, and Practice* (Schneider et al, 2001): *(Heuristic methods of obtaining knowledge: rhythms, rituals, and relationships.)* (Moustakas, 1981), and in the article *Heuristic Inquiry: The intimate search to know.* (Douglas & Moustakas, 1985, p. 39—55).

APPENDIX D

NEFF SCALE OF SELF-COMPASSION

Permission granted by author of the “Self-compassion Scale” in her own words:

Kristin Neff, Ph. D. Associate Professor, Educational Psychology Dept. University of Texas at Austin.

To whom it may concern:

Please feel free to use the Self-Compassion Scale in your research. You can e-mail me with any questions you may have. I would also ask that you please e-mail me about any results you obtain with the scale, and would appreciate it if you send me a copy of any article published using the scale. The appropriate reference is listed below.

Best, Kristin Neff, Ph. D. Associate Professor Educational Psychology Dept. University of Texas at Austin 1 University Station, D5800 Austin, TX 78712 e-mail:

kristin.neff@mail.utexas.edu Ph: (512) 471-0382 Fax: (512) 471-1288

Reference:

Neff, K. D. (2003). Development and validation of a scale to measure self: compassion. *Self and Identity*, 2, (223-250.)

Coding Key:

Self-Kindness Items: 5, 12, 19, 23, 26.

Self-Judgment Items: 1, 8, 11, 16, 21.

Common Humanity Items: 3, 7, 10, 15.

Isolation Items: 4, 13, 18, 25.

Mindfulness Items: 9, 14, 17, 22.

Over-identified Items: 2, 6, 20, 24.

Subscale scores are computed by calculating the mean of subscale item responses. To compute a total self-compassion score, reverse score the negative subscale items - self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification (i.e., 1 = 5, 2 = 4, 3 = 3, 4 = 2, 5 = 1) - then compute a total mean. (This method of calculating the total score is slightly different than that used in the article referenced above, in which each subscale was added together. However, I find it is easier to interpret the scores if the total mean is used.)

HOW I
TYPICALLY ACT TOWARDS MYSELF IN DIFFICULT TIMES

Please read each statement carefully before answering. To the left of each item, indicate how often you behave in the stated manner, using the following scale:

Almost, never, always.

1 2 3 4 5

- _____ 1. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.
- _____ 2. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong.
- _____ 3. When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone goes through.
- _____ 4. When I think about my inadequacies, it tends to make me feel more separate and cut off from the rest of the world.
- _____ 5. I try to be, loving towards myself when I'm feeling emotional pain.
- _____ 6. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.
- _____ 7. When I'm down and out, I remind myself that there are lots of other people in the world feeling like I am.

- _____ 8. When times are really difficult, I tend to be tough on myself.
- _____ 9. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.
- _____ 10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.
- _____ 11. I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.
- _____ 12. When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.
- _____ 13. When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am.
- _____ 14. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.
- _____ 15. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.
- _____ 16. When I see aspects of myself that I don't like, I get down on myself.
- _____ 17. When I fail at something important to me I try to keep things in perspective.
- _____ 18. When I'm really struggling, I tend to feel like other people must be having an easier time of it.
- _____ 19. I'm kind to myself when I'm experiencing suffering.
- _____ 20. When something upsets me I get carried away with my feelings.
- _____ 21. I can be a bit cold-hearted towards myself when I'm experiencing suffering.
- _____ 22. When I'm feeling down I try to approach my feelings with curiosity and openness.
- _____ 23. I'm tolerant of my own flaws and inadequacies.
- _____ 24. When something painful happens I tend to blow the incident out of proportion.

