

THE ROLE OF THE SOUL IN TRAUMA RESOLUTION:
A SOUL'S JOURNEY THROUGH ILLUSION

by

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This dissertation is dedicated to my earthly mother in this lifetime who showed me a pathway to the Infinite Mother within and to all of us who step with courage into life's lessons, dropping our minds into our hearts.

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This dissertation explores the role of the soul in the resolution of trauma. Building upon the work of spiritual and transpersonal psychologists and the writings of metaphysicians, this mythological narrative integrates accumulated knowledge and concepts into the story of a life created by the soul to align the personality-self with a higher state of consciousness. Broadening the perspective of the traditional psychological approach of individual recovery to the spiritual essence of oneness, this dissertation provides a tool for the client, therapist, and healer to envision the creation of one's experience as a purposeful and soulful journey into the realms of acceptance and love for self and others. It challenges us to recognize that varying degrees of trauma in our lives are but calls from the levels of higher consciousness to bring ourselves into a transparent state of being.

CHAPTER 1 PROBLEM FORMULATION

Introduction

Humpty, Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall, all the King's Horses and all the King's men couldn't put Humpty together again. In considering the plight of Humpty Dumpty, when we, as human beings, experience trauma in our lives, how do we put ourselves back together again? C. G. Jung (1961) described our healing process as related to one specific desire, that of striving after our own being.

Our outer world today reflects the inner turmoil that we all experience in our lives in varying degrees. Our life lessons challenge the health and wholeness of our connections: body, mind, and spirit. Perusing the offerings listed for current workshops in therapy shows the increased interest by therapists and clients in both offering and attending workshops focusing on spirituality. Additionally, professional organizations and their journals offer whole sections thematically attuned to the inclusion of spirituality in therapy. There appears to be a resurgence of a yearning to live according to beliefs in values and spirituality on a day-to-day basis that transcends concrete worldly issues.

Traditional psychology has assisted clients' healing by focusing on the personality and the effects of trauma on the mind. Healing approaches oriented to the body–mind connection have re-emerged onto the therapeutic arena. Transpersonal psychology seeks to include the spiritual dimension of that which is beyond the personality. Archetypal psychology orients itself in the direction of more carefully exploring the relationship with the soul.

Asking a client “who is your very best friend in the whole wide world?” will elicit a variety of answers depending on the level of personal self-awareness. If the reply is “the soul,” the therapist may respond with questions designed to explore that relationship. Such queries may include: How do you treat that best friend? How do you listen to it? How do you nurture it? How do you learn from it? How do you explore the soul's depth and mystery? How do you accompany it on its path to smelling the fragrant flowers of life as well as its desire to dive into the depths of its shadows?

A quote from Rumi (Barks, 1995) expresses this desire to know the soul, “but who is it now in my ear, who hears my voice? Who says words with my mouth? Who looks out with my eyes: What is the soul? I cannot stop asking” (p. 2).

This dissertation explores the role of the soul in the development of healing in the resolution of trauma. It discusses the traditional approaches of psychology in the resolution of trauma, mind-body centered methodologies, and therapies based on Eastern philosophies, as well as the archetypal approach of including the relationship with the soul in working with clients. It gives examples of how people have included the soul and its purpose for healing the fragmented parts of the ego or personality-self into wholeness so that the soul essence may be more freely expressed. This dissertation presents a more

direct approach for bringing soulful living into the center of awareness of healing. It presents a new myth for understanding the relationship between the personality and the soul and trauma, and how both the beauty and the beast of human lives lived can be honored for their healing potential into wholeness of the Earthbound personality-self.

Background of the Study From a Traditional Psychology Perspective

All introductory students of psychology are taught the definition of psychology on the first day of class. That definition characterizes psychology as the study of cognition, perceptions, and affects. The academic focus is the study of the personality. There is rarely any mention of the spiritual domain, including the purposefulness of the soul.

The word *psychology* comes from the Greek word *psyche*, which means life, spirit, soul, self. It is related to the word *psychein*, which means to breathe or to blow. Singer (1990) defines soul as “the vital principle of corporeal matter that is a distinct mental or spiritual entity coextensive with but independent of the body or soma” (p. xi).

The science of psychology relies upon the scientific method to examine the psyche, that which is visible and measurable to the methods of assessment. Those elements that lie outside of the five senses of objective scientific inquiry, such as the soul, cannot be explored with this approach. Because psychology relies on the five senses for its basis for research, the soul is not recognized (Zukav, 1989). Zukav further states:

Because psychology is based upon the perceptions of the five-sensory personality, it is not able to recognize the soul. It is not able to understand the dynamics that underlie the values and behaviors of the personality. Just as medicine seeks to heal the body without recognizing the energy of the soul that lies behind the health or illness of the body, and, therefore, cannot heal the soul, psychology seeks to heal the personality without recognizing the force of the soul that lies behind the configuration and experiences of the personality, and, therefore, also cannot heal at the level of the soul. (p. 193)

In the psychoanalysis process of Freud, the word for “psyche” and the word “soul” were used interchangeably, as noted by Frances Vaughan (1995). He noted that *soul* was a psychological term that acknowledged its value to a human being while living. The mind and the instinctual nature of man were thought to contain the soul. Acknowledging the existence of the soul is not enough, according to Gary Zukav. In order to assist the soul in its evolution, it is necessary “to understand the soul’s temperament, to learn what the soul can tolerate and what it cannot tolerate, what contributes to its health and what breaks it down” (Zukav, 1989, p. 194).

Singer (1990) states a similar view of traditional psychology and the exclusion of the soul. A scientific method procedure of examining the psyche is conflicted by the attempts to contain it by observing the psyche by the psyche itself. The scientific inquiry attributed to traditional psychology focuses on achieving objectivity by spotlighting limited independent samples of behavior, which are then interpreted into theories about human behavior. “But the soul, that aspect of the human being that refuses containment in the visible world, is turned away by this approach” writes Singer (p. xvi).

Referring to the soul as “daimon,” James Hillman (1996) maintains that we go into therapy to recover the wholeness of who we are. Until we have a therapeutic approach that includes the daimon as reality, we cannot find our whole identity. Hillman finds the problem in psychological theory as the manner in which “trauma” is viewed, which is a view stuck in the early years of development. He writes that our memories of childhood and the perspective from which we tell our stories are tainted by the traditional psychological approach. Hillman states, “our lives may be determined less by our childhood than by the way we have learned to imagine our childhoods. We are less

damaged by the traumas of childhood than by the traumatic way we remember childhood as a time of unnecessary and externally caused calamities that wrongly shaped us” (p. 4).

Further describing the lack of inclusion of the soul in the traditional psychological theories, he continues:

They do not reveal enough. They trim a life to fit the frame: developmental growth, step by step, from infancy, through troubled youth, to midlife crises and aging, to death. Plodding your way through an already planned map, you are on an itinerary that tells you where you have been before you get there, or like an averaged statistic foretold by an actuary in an insurance company. The course of your life has been described in the future perfect tense. Or, if not the predictable highway, then the offbeat “journey,” accumulating and shedding incidents without pattern, itemizing events for a resume organized only by chronology: This came after That. Such a life is a narrative without plot, its focus on a more and more boring central figure, “me,” wandering in the desert of dried-out “experiences.” (p. 5)

A brief overview of several of the major theories of psychology describes the line of questioning that has developed over the years. Psychodynamic theory would query the client about how the past is affecting the present life. Possible questions posed in therapy might include the following questions: “What does it mean that this person, with a unique history and concerns, is saying this particular thing at this time? How might past experiences be impacting this person’s life now? What are the unspoken expectations and underlying beliefs that are limiting this person’s potential satisfaction?”

The Behaviorist movement in psychology focused on studying behavior in the laboratory at the expense of consciousness. B. F. Skinner set forth the theory that consciousness does not exist and, therefore, is not an object for investigation. Behaviorist questions were limited to cause and effect of behavioral stimulation and response.

The Humanistic movement with Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and Virginia Satir emphasized developing the human potential, self-actualization, and the management of

human relationships. In response to the study of human beings as reductionist objects, the Humanistic theories of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow brought the human being out of the laboratory and into the therapeutic setting.

Characteristics of Roger's Person Centered therapy consisted of three main factors: genuineness, unconditional positive regard, and empathic understanding (Ewen, 1988). Humanistic thought delved into the personal consciousness of the individual, how the clients experience themselves. Inquiry into the natural inclination toward self-actualization was a goal of this line of thinking. Ewen (1988) describes Maslow's hierarchy of needs peaking with the developing of one's innate potential and abilities as self-actualization.

The questions posed in Humanistic inquiry would include the exploration of meeting the lower needs of survival, the mid-level needs of self-esteem and belonging, and allowing movement into the investigation of what are the inherent capabilities and potentials of the unique individual.

Gestalt therapy focuses on contact and awareness in the here and now. The past presents itself to clients as "unfinished business" in a response to what one experienced in the past and how one adapted to that experience. The focus of Gestalt therapy is on deepening the awareness of one's feelings. Gestalt means the whole, experiencing the awareness of the wholeness of self; survival of the past means that one has had to repress parts of oneself. The questions posed in Gestalt therapy would concentrate on how one is feeling about an object, person, or experience.

Transactional Analysis as described by Eric Berne (1986) asks the question of which ego state of the adult, parent, child perspective of the personality is transacting at

the present time. Berne theorized that the client had to make survival decisions in childhood, which caused self-limiting dysfunctional behavior in later life. These decisions became the “life script,” a pre-conscious life plan that regulates the choices that one makes regarding life. The goal of Transactional Analysis therapy is to ask questions of this underlying life script, asking and increasing awareness of which of the ego states are speaking for this script, and to make changes that result in a more effective story.

Narrative therapy as visualized by Michael White and David Epston discuss the value of the interpretive method as delineated by Bateson (1972, 1979). This method attempts to make sense out of the world that we experience, while arguing that we cannot have an appreciation of objective reality. Bateson’s method holds that we receive any event in interpretation with a perspective that relates to our already codified presuppositions that map our world. Events that cannot be patterned into this system of perceptions will not exist for us as facts. White and Epston (1990) have written that “people give meaning to their lives and relationships by storying their experience and that, in interacting with others in the performance of these stories; they are active in the shaping of their lives and relationships” (p. 13).

In the event of a crisis or trauma being experienced by a client, Narrative therapy would interpret this situation as being related to some feature of a transition or rite of passage being experienced. Questions would be asked in order to establish the trauma as related to these phases (White and Epston, 1990, p. 7):

The separation phase—exists when a role, part of identity, or a form of status is no longer considered necessary for the client.

The in between phase—consisting of disruption, confusion, discomfort.

The reincorporation phase—a new status presents itself, which brings challenges for new responsibilities for the client.

The questions pertinent to these phases include, according to White and Epsen (p. 8):

What the crisis might be about, what they could be separating from that was viable for them, and perhaps certain negative attitudes that they have towards themselves or that others have towards them, or expectations and prescriptions for their life and relationships that they experience as impoverishing;

What clues the crisis might give about the new status and roles that could be available to them;

When, how, and under what circumstances these new roles and status might be realized. Thus, a receiving context established by this rite of passage analogy can construct the crisis within terms of progress rather than regression, without denying its distressing aspects.

By the telling of one's story, certain aspects are emphasized and retained at the expense of others. If it is accepted that persons organize and give meaning to their lives by using the narrative, story-telling of one's life, then the imagination is required to fill in the spaces. In using the narrative experience of re-telling their stories, clients continually re-author their lives.

In therapy, this approach is useful in delineating how the narrative story fits with the actual experiencing of one's life. Possibilities for discussion include how the client's experience feels discordant to the self because s/he is attempting to fit this experience into other's peoples' stories, or that the client is engaging in stories that are inherently unsatisfying, empty, and not helpful and that these stories do not tell the real story of the client's experience.

The results of such postulations would encourage the outcome of successful Narrative therapy to be "the identification or generation of alternative stories that enable them to perform new meanings, bringing with them desired possibilities—new meaning that persons will experience as more helpful, satisfying, and open-ended" (White and Epsen, 1990, p. 15). Whereas White and Epsen's Narrative therapy contextualizes

psychological experience within a story, the story incorporates the mental constructs and emotional affects, leaving no mention of the spiritual aspect of the individual and the relation of such to the story.

Schema therapy, as described by Jeffrey Young in his book of the same name (2003), evolves his theory from cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) to Schema therapy. Whereas CBT focused treatment on reducing symptoms, skill building, and solving problems that were apparent in the client's current life, Schema therapy "expands on traditional cognitive-behavioral therapy by placing much greater emphasis on exploring the childhood and adolescent origins of psychological problems, on emotive techniques, on the therapist-patient relationship, and on maladaptive coping styles or schemas" (Young, 2003, p. 5). The questions of Schema therapy might ask the client to describe the disturbing event, where the client feels the event in his or her body, how the client names that sensation, what is the thought that precipitated the feeling, what previous life experience relates to this thought and feeling, how can one comfort that fragment and integrate into wholeness, and/or how can one change the response to this current situation.

Tara Bennett-Goleman, in *Emotional Alchemy* (2001), adopted the Schema approach of Young and added the practice of mindfulness, while drawing parallels to Buddhist thinking of deepening awareness. Her questions focus on "when you see, hear, or feel a sensation, what are the immediate next steps in the mind? Can you detect the tendency to grasp—to have a preference, liking or disliking what is sensed?" (p. 290).

Thomas Moore suggests in *Dark Nights of the Soul* (2004) that perhaps the purpose of a dark night "might be to refine your sensitivities and show you how to make yourself

into a multidimensional, fine-tooled person. Medicine and psychology, like many other institutions in modern life, prefer the understandable and treatable case to the irreducible individual. They can imagine restoring you to good functioning, but they can't envision fulfilling your fate and discovering the meaning of your life" (p. xx).

This dissertation is about learning how to incorporate the soul into our healing process by asking the questions that acknowledge its role. Humpty Dumpty's crisis would not include investigating the role of the soul if addressed directly by most of the psychological theories described above. The multi-sensory self is not included in these approaches.

I present a new therapeutic myth that therapists and clients alike may use for exploring the role the soul plays in presenting grist for our mill of healing. In *Care of the Soul* (1992), Moore acknowledges the essence of the soul when he writes, "There is nothing neutral about the soul. It is the seat and the source of life. It interferes with the smooth running of life, it obstructs attempts to understand, and it seems to make relationships impossible" (p. 129). The spirit seeks oneness and harmony while the soul is mucking about in the depths of our beings, urging us on to wholeness.

If we acknowledge the role of the soul in the healing of our lives, then we may change our line of questioning from how one can alleviate these symptoms of pain to questions of what the soul wants from us in this experience. In his book *Soulmates* (1994), Moore asks the questions of an ill-fated relationship, "What is the meaning of this continuing failure to find love? What does fate want in it demands on me?" (p. xiii). This perspective changes the focus from "what is wrong with me?" to "what does my soul desire for my learning?" This dissertation explores the suffering of life's experiences as

deliberate lessons gift-wrapped as packages from the soul, represented as challenging relationships, conflict-producing situations, and the daily circumstances of life.

Background of the Study From an Archetypal and Transpersonal Perspective

Singer (1990) states that transpersonal thought as developed according to Carl Jung described the universal archetypes that can beset our path to wholeness. Jung differed from Freud in emphasizing motivations of behavior being derived from sexuality and aggression. Jung's view of the unconscious was divided into the personal, in agreement with Freud, and the collective universal unconscious, which contained symbols of patterns of human behavior categorized as archetypes. The questioning process here entails inquiring as to the structure and form of the ego, which according to Jung was comprised of the persona and the shadow.

Exploring with the client to understand which masks the client uses to present the self to the world, while investigating the shadow side of the self that holds fragments about which the person would feel shame and guilt about acknowledging, would set the stage for questioning. Inquiring as to the meaning of the archetypes in experiences and dreams as well as integrating aspects of the shadow would elicit an awareness to change behavior.

James Hillman's use of the soul, as discussed in *Re-Visioning Psychology* (1976), in reference to depth psychology or Archetypal theory denotes "a perspective rather than a substance, a viewpoint toward things rather than a thing itself" (p. xvi). The question that Hillman poses is, "What does this observation, this study imply for soul? Where there is a connection to soul, there is psychology; where not, what is taking place is better called statistics, physical anthropology, cultural journalism, or animal breeding" (p. xviii).

Moore describes what he sees occurring when the soul is not considered in mental health therapy:

If we have a psychology rooted in a medical view of human behavior and emotional life, then the primary value will be health. But if our idea of psychology is based on the soul, then the goal of our therapeutic efforts will be beauty. I will go so far as to say that if we lack beauty in our lives, we will probably suffer familiar disturbances in the soul—depression, paranoia, meaninglessness, and addiction. (1992, p. 278)

Moore (1994) writes that when we bring the concept of the soul into therapy, we give soul the freedom to find its own destiny. Instead of asking why or how to fix it all, we query the mystery of the soul's purpose in the event at hand: What does the soul want in the pursuit of love? What does the soul want to learn in the flow of energy labeled as separation? Rather than asking "what is wrong with me?" with a concentration on the "me," Moore asks us to reflect on what the soul might want in these circumstances of our lives; what the soul wants to show us in these repeating patterns. Living in an age of the "quick fix," we have been conditioned to find the cure and to find it as fast as we can. If we are able to bring the soul into our questioning of the mysteries of life, perhaps we are better able to not focus on how to do it right and feel guilty if we don't achieve that goal, and we can travel through our emotional dilemmas and landscapes of feelings with less discouragement and more curiosity.

Moore further states:

The soul is a wide, spacious area in which fate plays a great role, and in which family, society, and history—personal and cultural—are major influences. Much of this material is beyond an individual's power either to invent or to control. As the Greek mystical philosopher Heraclitus taught, "The soul is its own source of unfolding." It has its own reasons, which may be only dimly apparent to consciousness. If we want to see the soul in a relationship, we have to look beyond our intentions and expectations. (1994, p. xiii)

Ken Wilber can be considered a pioneer in the structuring of an inclusive theory of transpersonal psychology. In *A Theory of Everything* (2000a), he conceptualizes human beings growing along various distinct lines of development as we move through life. The lines of development are represented by the cognitive, spiritual, emotional, moral, and interpersonal domains. Each developmental line has its own rate of growth, and a holistic graph of the lines for an individual could show that at any one point our growth is uneven.

Wilber states in *Integral Psychology* (2000b) that we should attempt to honor all the manifestations of consciousness from the dense body to the higher vibration of the soul and the spirit. “You must grow and evolve in your capacity to perceive the deeper layers of your Self, which disclose higher levels of reality: the great within that is beyond: the greater the depth, the higher the reality” (p. 189). Perhaps the questioning in Integral Psychology is within each of the developmental lines as they relate to the soul’s yearning to return to the “Great Nest.”

Dorothy Becvar describes her transpersonal approach in *Soul Healing* (1997). Combining social constructivism and second order cybernetics, she writes that “we create behavior rather than discover it as we look at reality through the lenses of our individual perspectives. In other words, believing is seeing” (p. 105). Further she states, “Thus, we cannot know the truth about people or things in our world in any objective way. Rather, all that we can know with any certainty are our constructions of people or things” (p. 105).

The questions that Becvar asks the client regarding therapy inclusive of the soul relate to how the soul might be communicating something specific to the client through

the experience. She likens the situation to having clues from the soul that would constitute a map leading to buried treasure from the client's higher power.

The therapeutic healing that occurs when walking the spiritual path takes a different focus than the traditional viewpoint of taking care of the problem; its focus is one of increasing one's awareness of one's self at all levels. Ronald Mann, in *Sacred Healing* (1998) states:

A spiritual approach to healing focuses on the unfoldment of the soul, not the resolution of the symptoms. The soul's encasement in ignorance is the real problem, and the various symptoms, whether they be physical, mental, or emotional, are only the motivating factors that drive us to consider our soul's dilemma. For example, if someone comes in with a physical ailment, my primary concern is to use the symptom to help the person realize why they have that particular ailment, and the power that that disease can hold for them in the awakening of their soul. (p. 24)

Mann describes that the healthy, spiritually directed person sees life as a continual flow of invitations to heal desires and attachments, releasing the ego identification into that spaciousness of the soul. In doing so, we are recognizing our two purposes for being on Earth: to serve others and to become self-realized. In doing so, all events and situations that occur in our lives are but spiritual blessings that function as purification rites of the self.

All of us have broken pauses in the evolution of our development. Our parents provide us with emotional conflicts and attachment to having something fill the void. It is our identification with these problems that keeps us stuck in the cycle of desire and off the path of wholeness. The energy that we expend to keep ourselves as hostage to these experiences contributes to our feeling of both being controlled and feeling powerless. Knowing that we are not the feelings, desires, and attachments of these experiences, but

rather that we do rest in the arms of God, we are able to transform ourselves and our symptoms into a healing that results in a sense of peace within our hearts.

Mann describes the therapist as able to work with images, thought transmissions, and bodily sensations. Using their intuitive abilities, therapists are able to process with the client the inner process of transformation that is occurring in the client. As therapists learn to let go and let the higher vibrational energy flow through, they become directed by it in their work.

This dissertation suggests that as we re-author our lives, we tell it from the perspective of the soul. In doing so, we create an alternative story to the five-sensory assessment of our lives; to postulate that living life from the perspective of the soul creates a new viewpoint of our experiences in life. The questions to be asked revolve around the concepts of Moore and Hillman, who pose the question of what is the soul's purpose in deepening one's life into the valleys rather than communing in the peaks of transpersonal psychology. Needleman (1980) describes the soul as sitting in the space between Spirit and matter, mediating the matter of the physical with the love of the Spirit. Singer (1998) summarizes the transpersonal perspective as a view of people and their relations to the larger world as connected to and interacting with the universe and all of its contents, inclusive of the invisible world of the spirit. She notes that some have noted that transpersonal psychology has a tendency to overlook the dark night of the soul work, in favor of retreating into the protected life of a spiritual seeker. Rather than seeking the health and purpose of the soul as Zukav described, transpersonal psychology focuses on the transcendence into the higher realms of spirit.

Buddhist psychology as described by Mark Epstein (1995) in *Thoughts Without a Thinker*, contends that “the Buddhist approach requires that all of the psyche be subject to meditative awareness” (p. 3). The process of meditation uses the tools of bare attention, concentration, and mindfulness to evolve out of attachment to the emotion itself to a focus on the identification of the feeling and an examination of the self-experience.