_____ 25. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure.

_____ 26. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.

APPENDIX E

DEFINING COMPASSION, EMPATHY & ALTRUISM SCIENTIFIC, ECONOMIC, AND PHILOSOPHICAL, AND CONTEMPLATIVE PERSPECTIVE: EXCERPT

In a YouTube video published on Oct 3, 2012 the conference entitled: *Defining Compassion, Empathy & Altruism Scientific, Economic, Philosophical & Contemplative Perspectives*, which took place March 4th to 5th 2009, which was sponsored by the organization CcARE Stanford, the topic of compassion and human propensity toward empathy and altruism was taken up in earnest. In the portion of the conference, focusing on Compassion Research in Neuroscience, the following speakers became intensely engaged with the topic of Compassion Training: Brian Knutson, Ph.D. Richard Davidson, Ph.D. Tania Singer, PhD, and Bill Mobley, MD, Ph.D. A notable moment came when Jinpa Thupten, who has been the English translator to His Holiness the Dalai Lama since 1985, posed his questions to Professor Singer.

During the discussion, with Richardson leading off with an explanation of the importance of the Compassion Training Research Jinpa Thupten posed what I believe to be a very crucial aspect emerging from the investigation into the principles of compassion and empathy on the whole. His inquiry addresses the importance the author of this dissertation has emphasized throughout the course of this discourse, namely: Once compassion has been ignited and excited, it is difficult to not feel compassion for all living things and subsequently experience a sense of connectedness with all of life. Singer nevertheless, points out the precursory function of empathy.

Richard Davidson and Tania Singer in conversation with Jinpa Thupten:

Davidson: The other day I asked Jimpa, what does it feel like to be in the state of compassion? What are the thoughts you have? How does your heart beat, what about your skin? I need to hear that. A neuro-scientist needs to hear what the experimenter has to say about his or her experience. After 36,000 hours of meditation, what is it like. Even if I don't trust what they are saying, I need to hear it. So Jimpa, say something to me teach me.

Jimpa: I am the wrong person to ask. Brian and some of his colleagues might be better at answering these questions. I am involved at the present with doing some experiments with a few other adepts and how they feel empathy and respond to Compassion Training. We will then have the opportunity to ask them directly, what being in a state of compassion feels like.

I was going to ask Tania a question. Tania, my own personal wish is to know really, it's one thing to work with adepts and discover elements of what the mind is really capable of. Personally, as a father of 2, where I am really interested in the work is, how much of the meditation and compassion training can be performed and be of advantage to the average person on the street? With this research, in whose life is it that differences can really be made? So, with that thought Tania, the question I have for you is: increasingly through the work of developmental psychologist, and in other areas of psychology and your work as well, and considering the outward conceptualization in Western thought regarding compassion and altruism, empathy seems to play a very central role. A lot would depend upon how clear we are in articulating and conceptualizing what it is that we mean by the term compassion, and what do we mean with the term empathy; what is this phenomenon? A lot of your work really appears to be

centered on empathy in relation to pain and witnessing pain and physical pain. So, would you please, speculate or hypothesize, even though the current work is centered on very visible and concrete pain sensations, would the same kind of observances be possible to attain, if this pain were more of a psychological nature; less obvious, but, something regarding a sense of recognition on the part of the observer towards those unseeable or undetectable feelings?

Singer: Yes, surely, but perhaps not as strongly detectable by the observer. I think it matters however, just how good you are at being able to imagine the suffering of another person.

I can imagine through my experience, that some people are better able to imagine psychological pain than physical pain. In our research, when asking a subject to imagine the pain experienced by one who has cut their hand, that has proven to be much more difficult to accomplish than imagining the suffering of another who has lost a loved one per say.

Jimpa: The other question is, that if empathy is turning out to be so crucial for social, generational and pro-social behavior; compassion and altruism and caring for another in our society, does this mean that the ability to think in terms of we as human beings belonging to the same human family, the kind of consciousness that people like His Holiness and other visionary leaders are talking about and working to build and impress upon society and a lot of other people tell us, is necessary in order to survive this present and next centuries, will the arising of this consciousness depend upon empathy?