The first step in this process is to “learn to be with the threatening emotion in a nonjudgmental way. The next step is to find the sense of ‘I’ that is hidden behind the disclaimed actions and emotions when the spatial conception of self dominates”(p. 209). The focus is on obtaining emptiness, a release of the ego’s control. Concepts of the spirit and the soul are not the goals of psychological investigation.

From transpersonal and Buddhist perspectives, Humpty Dumpty’s healing does not necessarily take place with an awareness of the soul’s role in the healing of the trauma. This dissertation suggests a story of purposeful living from the viewpoint of the soul. Zukav (1989) underlines the theme of the myth of this dissertation:

We have not yet created a disciplined and systematic understanding of the soul. We do not understand how our behaviors and activities affect the soul. When we see the personality in dysfunction, we do not think of what this reveals about the soul. Yet the personality is specific aspects of the soul reduced to a physical form. Therefore, dysfunctions of the personality cannot be understood without an understanding of the soul. (pp. 194–195)

This dissertation offers an exploration of the soul’s connection and purposes to be achieved with the specific designing of the personality’s life. The personality is asked to experience and consciously live life through situations, relationships, and events that are congruous with experiences that allow the liberation of the soul from the constraints of the personality-self through these teachings of life circumstances.

Background of the Study from the Perspective of Trauma Resolution

The transpersonal movement has expanded to include the body-centered transpersonal approaches for the healing of trauma. The definition of trauma has changed over the last forty to fifty years from the effects of post-traumatic response to war, natural disasters and accidents, the abuse of women and children, life-threatening illnesses, and the breakup of important relationships. Trauma Resources.org (Santa Barbara Graduate Institute, 2005) lists the three common elements of an emotional trauma as: (a) being unexpected; (b) the person was unprepared; and (c) there was nothing the person could do to prevent it from happening. The experience of the trauma from the person's perspective of the event is the determining factor in discerning whether it is a trauma or not.

Symptoms from unresolved trauma include bodily responses such as eating and sleeping disturbances or low energy, as well as emotional responses such as depression, anxiety, panic attacks, fear, anger, guilt, withdrawal, and dissociation. Trauma symptoms affecting the cognitive realm of functioning include: loss of memory, lack of ability to focus, and/or feeling distracted.

In dealing with these anomalies, a traumatized person may engage in feelings and behaviors that include substance abuse, risky behavior choices, compulsive behavior patterns, inability to form relationships, dissociation, shame, guilt, hopelessness, self-punishment, a loss of a previously structured belief system and a loss of trust in themselves and the external world.

The somatic therapies of connecting body and mind as well as the traditional psychotherapies of the Western world work with the individual client to release the energy of blocked thoughts and feelings. The soul's role is not considered to be a central focus to any of these therapies.

The traditional approach of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) has been successful to a degree with the systematic desensitization process of talk therapy. This mode of treatment focuses on intentionally changing one's thoughts and behaviors by the retelling of the story until the emotional charge lessens.

Therapies that treat trauma have increased with the ability to scan for structural and functional abnormalities of the brain itself. Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR) has been growing in popularity with therapists and clients over the last decade. Francine Shapiro (1995) has combined rhythmic movements of bilateral stimulation by way of alternating lights, sounds, or tapping with holding of a disturbing image to facilitate the healing of trauma. It is hypothesized that the bilateral stimulation of the client's body may assist the brain in releasing memory frozen in the brain related to the trauma. The original research dealt with single-incident trauma and has now been generalized to childhood trauma, sexual abuse, and anxiety, with the list of disorders treated increasing every year.

Peter Levine, in *Waking the Tiger* (1997), discusses his Somatic Experiencing therapy for healing traumatic experiences. Levine correlates his observations of how animals "shake off" traumatic experiences to the human trauma encounter and what occurs in the human body. He theorizes that treatment needs to consist of engaging the brain to change in the realm of neurological connections. A trauma is frozen in the biochemical structure of the human body, and by engaging both the body and the mind, the experience, as in the use of EMDR, will thaw and begin to move out of the held experience.

Similarly, Hakomi therapy employs observation of the client's bodily gestures to learn how the physical body holds the trauma in. Ron Kurtz (1990) in *Body-Centered Psychotherapy*, describes a mind-body approach in which the therapist helps the client to experiment with different movements of the body to see which ones might affect the processing of the emotionally charged trauma memory. Different gestures of the body affect changes in feelings or thoughts that have been frozen in the brain as trauma.

Integrative Body Psychotherapy (1985) by Jack Rosenberg presents a system that integrates verbal and cognitive methods with breath work and movement. Theoretically this therapy is based on other therapies that focus on early childhood experiences, personal relationships, and existential issues. Here the client is encouraged to create a sense of safety while re-telling the trauma, using movements, words, etc. to dissipate the frozen energetic patterns that might present themselves with shaking or contractions of body movements. The questions asked in this type of mind-body therapy may involve a spiritual orientation of the client, but the soul is not directly consulted.

Bioenergetic Analysis as developed by Wilhelm Reich and Alexander Lowen, as an expansion of Freud's psychoanalysis, also focuses on how the body holds experiences of trauma. Reich (1971) writes that the most important human life experiences find expression not only in mental-psychic functioning but also in the body as it holds its posture, and inhibited patterns of breathing, movement, and expression. Over time these patterns create a "character structure" that influences physical self-perception and self-esteem. The questions asked by practitioners of Lowen and Reich would focus on the language spoken by the body in communicating its repressive patterns. The soul's purpose and what it needs is not a part of their discussion.

Jane Roberts, in *Nature of a Personal Reality* (1974), discusses therapies of the future. In her readings, she perceived that these therapies would allow the resolution of the affective characteristics of a trauma memory without having to relive the entire experience. Inner child or ego state therapy and EMDR are some of the therapies today that are able to achieve that very description of processing. They allow the release and resolution of the feelings associated with the original experience without having to process the original trauma.

John Bradshaw, in *Homecoming: Reclaiming and Championing Your Inner Child* (1992), related the developmental stages of psychological maturation to the problems inherent to trauma induction at each stage. The process of inquiry in Bradshaw's therapy of the inner child focuses on what the child fragment of the psyche needs at each interrupted individuation stage.

The Holographic Memory Resolution process (Baum, 1997) uses the creative abilities of the mind to move the "old" scene with the charged affect from the nervous system and replaces it with a "new" scene envisioned as a healing scene with positive affect into the nervous system. Using the theory of quantum mechanics, changing the contents of the scene causes us to change our emotional memory contained in the nervous system. When the emotional charge is released and the experience integrated into the system, the lesson of the experience can be explored.

Brent Baum describes the process of healing trauma as when "both our personal and collective histories proceed, therefore, as a "dialectic process"—one in which the truths we learn about ourselves are subsequently challenged by life experiences which lead us to further refinements in understanding who we truly are" (1997, p. 139). He

considers the layers of the bodies of the personality: mental, emotional, and physical as he describes the process of the emotional body holding the affect of the trauma while the mental body holds it at bay not wanting to re-experience the pain.

When trauma occurs, “ego-states” are formed to contain the overwhelming energy of our crises. These “orphans of trauma,” as Baum calls them, are splinters of the whole, frozen unbalanced in disintegration. These ego-states can control the conscious mind from the sub-conscious mind. According to Baum, the soul seeks to draw these nonintegrated parts into wholeness. Baum concurs with Bradshaw (1988) in recognizing that, over time, this fractured self begins to identify itself with shame. Thoughts of inadequacy, judgment, and defectiveness begin to circulate as the definition of the self.

Baum writes that shame is induced on the emotional level. “When we innocently internalize emotionally shaming messages and perceptions from significant others, we begin to narrow out emotional, intuitive, and spiritual channels of communication.”

Regarding the process of trauma, he states:

As young children, trauma induction is fostered by the following factors: 1) our fragile “boundaries” which are still in formation; 2) exposure to the unresolved abuse issues of our parents which repeatedly are “acted out” in front of us and which we internalize and imitate—for example, domestic violence, chronic depression or rage, pain avoidance through medication or denial, etc.; 3) internalization of shame through repeated exposure to patterns of emotional repression. This last factor is even more pronounced if the negative modeling is from the same sex parent or the parent with whom the child most identifies. (1997, p. 183)

This dissertation describes how traumatic experiences can affect human beings and arrest the developmental progress of the individuation process. The above described mind-body therapies do not specifically address the role of the soul in healing. The

metaphor of the story told in the body of this dissertation explores the soul's role in the healing of the traumatic fragments of the psyche.

Statement of the Problem

Simply stated, our world is in need of a new metaphor of self-responsibility. Acting from the motivation of the victim role, human beings continue to blame themselves and others for their plight in life. Traditional therapies deal with the mind and the body, relegating the soul to religion. Psychology has not been able to recognize the role of the soul in dealing with trauma and, therefore, cannot access the healing presence of the individualized droplet of spirit that resides at the center of the human being.

Moore (1994) describes how the soul is largely ignored in modern society. Addictions, alienation, obsessions, and violence are the call of the soul to healing. Therapists work very diligently to eradicate these symptoms while continuing to neglect the role of soul as well.

Further, he notes that when caring for the soul, it is important to observe the process of the soul, how it manifests and how it behaves. When a client and therapist work to explore the purpose and value of a trauma, rather than eradicating the symptom, one can find the wisdom of the event. A careful observation of past traumas will reveal elements of direction and growth from the soul. These previously unrecognized gifts, greeted only as pain, may now be welcomed for their healing qualities.

Therapies can assist the client in changing thought patterns and releasing the emotional armor that is held in the body as a result of energetically frozen traumatic experiences. When the personality-self is struggling, the questions have not been asked as to what this means for the liberation of the soul. What is it that the soul desires in the

experience of this plight in life? Trauma experiences cause the emotional body to hold onto feelings and perceptions that trigger the self-medication response. In the exploration of those responses, one can see the path of the soul. The areas where re-balancing of energies are needed indicate the growth points of the personality-self that are initiated by the soul.

Spiritual psychology encourages the client to see the illusion of its learning on earth. When the life script of a client is perceived within the context of karmic evolution of the soul, the client is able to detach from the personification of the experience. By standing back from the experience of the lesson, the client is more able to distinguish the illusion from the authentic learning of the soul.

An illustrative metaphor is described by David K. Reynolds in *A Thousand Waves* (1990). Whereas clients may tend to struggle with their feelings, personalizing the event or events as being done to them and focusing on what should have happened; another perspective to explore would be to flow like water. When water is cold, it accepts the conditions and freezes. When water is hot, it also accepts and becomes warm, boils, or evaporates. Water is not wishing it was different or that the conditions were different; the acceptance allows it to transform as necessary. It flows around the obstacles.

Clients may respond in similar form. When working in the therapeutic arena, clinicians may assist clients to stop manipulating their lives or feelings into what they think it should be. Posing the questions of what is the soul's purpose in this situation, what does the soul want, assists the clients in flowing like water.

This dissertation presents a myth that incorporates the concepts of reincarnation and karma in relation to the liberation of the soul. Reincarnation supports the idea that a

personality experiences life many times. The concept of karma suggests that each life is directed by an impersonal energy dynamic. Each personality is constructed according to the karma of its soul, working to balance the karmic energy in each lifetime. According to Zukav (1989), if the energy of the intentions is not balanced, another lifetime is constructed according to those intentions.

The vision of a soul contract being scripted by the soul, specifically designed to assist the personality-self in balancing karmic energy, alleviates the need for the client to assume the role of a victim.

Each time some aspect of the karmic energy is not balanced, a fragment of the personality-self is created. Zukav (1989) states that authentic needs of the soul are exemplified by the need to be loved and to love others. If the personality-self does not recognize the need to heal all splintered fragments relating to this need, the soul will create experiences designed to assist the personality to acknowledge the need to remove the barriers.

Using the myth described in this dissertation, both clients and therapists will be able to incorporate the soul into the healing process. Fragments and symptomatic behavior may be recognized as a call from the soul. Healing the personality-self into wholeness from the wider perspective that all pain is indeed medicine, may facilitate a deeper level of mindfulness.

This dissertation provides both the client and the therapist with a model of healing that includes the above-mentioned concepts. Rather than viewing life's challenges from a victim perspective, the client may now find self-responsibility in meeting traumatic

events. Using the perspective of the soul creating the life experiences for the personality-self to heal into wholeness brings a new mythology from which to live one's life.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to bring forth a new myth that will show how healing from the perspective of the soul may assist people in answering the call of the soul to each personality-self. The problem formulated for this study is the role of the soul in trauma resolution. The key concepts that will be presented to assist in this process include: (a) the importance of reactivating the concept of the soul in our daily lives; (b) the importance of karma and reincarnation in our daily lives; (c) the importance of the role of the soul in trauma resolution; (d) the importance of recognizing the stages of the journey of the soul's intention to heal the personality-self into wholeness; (e) the importance of aligning the soul with the personality-self within spiritual psychology; and (f) the courage to take responsibility for life. These concepts will be addressed at length in the following sections.

The Importance of Reactivating the Concept of the Soul in Our Daily Lives

Dalal, in *A Greater Psychology: Sri Aurobindo* (2001), discusses the differences among the forms of the higher realms of consciousness. The spirit is described as “self-existent above the manifested or instrumental being—it is superior to birth and death, always the same, the individual Self or Atman. It is the eternal true being of the individual” (p. 85). Sri Aurobindo describes the soul as coming down to the manifested realm as a drop or spark of the Divine. “It is at first an undifferentiated power of the Divine Consciousness containing all possibilities which have not taken form, but which it

is the function of evolution to give form. This spark is there in all living beings from the lowest to the highest” (p. 86). He continues:

The psychic being is formed by the soul in its evolution. It supports the mind, vital, body, grows by their experiences, and carries the nature from life to life. At first it is veiled by mind, vital and body, but as it grows, it becomes capable of coming forward and dominating the mind, life and body; in the ordinary man it depends on them for expression and is not able to take them up and freely use them. (p. 86)

Zukav (1989) states that when a soul incarnates into the physical body it is voluntarily choosing this life path in order to heal. The soul wants to become liberated from the constraints of the personality-self. In order to attain this goal, a soul contract is created by the soul in the interlife, that realm of consciousness between incarnated lives. Assuming the concept of reincarnation, the soul moves from physical manifestation life after life working to liberate the soul into self-realization. The soul contract sets forth the priorities of the personality’s upcoming lifetime by choosing the appropriate themes upon which to work. These themes are determined by the karma generated by previous choices in other lifetimes.

In this dissertation I will show how the soul discerns the appropriate lessons to be learned by the personality-self in the next incarnation on earth into order to heal fragmented parts of the personality-self. Working to align with its personality-self, the soul sets up the soul contract to experience certain situations and relationships to create the opportunity to heal the personality-self into wholeness, thereby allowing the soul to become the motivating factor of one’s life.

The personality serves as a signpost for those fragmented energies that are in need of healing along with the higher vibrational energies of loving kindness and forgiveness.

Living a challenging human life gives the personality and soul an opportunity to heal those splintered parts of the ego. Zukav states,

Each personality is unique because the configuration of energy of the soul that it formed is unique. The conflicts of a human's life are directly proportional to the distance at which an energy of personality exists separately from the soul, and . . . in an irresponsible position of creation. When a personality is in full balance, you cannot see where it ends and the soul begins. This is a whole human being. (1989, p.37)

Raheen, in *Return of the Soul* (1991), sees the soul "as a discrete energy pattern which carries an evolutionary record of its immortal journey. It brings a blueprint for the essential meaning and purpose of the current lifetime, which, in turn, may be part of an evolutionary pattern" (p. 9).

Dalal (2001) discusses the challenge of the soul in working with the personality-self. The soul must accept the human characteristics of mind, emotions, and the distractions of life as challenges to the journey of becoming a multi-sensory personality. "Unerring in the essence of its will, it is obliged often under the pressure of its instruments to submit to mistakes of action, wrong placement of feeling, wrong choice of person, errors in the exact form of its will, in the circumstances of its expression of the infallible inner ideal" (p. 90). In discussing the soul's journey, Dalal states:

For it is part of the work of the soul to influence mind and heart and vital being and turn their ideas, feelings, enthusiasms, dynamisms in the direction of what is divine and luminous; but this has to be done at first imperfectly, slowly and with a mixture. As the psychic personality grows stronger, it begins to increase its communion with the psychic entity behind it and improve its communications with the surface: it can transit its intimations to the mind and heart and life with a greater purity and force; for it is more able to exercise a strong control and react against false mixtures; now more and more it makes itself distinctly felt as a power in the nature. But even so this evolution would be slow and long if left solely to the difficult automatic action of the evolutionary Energy; it is only when man awakes to the knowledge of the soul and feels a need to bring it to the front and make it the

master of his life and action that a quicker conscious method of evolution intervenes and a psychic transformation become possible. (2001, p. 94)

Kevin Todeschi, author of *Soul Development* (2000), reflects on Edgar Cayce's work regarding cooperation. This concept is described as the personality-self learning to look beyond personal agendas, beliefs, motives and desires to work with spiritual dimensions so that spirit can work through the multi-sensory personality.

Singh Ji, in *The Science of the Soul* (1991), describes the state of the soul in every day life:

Very few people are aware of their souls—when they speak of their soul, they usually mean the vital and mental being or else the (false) soul of desire. The psychic remains behind and acts only through the mind, vital and physical wherever it can. For this reason the psychic being except where it is very much developed has only a small and partial, concealed and mixed or diluted influence on the life of most men. By coming forward is meant that it comes from behind the veil, its presence is felt already in the waking daily consciousness, its influence fills, dominates, transforms the mind and vital and their movements, even the physical. One is aware of one's soul, feels the psychic to be one's true being, the mind and the rest begin to be only instrument of the inmost within us. (p. 95)

Edgar Cayce's work is described by Thurston (2004) as focusing on the reason for our incarnations, the purpose of our soul contract. He states, "We are here to become aware of our relationship to God, and that awareness comes primarily in the ways we think about, talk to, and interact with other human beings" (p. 51).

The body of this dissertation will tell a story of a young woman who, because of the experiences her soul has created for her in this lifetime, encounters opportunities for recognizing the existence of her soul. These relationships and situations offer the personality-self an opportunity to realize that these occurrences are for the highest good of the personality and all those concerned. From a higher perspective, all life experiences

can be deemed to be purposeful learning opportunities so that the soul can come forward as Sri Aurobindo describes as a pathway to liberation of the soul.

The Importance of Karma and Reincarnation in Our Daily Lives

The Edgar Cayce readings are cited by Todeski (2000) as emphasizing the continuing process of successive lives. He states that, given the eternal state of the soul, each incarnation is an expression of the ongoing state of the soul.

The Golden Rule exemplifies the non-judgmental aspect of karma, doing unto others what you would have done to you. Zukav (1989) describes karma as “you receive from the world what you give to the world” (p. 40). Because we cannot see what is being healed in these karmic debts, we cannot judge ourselves or others. The goal of the soul is to find release from the confines of the human ego. Zukav continues, “Whether an interaction between souls is healing or not depends upon whether the personality involved can see beyond itself and that of the other personality to the interaction of their souls. This perception automatically draws forth compassion. Every experience, every interaction provides you with an opportunity to look from the point of view of your soul or from the point of view of your personality” (p. 42).

Karma produces fragments that have been shattered in other lifetimes by the personality preferences to remain separated from its spirit and Source or by choosing to remain connected to the Source of love energy. Todeski (2000) describes what Cayce discerned from his case studies when he writes, “It is not that each life begins anew like a blank slate, but rather that the soul takes with it talents, experiences, relationships, and weaknesses from one lifetime to the next” (p. 9).

Rosen (1997) states that historical American figures such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Tom Paine, Thomas Edison, Benjamin Franklin, Henry Ford, Henry David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman all believed in the concept of reincarnation. He quotes a survey published in *World Statistics* (July, 1996) that described its findings: “more Americans believe in reincarnation than ever before, and more and more Europeans are accepting the doctrine with increasing frequency” (p. 2). Further, he states that “in the East, four out of five people surveyed embrace the doctrine with full conviction. In total, this accounts for well over half the world’s population” (p. 2).

This dissertation proposes to show the importance of increasing awareness of the balancing of karma in one’s life. Understanding that the experiences offered by the soul in each lifetime are opportunities for strengthening proven abilities and outstanding weaknesses for the personality-self, allows the human being to release the attachment to feelings of victimization.

The Importance of the Role of the Soul in Trauma Resolution

Trauma experienced by the individual is an invitation from the soul for the personality to surrender to the inner spirit, which would then integrate the fragment into wholeness. Trauma can be of any degree and kind. Illnesses, accidents, childhood abuse and neglect, divorce, losses, failures, discrimination, disabilities, natural disasters, wars, etc. are all grist for the mill of transformation.

Trauma can be defined as the awakening of the personality by the loss of the personality’s power (Zukav, 1989). When we are made to feel that deep and foreboding sense of powerless through the loss of one’s love, whether in partnership or parenthood, the demise of a business, an illness that brings one to one’s knees, then that powerless is

experienced as a crisis. If the personality-self is not consciously connected to the soul, it may be considered to be asleep. Intuition is not an inherent ability that is recognized as available to the personality in daily life.

Trauma snaps the personality into awareness and offers the opportunity for personal spiritual growth and connection with the soul. Baum (1997) writes that trauma is relative to the observer and creates an actual energy blockage, regardless of whether the trauma is accidental or intentional. He writes of our first stage trauma experience, that of our childhood:

Our parents mediated our first experience of love. Our self-esteem is first mirrored to us through the eyes of our parents. We internalize their expressions, feelings, messages, and attitudes. If we did not get the nurturing and love that we needed at certain developmental stages, we became stuck in that stage—the naturally outward-looking posture of the child. This created codependency—the child of trauma. Then we begin to look outside of ourselves for the nurturance because one's own sense of unworthiness excluded the self as the place where love would be found. Just as these experiences imprinted me with false messages of self, love, relationships, worthiness, higher power, these experiences also hold the healing of the obstacles to intimacy and spiritual connection. (p. 190)

Bradshaw, author of *Homecoming* (1990), defines codependency as a loss of identity that is characterized by a numbness related to one's feelings, desires, and needs. He discusses how a child, who is not unconditionally loved in early childhood, develops an addiction for love, attention, and affection. He states that such lack of unconditional love is the basis for addictive and compulsive behaviors that are manifested in adulthood, affecting relationships with self and with others. Ultimately, the primary relationship with one's soul is affected as the inability to trust others and self is replaced with a craving for control.