Singer: The empathy work is basically just the base from which compassion can arise. It was very elucidating for me to work with Matthieu Ricard, and we were attempting to

test for observable patterns while testing our Empathy for Pain Paradigm. We asked Matthieu to stop generating compassion and still imagine the scenario of this person suffering, we had set before him? Just sit there, static and just feel the pain or imagine the distress and pain this person is suffering. It took us a half a day explaining what we wanted from him; not to compassion—ate, but just sit there and observe and feel. He asked us, “Should I not go into compassion?” “How should I keep myself from transforming it into love and concern?” (Recard, 2008) In the research we try to get the subjects to just take in what they are witnessing and allow themselves to feel it as it is registering within them, without any response, especially without feeling or allowing themselves to experience the rising of empathy and definitely without compassion. This we discovered was very difficult for Matthieu to accomplish. In fact, from under the MIR scanner and over the load-speakers we could hear him, begging us, “When can I begin my Meta?” —Meta being the term given to a particular deep level of compassionate meditation. He desired so greatly to transform this feeling of unbearable-ness of the weight of the suffering. He told us after the experiments that, he could now understand why it is so important to transform suffering into compassion, because it had been so unbearable for him to contain the inner responses within him to the images of suffering, to which he was being exposed” (Reneud, 2008) I think that, what occurs in a lot of the healthcare systems, where facilitators have to work with people and illness, is that people are not trained to transform the empathy into a real compassion and love, because that’s not what we do. We run away from pain and suffering. We are besieged by feelings of aversion to another’s suffering; we do not really learn how to approach aversive feelings. I think if we do not learn this to a major extent, one burns out or you get cynical or

eventually do not feel anything any longer. It would be wonderful to see this transported from adults into schools, where children can learn how to deal with aversive feelings. In general, I would say first, you really need to begin with empathy in order to sensitize, or become sensitive to the other, and on top of that, you do the work of transforming pain and suffering into love. I guess this is an answer to your question, albeit empirical.

(Davidson, Thupten and Singer, 2008, 1:33:54)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

David Allan Lane

Transpersonal Psychology/Expressive Arts Therapies

David Allan Lane completed his Masters requirements in Transpersonal Psychology/Expressive Arts Therapies at the International University of Professional Studies, Maui, United States, in 2011.

David Lane is the former founder and head instructor of *Artis Studio Berlin*, Berlin, Germany, where he trained potential future musical theater professionals, actors and singers, in the art of subtext development and voice-production, from 1994—2000.

David Lane is formerly the head of the art department at Erasmus International School Potsdam, Potsdam, Germany, 1998.

He received his training in school-based assessment and qualifications to set course work in the fields of art and design and drama at University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 1998.

While pursuing a secondary vocation in the field of Physical Fitness, David Lane wrote and published the aquatics fitness book *Water Walk —The Lucid Handbook To Total Fitness*, 2001, for which he has received numerous recommendations from Gerhard Axnick, *Kneipp Institute* instructor; Fach Klinik Ensdorf, Ensdorf, Germany, among others.

He has written the yet to be published book *Water Walk Weight Lifting*, and received his *Personal Fitness Trainer* certificate from the American Council On Exercise, where he is presently working on the certificate of *Advanced Health and Fitness Specialist*, 2013.

David Lane earned his State License of *Heilpraktiker, (Naturopathic Practitioner eq.)* in the district of Schöneberg, Berlin, Germany in 1991.

David Lane is a Christian Science Practitioner with the Church of Christian Science, Boston Mass., 2005—.

David Allan Lane is presently developing therapeutic group-systems, wherein many of the adverse subjects raised in this dissertation pertaining to objectionable internal human conditions can be completed and integrated within the individual.

Dr. Irvine Katz and Dr. Inula Martinkat of the International University of Professional Studies Maui, supervised Dr. Lane's dissertation, *The Jewel Of Suffering: On The Way To Compassion*.