Baum (1997) agrees by stating that which enhances relational connections fosters spirituality:

Rather than being preoccupied with defining exactly what Higher Power is in order to experience spiritual growth, I come to realize that every step I take that brings me closer to myself or other people is a spiritual experience bringing me closer to the feeling of my higher power. Trauma induces spiritual and relational blockages that inhibit our experience of our birthright, our heritage as being of Light, as children of the Divine. Anything that I do therefore that fosters the release of the trauma experiences stored within me, whether it is giving myself permission to remember, allowing myself to cry, deciding to go to therapy or treatment, owning my depression, anger and the other warning signs of trauma, asking for help, saying a prayer, journaling, meditating or any other of an infinite variety of expressions, is a healing or integrative movement toward the Divine. Trauma is an invitation to transform “negative” experiences into opportunities for growth and spiritual awakening. As we have fractured fragments in need of integration within us, so is each individual a fragment of the whole of the Divine. (p. 191)

Spirituality and intimacy are founded on the ability of the human individual to internalize and externalize the reality of love. When a child is shamed, the diminished self-worth increases the probability of compulsive behaviors. Feelings are repressed and the connection to the bridge of spirituality is blocked. The energy of the emotions generated at the time of the trauma becomes frozen in the physical systems of the body (Shapiro, 1995; Baum, 1997).

Bradshaw and Baum both encourage therapeutic work that works to recover the helpless child ego-state that is created at the moment of the trauma. The wounded ego states are integrated into wholeness. These fragments are reconnected through an internal dialogue that comforts and secures the wounded ego-state by building a bridge between the experience of trauma and the heart of acceptance, nurturance, and safety. This allows the frozen energy to thaw and move toward integration of the mind and the body.

The stages of the Holographic Resolution process as described on page 101 include:
identifying the presence of an unresolved trauma memory;

accessing the metaphor which contains the memory;
defining the metaphor;
moving from the metaphor to the original scene;
correcting or healing the scene; and
securing the new scene in the relevant cells and fields of the body, thereby
replacing emotional content of the old scene with the healthy essence of the
new.

The Holographic Memory Resolution process uses the creative abilities of the mind to move the “old” scene, with the charged affect from the nervous system, and replaces it with a “new” scene, envisioned as a healing scene with positive affect into the nervous system. Using the theory of quantum mechanics, changing the contents of the scene causes us to change our emotional memory contained in the nervous system. When the emotional charge is released and the experience integrated into the system, the lesson of the experience can be explored.

Both our personal and collective histories proceed, therefore, as a “dialectic process”—one in which the truths we learn about ourselves are subsequently challenged by life experiences which lead us to further refinements in understanding who we truly are” (p. 139).

This dissertation shows how the traumas that were orchestrated by the soul in this described lifetime presented an opportunity, rather than a victimizing punishment, to the personality-self. The traumas created a fragmented personality-self that experienced the events and relationships in her life as more powerful than her own Being. She felt victimized and burdened by her life. By dialoguing with her wounded ego-states, with guidance from the higher vibrations, she is able to integrate those splintered fragments and to move toward a more whole relationship with her soul. Clearing the emotional

blockages allows her to connect to a greater degree to the guidance that is always available to all. By healing parts of her personality-self, she is able to align the earthly personality with her soul's intentions.

The Importance of Recognizing the Stages of the Journey of the Soul's Intention to Heal the Personality-Self Into Wholeness

Depth psychology encourages the understanding of the individual moving through stages of growth; when one stage is completed there is movement to the next phase of development. Within each stage of growth is a task to complete. Stories of mythology can describe the stages of our journey in each lifetime. Archetypes are patterns that describe each stage of a lifetime journey. By observing choices, behaviors, and feelings, archetypes can inform the traveler of the past and present patterns of relating to self and others.

Using the metaphors of the archetypes as guideposts to our development on the Hero's journey of individuation, Carol Pearson writes in *The Hero Within* (1989) that "these are the archetypes manifested in our daylight worlds that help us define a strong ego, and then expand the boundaries of the ego to allow for the full flowering of the self and its opening up to the experience of oneness with other people and with the natural and spiritual worlds" (p. xxvi).

In this dissertation I show how the stages of the hero's journey can be illustrated in one's life as lived by the main character of the story. She experiences a lack of trust in her parents in the passageway of the innocent and orphan archetypal process. Because the completion of this important task is not accomplished, the young woman suffers in relationships with herself and others with a lack of trust and safety. Subsequently, she interprets life through the martyr archetype, as she lives for others' approval or,

alternatively, misuses the power of the warrior archetype. Fearing surrender to authority while immersing herself in the wanderer archetype, she loses touch with her identity in the world of addictions.

The magician archetype is described by Pearson (1989) as having the task of healing into wholeness by completing her tasks of learning to trust, finding safety, and knowing her own goodness, strength, and autonomy. By delving into the dark night of the soul, the young woman learns to complete these tasks in order to find her authentic self.

This dissertation will show how human beings may disengage from the drama and victimization perspective of their lives to enter into a process of healing that is consciously aware of the healing of the alignment of the soul and the personality-self.

The Importance of Aligning the Soul With the Personality-Self Within Spiritual Psychology

“Spiritual psychology is a disciplined and systematic study of what is necessary to the health of the soul,” writes Zukav (1989, p. 200). Healing therapy will assist the client in identifying human behaviors that create separation of the body and the mind from the soul, shackling this spiritual energy into a compressed, disconnected state. In the context of a unified consciousness, the effect of one soul’s imprisonment affects all the other souls. The effect of negativity and associated behaviors affect us all.

Zukav further states (1989) that the soul is connected to the personality-self energetically and contains the seed of wholeness within it. The soul is the mediator between the personality-self and spirit, that which is considered to be the universal state of bliss. Working therapeutically in the context of the soul, any behaviors of the personality that disrupt wholeness are examined. We can look without judgment upon the needed healing process; we are healing and allowing a fettered soul its freedom. As

human beings we tend to interpret the soul compression as our unworthiness. There is truly nothing wrong with us.

Spiritual psychology helps individuals to recognize the role of the soul in their karmic development as they move through the stages listed above. Both the concepts of reincarnation and karma are important to the development of a multi-sensory personality who is consciously working to heal into a state of liberation, the energy of the soul.

Zukav speaks to the exceptional soul relationship with one's parents. He states,

Your soul and the soul of your parents agreed to your relationship in order to balance the energy that each needed to balance, or to activate dynamics within each other that are essential to lessons that each must learn. Without an awareness of your karmic interactions, of the experiences of other lifetimes of your soul, you are not able to understand the depth of the potential awakenings that can result from your interactions with a parent, or a sibling. (1989, p. 199)

He continues, "spiritual psychology will trace and understand the functional relationships between karma, reincarnation, intuition and spirituality" (p. 200).

The main character in this dissertation demonstrates the remarkable relationship that her soul designed for the personality-self in this lifetime with her parents. These relationships were designed to deepen her awareness of her relationship with herself and, therefore, with others. Ultimately, these relationships offer the opportunity to strengthen the trusting bond and deep love between the personality-self and soul as they meld into the ocean of spirit.

Development of intuitive abilities

Recognition of the existence of communication channels with the nonphysical world enables the five-sensory personality to evolve into the multi-sensory personality. In the process of her childhood experiences, the main character in this dissertation passes

through the initiation phases of the archetypal process feeling more and more alone. Sri Aurobindo's view of intuition is described by Dalal (2001) as an inner being that is privy to that which is unknown to the external being because it is in closer relationship with the Divine.

Vaughan writes in *The Inward Arc* (2000) that intuition provides inner guidance to the all-encompassing truth. "When intuition is used to envision possibilities, the process may activate both insight and imagination, giving form to formlessness in the mind, thereby creating something out of nothing" (p. 206).

Whereas the five-sensory personality believes that all incoming information is self-generated, the multi-sensory personality recognizes and accesses guidance from sources other than the physical self. The multi-sensory personality is able to progress more quickly when it is open to the messages that are produced from the higher realms of consciousness.

Zukav (1989) gives a visual picture of the process of intuition: "Intuition can be thought of as a type of wiring that can be used by various sources. One of these sources is the soul. Intuition is a walkie-talkie, so to speak, between the personality and the soul. This happens through the higher self" (p. 86). Receiving intuitive information from other souls is part of this process. This information is received from channels from higher realms rather than an internal intuitive connection.

This dissertation shows how the young woman in this metaphor learns to clear her emotional blockages so that she can connect with her own guidance as well as receive information from other souls who serve as guiding channels. Her experiences demonstrate how the relationship with one's soul can be strengthened with intuition

connections. She learns that she is never alone or separate from her soul, that she is continually assisted by the higher vibrations of love in every moment.

Chakra archetypes

In this dissertation an important concept utilized in the healing process is the system of the energy centers of the body known as the chakra system. Vaughan (1995) discusses the series of seven chakras as they represent psychological development. She states that “localization of the chakras in specific areas of the body corresponds to the universal tendency to localize certain feelings in specific bodily regions” (p. 99).

Each energy center refers to a particular phase in the development of consciousness. The first three chakras represent ego development in terms of physical survival, sexuality and creativity, and personal power and identity. The fourth chakra, or the heart chakra, is known to represent qualities of love and compassion.

Reality is interpreted in the vibrations of higher consciousness as development proceeds toward the fifth, sixth, and seventh chakras. The fifth chakra, located in the throat area, symbolizes the ability to hear, to listen, and to speak with an authentic sense of self. Located in the area of the forehead, the sixth chakra allows one to perceive reality through the sense of intuition. Releasing a sense of self occurs within the seventh chakra, located at the crown, a beingness that resonates as one.

This dissertation demonstrates an awareness of the system of the chakras as a pathway to healing the psychological blockages that one can encounter in an incarnation on earth. The specific circumstances that the soul has designed for this human being to experience draw attention to the lower chakras as they become continually blocked and stalled on their developmental path. The young woman is presented an opportunity to

bring her limited thinking patterns into an awakened state of healing. The soul continues to offer choices in healing as her life unfolds.

Opening to the healing of the first chakra allows the main character of this story to expand into a trusting knowledge of the trust that will never fail her. She believes that it will, because her parents were not capable of holding her trust. Healing experiences from higher dimensions encourage her to integrate that painful trusting into the trusting of who she really is.

The second chakra healing offers her the opportunity to heal relationships with herself and others. She is asked to look at her need for approval from others and her need for control. She is asked to speak her truth as she is.

Coming into her own personal power with confidence and intentionality is the gift her soul offers to her in the form of her lessons in the third chakra. Her teachings are filled with sadness, fear, envy, pride, aggression, and passivity. She learns, through fully experiencing these emotions, to reside in the place of that which never changes and opens her heart to vulnerability.

The dark night of the soul

If the journey of the soul can be described in three steps, the first would be the call, the subsequent dark night of the soul, and the third stage would be transformation.

In a discussion of Epstein (2001) meeting with his teacher, Ram Dass is described as asking Epstein if he had carved out any new territory between Buddhism and psychotherapy. The question Ram Dass phrased to Epstein was if he could see his patients as already free. Ram Dass continued, "They are souls seeking God. The game is to pretend with them that they are lost, then help them rediscover their freedom" (p. 87).

Moore suggests, in *Dark Nights of the Soul* (2004), that perhaps the purpose of a dark night:

might be to refine your sensitivities and show you how to make yourself into a multidimensional, fine-tooled person. Medicine and psychology, like many other institutions in modern life, prefer the understandable and treatable case to the irreducible individual. They can imagine restoring you to good functioning, but they can't envision fulfilling your fate and discovering the meaning of your life. (p. xx)

Religion does not always delve deeply and meaningfully into the dark night either; it tends to give the vision but not guidance through the night. Some paths in spirituality present such a positive affirmative approach that the dark night does not see the light of day as well. Moore (2004) writes that spiritual life should make you a person of character and discernment, emotionally tough and intellectually demanding, as well as loving and compassionate. It should give you insight into the deepest of your questions and problems, and give you a vision that extends beyond the everyday issues" (p. 15).

Gangaji (2005) in *The Diamond in Your Pocket*, further validates this importance of the dark night of the soul. She writes:

In the willingness to simply and directly experience any kind of pain, just for an instant, you will discover that the essence of pain is intelligence, clarity, joy, peace—the same essence as bliss! The truth of yourself is revealed even in the midst of pain, and pain is revealed to be another vehicle for truth. In following the story of the pain, this vehicle is overlooked, and the potential gift of pain is wasted. (p. 154)

This dissertation encourages the reader to interpret the dark night of the soul passage as an evolutionary process not to be avoided, but to be integrated into the wholeness of one's life. The young woman of this myth tries repeatedly to escape her pain.

Trauma experiences cause the emotional body to hold onto feelings and perceptions that trigger the self-medication response. Working through the mental body does not heal the emotional body. It must experience healing within itself.

Christina Grof, in *The Thirst for Wholeness* (1994), writes about addiction:

As far back into my childhood as I can remember, I was searching for something I could not name. Whatever I was looking for would help me to feel all right, at home, as though I belonged. If I could find it, I would no longer be lonely. I would know what it is like to be loved and accepted, and I would be able to love in return. I would be happy, fulfilled, and at peace with myself, my life, and the world. I would feel free, unfettered, expansive and joyful. (p. 9)

The main character of this dissertation would certainly commiserate with Grof as she continues:

I also remember sampling what seemed to be the promise of freedom, connectedness, and love as I received praise from a revered teacher, a colleague, or appreciative guests after hours or days of frantically working to prove myself. I thought I felt it as I nestled into the arms of lovers, swallowed a Valium, devoured yet another brownie, or drove my car too fast. (p. 10).

Agreeing with Jung, Grof believes that this intense need to quench one's thirst and to satisfy the cravings is an intense pull to connect with our divine source. Jung (1989) describes it as the drive to know our true selves, which produces a sense of dissatisfaction within us.

Grof describes the two aspects of our being: one is the deeper Self, which is an eternal unlimited part of us; and the small self, our ego-centered personality-self. She defines abuse as "the violation of our own sacred identity as individuals, an active intrusion through the boundaries that define us as unique" (p. 41). Such abuse can cause us to experience a growing sense of alienation from the deeper Self. This feeling of

separation increases our fear of aloneness as we become less trusting of friendships and relationships in the world that can sustain and nurture us.

The young woman characterized in this dissertation experiences abuse in her life. Her interpretation of her life after such a childhood was that of a victim. She felt alienated and alone and lost in her struggle to survive. She looked for escape hatches in order to run from her life. Rather than realize the truth of which she really was, the deeper Self, she continually numbed herself to the challenge of opening up to the dark night of the soul.

The courage to take responsibility for life

The empowerment of forgiveness of self and others. An important part of this young woman's healing process is the forgiveness of her parents, lovers, God, and self. Gangaji writes about forgiveness, "You must be willing to stop the karma with yourself, be willing to say, 'No, this time it goes no further than me'" (p. 227). The author describes how she called her mother on Mother's Day to tell her she was a good mother even though Gangaji didn't believe it. As the process unfolded, she realized how much her conflict with her mother offered Gangaji in terms of the richness of her life and the fact that her mother was a good mother.

And so the main character of the story also finds that teachers come in many disguises, sometimes as cruel mothers and abandoning fathers and lovers. Forgiving one's self for hating and blaming and feeling victimized is an essential release for the experience of freedom. Gangaji states it thusly, "As with everything else, in our desire to hold on to one thing, we keep something else away. In the desire to give something, we actually receive" (p. 228).

Releasing the victim mentality. One of the core elements to healing is releasing the victim mentality. The process for this healing is in continually recognizing the truth of oneself. Increasing awareness of when one does lapse into victim mentality encourages the development of a greater sense of Self. In every moment there is a choice of choosing to remain hostage to the victim mentality or choosing to remember who one really is.

This dissertation tells the story of the young woman who learns the victim mentality from birth, refines it in childhood, and lives from its depths as a young adult. Her path in healing is assisted from the realms of the higher consciousness to awaken to her ability to choose which self she is to remember, the personality-self or the Higher Self.

Releasing control. The healing of having to control life is an important aspect of this young woman's spiritual development. This dissertation explores her need to control based upon her childhood experiences of trauma. Her soul presents relationships and situations that challenge her belief that she has the ability to control life.

In the spiritual assistance that is available to her, she learns to recognize that all she can control is from what position she chooses her thoughts. Gangaji (2005) states that "if your desire is to support rather than to control, you will catch fire. The mind will stop its clutching and will begin to open. What follows the natural opening of the mind is the most profound, the most mysterious, the most unspeakable realization" (p. 180).

Importance of the Study

This dissertation's contribution to the field is that it provides the reader a story representative of a soul's journey to liberation. It uses varying degrees of common occurrences in a human being's life so that readers can relate from a place in their own lives to the journey that is common to the evolution of humankind. It helps readers

identify and empathize with the main character in living a life marked by trauma, grief, and separation from the deeper Self.

Readers are offered the reminder that what is true exists eternally. By experiencing this personality-self's journey through illusion, one is awakened to the role of the soul in the resolution of trauma as a continuing journey through lives and the balancing of energies.

This dissertation tells the story of hope, and the possibility of awakening to the soul's role in creating a life full of teachings disguised as conflicts, meant to assist the personality-self in healing the fragments dissociated from the multi-dimensional self. It provides an overview of spiritual psychology expressed in the story of one person. It reminds the reader that through the acceptance of the dark night of the soul as a teacher, one finds the truth of Self that one really is. It reinforces the concept that our pathway to wholeness lies within the work that our soul provides for each of us in our own unique lives. Observing the relationships, events, and circumstances in each life, allows the personality-self to recognize the specific yearnings of the soul that are pertinent to the individual. Our primary teacher is our life reflected in the relationships and circumstances we experience daily.

One is reminded that universal assistance is always available to the seeker. That in healing the blockages of limited thoughts and subsequently trapped bodily emotions, one is able to access the intuitive connection with one's soul. In that way, the personality-self moves along the continuum to merging with the multi-sensory self.

Western psychology is encouraged to stretch beyond current therapies to include the mystery of the soul as an approach to healing. Rather than fixing the client, the

process can help incorporate all the experiences in one's life as a teacher. Using the chakras as a system of limited energy at each level of development can be helpful to both therapist and client. Recognizing the energy blocks held in the body, one is reminded of the soul's call in this life. The unfolding of the quest of the soul using each unique life story, creates a teacher in the interpretation and integration process of one's life. Aligning the personality-self with the soul's intentions creates the peace for which all search.

Zukav states "that it is the health of the soul that is the true purpose of the human experience" (p. 189). This dissertation is offered to those people who are following their soul's path without the comprehensive understanding of the soul's role in the creation of their lives and their healing.

Scope of the Study

This dissertation provides a framework for the seeker of connection with one's deeper Self. It is designed to assist those whose lives have been affected by trauma and separation. Whereas the degree of trauma is relative to the reader, the commonalities of the journey are relative to all. Each human being is called to grow in the four aspects of wellness: physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. In doing so, one passes through the dark woods of betrayal and separation in some manner, and is then offered the opportunity and choice for merging the fragmented parts into wholeness.

This dissertation provides guideposts on the path to healing for both therapists and clients. It fulfills a need for a fictional tale of healing that would support the client in therapy as well as the seeker in personal growth. The tale of the myth provides a comprehensive overview of a life from interlife to birth, through the developmental stages, experiencing death and a return to the interlife.

Those readers who are not interested in a reincarnation cycle of life perspective, karmic balancing, existence of a soul, intuitive abilities, and healing into wholeness may not overtly find effectiveness in this approach. Additionally, taking responsibility for one's life requires consummate courage and the desire to do so. Those readers who do make the choice to embark upon the journey through illusion to liberation may find this myth supportive of that passageway. This myth offers hope, empathetic understanding of life's trials, and a process to access therapeutic steps in that evolution to transformation.

Limitations of the Study

This study is based on heuristic research. Inherent within this process is a combination of scholarly research, therapeutic counseling with clients in my private practice, intensive counseling work with at-risk students and their families in the public school system, creating and facilitating a life-skills group processing program, presenting and attending workshops, and my own life and spiritual journey in personal growth.

The limitations of this study revolve around the lack of quantifiable results based on the analysis of the philosophy of life, life experiences, and healing processes discussed. The subjective experiences of my clients, students, and myself are expressed in narrative results of our work. Comparative approaches to healing have not been examined. The follow-up results of this study would be restricted to feedback received from clients, continuance of work, and subsequent referrals.

Further, the concepts and metaphors used in this dissertation have not been evaluated across the spectrum of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Neither have these concepts been evaluated for effectiveness across the broad range of religious or spiritual

practices. More research would be indicated to ascertain the effectiveness of such an approach across the spectrum of the general population.

This dissertation is a tool that one might use to remind or awaken oneself to the role of the soul in the interpretation of trauma in human lives. Hopefully, it would encourage a release of the victim mentality and an embracing of the compassionate seeker. It is not designed to provide therapy or to provide an answer to life's "problems." It is to reawaken the mystery and imagination of the soul and contribute to its quest.

Definitions

The following definitions are intended to help the reader understand the meanings as used in this dissertation:

The Self or Spirit: "The Atman, the universal Spirit, the self-existent Being, the conscious essential Existence, one in all. (The Self is being, not a being.)" (Dalal, 2001, p. 415).

The Soul: "The psychic essence or entity, the divine essence in the individual; a spark of the Divine that comes down into the manifestation to support the evolution of the individual. In the course of the evolution, the soul grows and evolves in the form of a soul-personality, the psychic being. The term "soul" is also often used as a synonym for "psychic being." (Dalal, 2001, p. 416)

Soul-Personality: "Soul-personality: the psychic being or soul form developing through evolution and passing from life to life." (Dalal, 2001, p. 416)

Transpersonal Self: "The transpersonal Self is further distinguished from the soul since its recognition implies a transcendence of egoic and existential self-concepts, the same self-concepts that are sometimes attributed to the soul as a subtle separate entity. So while the transpersonal self includes *awareness* of the soul, it is not exclusively identified with it." (Vaughan, 1995, p. 47)

Gradations between Mind and Supermind: Dalal (2001, p. 49) describes the continuum of consciousness. "Higher ranges of Mind overtopping our normal Mind and leading to Supermind; these successive states, levels or graded powers of being are hidden in our own superconscious parts. In an ascending order the gradations of spiritualized mind are:

- a. Higher Mind: a luminous thought-mind whose instrumentation is through an elevated thought-power and comprehensive mental sight. In the Higher

Mind one becomes constantly and closely aware of the Self, the One everywhere and knows and sees habitually with that awareness.

- b. Illumined Mind: a mind no longer of higher thought, but of spiritual light; here the clarity of the intelligence, its tranquil daylight, gives place or subordinates itself to an intense luster, a splendor and illumination of the Spirit.
- c. Intuition: a power of consciousness nearer and more intimate than the above-mentioned gradations to the original knowledge by identity. What is thought-knowledge in the Higher Mind becomes illumination in the Illumined Mind and direct intimate vision in the Intuition. This true and authentic intuition must be distinguished from a power of the ordinary mental reason which is too easily confused with it, that power of involved reasoning that reaches its conclusion by a bound and does not need the ordinary steps of the logical mind.
- d. Overmind: The Overmind is a delegate of the Supramental Consciousness, its delegate to the cosmic Ignorance. The Supramental is the total Truth-Consciousness; the Overmind draws down the truths separately and gives them a separate identity.”

The Divine: “The Supreme Being from which all comes and in which all lives. In its supreme Truth the Divine is absolute and infinite peace, consciousness, existence, power and delight. The Transcendent, the Cosmic (Universal) and the Individual are three powers of the Divine, overarching, underlying and penetrating the whole of manifestation.” (Dalal, 2001, p. 408)

Ego: Dalal (2001, p. 408) describes the ego as “the “I” constituted by a mental, vital and physical formation which serve to centralize and individualize the outer consciousness and action; when the true self is discovered, the utility of the ego ceases, this formation disappears and the true individuality is felt in its place.”

Chakra System: “(The soul) is, according to our psychology, connected with the small outer personality by certain centres of consciousness of which we become aware by yoga....The inner centres are for the most part closed or asleep—to open them and make them awake and active one aim of yoga.” (Dalal, 2001, p. 406)

Trauma: Baum (1997, 187) defines trauma as “relative to the perceptual field of the observer—this is, what traumatizes a child may seem trivial to an adult, and 2) that anything that constitutes actual energy blockage, whether intentional or accidental.”

Dysfunctional Families: Grof (1993, p. 59) describes her definition of dysfunctional families as “one that creates a behavioral structure in which its members avoid, rationalize, or cover up problems and carefully guard or deny secrets. Individuals within this system also have the tendency to indulge in exaggerated

and destructive emotions, conceal their true feelings, or evade their own issues by judging, criticizing, blaming, or attempting to control others. In addition, they regularly violate one another's personal boundaries or remain aloof and unavailable behind well-fortified emotional and psychological defenses.”

Abuse: Abuse as defined by Grof (1993, p. 41) “is the invasion of our physical, sexual, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual integrity. It is the violation of our own sacred identity as individuals, an active intrusion through the boundaries that define us as unique.”

Karma: Huston Smith (1958) visualized karma as a disturbance in the cosmic harmony that requires balance. Rather than projecting the cause of disharmony outside of oneself, personal responsibility recognizes that each act chosen has its equal and opposite reaction on the individual himself.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this review of the literature, I will focus on the information written on the subject of trauma resolution and the intersection of the role of the soul in trauma resolution.

Whereas the breadth and depth of the subject of trauma resolution is voluminous, I will attempt to focus on the main topics addressed in trauma therapy. Subsequently, I will address the present state of trauma resolution in the clinical environment as it pertains to the inclusion of the concept of the soul. Each of the major components of trauma resolution will be reviewed in the literature as well as how the soul has been perceived in current therapeutic practice. I will also discuss how this dissertation of the role of the soul in trauma resolution will contribute to the field of spiritual psychology.

The Changing Therapeutic Paradigm

Alcoholics Anonymous' co-founder, Bill Wilson, provided an empowering shift in the consciousness of healing addictions in 1935. In speaking to his sobering friend regarding how to incorporate a spiritual rather than religion aspect to the recovery process, he writes of the process of awakening to the direct path of the experience of his Higher Power:

Despite the living example of my friend there remained in me the vestiges of my old prejudice. The word God still aroused a certain antipathy. When the thought was expressed that there might be a God personal to me, this feeling

was intensified. I didn't like the idea. I could go for such conceptions as Creative Intelligence, Universal Mind or Spirit of Nature but I resisted the thought of a Czar of the Heavens, however loving His sway might be. I have since talked with scores of men who felt the same way. My friend suggested what then seemed a novel idea. He said, '*Why don't you choose your own conception of God.*' That statement hit me hard. It melted the icy intellectual mountain in whose shadow I had lived and shivered many years. I stood in the sunlight at last. *It was only a matter of being willing to believe in a Power greater than myself. Nothing more was required of me to make my beginning.* I saw that growth could start from that point. Upon a foundation of complete willingness I might build what I saw in my friend. Would I have it? Of course I would! (pp. 2–3)

The recovery process that Wilson envisioned was of releasing self-centeredness and entering into a new relationship with whatever one considered to be one's Higher Power. Wilson delineated that approach as an alternative pathway to a religious perspective of an omnipotent God. In Wilson's discussions with his friend, a decision was made to list all manner of defective qualities and to release them to the Higher Power. In that way, character defects and problems encountered in life were submitted to a higher spiritual energy.

I was to test my thinking by the new God-consciousness within. Common sense would thus become uncommon sense. I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me. Never was I to pray for myself, except as my requests bore on my usefulness to others. Then only might I expect to receive. But that would be in great measure. My friend promised that when these things were done I would enter upon a new relationship with my Creator; that I would have the elements of a way of living which answered all my problems. Belief in the power of God, plus enough willingness, honesty and humility to establish and maintain the new order of things, were the essential requirements. Simple, but not easy; a price had to be paid. It meant destruction of self-centeredness. I must turn in all things to the Father of Light who presides over us all. These were revolutionary and drastic proposals but, the moment I fully accepted them, the effect was electric. There was a sense of victory, followed by such a peace and serenity as I had never known. There was utter confidence. I felt lifted up, as though the great clean wind of a mountain top blew through and through. God comes to most men gradually, but His impact on me was sudden and profound. (pp. 3–4)

Whereas Bill Wilson began a world-changing self-help organizational movement in dealing with addictions and character defects, he did so with the idea of a Higher Power without the additional concept of a role of a soul in the resolution of life's challenges.

Ernest Holmes described his theory of *The Science of Mind* (1938) in his book of the same name. Building on the foundational concept of "One Infinite Mind," Holmes defines living the Consciousness of Christ as being able to discern behind the physical representation of an object the spiritual sense of All That Is. *The Science of Mind* as proposed by Holmes imparts a way of living both mentally and spiritually. The website for *The Science of Mind* explains the foundational concept as follows:

The Science of Mind declares the Truth about this spiritual universe and it also declares the Truth about false belief, considering everything which is opposed to good as an accumulation of human thought, the collective negative suggestion of the race. Wrong conditions are resolved into false beliefs and, through the use of right ideas, a transformation of thought takes place. We learn to build our ideas upon an affirmative rather than a negative factor. To state the Truth and deny or disregard that which in belief is opposed to it, is to prove that the Principle of the Science of Mind is actual. (scienceofmind.com)

Holmes has created a series of lessons that assist the student in mastering the strength of the mind to find purpose in life, to heal, and to provide self-confidence and love for oneself and others. By changing the thoughts that one allows the mind to entertain, positive and affirmative states of mind prevail. Holmes does not however, entertain the idea of a soul perspective in the healing of physical, emotional, and mental conditions. Louise Hay has been one of the primary practitioners of *The Science of Mind*, and has popularized the use of affirmations and the awareness of the quality of thoughts allowed in the mind for millions of people in the self-help industry.

The Changing Trauma Paradigm

Judith Herman writes in *Trauma and Recovery* (1997) of the range of traumatic disorders, including the effects of a single devastating event to the complex and intricate effects of long-standing abuse. Herman states that the recovery process from traumatic effects follows a common pathway: “The fundamental stages of recovery are establishing safety, reconstructing the trauma story, and restoring the connection between survivors and their community” (p. 3). Herman describes the lack of previous awareness of victimization in the act of trauma resolution. Noting the advances in trauma research, Herman foresees continuing work from biological, psychological, social, and political perspectives.

Steven Gold describes his contextual approach to trauma therapy in *Not Trauma Alone* (2000). His therapeutic methodology incorporates the theory that instead of being nurtured and taught life skills in their families of origin, abuse victims live daily lives of control, contempt, rejection, and emotional neglect. Because these victims experience life development essentially alone, Gold focuses less on the re-exposure to the past that many therapies consider necessary but rather focuses on teaching clients interpersonal competence and social effectiveness skills, filling in the void left by the recurrent abusive environment. Therapeutic goals include building the skills necessary to manage emotional discomfort in order to stay present and focused and using critical thinking processes, all focused on replacing maladaptive modes of adjustment to trauma.

Chu writes in *Rebuilding Shattered Lives* (1998) of the progression of treatment for complex post-traumatic and dissociative disorders over the years. He cites the absence of awareness in therapeutic offices of the depth and breadth of the occurrences of trauma.

The 1980s and 1990s brought the full attention of the psychiatric community to the treatment of such traumas. The lack of a full understanding of the holistic effect of complex trauma brought fragmented clients to the therapeutic office. Chu states:

They developed fundamental assumptions about the world as malevolent and themselves as defective and powerless, leaving them poorly equipped to cope with even basic human functioning. Perhaps most important, they also learned to approach others with deep mistrust, making all relationships-including therapeutic relationships, tenuous and potentially explosive. In retrospect, it is easy to see how severely traumatized persons failed to benefit from a type of exploratory therapy that assumes basic trust and the ability to tolerate intense and dependent therapeutic relationships. In addition to sometimes painful and unsuccessful treatment, a premature emphasis on childhood abuse resulted in a fixation on the trauma as the central theme of the lives of some patients, with their identities becoming organized around their traumatization. Thus, rather than seeing the abuse as events to be overcome, these patients essentially began to see themselves as chronically victimized and disabled, sometimes with an expectation of compensation for their early experiences. (p. 38)

Co-dependency is defined and described by Sharon Wegscheider-Cruse in *Choicemaking* (1985) as “a specific condition that is characterized by preoccupation and extreme dependence (emotionally, socially, and sometimes physically), on a person or object. Eventually, this dependence on another person becomes a pathological condition that affects the co-dependent in all other relationships” (p. 2).

In *Recovery, Plain and Simple* (1990), John Lee describes the need for co-dependents to be in control. He relates how co-dependent behavior spends energy by “repressing feelings and trying to guess and cater to other people’s feelings” (p. 47).

In answering the question, “what do we do with our feelings of anger and grief?,” Lee states what not to do: deny or bury them with addictions, neither medicate, meditate, nor transcend them. Feelings must be experienced first, as deeply as we can. Methods of

releasing feelings are only effective when feelings have been processed through the body, heart and mind.

Bradshaw deepens the idea of co-dependency in his book, *Creating Love* (1992). Bradshaw discusses the concept of being in a trance, a mystification, a role which family members play in order to survive the dysfunctional family system. This mystification process consists of obedience to the patriarchal power in the family, which suppresses the development of the self of each individual. Feelings are denied in order to maintain a sense of balance and control in the family system. Feelings, thoughts, questions, needs, and desires are shamed in order to keep the family at the level of dysfunction of the marriage or partnership.

The symbolism of the inner child is characterized by Lucia Capacchione (1991) as “a powerful presence that dwells at the core of our being” (p. 16). It consists of those qualities which expresses feelings with directness and aliveness that empowers the being. With the reality of interaction with others, the spontaneity of the inner child is diminished. Don’t talk, don’t trust, and don’t feel are rules that are expressed either directly or indirectly in varying degrees to the growing child. In order to survive the process of growing up in families, the inner child dives more deeply into the interior in order to find safety. Although the inner child spontaneity is repressed, it continues to knock at the door of its consciousness, expressing itself in depression, anxiety, fatigue, and illness, among many possibilities, and reflecting a lower energy for living.

Capacchione states that not only do we lose connection with ourselves but we also lose connection with others. By not sharing the truth of who we are, intimacy is not experienced; our mask of survival is presented instead.

In *Adult Children of Abusive Parents* (1989), Steven Farmer paints a portrait of the typical abusive family. Symptoms include denial, a lack of empathy, lack of clear boundaries, role reversals between parents and children, a closed family system that does not interact with the community, incongruent communication among members, extremes of conflict, avoiding feelings, low self-esteem, a sense of helplessness, and difficulties with many forms of relationships.

Farmer discusses the habitual interactions in the primary family in childhood that create a series of identity roles that serve to protect the adult child: the perfectionist, the caretaker, the invisible one, the rebel, the guilty one, crisis addict, black-and-white thinking, and asking what is normal. Healing occurs in the process of giving oneself permission to feel repressed feelings, increasing one's awareness of each feeling and accepting those feelings. Awareness and acceptance creates release of the feelings, allowing forgiveness of others and self to integrate into the woundedness of the self.

The Intersection of Trauma and Spiritual Psychology

In *The Drama of the Gifted Child*, Alice Miller (1994) describes the trauma of childhood abuse. "Probably the greatest of wounds—not to have been loved just as one truly was—cannot heal without the work of mourning (p. 102). In writing about the inclusion of spirituality in therapy, Miller writes:

The so-called recovery movement, for instance, is based on techniques borrowed from Transactional Analysis and Neurolinguistic Programming—the latter of which is more or less an attempt to unlearn ingrained patterns of behavior via manipulatory exercise, ignoring the emotional information these patterns have to offer us. The recovery movement is also infused with spiritual and religious concepts, such as forgiveness and a Higher Power, that seem to be necessary because, ultimately, the techniques offered are of no use and *can* be of no use. But whether a Higher Power helps in individual cases depends on individual belief, and in that sense what is offered is, at best, old wine in new bottles. Consequently, this movement does not lead to personal

freedom and autonomy but rather to group-dependency and conformity, as evidenced by the similarity in the vast literature on the subject of recovery. I think that religious concepts become necessary when real procedures for self-help are lacking, either because they are unknown or just feared precisely because of their effectiveness, radical nature, and revolutionary power. (p. 11)

Miller's healing is directed to self-therapy using four steps that describe listening to the memories of abuse stored in the cells of the body, giving voice to those feelings, recognizing the recurring fear in adulthood, and confronting the abuser with repressed needs. The writings of Miller have stood firm in both affirming the depth of the trauma experienced by a victim of abuse and setting forth boundaries to protect the victim.

Miller incorporates the concept of a Higher Power in alignment with those described above in the recovery movement. The role of the soul in trauma resolution is not mentioned.

In *Sacred Contracts*, Carolyn Myss discusses finding purposes in our life experiences:

No one can see everything in advance, of course, but if we had a way of looking at the symbolic meaning of our experiences, we would be more prepared to face and accommodate the inevitable changes. Rather than fight change, and build up emotional scar tissue, we would be able to choose to see events in a different light, accept the changes, and get on with our lives. (pp. 2-3)

In her work with clients, Myss assists them to bring traumatic events into their awareness so that they can relate the experiences to a loss of power caused by an attachment to their interpretations of the memories. By "calling back their spirit" she helps them to recognize and change the underlying patterns of thoughts that are laden with the emotional reaction to such mental processes.

Meredith L. Young-Sowers reflects in her book, *Spiritual Crisis* (1993), about the traumas and experiences that we encounter in our lives. Such crises transform our living

environments, which we interpret as a collapse and failure of our integral systems.

Young-Sowers reframes that interpretation as a “breakthrough to the reservoir of Love, spiritual energy, held captive within us and replaceable from the God-source. When we tap this reservoir we are able to give ourselves the Love that is essential for life” (p. 21).

Robert Sardello, in *Freeing the Soul from Fear* (1999), describes a change in the basic motivation of relationships. Previous ways of relating required the continual giving to others and the need to get something back in return. The new paradigm suggests that relationships are more about serving one another’s soul, not fulfilling the needs of the other. Stating his view in terms of therapeutic relationships, Sardello writes the following:

If I were a therapist working with someone, what would the essence of truly helping that person be? To love his soul and look on it without judgment, so that he can experience love without reservation. I would need to enter the darkest regions, the ugliest places, the scariest dimensions of the person’s soul, and do so without the slightest bit of judgment or hesitation. Such empathy constitutes an act of redemption. What would I get out of it? Nothing of a personal nature—and if I were to, the therapeutic process would get dammed up. (p. 104)

In discussing the concept of fear as it relates to our ego consciousness, Sardello describes it in these terms. “As one becomes accustomed to the touch of inspiration, something very interesting happens to the fear hidden within ego consciousness. It does not simply go away but drops into the fertile womb of the soul, where it undergoes a transformation” (p. 265).

Further, Sardello states that as we work to bring the soul into relation with ego consciousness, fear has no place to hide. “Love acts as a force against fear by being an impulse toward relationship, connection, and attraction, which stands against impulses toward separation, division, conflict, and violence” (p. 257).

Soul purification as described by Sardello requires one to be present in living with the range of human emotions without either acting them out or repressing them.

“Purification is a kind of burning process, an inner heat, where the source of the heat, the means of the purification, is the poison itself” (p. 87).

Edgar Cayce’s work on soul development has been summarized by Kevin Todeschi (2000). During Cayce’s forty-three years of giving intuitive readings for people, he was able to perceive the importance of people’s thoughts and interactions in relationships that created the lives that they were experiencing. Todeschi described life as “a process of personal growth and development. It is a required transformational process that has been in effect since the dawn of time and will be underway until each soul has passed through every portion of the curriculum” (p. 2). In other words, every situation, relationship, and circumstance comes from the loving Grace of the Creator who affords the individual the will to determine the consequence, either reacting as a victim or responding as an empowered and growing human being.

Two fundamental views of the world are suggested by the work of Edgar Cayce. One is that life is a coincidence; events and circumstances are the effect of the absence of a harmonious process inferred by the concept of God. The other view is of a God who is present and all-loving. The second idea suggests the following questions:

What if the apparent randomness of life weren’t random at all, but instead was a purposeful unfolding of experiences, thoughts, desires, and lessons that originated at the level of the soul? What if we were active participants in the creation of every element of our lives rather than simply the recipient of them? What if the Creator were at least as equitable and fair as a loving parent who didn’t play favorites with her or his children? What if God were truly all-loving, ever-merciful, and eternally supportive, providing a firm foundation for each of His children to live and grow and become all that they were meant to be? (p. 4)

In terms of the soul, Cayce saw that each soul performed two specific functions of its destiny. First, the soul strives “to become cognizant of its true individuality while maintaining an awareness of its oneness with God” (p. 7). Secondly, while living an incarnation or life upon Earth, the soul brings forth the strengths upon which to build and the weaknesses which are to be healed.

The most important lesson, according to Cayce, is “a state of being that somehow sets aside personal agendas, beliefs, motives, and desires and enables an individual to become an agent of spirituality in the lives of others. In other words, true cooperation is learning to work with God so that the Creator can work through you” (p. 17).

Jane Roberts echoes a similar view of the soul in her book, *Seth Speaks* (1972):

Now in terms of psychology as you understand it, the soul could be considered as a prime identity that is in itself a gestalt of many other individual consciousnesses—an unlimited self that is yet able to express itself in many ways and forms and yet maintain its own identity, its own “I am-ness,” even while it is aware that its I am-ness may be part of another I am-ness. (p. 83)

Seth, as interpreted and channeled by Roberts, emphasizes the role of the soul in manifesting thought and emotions into the physical realm of reality. A personal reality consists of the construction of ideas which the soul transfers into daily experience. This process, when brought into conscious awareness, can lead to liberation of constricting ideas through the power to change the thoughts and emotions of the subjective self.

Satprem (1968) writes of Sri Aurobindo’s expression of the state of Western psychology when he describes the power of the inclusion of the higher elements in healing processes:

I find it difficult to take these Western (psychologists) at all seriously . . . yet perhaps one ought to, for half-knowledge is a powerful thing and can be a great obstacle to the Truth. . . . They look from down up and explain the

higher lights by the lower obscurities, but the foundation of these things is above and not below. . . . The significance of the lotus is not to be found by analyzing the secrets of the mud from which it grows; its secret is to be found in the heavenly archetype of the lotus that blooms forever in the Light above. (p. 168).

In *Transformers* (1982), transpersonal therapist Jacqueline Small discussed how psychology as a traditional science has perceived the self as a personality yearning after “constant ego gratification.” This perspective lacks the depth of study of the meaning and purpose of human lives. The concept of the soul or Essence has been historically linked to studies of religion and metaphysics. Small states how effective psychology requires the inclusion of the large sense of Self, the soul, to release negative, self-defeating patterns of thoughts and behaviors. She comments on the inadequacy of some traditional counselors “bent on changing, remolding and scolding are not able to endorse a client’s delicate inner nature striving to emerge; they only increase the energy in self-hatred or in developing more and more of the mask, the outer personality that later must be transcended” (p. 6). *Embodying Spirit* (1994), by the same author, again combines directions to walking the spiritual path combined with the process of psychological integration in order to align the personality-self with the soul’s purpose.

Some authors believe that the soul by its intrinsic nature must learn. Subagh Singh Khalsa (1997) has described the journey as the soul choosing certain soul-designed incarnations, life events, and relationships that are integral to the learning process:

This learning soul needs a mind and a body. It needs the experiences of the individual in order to grow. Soul and personality function together in a collaborative learning relationship, each needing the capacities of the other to complete its task. When we understand this symbiosis, this energy between the finite and the unlimited, we can free ourselves from resentment about the circumstances of our life. We have what we need. (p. 17)

Reframing the question of how the soul might serve the needs of the personality to how the personality may serve the soul, Khalsa sets forth the transforming power of the answer. When the perspective shifts to the personality serving the soul, a deeper source of inspiration may be the vehicle of transformation, a more lighted path that forms the basis of daily activities, and an empowering sense of destiny.