Figure #1 The Wood—Horse



Figure #2 YOU—Must Turn



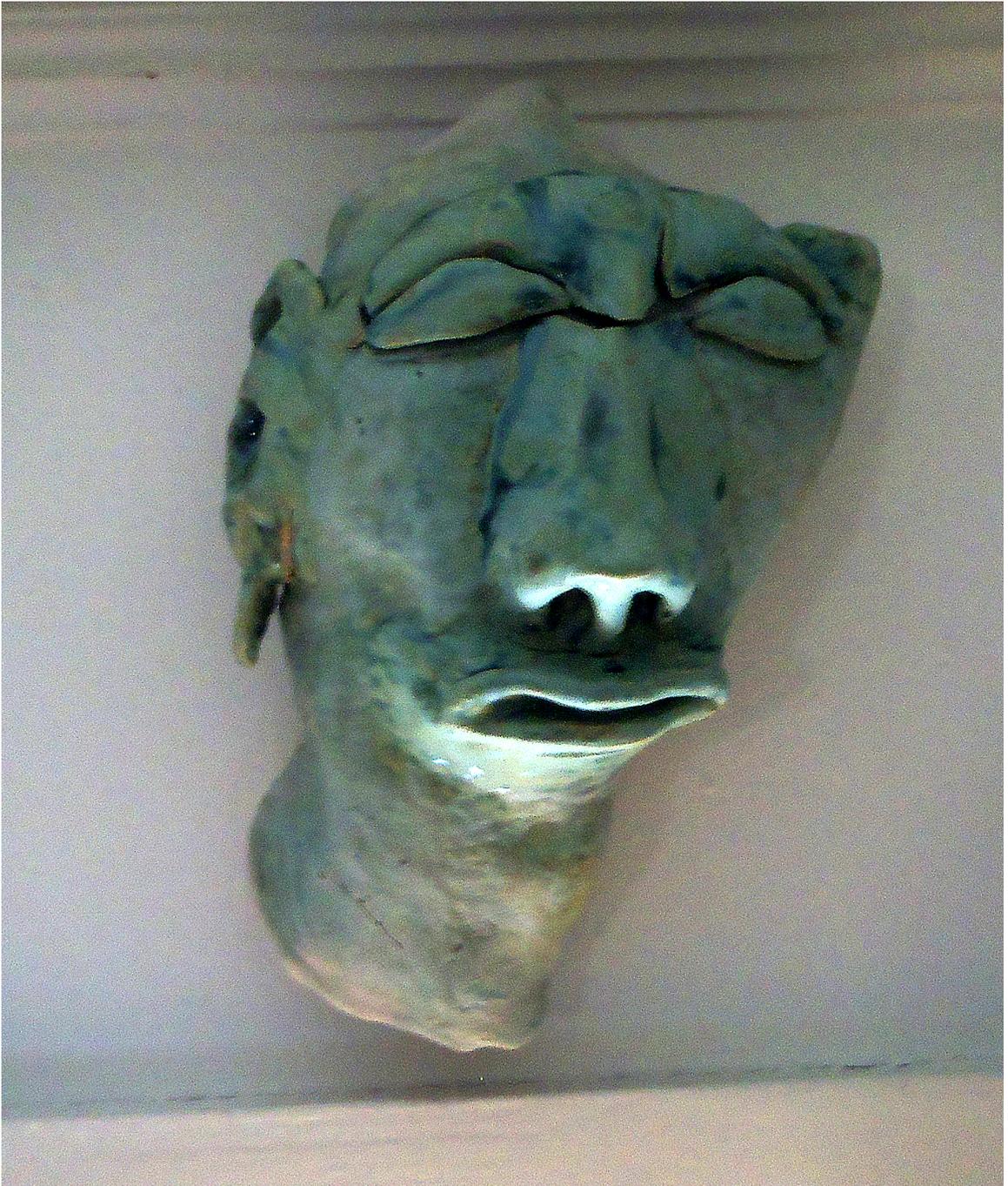
Figures #3:1 Earth Steward



Figure #3:2 Earth Steward



Figure #4 Blue Man—Child



Figure# 5 Question Everything