Rather than dealing with the soul and its lessons, Eckhart Tolle in *The Power of Now* (1999) refers to ending the suffering by liberating oneself from the mind. In the process of “watching the thinker,” Tolle states:

When you listen to that voice, listen to it impartially. That is to say, do not judge. Do not judge or condemn what you hear, for doing so would mean that the same voice has come in again through the back door. You’ll soon realize: *there* is the voice, and here *I am* listening to it, watching it. This *I am* realization, this sense of your own presence, is not a thought. It arises from beyond the mind. (p. 15)

In *The Heart of the Soul* (2001) and *The Mind of the Soul* (2003), Zukav continued to develop the concepts from his *Seat of the Soul* (1989). Working to increase “authentic power,” Zukav describes methods to increase awareness of wounded pain that leads to compulsions and addictions such as those discussed in the dissertation. This dissertation describes a journey of freeing oneself from such compulsions and increasing the emotional awareness and the responsible choices of the mind that empower the potential of the soul.

The Metaphysical Perspective on the Role of the Soul in Trauma Resolution

Michael Newton writes in *Life Between Lives* (2004) of the hypnotherapy process he uses for spiritual regression. In describing the desensitizing of trauma when working with a client, Newton states “that the purpose of desensitization is to take a traumatic

event or repressed incident and allow the mind to digest it slowly in order to live without panic, fear, anxiety, or discomfort” (p. 66).

Newton further describes the juxtaposition of healing trauma in conjunction with the soul, “The client is then able to integrate the painful elements connected with the traumatic scene more effectively because in the soul state they have an awareness of their immortal self. Also, from the spirit world it is easier and more effective to look at other lives. If necessary we can return to a significant earlier life to locate the origins of a continually scarring karmic pattern” (p. 66).

Destiny of Souls (2000) and *Journey of Souls* (1996) by Newton further detail case studies of clients in hypnotherapy who provide specific details regarding the transition of souls to a higher state of consciousness and the conditions of residing in between lives. Some of the characteristics of the case reports are incorporated within the myth of the dissertation providing a story rather than discrete amounts of information on each subject.

Another source of similar information is Brian Weiss, M.D., who reports in *Many Lives, Many Masters* (1998) of a case study he experienced in his practice of psychiatry. During a hypnotherapy session for regression of past childhood trauma, he encountered a client who spontaneously regressed into a series of previous lives. Through the messages from her guides and the experience of the regressions, the client found herself relieved of depression, anxiety, and phobias. Weiss documents how his regressions, both past and future, have helped clients to grieve the loss of a loved one, uncover the root causes of obesity or substance abuse, heal the inner child, integrate the abused child, and promote physical healing.

What This Dissertation Contributes to the Field

The last seventy-five years have seen a plethora of writing oriented towards incorporating transpersonal and metaphysical concepts into narrative mythologies aimed at increasing personal growth and assisting in manifesting therapeutic goals for the general population. While the numbers of such books continue to grow, presently there is no other literature that specifically addresses what this dissertation does in the following areas.

Applying Mythology as a Learning Tool to Facilitate the Role of the Soul in Trauma Resolution

Several books have been written to describe the process of the shamanic journey. Soul Retrieval explores the shamanic belief that the essence of our life energy, termed the soul, can become split-off and lost in altered states of consciousness. By the use of trance-inducement such as drumming, an altered state of consciousness is entered in order to recover the lost soul parts. One of the most well-known examples is *Soul Retrieval: Mending the Fragmented Self with Soul Retrieval* by Sandra Ingerman (1991). Expanding on the topic of healing the fragmented parts of the personality-self to connect with the soul are her other books, *Welcome Home: Following Your Soul's Journey Home* (1994) and *Shamanic Journeying: A Beginner's Guide* (2004). These books are based on her training with Michael Harner who wrote *The Way of the Shaman* (1990). The premise, that one looks in relationships for fragments of ourselves in order to fulfill a drive for wholeness of the personality-self, is expressed in this dissertation. However, none of these books incorporates the concepts of the mythological model beginning in Heaven with a created life purpose of aligning with the soul.

Books by Joan Borysenko, *Guilt is the Teacher, Love is the Lesson* (1991) and *Minding the Body, Mending the Mind* (1994), reiterate the idea of lessons or “dark nights of the soul,” which are catalysts for spiritual growth. Trauma can be a source of healing by encouraging the shedding of old beliefs leading to transformation. To overcome the roots of addiction, fear, and negative thought patterns created by varying degrees of trauma in one’s life, spiritual growth requires a persistent effort. This dissertation is in agreement with Borysenko’s perspective of trauma as a healing process but differs from the vantage point of the incorporation of the soul as a directive model.

Van Praagh, in *Talking to Heaven* (1999) and *Heaven and Earth* (2001), makes the point of the importance of the healing aspects in the knowledge of karma, the afterlife, spiritual guides, and contact with the deceased. These concepts are connected into an account of an actual life in this dissertation for greater ability to link to an individual’s healing process. In *Induced After-Death Communication* (2005), Allan Botkin describes a therapy using a modified version of EMDR for PTSD, complicated grief and trauma. In his work with war veterans, clients find themselves spontaneously communicating with deceased loved ones or enemy soldiers killed in battle. His reports indicate that only one or two sessions are needed to resolve the trauma because of the intensity of emotional connection in the spiritual realm. Clients report resolving feelings of guilt, anger, and sadness and replacing them with acceptance and an abiding sense of the deceased being well and at peace. This dissertation describes the concept of communicating with a deceased person with the goal of increased spiritual awareness and healing; it differs from Botkin’s writing by nesting this concept into the idea of a reincarnational and karmic process of an actual life.

Using the Narrative as a Model of the Metaphysical Life Designed by the Soul to Accomplish Certain Life Lessons That Empower the Personality-self to Live in Alignment with the Soul

Raymond Moody, in *Life after Life* (2001), states one of the key concepts of this dissertation, that of the “life review.” In his investigations, Moody summarizes the life process as a physical body having a spiritual lesson to learn grows through the challenging experiences and choices presented to us by Spirit. The outcome of such growth is the integration of unconditional love. When this love encompasses the personality-self or ego, then the life review is successful in moving the energy into a higher vibration. *Lessons from the Light* (Ring, 2006) reinforces this perspective. These books reflect informational content rather than a narrative that connects the puzzle parts of a spiritually psychological life process.

The *Oversoul Seven Trilogy* (1995), written by Jane Roberts, portrays the interaction of reincarnational selves with guides in search of spiritual teachings. But unlike this dissertation, these books do not address the psychological aspects of healing trauma into alignment. Within the *The Oversoul Seven Trilogy*, Roberts tells a story of reincarnation with assistance from spiritual guides in the myth of *The Education of Oversoul Seven*. The concept of time occurring in past, present, and future is recognized as happening simultaneously by personality-selves living in differing environments. This myth emphasizes the reincarnational relationships among incarnational selves as they work to learn lessons of spiritual growth. Teachers assist the reincarnational energies as they each explore the learning opportunities appropriate to each setting.

Roberts expands her thesis in the third story of the trilogy in *The Further Education of Oversoul Seven and Oversoul Seven and the Museum of Time*. The hypothesis that the

soul energy of the human incarnations leave their sleeping bodies at night to move into the higher dimensions of vibration to attend classes and teachings is described by Roberts as a main teaching tool of the metaphysical world. These three books form a foundational basis for this dissertation. The contrast occurs in describing not the relational aspects of reincarnational lives and the soul but one life confronted by trauma and the psychological recovery involved.

Mitch Albom's book, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* (2003), describes the main character's transition into Heaven, where five souls from his life on Earth meet with him. In visions and discussions he is shown how each person represented a lesson for him to learn about himself, the true meaning of his life. Previously he had viewed events in his life as indications of his lack of self-worth. Viewing them in the context of their conversations from Heaven, he is able to widen his perspective to soul learning. While Albom's book metaphorically may represent fragments of the self, this dissertation strives to incorporate the metaphysical aspects of a soul-directed life.

Jonathan Livingston Seagull (1970) written by Richard Bach presents a metaphor of a bird who represents finding the true sense of Self by living his highest vision regardless of what other people think about him. Living true to the seeking of a higher purpose in life and following one's dreams to fly, Jonathan realizes transcendence in the higher realms of love and compassion. The concept of reincarnation is approached in this story. The wise elders of the group observe his progress and note that for many people the process of transcendence takes many lifetimes. If one chooses to follow their dream with passion in a lifetime, the possibility of moving into a higher level of consciousness can happen. If not, then rebirth at a similar level will occur. This myth offers the idea that

life becomes meaningful when one continues to work on the innate inner path to perfection, rather than expecting that “Heaven” comes from an external power. This dissertation reflects the idea of learning from wise teachers as does Bach’s book, but moves beyond into the area of incorporating a wider range of metaphysical concepts.

The Way of the Peaceful Warrior (2000) by Dan Millman tells the story of a young man who finds guidance from a wise teacher, Socrates. Millman’s narrative inspired many people by touching upon a common theme of humans yearning for a meaningful life with purpose. Millman summarizes the popularity of his book by describing its how it reveals to readers what they had always known but had forgotten, namely, the bigger picture and the essential perfection of our lives unfolding. The heroic journey from dissolution to integration is described in both narratives. This dissertation differs from *The Way of the Peaceful Warrior* by incorporating the soul’s perspective.

James Redfield’s best-selling *The Celestine Prophecy* (1995) detailed the myth of a middle-aged man who embarks on a journey to find an ancient Peruvian manuscript containing nine Insights that foretell the rise of modern New Age spirituality. Redfield alludes to the probable response by some religious organizations of fear and repression of such spiritual insights as detrimental to traditional family values. Psychic concepts such as auras, energy vibrations, and paranormal phenomena are described in the nine Insights. This book was exceptionally popular with the population in general, selling as self-published and by word of mouth at its initial introduction. The theme of spirituality with psychic concepts appealed to a wide audience. In contrast, the myth presented in this dissertation does not tell a story of individual insights or psychic qualities, but instead focuses on a development of personal growth incorporating life experiences.

The Teachings of Don Juan (1968) by Carlos Castaneda presented a radical way of “seeing” in the world. Castaneda chronicled his tutelage under the Yaqui Indian shaman, Don Juan Matus. Through the use of a different cognitive approach to viewing the world and the use of peyote, a new and unique reality was entered into as a result of the teachings. This dissertation differs from Castaneda’s writing in that the myth centers around the resolution of trauma from the perspective of a personality-self attempting to learn the lessons of love in order to align with the soul.

Demonstrating, by Use of the Mythological Story, the Healing Process of Trauma Resolution as an Integration of the Lower Self Shadow into the Higher Self

Two books describing the importance of our personal dramas as they relate to our growth have been written by Debbie Ford. *The Dark Side of the Light Chasers* (1998) brought the concept of incorporating the shadow into greater awareness in the general population. *The Secret of the Shadow* (2002) emphasized the need to make peace with our stories by identifying, understanding, and accepting all that is contained within our past. Rather than incorporating points to include in a healing process, this dissertation tells a story of healing the shadow.

As discussed in Chapter One, Baum in *Healing Dimensions* (1997) addresses the process of trauma integration for spiritual growth by describing how decreasing one’s self-worth also increases compulsive behaviors that paralyze the path to higher spiritual connections. Baum describes how to recover the helpless child ego-state, which is lost at the moment of the trauma experience itself. This dissertation differs from Baum’s work in that it aligns many of the concepts that he addresses such as the wounded child, repressed emotions, compulsive behaviors, depression, enmeshed relationships, and

distorted cognitive thinking patterns into a chronologically sequenced narrative that presents the therapeutic process in a more easily integrated form for the client.

In *On Life After Death* (1991), Elizabeth Kubler-Ross uses the metaphysical process to assist those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. From a multitude of interviews, Kubler-Ross describes the spirituality of the transition process from a metaphysical perspective. In her last book, *Life Lessons* (2001), she describes her own process of coming to terms with the loving of oneself compounded with the trauma of her own illnesses. The trauma of losing a loved one is described in this dissertation from a traditional victim perspective and progressively from the viewpoint of spiritual psychology and the soul.

Mary O'Malley, in *The Gift of Our Compulsions* (2004), employs a therapeutic strategy incorporating spirituality into her process with clients. The compulsions that she describes in her book include all of those cited in this dissertation: drug abuse, compulsive eating, focusing on the cognitive realm at the expense of the physical, and emotional and spiritual development. The concept that our compulsions are overt behaviors that can be recognized as teachers for our growth can become a lifestyle of living in connection with spirit rather than diminishing our self-worth. This concept correlates with the foundational basis of this dissertation but differs from O'Malley's writings by offering the concept that the soul creates the opportunity for these compulsions to occur in one's life. Whereas O'Malley's book utilizes techniques for the therapist and client to use to resolve compulsions, this dissertation is a description of a life based in karmic balancing as a basis of resolving compulsions.

Summary

This dissertation contributes to the emerging field of spiritual psychology by providing a compilation of healing strategies related to the role of the soul in trauma resolution. The “normalizing” of trauma into a process of self-responsibility through lessons designed by the soul can be applied to clients, therapists, and healers who incorporate the spiritual and metaphysical realms into their practices of transformation. Clients will be able to have “in hand” a sequential unfolding of the metaphysical process of healing from various degrees of trauma. Therapists practicing spiritual psychology will have a tool to share with the client that serves as a reinforcement and continual reminder of the exercises and progression of healing. Perseverance during life’s continual challenges is an essential quality required in the therapeutic process of trauma recovery. The ability to refer to examples of such challenges and the corresponding steps to emotional and cognitive restructuring through integration of fragment of ego states can be an important assistive tool in the development of recovery. Incorporating the soul in trauma resolution widens the scope of practice to deepen the individual layer of recovery through the recognition of the essence of All That Is that lies at the core of each client. This dissertation seeks to contribute to progression of awareness.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This dissertation is a heuristic study that began with a search for an answer to the questions: “what underlying principle is operating in a person’s sequence of life experiences?”; and “what is the role of the soul in the resolution of trauma?”

I did not even know what the word *heuristic* meant before I started this dissertation. I wrote the myth that comprises the body of this dissertation from the experiences of my own life, that of my clients’ lives, and my own inner knowing that I had to write it. I didn’t know why; I didn’t know what I was looking for until I finished it. I was drawn to write about life and it turned into a story of the life of the soul; an attempt to explore the alignment of the personality-self with the soul’s purpose.

Because my own life seemed to follow a pattern that, at first, I didn’t want to own, I was interested to see that my clients responded to their own life experiences in the same way. Each experience, circumstance, and relationship was explored and investigated from the perspective of a discrete event. Looking at the whole picture of each experience allowed me and my clients to begin to question the value of the valleys, as well as the peaks, in growing a deeper relationship with the soul.

In this chapter I will discuss how the heuristic research process allowed me to validate my perspective of my own intuition and inner guidance. I will describe the theoretical perspectives, ideologies, and biases that have influenced this research project.

The research methods used to collect data will be delineated, as well as the organizational system itself.

Research Approach

Clark Moustakas (1990) reminds us that the word *heuristic* has a Greek basis in the process of discovering or finding. I have been exploring the mystery of my life, and subsequently the lives of my clients, for all my years on this planet. This search has brought me into a deeper relationship with myself and the process of knowing with more depth, the role of my soul in this mystery of my life. Moustakas describes the process well when he writes: “The heuristic process is a way of being informed, a way of knowing. Whatever presents itself in the consciousness of the investigator as perception, sense, intuition, or knowledge represents an invitation for further elucidation” (p. 10).

This heuristic process began for me in my childhood, a continuing puzzle of experiences and relationships. A symbol of my confusion as to the understanding of this puzzle might be a holographic spiral. In my innocence at birth, I began at the center of the spiral and continually moved outward, away from my center, extending further into alienation and separation. The response of my childhood mirrors, my parents, and my own sense of self validated that movement outward. Eventually, I was literally extended as far as my spiral could unwind. An invitation from my soul called me back to follow the path back to my center. Moustakas describes that process as:

through an unwavering and steady inward gaze and inner freedom to explore and accept *what is*, I am reaching into deeper and deeper regions of a human problem or experience and coming to now and understand its underlying dynamics and constituents more and more fully. (p. 33)

I choose the question “what is the soul’s role in trauma resolution?” as a study to understand what I saw in my life and what I saw in my clients’ lives. Searching for a unified understanding of what I experienced in therapy, both myself and with my clients, I sought to dialogue with our experiences, asking what the dynamic underneath the evolution of healing was.

Using the concept of tacit knowing, I began to understand patterns through internal reflection. I could feel a part of the puzzle pulling me to see it. My knowledge was based on my feelings of just knowing it to be. Douglass & Moustakas (1985) describe tacit knowing as a basic capacity of self of the researcher that gives “birth to the hunches and vague, formless insights that characterize heuristic discovery” (p. 49). My intuitive senses were activated to hear my inner dialogue. This process encouraged immediate understanding without the need to activate the development of analytical and logical reasoning.

Moustakas describes indwelling as an integral part of the heuristic approach to research. “The indwelling process is conscious and deliberate, yet it is not lineal or logical. It follows clues wherever they appear; one dwells inside them and expands their meanings and associations until a fundamental insight is achieved” (p. 24). I experienced much of my research in the process of indwelling; feeling little “ahas” leading to a greater sense of peace within me as I intuitively knew that what I was observing felt true.

This practice incorporated the element of focusing as described by Moustakas and by Eugene Gendlin (1978). Reaching a gestalt sense of the wholeness of my project was assisted by the process of focusing, holding my inner attention on the crux of the experience, until a shift occurred in my felt sense of knowing.

And finally, my internal frame of reference allowed me to portray the story of transformation described in this dissertation. I am writing from my own sense of my experience and those expressed by my clients and students, which includes our perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. The progression of explication as described by Moustakas (1990) relates how a researcher uses the techniques of focusing, indwelling, and intuition to delve deeper into nuances of the experience, remaining open to exploring the entire realm of incoming information that pertains to visualizing the patterns of the whole.

Therefore, the meanings of these experiences described in this dissertation are “inherent in a particular world view, an individual life, and the connections between self, other, and the world” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 32). Using the practice of meditation in all its forms facilitated this process of awareness; the resonance of these experiences to me as the researcher.

To say that this heuristic research experience changed my life would be a statement of minimums. I have had to set aside preconceived notions of others’ teachings and open up to the unfettered exploration of my own ongoing process. Michael Polanyi (1962) has stated my experience in his terms: “having made a discovery, I shall never see the world again as before. My eyes have become different. I have made myself into a persona seeing and thinking differently. I have crossed a gap, the heuristic gap, which lies between problem and discovery” (Polanyi, 1962, p. 142).

Theoretical Perspectives, Ideologies, and Biases

Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle suggests that the inclusion of the observer in the research process changes the process of observation. As such, my perspectives,

ideologies, and biases affect the outcome of the research. Heuristic research requires that the researcher's experience form the foundation of discovery.

The path that led me to this topic of research was my experience counseling students and clients in their life experiences. Whereas we worked session after session with feelings and thought patterns held in the body, elicited from years of living life through varying degrees of trauma, we sometimes lost track of the wholeness of the process of the life.

Using bibliotherapy, we explored books on various aspects of the healing process, but we lacked a book that supported a holistic view of the journey. We needed a book that addressed a more expanded view of life with aspects addressing reincarnation, karma, traumatic childhoods, healing fragments of the psyche, exploring the chakra system, and discovering the multi-sensory self with a connection to the soul.

The body of this dissertation represents my response to the requested need from my clients. For the past twenty years, I have been reading, discussing, listening, writing, and experiencing my own growth and that of my clients. Reading professional journals and books, as well as attending trainings at professional mental health workshops, has kept me current in the advances in Western psychology.

EMDR, hypnotherapy, rebirthing, Jin Shin Do, meditation, Tai Chi, and acupuncture have been instrumental in my growth process. My beginnings have their firm foundation in the Alanon and Codependency meetings and readings, and the Course in Miracles. I have attended workshops by Deepak Chopra, and the Dalai Lama, among others. My intensive spiritually based reading agenda over the past years has also given me a foundation upon which to build my heuristically modeled dissertation. Tape sets by

various authors have been a source of balanced right and left brain knowledge and guided imageries as well.

I have been in spiritual coaching for a number of years with several highly gifted intuitives, who have been excellent teachers for me. They have provided a few answers and many questions, as well as support as an observer-self to my journey, over the years. In addition, I have been able to receive information from my guides myself, with a continually growing discernment with what resonates as true for me.

As I have reached each step in my development, every experience, discussion, and reading has been essential in some way to my researching this dissertation topic. Each teacher, in whatever form, has guided me in formulating this research to its fruition through the heuristic process. The gestalt of all of my inner knowing is flowing through this heuristic course of action.

Again, using the spiral as a symbol of growth, I see myself as moving inward, taking with me and expanding upon what was known and experienced before I started. All the so-called traumas of the inner spiral leading outward, away from my inner being, were in actuality a necessary process. This process of movement has allowed me to be able to participate in a heuristic journey in bringing what I know to be true for me, at this present moment, inward back to the center of the spiral.

It is from this center that I am able to share my knowledge and story of healing with others. Hopefully, this myth of the personality-self connecting with the soul will be an effective support and change agent of whatever degree in the earthly environment. Moustakas (1990) summarizes this feeling of universal connection with the statement that it is “autobiographic, yet with virtually every question that matters personally there is

also a social—and perhaps universal—significance” (p. 15). I am also aware that my movement on the spiral will continue to move and expand in all directions, a continual emptying of that which I process through.

Data Collection Methods

For the past fifteen years, I have been working with adolescents and adults in a counseling relationship, whether in the public school system or in my sole private practice as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Alaska. Alaska has been reported to have four times the number of adolescent suicides as compared to the average of the rest of the nation. Adults have two times the national rate of suicide. The rate of sexual abuse is the highest in the United States, and substance abuse is very prevalent. My clientele was highly challenging in terms of trauma.

In the school system, I was asked to create and implement a series of classes that would provide a safety net for at-risk students. My students and I refined the curriculum of the class over time. The content was our lives. As we delved into topics of communication skill-building, anger management, conflict resolution, prejudice and discrimination, healthy relationships, and safer sexual decision making, we shared the experiences of our lives that constructed our self-images.

Students were standing in line to attend this class. The classes were overloaded, with standing (or sitting on file cabinet) room only. Every class was an open adventure, as we shared who we thought we were and how we might have arrived there. It was a puzzle that fascinated us, and we sought with much humor to find the solution. What we found was that we didn't have any answers for our mysteries, but we did have tremendous love for each other, and that seemed to be the medicine we needed.

At the same time, I started my private practice. Clients with mental disorders abounded. I worked with clients on issues of depression, anxiety, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, personality disorders, family systems work, and couples therapy. At first I worked very intuitively, following my gut instincts, seeing auras around clients' heads, following my inner knowing in the healing of fragments of personality-selves by incorporating beautiful sequences of guided imagery that clients asked to have recorded and subsequently enjoyed at home very often. The balance of my creative right brain with the analytical theoretical left brain supported healing therapy for my clients.

With the advent of managed care and fewer authorized sessions from the insurance companies, my therapeutic stance changed to meet the times. The left brain was the focus, with outcome-based goals having to be achieved in as few as three sessions. Setting my intentions, a number of openly spiritually based clients without managed care plans appeared at my door. My inner guidance was invited to participate in the sessions, and we returned to the balance of right brain/left brain therapy.

I began to interact with my clients on an energy level. I could sit with them and journey with them on what might be described as a shamanic level. I could sense what they were feeling and "see" into the picture they were sharing. I could have finished their sentences, but I didn't, at least not frequently. I was able to go into their pictures and assist them in healing the inner child fragments that were stuck out in the frozen energy of the trauma. I assisted by modeling and sometimes speaking for the nurturing adult ego state that had not been adequately developed in the client. Fostering such nurturance through guided imagery provided an experiential model for the client.

This intuitive type of data collection was one of the sources of my own healing. In 1986, I experienced a spontaneous healing of a little girl fragment of myself while meditating in my room. I have continued this process over the years, continually increasing my awareness of these ego states and integrating each one into wholeness.

An experience that I forever hold in my heart and that affects all that is the unique self that I encounter within and without was a burning touch of love to my heart in a meditation. Words do not express the feeling of unconditional love. I only know that I am that, and I experience myself, others, and life more deeply because of that sensation. It is the lens through which I interpret meaning in my world.

Among the various data collection methods that I used for assembling the focal points of this dissertation project are the following:

My Own Life

I have been preparing for this dissertation my entire life. As a child I knew somehow, through all the drama of growing up, that I was doing what I was supposed to be doing. Even though I compared myself to others and their lives (and mine seemed rather bizarre at times), I had some inner faith that I was on a path to somewhere. At my greatest times of doubt, the higher vibrations of Spirit flowed in to show me the way. When important people in my life rejected me, and I shook with fear, underneath it all was a feeling of connection. To what, I had no idea, but somehow, I knew.

I see now in retrospect that all my experiences were created not only to help me but also to be utilized in my work so that I could resonate with empathy and knowledge about that path with others.

My Inner Guidance

My ability to automatic write and to receive information in ways of clairaudience has been one of the main data collection systems for this research. Certain dreams have also been important in the garnering of information. Hearing the support of my guides and receiving information from talented intuitives proved to be a very significant avenue of data collection. I was able to examine each initiation of my development as to its significance and meaning. I was given, and continue to be given, love and unconditional support as I fell in the mud time and again, struggling to clean myself off and get back on the path.

My health has also been a significant signpost as to which way to proceed. Over time I have become incredibly sensitive to my personal inner environment as well as the physical outer environment. Whenever I begin to stray off the path, heading in a direction by making choices that reflect fear of almost any degree, I will experience some form of a health issue.

Professional Research and Training

All my years of training in the counseling field and spiritual psychology have contributed to this heuristic research project. I read with a passion, not knowing why I was so driven to understand something that I couldn't name. I ingested each knowing, chewing it thoroughly and digesting whatever I was ready to integrate. Sometimes I would circle around the information, holding it within me but not connecting with it, coming back years later and finally understanding the sense of the material. The areas that I explored in the process of writing this dissertation include:

The concept of reincarnation, karma, and the interlife

The psychologies of childhood trauma

The psychology of addiction

Transpersonal, archetypal, and spiritual psychology

Multi-sensory capabilities of authentic power

The context of the soul in spiritual approaches to psychology

Chakra archetypes and their relationship to connection with the soul

My Counseling Practices

The career I sought was one that I was drawn to out of the quest for an answer to the meaning of my life. This vocational choice brought me into the realm of others who had experienced similar events in their lives. It was here that I could be of service because I was in known territory. My students and clients brought stories of abuse, addiction, separation, victim mentality, co-dependency, anger, depression, anxiety, and grief and loss, among others.

My techniques were gleaned from my professional training and my personal path of healing. My students and clients were willing participants in a journey of our own discovery. They shared their discoveries as we explored the process of healing into wholeness. As more and more spiritually attuned clients appeared in my office, I was able to explore the balancing of the chakra system with them, using Schema therapy with mindfulness practice and EMDR as we invited the connection to align personality-selves with soul purposes.

Feedback from the clients occurred on a daily basis and helped to refine the imageries used to integrate the fragments into a system desiring wholeness. Each part became more than the whole as clients suggested books and reinforced concepts that worked for them. One focal point expanded into numerous others as we continued to explore the mysteries of their lives. Over time we realized that each life was a director of their unique path. There was no answer or master teacher or solution to the puzzle; it was

their own process that provided the guideposts to their journey. It was the soul communicating to the personality.

Discussions With Friends and Other Therapists

I have participated in peer supervision groups and clinical supervision for more than a decade. During these sessions I have had the most gratifying experiences in discussing cases related to client support, both offering thoughts and being the recipient of excellent and helpful direction and encouragement. Sometimes my perspective was clearly changed in favor of new information, and sometimes I came away with a renewed sense of confidence in my own problem-solving abilities.

My collection of friends shares various degrees of the same intense passion I have for exploring the spiritual realms and the mystery of life. I am indebted to our endless conversations on walks, over tea, by phone, emails, and at other times, all of which have been challenging to my thinking processes and confirming of my progress.

Organizational Schemes for Data Synthesis

I would like to describe an effective organizational scheme for compiling my data, but that is not the case. Utter confusion dominated my attempts to organize all the seemingly disparate but highly interconnected parts of this dissertation. My only solution was to sit in it and learn to tolerate the confusion. This approach produced great fear at first but as time went by, I could breathe my way through it. Then I became open to the challenge of letting it find its way to become a working system. Not letting this situation be perceived as a failure, I resolved to explore each idea at synthesizing the data, flow into its beingness. Each attempt was a learning experience as it was incorporated into the next step.

I asked for guidance to write and the trust to let it flow from my fingertips. At times when I circled around in fear, the writing would stop or proceed in halting steps. As I meditated into relaxation, the writing flowed from one passage of experience to a sequence of healing processes. Sometimes I had no idea what was coming next or how it would be said. I learned a tremendous amount about “allowing” during that writing experience. I formed a closer connection and trust with my inner guidance. I am certain that further forays into the writing world will be less chaotic and more “in the flow” from this expanding experience.

In a sense, this experience of organizing and writing was a microcosm of the healing process. All the qualities of recognizing and connecting with the soul in the healing of trauma are present: patience, trust, allowing, mindfulness, surrender, nurturance, acceptance, and forgiveness.

Summary

This heuristic journey of dissertation research in answering the question “what is the soul’s role in trauma resolution?” has brought me, personally, to a much deeper relationship with my own soul. It has been an empowering experience because I was encouraged to find my own way, using my own journey with all of its thoughts and feelings. Tacit knowing, intuitive knowing, focusing, and an immense amount of indwelling using my internal frame of reference all contributed to an ever-expanding answer to my question.

Not feeling restricted in my approach, methodologies, data collection and synthesis by using the heuristic approach, avenues of exploration that would have been restricted in

other venues expanded into areas that had not previously been considered with connections that were unexpected.

As much as I have been encouraged and supported through this process by all of the teachers to whom I have been exposed, I am hopeful that my research findings of this experiential heuristic journey will be helpful in some way to those stepping upon the path that spirals through our lives.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Crossing The Line

At the twilight of our lives, we will be judged on love only.

Saint John of the Cross

Stopping in the tracks of his own light, he marveled at the numbers of souls who were crossing over at just that present moment. Some were floating slowly, some were flying, some were running, some were walking with heads up and some with heads down, and then there were some who were crawling, inch by inch, to the finish line. The myriad flashing neon lights on the Transporting Board announced the arrival of each soul from the planet Earth. A brilliant flash of light resounded throughout the Heavens as each soul crossed over. All souls in the Heavens welcomed each returning soul with telepathic thoughts of unconditional joy and healing.

A quick glance at the Transporting Board and he could see where each and every one of his soul group members were at any given moment. He watched as each light continually blinked into shades of different colors, indicating changes in their consciousness. As each personality made choices in the present moment with compassion and love for themselves and others, their inner light shone a brighter, clearer light. Likewise, choices based in fear, attachment to the past, expectations of the present, a need to control, or a feeling of unworthiness elicited the consequence of a light less

bright. Scanning the Board he found the light that he was intent upon finding; there she was. He was very excited. The process of her dying was happening right now.

Actually, she wasn't really dying, because birth and death were simply changes in awareness. Dying on Earth just meant losing consciousness of the physical body and all its sensations. An Earthly birth meant losing consciousness of the awareness of the soul and the spiritual source of Being and learning the lessons to reconnect with that deep inner sense of Being. Her physical body on Earth was dying into a birth into Heaven. She was coming Home.

Not knowing what had caused her demise on Earth, whether illness, old age, accident, or violence, he could see that her soul was in the process of being liberated from the physical being that was her body. As it unfolded from the cramped container of that body, her soul expanded into an explosion of joy. As a droplet from the unlimited sea of spirit, her dear soul had spent its entire lifetime on Earth yearning to reunite with the blissful Cosmic Consciousness of All That Is. And now with lights surrounding it, the soul was being guided back to its Source.

The lights reflected in his eyes as he stood in a trance, watching the souls approaching the crossing line, orienting themselves to their Homecoming in Heaven. Some souls were joyfully gliding into Heaven as though they had hit a home run of a life back on Earth, embracing loved ones from all their previous lifetimes in utter joy of release.

Their energy was brilliant, colors spreading far in all directions. One just wanted to stand near them because it felt so good. His heart celebrated with them as they began planning together their celebrations of lessons learned through the challenging lessons of

planet Earth. His Homecoming would be like that, too. He just knew it. Along with the elation of meeting his fellow soul member, curiosity had pulled him to the Crossings. He had been drawn here to remember what it was like to return Home after being a student of the Earth school. The time of his departure to Earth was drawing near.

Those souls who were struggling on their return to Heaven had suffered. Their companion egos had believed in suffering and so it was. Through lives in earthly bodies, karma was continually being balanced; choices and consequences determining how karma would manifest in each human life. So many of his lives had been lived unconsciously creating karma. Other lives had been devoted to awakening his connection with his inner Being and, thereby, resolving and balancing his karma. It wasn't really all that difficult, was it? His ego just had to remember who he really was when he was on Earth.

But who was he on Earth? He was the soul that had incarnated into a human body. His purpose was to inhale the idea of dualism, that he and God were separate and breathe out the realization of the wholeness of his Being. The loving energy one might call God was always within him, never needing to be separate as something not quite as worthy as God might be.

But the ego or personality-self was not interested in the presence of the soul. It wanted what it wanted, and it wanted to survive. It wanted to enjoy the pleasures and sensations of Earth. His soul longed for the ego to wake up to the presence of the soul and to work toward the same goal: to be fully responsible and conscious of its true Self when living the Earthly life.

But in reality, he kept falling asleep at the wheel of his own life, thinking that he alone was in charge. His mind was on deck directing all traffic to keep him safe. Forgetting that he was a spark of the universal essence of Love, he would spend most of his time and energy trying to control all aspects of his life. This kept him so busy on so many levels that despite a deep emptiness gnawing inside, he kept on attempting to find happiness around him. This looking outward enlarged his mind and shriveled his heart. But this time would be different. He would answer the question of whether the ego or the soul would be driving his car as he motored through this next lifetime and allow his soul to blossom to full strength.

Turning to view another soul crossing over, his heart bubbled up with love. Directing his heart energy in a focused beam, he saw a ball of fragmented energy limping across the finish line. This soul was seriously wounded from severe neglect in this past lifetime. The human being who had contained this soul had chosen options of fear rather than love and had contorted the perfect soul into the image of the ego rather than the heart. It was a painful sight to behold.

Sending a continuous stream of healing love, he and others extended their light energy to the one in need. The skilled Healers of Recovery Transformation maneuvered their healing energies through the silent crowd of onlookers, reaching out to assist this exhausted soul as it struggled to reform its own unique energy. The Healers were working hard on the transformation process. Their telepathic thoughts created cells of a cocoon-like material that enveloped the struggling soul, soothing and filling the numerous voids of energy with the illumination and vibration of a rainbow of colors.

Ambulances transported the healing souls to the Remedial Transformation Centers. Here, filmy cocoons of a silky-like material were suspended in long rows, immersed in the healing atmosphere and rocked with the medicinal sounds of melodic healing tones, naturally attuned to the blissful nature of higher consciousness. As each soul recovered into its full potential of pure essence and left the healing grounds, another soul released from Earth fell into the open arms of the Healers. All was well.

Standing under the psychedelic skies of Heaven, he never grew accustomed to the beauty of Paradise. Deep shades of every color imaginable danced as they moved in rhythm across the sky to the music of the spheres. The cosmic consciousness held forth in a mesmerizing symphony of splendor. Stopping to smell the flowers, he noticed the petals and leaves undulating in waves of changing color and perfume, transmitting particular healing energies to whatever soul might be passing by.

The sidewalks moved as though surfaced with a glistening watery cover that could float a soul on its way to whatever destination it desired. In the background, oceans released a cadence of waves bringing hues of vibrant rainbows cascading in upon one another. The palette of the range of all possible colors permeated all creations of Heaven. The various vibrations of energy curatives worked to soothe each soul into healing balance after its particular sojourn into different parts of the Universe.

Suddenly, he sensed the energy of a light vibration running straight towards him. It was so excited that it moved right on through him. Bending over with laughter, the two souls collapsed into each other's arms on the soft lawn on Heaven. As they rolled on the multi-colored grass, other soul members of their group came to join them. Guides and angels, who had surrounded this newly arrived soul every moment during her lessons on

Earth, sending her steady streams of messages of love and encouragement, materialized and glided into the crowd.

As her guides surrounded her, she gathered them up in a huge hug of rolling laughter. “Do I need to pay you extra for helping me with that life experience? It must have been quite a challenge to try to get through to me time after time after time! Can you believe some of the choices I made in that life? No, I imagine you can’t! I still am amazed!! I am so thankful to you for always letting me know you were with me even though I couldn’t accept it at times. My gratitude for your help in getting through this one is beyond words!” She had tears in her eyes for the depth of their love for her.

They answered with an outpouring of pink light that surrounded her with unconditional love that knew no lower vibration of judgment at all. They had loved her for eternity as she did them.

The entire group, so full of love for each other, settled into a circle under a giant tree which bowed to them and gently spread its branches around them as they began finding places to sit around this newly arrived soul. As a soul group they had spent very many lifetimes together, not only on Earth but on other planets and in other dimensions as well. They had each assumed a different role to play for the growth of each other. It was not always pretty, that was for certain, but they knew in their hearts it was always for their highest good.

Sometimes they would design lifetimes together with very close relationships from which they could learn. At times one would play the mother, another soul would relish the role of the father, and then change into the role of a child in the next lifetime. It was an ever-changing drama to be played out on the stage of Earth.

Their goal was to learn to access the deep love and compassion that resided within each one and express that higher level of consciousness for each other, their world, and for their individual soul. The lesson was always designed with much love whether it appeared in the form of a deeply challenging relationship or a loving nurturing one. Each lifetime was an opportunity to dig at the corners of the blocks of fear to free the soul journeying within the physical, Earthly body. No matter what, compassion and love became the light to lead the way to healing in every circumstance.

The group members were full of questions as the group relaxed with the joy of seeing their dear friend.

“Let me begin by reminding us that a life on Earth is said to be worth forty lives in other dimensions,” she began with a smile. “As you all well know, fear is a strong current vibration on Earth and it resonates strongly!”

The group nodded in agreement. Yes, how well they knew! They had each worked with great care in designing their lives on Earth. Prepared in tandem with the Elders of the Council, the Angels, and their own personal guides, the Soul Contract was specifically designed to achieve one or several steps on the evolutionary ladder to self-realization. Each Soul Contract was specifically designed for each individual soul working with the personality-self to join together. Those souls who had chosen the Earth School for guiding the mind in releasing control and learning the steps to the opening of the heart and freedom of the soul, exhibited tremendous courage for attending class. For that, there was no doubt.

The temptations to ignore connection to soul and Spirit were legend. Anything one could think of to delay one’s progress on the path could be had on Earth. It was the

ultimate in candy stores of instant gratification. Substances to alter states of consciousness, foods that melted in one's mouth, sexual pleasures that mesmerized one's senses, gadgets and things and places and possibilities of possessions could wile away the hours with no end in sight.

The ego found a layer of security in these occupations; the heart felt a boomeranging emptiness that could be dulled only with more of the same. The delight of the human being feverishly enjoying its senses was the moral of many a story passed on through generations. Attachment to things outside of itself was a preoccupation that human beings were not easily willing to release.

“So, what was the primary lesson of your soul contract in this past lifetime?” asked a member of the group.

“I decided with my guides that it was time to release control and surrender to my soul,” she said with her eyes wide open. “My human ego was so strong, and it defiantly wanted its way in the world. Protecting my humanness was its goal, using fear as its early warning system, continually on the lookout for problems on the horizon. In every moment there was a choice of entertaining the thoughts of fear or choosing the higher vibrations of love and compassion. I must say fear held my soul hostage for quite some time. I wanted my soul to be the driver of my life and my ego to get out of the driver's seat. It was quite a fight, but the quiet whispering vibrations of love from my soul eased my ego's tight grip on the steering wheel.”

The group assented in unison. They knew that experience well. “What body did you choose to use in this incarnation?” queried a fellow soul.

“I chose a body that was able to withstand abuse. I was exploring the mind-body-spirit connection, and I could deeply experience the depth of fearful thoughts and their repercussions, physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. I also chose one that had a propensity for addictions, so that whenever I sought the answers outside of myself rather than turning to my inner knowing, I experienced an overwhelming need to find something or someone to give me solace. This created all kinds of challenges to get onto the path and stay there!” she said with a big sigh.

“And, I set it up so that whenever I was off the path of self-realization for very long, my physical body would get ill. Talk about getting one’s attention!! I must say that being sick can be an amazing wake-up call to remember the false security of my personality-self. I also chose a body with a personality that could laugh at itself and with others. That was a life-saver so many times,” she chuckled.

“The teachers in my life were varied and powerful. People, events, and circumstances were all poised to remind me that I was just there for the classes and that all I needed was always right inside me, whispering to me to pay attention. I just didn’t listen sometimes, and so often I fell right in the earthly mud and believed that it was all real. I kept forgetting who I really am . . .over and over and over. It seemed as though there would be no end to my falling asleep and having myself pinched awake by the Universe calling to remind me to remember. It wasn’t very pretty or graceful!”

Her goal for this lifetime had been to stand lovingly in her own power as she had learned to forgive herself and others for the transgressions of the ego energy represented in their earthly personality-selves. Her human personality would be challenged to release attachment to persons and circumstances external to the soul. That meant that her life’s

lessons would present her with temptations to avoid connecting with her authentic self. These lessons would repeatedly give her the choice of responding with love or reacting and contracting in fear, listening to the ego or bowing in surrender to the soul.

Her soul wanted to bring her into a state of acceptance; only in that way could she experience her inner Beingness. She had experienced many lifetimes of giving away the power of her unique self to things and people outside of herself in order to get approval, control, and security.

There had been times when she didn't stand up for herself, say what she really thought, set boundaries, and care for herself in a nurturing way instead of looking for others to do it for her. There were times when she built walls to protect herself from the vulnerability of pain and judgment. All the fearful choices were made to protect what she feared so greatly from others; the reflection in their eyes of her defectiveness, and then the need to abandon her.

She and her guides had designed this incarnation to set up just that scenario, the reflection of defectiveness and abandonment. She would experience the rejection and abandonment of those closest to her. Loss after traumatic loss would bring her to her knees to face what she had continually denied; she was love itself and all she needed to love herself was deep inside. If she could realize and remember who she really was as the larger Self, the smaller self would release the fear of control and move into alignment with the soul. Would she, could she?

Can I Remember?

You are influenced by the actions of others so forget what your heart once knew.

Kabir

“Speaking of which, it is time for your review!” laughed one of her guides as several luminous entities materialized in front of her. Her fellow travelers smiled as they remembered what would be happening next.

“Is it okay if my soul group comes with me for the review?” she asked her hard-working guides. “Of course, we welcome the learning for all, if that is your choice!” the guides responded as the group visualized themselves in the Scanning Room and relocated quickly by thought projection.

After the initial greeting at the Cross Over, each soul is welcomed into the life-scanning area for evaluation. The guides for this particular incarnation settled in front of a screen which projected scenes of the current lifetime for review. Every thought and action of the human being was examined for its ability to answer the one question, the only evaluative question that would ever be asked, “How well did you love?”

This question was answered by feeling the consequence of one’s behavior while standing in the shoes of those affected. Every word and action exhibited in the current incarnation was experienced by the sender from the experience of the person receiving it. It was a holographic experience of being both the sender and the receiver all at once.

For the personality-self being reviewed, there was no need to feel threatened or any form of fear. The entire process, the entire vibration of Heaven, including this review, was that of assisting with growth in a high vibration of nurturing and caring love.

Self-judgment and judgment by others was a quality that was restricted to the schools of other dimensions; it did not exist in Heaven.

Surrounding each other with light and love, the group gathered in a circle and prepared to see how their loved one answered the question that was perennially asked of all those returning from Earth, how well did she love and accept not only the externals that surrounded her but also the essence of herself?

Telepathically, the group tapped into the scenario just before she departed for earth. They found her in the Hall of Records. The illuminated lights of many souls were bent over the tables with the intense energy of studying the Books of Life. Small soul groups were reviewing pages upon pages of lives, critiquing the choices and consequences of each lesson. The scenes on the pages moved with action and delivered a clear dialogue of conversations of each life, capturing the attentions of each member of the group. Passionately searching for choices that reflected the soul's purpose in each lifetime, each group member pondered the possibilities for new lifetimes.

Asking by thought for her own Book of Life to appear, a large white manuscript floated down onto the table in front of her. As the pages fluttered by, her eyes focused steadily on the moving characters in the play of her lifetimes. With her guides she reviewed and examined every moment of her many lives being experienced in the present moment by sparks of her soul in synchronicity.

The dialogue echoed in her mind by telepathy, the video cameos reminding her of the great teachings she had experienced in previous lives. Energies who had loved her greatly had played teaching roles, nurturing as well as painful roles for each lifetime, urging her into remembering that she was not her story. She was a spark of the eternal

essence that unified all beings. Her goal was to remember to release all attachments to reveal that consciousness of joy.

She had a choice, in each moment, as to how she would respond to these times. She was able to experience a choice because her evolving awareness enabled her to see the illusion. Her choices included being the victim and feeling like something was being done to her, or accepting the experience and looking for the lesson in gratitude. That could be a tall order. Her personality tended to like the victim role because she could blame others, not take responsibility, and even feel a little self-righteous. She had free will in this lifetime, how would she use it? “Well, we will see,” the young woman sighed. The script was ready, was she?

With her script of the next life story in hand, she appeared at the Ring of Possible Lives Theater. She was surrounded with a holographic display of the life that she had chosen along with numerous possible alternatives. Watching as the scenes unfolded, she saw her teachers playing the parts that her soul had directed. She saw the periods of happiness interspersed with periods of challenge. She saw loss and betrayal. She saw trauma and sadness. Each was a call from her soul to remember who she really was. She saw the opportunities for her to grow on her soul’s path.

Every personality-fragment was an essential part of her process of realizing her true essence. Each fragment contained a shadow side of her personality that was in need of healing. A need for approval, a fear of abandonment, not feeling good enough, those fears and neediness brought out her fixation on relationships to sustain her, fear and self-judgment that would supposedly protect her, addictions that would numb her.

It wasn't an easy life; it would take courage to find her way. Her guides and teachers had written in tremendous support for her, in ways that she might recognize if she was looking. The messages of love were everywhere. If she could but see the "gift" in every so-called problem, conflict or incoming hits of heaven, there was a clear message there for her. A hit of heaven was the healing assistance that was always available to her. It was up to her to learn to be open to trust that hit of heaven and to not don protective gear and run.

Each soul designed the Soul Contract specifically for the soul's growth through her/his Earth personality. Each soul was connected to all others and responsible to her/himself for their own learning. Each life had a theme of lessons to be learned. None was better or worse than another. All experiences were needed equally. Hopefully, this time she would learn that her life was a specially constructed gift and to stop judging herself and others' choices.

She knew they would speak to her in her dreams; everything she needed would be given to her, whether it could be heard from someone's lips, observed in another's behavior, seen in a movie, or read in a book. Perhaps a scene from a movie would remind her; perhaps a quieting hike in the woods would bring forth a message. Animals could remind her; each one brought a message from which she could choose to grow.

Looking to see what crossed her path would help her. A red light warning would be the emotional charge that could be evoked by someone else's behavior. That was a direct mirror to her own internal process. And, every night when she laid her head down to rest, her soul would step away from the body and rejoin her group for the soul teachings in the higher realms of consciousness. She could do this. This script was perfect for her journey.

Taking a deep breath, she thought herself out onto the grounds of the surrounding buildings. Joining the closest circle of souls, she began to dance with the other illumined lights. Swirling energies emitted beautiful, brilliant colors, flowing up and down the color scale with intensities of shades and lighting. Patterns surged together in connection, and shifted into individual gushes with a psychedelic rhythm that produced images of their lives on Earth.

Animals of all shapes and sizes, symphonies of sunrises and sunsets, snow-capped mountains, long stretches of white beaches with blue water lapping on distant shores, famous buildings and well-loved art, soulful music and all things treasured on Earth appeared one after another. Each symbol held a specialness and a remembrance of each member's life on this amazing planet. Their connection with each other and with their Source strengthened as their lights shone more intensely. There was much love in their hearts for memories on Earth. Soon they would be adding one more. Excitement filled her soul as her light pulsated with a brilliant intensity. She could hardly wait to get there and get started.

Making The Plan

One who is strong finds out the direction in which God is going and goes that way too.

Henry Ward Beecher

She broke into a lively dance as she was running down the path. Twisting and turning with joy, she held tightly onto the translucent globe of dazzling neon-colored lights that darted and bounced off the inside glass surface in chaotic patterns. It looked like her hand was filled with a fluorescent rainbow that had been smacked by lightning. Reds, oranges, yellows, greens, blues, indigos, and brilliant violets bolts of electricity

moved in a powerfully silent dance within the globe as she noisily hopped and skipped down the path in complete and utter joy. In her mind she saw her dear friends, her soul group for so many lives, coming to share in the excitement; and sure enough, there they stood right in front of her.

As they held their own globes, alive with the rainbow dancing lights in their hands, soft white and gold light emanated from each of them. Upon first glance, the globes appeared to be alike; a closer look, however, revealed that each ball was unique in what looked to be such a chaotic pattern but was actually a well-structured soul contract. They held their precious globes out to show each other. “Oooohs” and “aaaaahs” mixed with delightful appreciation of the hard work that had gone into the production of each globe.

This pulsating orb of colored lights represented a sacred contract between the individual and the soul. The energy manifested within was a map of experiences, relationships, physical characteristics of the body, and personality traits that were specifically designed for that particular person based on past lives in all of the dimensions of experience.

The element of time on earth created the concept of past lives, but in Heaven time, all lives were happening simultaneously. If she looked at the palm of her hand with her fingers stretched out, each finger represented a life occurring in present time. Whatever choices she made in this lifetime would affect all others, past and future, so to speak.

The intention and vibration of this lifetime’s divine contract was to assist each person on the journey to the recognition of the Divine Energy within themselves. It was a remembrance of that eternal connection of Being, a perfect spark of the most loving universal consciousness.

The building of each sphere had required an intense series of research sessions and consultations. Now she was ready to present the contract contained in the sphere to the Council of the Elders. She had worked with her guides and soul group members, continually reworking the plan of adventures on Earth to achieve her goal for this lifetime.

Each prior life, in all of the dimensions, had to be reviewed thoroughly, searching for repetitive patterns of blockage to the Flow of the Divine. Elements of remaining karmic patterns in relationships were revealed as she and her guides scanned through the lives. Consequences of her choices made in other lifetimes sought to find an energetic balance.

She saw areas in past relationships where her heart was not open in understanding and empathy to others. She saw so many times when her own heart was not open to herself. She was aware of the hurt and pain in rejection and judgment of herself and, consequently, of others. Each dancing spark of energy vibrating in the globe represented a lesson for her to learn in realizing the perfection that was her true Self.

As they curiously examined each other's globes, a feeling of courage ran through the group. All the globes were packed with colored particles zooming in all directions, filled with the many lessons of their lives. The goal was always the same: to work on some aspect of the personality so as to reduce the blockage of what already existed within them, the soul. As a group, they had a definite level of confidence that they could and would pull off the work. Not one exhibited a concern or worry; in fact, they were all excited to face the challenge on their pathway to another step toward self-realization.

Sometimes the guides would have to discourage over-achieving plans. When sitting at the table with a heart filled with love and joy, as is Heaven's way, any task seems easy to the planner. What was forgotten at the moment was the ultimate challenge of the Earth process. "The Swamp" experience worth 40 lifetimes elsewhere was awaiting them all. They paused to consider this again. Was this really a good idea? They all laughed.

The soul group's hesitancy was interrupted by angels requesting their presence in the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders was of the highest consciousness realm for the planet Earth. They had loved this planet, from its initiation into being through its developmental stages of self-realization. There was no fooling these Elders; they took very seriously their job of assisting souls into their own self-realization on Earth. Words of The Elders were highly respected, but free will allowed any individual soul to create what it wanted in order to grow.

As soul group members who intended to reunite and help each other in relationships on Earth, they were asked to present their spheres as an assemblage. The Elders were dressed in white light and sat at the large table with the Books of Life flipping open their own pages for them. Breathing in the essence of each member of the group, the Elders read the energy of the spheres. One of the Elders nodded at the young woman.

"Please tell me in your own words, what does your soul want to accomplish in this approaching lifetime?"

She had waited for what seemed like a long time to get in line for another lifetime, and she didn't want to blow this chance. She looked at her guides for help, but they just smiled.

Clearing her throat nervously, she replied. “Well, my soul would like this Earth personality to realize that life’s conflicts are gifts for her growth. She keeps going into victim mode and separating in anger from Spirit. Swimming in emotions of guilt, shame, resentment, neediness, attachment, control, inadequacy, and fear, she tries to escape her learning. She turns away from her soul and turns toward things that she thinks will make her life better. Looking for anything or anyone that will take care of her and numb her feelings, she refuses to open her heart to loving herself. She just keeps playing a game of not listening to her soul’s yearning to connect with all the parts of herself that she keeps rejecting as wrong or bad or not good enough. The soul wants to gather the personality-self fragments into healing acceptance so they can be integrated into wholeness. The soul wants to be free of the personality control and unite in self-realization of the essence of which she truly is, not the story she lives.”

She closed her eyes as she awaited the response. The elders were conferring by thought transmission. She wished she could hear what they were saying, but their vibration was too elevated for her to connect with at this time.

“And what of your choice for family in this lifetime?” the Elders inquired.

“I have joined with a mother, father, and brother who have accepted the roles of a rejecting family for me. In this way, I will be continually challenged to find the true Source of love,” she answered. “My life experiences, as well as all others, are constructed so that I am always surrounded by Divine love and existence, with many opportunities to listen for that connection.”

“We see that you have carefully written this script with adequate research in consultation with your peers and guides. We see your motivation for growth and feel

your courage. We approve your soul contract and send our deepest blessings of love and light with you. We are always here whenever you may need us. Call upon us at any time.” And with that said, a brilliant beam of light shot out from the Elders’ table and surrounded her with a beautiful translucent eggshell for protection.

She jumped for joy as each member of the group was questioned and released. Interfacing their journeys with soul group members would provide joyous support at times on Earth. They would be sharing parts of the Earth adventure with each other in ways that would benefit both. They knew that, for much of the path they would be walking, they would not remember these elaborate plans and the reasons behind the specific goals. They would fall deeply asleep.

Turning to her guides for this incarnation, she embraced the lights of great wisdom. As their energy fields touched with a deep vibration of love, she was assured that she would never be abandoned; they would always be with her through every step of her journey, wherever those choices might take them.

“We shall whisper Love’s vibration to you in every present moment,” they said tenderly. “When fear comes knocking, know we are showering you with the remembrance of your True Self. You are love and we remind you always. All is well, always.”

Packing Your Bags

“Wherever you go, go with all your heart.”

Confucius (Gold, 2002, p. 63)

It was time. Taking their spheres, they transported themselves by thought design into the Transition Building. They had said their good-byes, such as they were. Time was not an element with which to be concerned here in Heaven, so the good-byes were short

and full of encouraging affirmations. It was as if they would be back to normal in what seemed to be just a few minutes.

Holding their spheres of soul contracts for the lifetime, the group ascended the stairs of the Transition Building, accompanied by their guides. The building was a beautiful translucent dome that pulsed in waves of glowing light. The translucent building emitted a special welcoming of comfort and joy in the form of a swirling energy of sound that seemed to spin around and through them. They had been here many times before, but that didn't dim the ripples of exhilaration that ran through them.

One by one, each member of the group entered a separate room with illuminated walls made of the same pulsating light. Rainbow colors circled in the room, moving in and out of the walls themselves. Smiling attendants assisted each person to climb up on a flat table covered with puffy cushions. With a loving touch, the assistants covered each person with soft blankets and kind words.

The Divine Soul Contract contained in the electrifying globe was then lifted to the area near the top of the head, the crown chakra. The sphere began to suspend over the head under its own power and to slowly gain momentum as it revolved at increasing speed. The orb was visible as a multi-colored blur as it moved through the top of her head, the crown chakra in connection with Spirit, delivering its rainbow contents to every cell in the body as it traveled through the remaining centers of energy in her body.

She began to feel as though more and more layers of dense consciousness were being stacked on top of her, one after another. A heaviness of feeling began running through her body. She could not lift her head, her torso felt like a sack of cement, and her legs and feet would not move anymore. Her energetic body began to shrink by degrees,

but she was not afraid. She knew that she was always safe and never alone. She was familiar with all these changes as she made yet another transition to Earth. She felt her soul shifting and slipping away to inhabit a new form.

I Want My Mommy!

What is it that sustains us? We remain hopeful of giving or receiving love.
Meister Eckhart

As was customary upon one's return to Heaven from the Earthly experience, the group of souls focused their thoughts upon creating a beautiful kaleidoscope in the center of the circle. As the scope maneuvered itself into position, all eyes were focused upon the screen. It was time for the life review.

How would she answer that query of a lifetime? She couldn't fake it with wondrous tales of what she had accomplished, how much money she made, famous friends she had known. Heaven was not interested in such Earthly material. Heaven only wanted to know about the Love.

Without judgment of good or bad, strong or weak, up or down, the group's task was to study her life and her choices of fear or love so that both she and the entire group could learn from her experience. Love and understanding filtered through the hearts of all members as they readied themselves for the undertaking. Peering into the prism of mirrors, an image floated into the soul group's view. It was the vision of a baby happily floating in its mother's womb.

All hearts were filled with a remembrance of Earth mothering experiences. The most growth-producing lessons could be faced with the choice of the Earth mother, of this they were all certain. All eyes eagerly awaited the story of this new birth. Peering

into telescopes of recorded history on Earth, they saw her floating into her new tiny body with excitement about her new incarnation.

The group's hearts filled with joy as they watched their beloved friend, looking with love at her exquisite little hands and feet as she floated in her Earth mother's womb. What a wondrous creation was the human body. And this little human temple of cells and tissues and pulsating heart would grow over her lifetime into its primary purpose of seating her soul. She bowed to the ever-present creative spirit that loved her so.

Her soul energy expanded into the mother's womb with a brilliant blue and crystal light. Resting in the high vibration of her soul-connected consciousness, this little baby felt the love of the Divine pulsating through her. Speaking with her soul, the little one reassured them both that the human body and the personality of this Earth child would listen to the soul's whispers of their connection. She felt strong in knowing that her soul had chosen her life script in order to strengthen that connection in this lifetime, and she was ready. Yes, there would be temptations to forget her greater Self and to separate and go her own way, but she was eager for the quizzes that would test her commitment to her own growth.

The vibration of her human name was Anisea. This particular energy of the word matched her soul's desire for this lifetime; to learn to love and honor herself and others for her true spiritual essence more deeply. Of course, there was karma as well. The law of cause and effect was forever balancing the energy of each person's choices from many lifetimes. And Anisea was no exception. Out of soulful ignorance, her personality selves had, many times, made choices based in fear. The consequences of such choices had brought painful learning both for her and others in her life.

And so, Anisea had balancing work to do. And she was ready for it. Her deepest goal was to realize her soul's desire to return to its source, the Cosmic Consciousness, the highest vibration of blissfulness and love.

Her angels radiated love into her tiny body as she continued to explore her new environment. Anisea felt herself glow with white light emanating from her heart. She curled up in her womb of protection and fell promptly to sleep, with her Earth mother's heartbeat keeping time with her own.

Suddenly, Anisea heard voices, muffled sounds like she was swimming on the bottom of a pool. A big deep drum was beating faster and faster. Anisea felt anxiety rushing through her body. Something was wrong. People were mad and yelling. Were the people angry with her? What had she done? Good grief, she had just arrived on the scene.

Her angels watched closely as Anisea tried to move and found that she was constricted and wet. She had already had a lapse in memory, forgetting that she had just arrived on earth for another lifetime of learning. Her thumb found her mouth, and watching the angels smiling at her, she knew she was safe. The voices of anger continued to rage with the big bass drum of her mother's heart thumping.

Anisea felt the comforting energy of the angels wash over her as she remembered why she had specifically chosen this mother. In their planning sessions in Heaven, this beautiful soul had agreed to play the role of her mother in order to encourage Anisea to learn the most profound lessons about herself; lessons that revolved around learning to love herself and, therefore, others with a deeper sense of compassion.

She had spent many lifetimes circling around that connection but had made choices to keep revolving; never really touching into that deepest part of herself that experienced

the divinity of her true Self. She had fallen by degrees into the temptations of whatever the outside world had to offer. If it glittered in one way or another, she was interested. Her inner life of the soul struggled to find truth in the Earthly life; her outer self seemed to continually want instant gratification.

With serious intent, Anisea and her guides had chosen, as this lifetime's parents for her, people who were not able to fully cherish the preciousness of her true Being. They would see her as a child who was a bother at times, who caused trouble and arguing between them, a child to criticize harshly, one who would function as a projection of their own lack of love of themselves. These parents were repeating the pattern established by long generations of families before them. Anisea wanted to stop the cycle.

Joining with the loving energy of her angels beside her, Anisea began sending love outward to her mother, comforting her as she could. As though in a dense fog, she could see someone coming closer. She heard a man's voice as he bent down to hug the mother now in a pact of forgiveness. As Anisea felt the pressure of his touch, she smiled. It felt so good. Now everyone was settling down and the big bass drum of thundering heartbeats reduced its pounding to a comforting rhythm, consistent and steady.

Anisea took this time of peacefulness to explore her surroundings and her little body within the womb. Looking at her perfect little self, she was awed by its amazing dexterity and completeness. How could one not love this precious being, a direct expression of the Divine Spirit. She stretched out her legs and expanded her elbows as far as she could. Ah, that felt good. She heard a resultant cry of joy and felt a multitude of hands being placed all over the top of her. That felt even better. She smiled at her angels as she cuddled up warm and soft in her mother's most tender protection.

Every night her soul would leave her body and rise up to the higher realms of consciousness for learning. Sometimes these journeys would be experienced as dreams or flashes of scenes that she couldn't quite remember when she had awakened in the morning. These nighttime journeys to Heaven were specifically designed for each and every soul on Earth to participate in renewal sessions with gifted mentors. Each meeting was intended to assist the personality-self or ego to more fully integrate the daily lessons of life. That was a good thing, because sometimes life became overwhelmingly confusing.

As she slept, her soul left her cherished little body in the womb and ascended into the higher dimensional consciousness for her nightly learning, as was customary for souls when their bodies are sleeping on Earth. Intentionally, Anisea drew in a deep breath of the blissful vibration of the Heavenly harmony as she arrived, grounding her every step. Her angels guided her down the path leading to the illumined dome of vibrating neon-bright lights. They pointed to her reserved chair as the group teachings began.

This beginning session was devoted to the breathing in of the Divine essence to recharge the soul. Each earth personality vibrated at a dense energetic level due to the presence of many forms of fear which continually constricted the soul's energy. Inhaling deeply of the nurturing essence of the Divine, the soul resonated with the highest vibration of love, energizing and strengthening the contracted Earthly connection to its true Source. As Anisea's soul drew in each breath filled with love, her soulful light began to shine more brightly. Glancing around the group, she smiled as the lights of each soul

regenerated as though plugged into a wall socket connecting each one to the ever present ocean of Spiritual vibration. The blissful nature that was theirs was remembered.

Is It Me?

*As the world changes do not seek to perfection in that which is external.
Rather, love yourself in your perfection.*

Master Sengstan

Suddenly, she was jerked awake from her meditative revelry by heaving movements. The mother was angry again, and she was yelling at the father. For a moment Anisea she couldn't remember why she had chosen this situation with these parents. This young human could remember and see the angelic companions that were always surrounding her. Anisea could feel their energy helping to calm down her growing anxiety. Her breath felt short and shallow. A part of her felt sorry for herself; a nice soft start would have been a good thing, she thought. She could feel the flood of chemicals of rage coming through the blood channels that she and her mother shared. Oh, dear. The drum is pounding with a greater intensity.

The voices grew louder, and in some way Anisea could not explain, she had an uneasy feeling that they were talking about her. No, it was not a feeling, it was a definite knowing. These people were not sure they wanted her. They weren't ready for Anisea. She could hear that they felt that she was going to be a burden in their lives. They blamed each other for her coming into being. There wasn't enough money; they had other plans for their time. The mother didn't want to be tied down and neither did the father but what could they do now? They told other people that they couldn't wait for her to be born, but in the confines of their own home, the parents-to-be knew the truth. There wasn't any room to love this baby in the way a baby needed and wanted to be loved.

These parents were not capable of loving each other, let alone loving themselves as individuals. There was too much unresolved pain in each of these parents. They looked outside themselves for validation of who they were; they had no experience of self-realization of their perfection. They lived their lives thinking that security would come from education, jobs, marriage, and other peoples' approval.

Because these things could and would come and go and were not always within their control, fear lapped at the soles of their shoes. These parents, like so many others, danced quickly, looking over their shoulders, watching their backs. God could strike at any moment, and they could be punished. They had no time for such nonsense as looking within. They were not aware that the blissful energy of higher consciousness resonated within them and was their perfect protection, their rightful heritage of love.

Anisea's ego wanted to run and hide from the pain. It needed to feel comfort in some way, it didn't matter. The soul responded to the ego's fear. From somewhere within Anisea came a feeling of bliss that vibrated throughout her human cells. The anxiety floated away. Her body responded with a sense of calm and reassurance. Somehow she knew it was going to be all right. A deep breath surged through her and she plugged in to the blissful nature that was her birthright. And with this resurgence of energy she returned to her budding life on Earth.

Where Is My Mommy?

Each newborn has great potential: who knows the possibility of a high spiritual being, a unique spark of light blossoming into the darkness.

R. D. Laing

After she had been slapped, foot-printed, and documented as a new arrival, Anisea was wrapped in a bright pink blanket and carefully placed in a glass box in a large room

full of other new arrivals, who were variously crying, sleeping, or just staring at the ceiling in disbelief.

Anisea tried to sleep, but suddenly she was lifted up by someone in white. Maybe this whole scene was a bad dream and she was really back in Heaven. Her hopes were dashed as she could feel the energy of the mother coming close. The mother was still upset and seemed very anxious. This response did not give the baby any comfort. She wanted to be held and talked to in the cooing, soothing tones of motherhood, she said to herself.

And there they lay, mother and daughter, together but not connected. Mother was staring off into space with her thoughts swirling around her head, while the daughter was feeling a need to be attended to, fussed over, held tightly and told how precious and how loved she was. She found herself crying very softly to herself, so quietly that the mother would not know the depth of her loneliness. "This mother is not here for me; she is wrapped up within herself and her troubles. Perhaps she was hoping for someone more beautiful than I am. I am just not enough for her to be happy and to love me," she said with her heart breaking. "It will be better as I grow up. I will try harder and she will love me," she thought to herself. "Of course, that's it! Why would I choose a mother that didn't love me? That just doesn't make sense!"

She fell asleep in the nursery. The human baby girl was trying to figure out what was happening to her.

Arising from her tiny body wrapped in soft pink blankets, the baby's soul looked down into the nursery as she floated up to and through the ceiling. "Sleep well, innocent

little baby,” the soul whispered as it melted right through the physical boundaries of earth on its way to her nightly teachings in Heaven.

She sat up straight in her chair and looked around the group. Her angels radiated luminous acknowledgement of her presence. The leader was talking about trust as the topic for the day. Anisea’s soul found it difficult to concentrate at first. She felt as though she was still gathering all her energy to coalesce into one entity in the chair. Slightly dazed, she smiled at the leader in her beautiful long hair and flowing dress. Already this soul of the baby Anisea felt comforted and loved for who she was and all that she could be. The energy from this vibration of the sacred Feminine energy was flowing through the layers of consciousness of this young one’s soul. Now here was a Mother.

The Infinite Mother was talking about loving and trusting. The young one was reminded that she had chosen her Earth Mother for a reason, a very good reason. The reason was the understanding that she needed to grow up with a mother who was emotionally unavailable to her. In that way, her personality-self would have the opportunity to develop a sense of self that was strong and consistent in relationship with her inner Being over time. And that would be accomplished by learning to love herself as her True Self, honoring the Divine within her, of which she was a reflection.

Sinking back into her seat Anisea’s soul could feel the pull of the human ego regressing into a victim role of feeling sorry for herself. This ego-self seemed to enjoy the role of “poor me,” because she just kept repeating this pattern lifetime after lifetime. Hadn’t she learned this simple lesson in other lifetimes? She must have; her number of lifetimes spanned into the digits of multiplicity. Was she forever doomed to the resource room of life?

Blaming other things and people, the personality-self kept so busy externally that she forgot about looking for the answer inside of herself. Her soul knew that all things were perfect for her growth, whether the personality-self liked them or not.

The Infinite Mother lightly touched this soul's shoulder and instantly expanded her light body into the realm of self-responsibility. The blissful touch reminded her that the personality-self indeed needed more work on this process of self-love and the ability to trust herself as that which divinely resided within her.

“Trust,” the Infinite Mother continued, “is an essential first step in a human being's development. The mastery of this skill normally occurs in the first year of life. As the primary caretaker consistently provides comfort and a bonding connection with the baby, a mirror reflects back to the infant that it is loveable and deserving of having its needs met. The “Being” sense of self is validated and accepted unconditionally. A sense of hope and faith in being worthy in relationship is encouraged to grow in the developing baby. By being able to trust outside of oneself, one naturally learns to trust one's own self.”

Anisea knew this was not happening with the Earth Mother. That mother was stiff and angry. Anisea felt like a bother, with the mother's robotic routine of caring for her safety needs. There was no awareness of nurturing the child's “being” needs, because the mother had no connection with her own inner self. Anyone looking from the outside world would not realize that this little child's first stage of trust/mistrust needs was not being met. The family kept its secrets quiet, while presenting its smiling face to the neighbors.

In front of the few friends her parents had, the family looked healthy. Alone, the family's cracks bled openly. These cracks came from the core of woundedness that was passed down from generation to generation, with little healing in between. The feelings of unworthiness, fear, judgment, and distrust flowed down the family trees on both sides like water surging dangerously close during a flash flood. Each person struggled to hold her or his head above the water line, but over time, their grip lessened as they let go of the edge and fell victim to despair, closing hearts and opening up to lives of addictions of one kind or another.

The soul shifted in its chair. The Soul Contract was designed exactly as it was being played out in life on Earth. This mother had been especially chosen to assist Anisea with this spiritual lesson of self-trust and love. The soul yearned for liberation from this lives-long pattern of the ego believing that one had to be dependent and attached to others for love and nurturing, that there was nothing inside that could bring peace to the wounded heart. Perhaps the soul would now be acknowledged as the seat of higher consciousness based in love, and the ego could now rest from its frantic attempts to control all things external to the Self.

As an ending meditation for the group session, all souls were surrounded with shimmering white and gold light, like an eggshell encasing them with profound love and inner strength. Each soul immediately transmitted this energy of safety and trust to the sleeping human back on earth. "All is well" echoed through the soul as it began its transition back into the Earth body.

Silently the souls returned to the rooms where their bodies lay quietly sleeping. This soul saw her perfect little intact self, rhythmically sucking her fingers. With a deep breath

and a nod to the angel watching over her sweet baby-self, the illumined soul slipped into the dense Earth shape of the infant child.

Trying To Do It Right!

Our oars are our own responsibility as to how we choose to move forward.

English Proverb

A man who had been so smiley through the nursery window came in and picked her up very carefully. He thought she was beautiful and told her so. The mother stiffened as she heard this carrying on with the baby. He swirled Anisea around and laughed with her. She reached out a tiny perfectly formed hand and touched his cheek. He knew that he would try to be her parent because he cared about the mother. The mother told the father to put the baby down, he would tire her out. So this is my father; he is handsome and full of fun, she joyfully thought to herself. Good job on picking out a cool dad!

They all went home to live happily ever after. Well, sort of, but not really. It did look that way to the outside world driving by their little house with the white picket fence. Anisea continued to grow, despite her mother's resistance to any real relationship with her. The parents maintained their marriage of distance as well. The father seemed to stay away a great deal of the time. He worked during the day and went to school during the evening hours. Anisea was left with her mother.

It was confusing to say the least. On some days the mother would be nice and laugh; other days she would be mad at the slightest thing. When the Earth Mother cut loose, she could yell and scream for a very long time and be very scary. Sometimes Anisea would wonder why the mother was so mad at her. Anisea couldn't figure out what she did wrong all the time. It didn't seem to matter what she actually did; she was just

plain wrong. Any of her behaviors could set off the mother at any given time. The young one began to tiptoe around the house as a habit of safety.

It was so confusing, because people seemed to like her mother when they stopped to talk. But her mother didn't act the same outside the house as she did inside. It was a secret that didn't dare be told. It was a feeling that couldn't be felt. Her chest tried to hold onto her breath so no one would notice. As the anxiety would mount, her breathing would protect her by becoming ever so shallow. Looking for any escape route she could find, her eyes searched for the path, but her feet seemed anchored in concrete.

It was uncomfortable staying with the mother. The little girl could barely walk when she started running away to neighbor's houses, where she was welcomed with milk and cookies and could play with whatever she could find. Her mother began tying Anisea up with a rope to the clothesline in the front yard so that she could keep an eye on her.

This young one became very sensitive to the mother's moods. It was an effective way to live and survive. Anisea could read her mother like the proverbial book, even though she hadn't learned to read actual books yet. The slightest inflection of tone, the movement of the head, the pursing of the mouth, the dart of the dark eyes could send this young personality into a shutdown mode of being. The gravity of her mother's footsteps coming down the hallway could cause the little girl to tremble.

Anisea didn't know it yet, but this reaction to her mother would set the pattern for how she would connect in future relationships in her life. She would find herself most comfortable with those who scared her and who didn't have the ability to love her for who she truly was. It just felt right.

Her father modeled the pattern of running away from relationships, hiding in the garage and drinking away the pain. And so she would find it difficult to stand up and express her feelings, to herself or anyone else. As time went on, the parents' relationship became internalized within Anisea. She could habitually act out their imbalanced way of relating whenever life presented her with a challenge.

The soul that was Anisea would feel strangled whenever she, as the human being, became so scared. The soul wanted to dance and to sing and be free; it wanted to vibrate its feelings of love to the fullest. It wanted Anisea to remember what was real and so it would pull all of its energy together to attempt to pierce the ego's strong hold on her with its fear. Because the soul was all-loving, it could understand and empathize with the ego. At this point, the attachment to fear was the only protection that her mind knew.

The soul whispered into Anisea's ear a remembrance of her true Self. It flooded her with the energy of connection to Spirit and all that truly loves her in every moment. A wave of recognition passed over her smiling face. Of course, I do remember. This is just a dream. I am living in a dream; it is but the School of Earth and I am a temporary student of life. Who I am truly is of the universal consciousness; there is no other. I am safe and all is as it should be. I remember.

But then as the sun rose in brilliant colors the next morning, she had forgotten. Fear returned to claim its territory that was her body and mind.

Oh, no. She was being screamed at and dragged out of bed. "What was wrong with her to wet her bed all the time?" The question was being yelled at her and demanded an answer. "Right NOW!"

“I don’t know,” she pleaded. “I wish I had never had you,” screamed the mother. The unspoken had been made real. Her mother did not want her. This mother was tall and strong. She did a lot of things. She worked, kept the house, grew the garden, cooked, canned things from the garden, and drove the car. She seemed very much in charge and very good at what she did. The young one was afraid of her, but she was also very proud of her.

“So, this Earth mother doesn’t want me,” Anisea thought to herself. There was no one to talk with about this, which was just as well, as she couldn’t really form her thoughts into words to share. Tenacity seemed to be woven into her sense of self. She would make this better. The Mother was probably just upset about the sheets and stuff. She would try even harder not to pee in the night.

She began sucking her fingers again, the index and middle fingers inserted into her mouth backwards. If she sucked harder, maybe she wouldn’t pee her bed. Not only was it supremely comforting but it made a gigantically loud racket. It gave her such comfort; that is, until one time, her father who was studying, as he did every night at the kitchen table, had had enough.

He ran into the darkened room and stood like a big ugly monster yelling in the dimly lit night that he would cut her fingers off with a kitchen knife if she continued to suck one more time. Whoa, she had seen those knives and they were well up to the task of slicing off her little fingers.

She pulled her pillows up over her head and then covered her head with all the blankets on her bed. She cried softly. These parents just didn’t seem to love her, and maybe they were right, she was a bad girl and just a bother. Well, sometimes it seemed

like they did like her and other times it didn't for sure. You just never knew which way it was going to be.

She didn't trust them to take good care of her. She seemed to always being doing something that made them mad. Her mind began to entertain thoughts that perhaps it WAS her fault. She did pee. And she peed a lot. That was true. She did cause problems. She did do things that they didn't like and these parents must know what is right and what is wrong, don't they?

They seemed to be the most important players in this family. Well, they were to her. She needed them for about everything she knew. Maybe she was a bad kid. She must be a bad kid for them to be so angry. They were right. She agreed. Anisea must try harder to be good and please her very important parents. She could do it, she thought to herself as she sucked those scared fingers under two pillows and three blankets . . . very quietly.

I Gotta Go!

That which is Pure Awareness, renew me with the touch of your spiritual vibration.

Paramahansa Yogananda

During the night when the young one was wetting her bed as a matter of anxious habit, she would rise up from her wet body and transform into the dimension of All That Is. Joy filled her as her vibration lightened into the higher consciousness. Angels came to dust her with little spheres of courage. She asked for a second helping as they danced around her sprinkling love into her energy field.

Here she met with her guides and checked the Board of Possible Paths. All the lights of every human being working on Earth were illuminated on this Board. This was

the Board that telepathically informed the entire Universe how you were doing at any single moment.

The chosen paths of each individual could be seen as the trail of each brilliant light moved on its chosen journey. Some lights moved quickly, some slowly, some were stuck in potholes in the road. Some were even backing up and trying it again.

All possible paths for choices made in each present moment were shown in neon colors representing alternative paths. It was a glorious maze of lights and colors moving and changing instantaneously. A direction could be changed in each moment depending on the thoughts being created. The probability of an event or direction occurring in one's life was dependent on the perspective of the individual.

And one of the most interesting aspects of observing the movement of these lights was how one light's choice of movement affected all the other lights. They were truly all connected. There was incredible power in these choices but most human beings were not aware of the potential creative strength of their choices.

This Board could be easily checked by anyone crossing over during sleep. One could calculate the accuracy of the choices and movement in comparison to the planned contract of completed spiritual lessons. She found her own light and realized that she was right on target for her learning as she heaved a heavy sigh. It was reinforcing to know she was on track, but she felt clueless as to how to deal with these lessons. Her personality-self just seemed to be stuck in the lowest vibration of all, FEAR.

The leader of the group responded by simply emitting the most blissful, loving energy, which was instantly healing as it permeated their essences. Well, of course!!!! They were safe and loved, always loved, never abandoned, never alone. How could she

ever believe otherwise? Yes, that felt so much better. She didn't even need to share. She was remembering. It was clear what was real and what was important. Love was the healing vibration and she could choose it. At her innermost core she was the highest vibration of love not fear. She could choose to remember; the power was hers.

She was given a beautiful stone of rose quartz, shaped in the form of a comforting heart. She grasped it tightly in her hand and used it to move through the doorway back to Earth.

There Is Something Wrong With Me!

“There is always a piece of fortune in misfortune.”

Japanese proverb. (Gold, 2002, pg. 86)

Life continued with its ups and downs until one day there was a great flurry of excitement and running around. Suddenly, big, tall people, came climbing up the steps of the front porch carrying something in yellow. They went to a large basket in a room with the curtains drawn and put the yellow thing in the basket and talked in hushed, proud tones. The yellow thing was quiet and didn't seem very exciting to her. The big people left the room and she stayed to watch the basket. Nothing happened.

As she approached the basket, she stood on her tiptoes. As she extended to her full height, she reached a hand over the top because she just couldn't see. She could feel the blanket and a lump. All of a sudden she was swooped up into the glaring face of her father. He slapped her hand hard and told her to get out of that room, right now!! Her little heart was beating so fast. She ran to hide under her covers and to find those comforting fingers once again. She was just over two years old.

The yellow lump transformed into a golden, naturally curly little brother with big brown eyes. This little yellow bundle was the delight of the family. The young girl had an uneasy feeling.

Suddenly she was sitting on a papered table with her mother telling a man in white that this little girl had gotten into it by herself and she darn well knew she wasn't supposed to get near the stove. She looked at her hands and saw that they were all bandaged up in white. Now she had paws while just a minute before or so it seemed, she had her regular hands, with no fingers cut off as yet, she smilingly noted.

Her hands ached as she remembered how she had been standing in the doorway of the bedroom with her mother holding the baby brother. Her screaming words were echoing off the walls as she yelled to the little two-year old to get the bottle off the stove. She remembered being called a "lazy little pig" with a voice that was laced with hate.

The young girl saw herself running to the white vinyl chair of the dinette set and tugging it over to the big white metal stove. She got up on the chair and looked into the pan with the bottle and bubbles going up and down. It smelled hot with the steam wafting up into her scared face. She reached out and touched it and it was way too hot. She climbed back down off the chair, pushed it back to the table and ran back to the doorway.

No way was she brave enough to go into that room as she told the mother that the bottle was too hot. The words came like bullets zinging at her: "You little liar, you are a lazy little pig. Do not come back until you have that bottle!"

By now the baby was crying and the little girl would have too, except she was too scared. She ran back to the chair that she had to drag back over to the stove all over again. She scrambled back up, and it was still full of bubbles just like her toy bottle and

wand, but not the same. Again, she reached out and grabbed the bottle with her hands and somehow pulled herself down the chair to the floor. She ran to the doorway but could not hold onto the bottle anymore. She saw it hit the floor, breaking into a billion pieces with milk flowing everywhere. She hoped she was being taken to Heaven as the room went black.

Now she heard herself being blamed for burning her own hands. Anisea heard herself described as a problem child who got into things she was told not to touch. This was not Heaven. She did not say a word. She just listened as the doctor empathized with the sad story of the trials of being a mother. The little girl was beginning to get the picture. This mother really did not like her. “Maybe, maybe not” was no longer an appropriate game. Reality was dawning in the innocent corners of this Earth child’s mind.

Her angels appeared before her and encircled her with a soft, pulsating pink light. Their whispers of comfort reminded her again that she was learning lessons in the School of Earth. But what could these lessons be? Why were they so painful? As the wings of heaven wrapped around Anisea, she knew it didn’t really matter. The only thing she knew was that she was surrounded by a deeper powerful love that knew no depth and that was truly who she was. She hugged herself tightly with her big white paws of bandages.

The doctor believed her mother, and not one person asked the little girl for her opinions or feelings about the incident. It was just assumed that she did the wrong thing. The brilliant blue sapphire light of her voice lost some of its luster after that.

This dimming of her voice would form the foundation of her choices to give up her power to other people in small ways, repeated over time. Her ego self would gladly duct tape up her mouth in order to stay safe. Her soul knew better and just waited patiently.

There was no comforting, no hugging, no understanding, no apology, no love. There was no touching from the mother at all; just the constant feeling that Anisea was a problem, a stress that this mother didn't appreciate. Whether it was her fine hair which her mother hated to comb and curl, or what she said or did, it just wasn't good enough for the Mother. Anisea was carefully instructed to call her "mother." Mother made it perfectly clear that she was not be called mom, mamma, mama, or any such stupid thing, don't ever.

Having a brother was not much help. He was definitely the favorite. He was the one who was cuddled and nurtured. The many photographs, of which he was usually the subject, confirmed Anisea's feelings. As they grew up together, he seemed to be watching her a lot. This way the mother would know immediately what Anisea was up to and would proceed to find a problem with it and a chore to do. When Anisea read the story of Cinderella, she felt relieved. Someone else had this problem; it wasn't just her.

In a strange way, Anisea was not so bothered by her position in the family. She grew to understand and accept that this was her family and she could not change it. Never at a loss for a friend, Anisea spent most of her time at the homes of neighborhood kids and playing outside. From sunrise to sunset, every minute she could squeeze away from her own house, Anisea was learning to yo-yo, fly kites, jump sky-high on trampolines, roller-skate down steep hills with abandon, and swim as often as possible. Her heart found peace and nurturing outside, playing with her friends.

The loss of a family life was balanced by the love of her friends. Her childhood years were filled with large neighborhoods of busy, active kids playing together. Making forts in the woods, running restaurant businesses selling raspberries with her red cash

register, from board games to red light-green light on the lawns of the neighborhood, she was happiest with her friends. At those times when no one was available, she would put on her skates and fly down the hilly sidewalks, jumping curbs, hair flying, happy to be alive.

In the midst of the family chaos, there was a joy running through Anisea as though she was on a magical mystery tour of life. Something inside her knew this family situation was not the definition of who she was. There was something more, and the more could be found in the laughter and imagination of her childhood. Her soul smiled in its joy of freedom in those times of play. Her angels rushed to keep up with Anisea as she rushed from one discovery in life and about herself to another. Anisea was trusting life as it vibrated through her; there was no question to ask about if it was or if it wasn't, her soul sang its joy in every moment.

As time went on, Anisea could see how the natural bonding that might take place between siblings was thwarted by the mother. The brother seemed to enjoy getting Anisea in trouble and having the mother angry with his sister. The brother would start fights and then blame her, knowing full well that she had no chance for explanation. The Earth child wanted to pound the crap out of the little brother, but any movement in that direction was deflected by running straight to the mother.

The father was no help. He seemed powerless to deal with the mother. Disappearing into the bottle and the garage was his magician's trick. The father's nickname for her brother was a word of endearment. Anisea was called, "diddly." She never questioned the name. Many years later she asked him why. He said because she wasn't worth diddly

squat, as he laughed at the thought. Oh, of course, that makes sense, she thought. That was exactly how she felt around her family.

As she watched her brother being held and hugged by her parents, she began to feel the rigidity in her body growing. Muscles and posture would tense for Anisea in her house. The tension in the house was transferring to the way she felt in her body when she was with them. Her own body began to feel numb and distant. She was happy to find that state of emotional escape. She had found relief. In these young years she became adept at shutting down her feelings when she was in the house and letting them fly openly in the wind when she was with her friends or playing by herself.

That night she dreamed of the same fairy godmother that she had seen in her books. With a flowing gossamer dress that sparkled even in the darkness, the godmother folded this cherished young one into her arms and rocked her. Tears spilled over the gossamer gown as she relaxed into the beautiful, affirming words being whispered into her ear. *“You are a child of the Divine, you are precious and so very cherished.”* A smile passed over the young one as she felt herself being rocked to sleep.

Who Is The Way, The Truth, And The Light?

“Your teacher can open the door, but you must enter by yourself.”
Chinese proverb (Gold, 2002, p. 69)

The basement was a scary place. It was dark, with few windows. Frightening things could live down there and pop right out at you. Anisea always walked very carefully in that place of possible monsters and demons.

One night the mother took the daughter down to the basement to yell at her. She started screaming things like, “I wish I had never had you, you are always causing problems, and you are making my life miserable. Why can’t you be like your brother?”

You are the oldest, you should know better. I am so sorry I ever had you. I wrecked my health to give birth to you and for what? God doesn't like you because you cause trouble all the time. You had better be good or you will go to a very bad place and stay there. God keeps track of everything you think and everything you do, and he marks it down in his book. He doesn't forget. He knows who you are. God doesn't like people who do bad things, and he won't let you into Heaven. You are a bad child. I am sorry you were ever born."

Anisea stood frozen to the spot in terror. Her mind was spinning. "Everything? He knows everything? You mean he knows how much I hate you and how much I wish you would die, yes, die, right this very moment?" Her mouth was silent, but her thoughts were racing, colliding into one another.

When her mother had tired of the tirade, she climbed the stairs without giving Anisea a second look. The young girl felt the numbness working its way up her legs and into her chest. Her body felt kind of floaty.

Anisea paused to look at a banner that was hung on the wall by the stairs. It said in purple glitter, "*I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.*" "Who is?" she asked the darkness. There was no answer. It was just a sign on the wall. She so wished someone was there.

And so it was that the trance of childhood dysfunction intensified. The innocent child began to shut down as her sense of self was being diminished in the family. Her feelings, thoughts, questions, and desires were quietly put to rest. There would be no challenging the powerful patriarchal rules of no talking, feeling, or trusting in this family. It was a way of preserving the balance of power.

No one was allowed to grow beyond the degree of health reflected in these parents. One was shamed into conformity or spent a life in rebellion, compulsively fighting any bit of authority that tried to impose itself upon one. The ego would choose what was best for its safety. The soul bided its time with the utmost patience, although the space it was allowed was very contracted. The ego was working overtime to protect that which was its precious container.

She left her sleeping body and rose to float above the little girl who was Anisea. The soul loved this little one so.

As the soul that was Anisea passed into the higher dimensions of Heaven, the energy of total acceptance and unconditional love pulsated through the soul, filling it as if by osmosis. As the soul sighed a deep breath of love, its energy looked up into the beautiful dome of Heaven. From a kaleidoscope of neon clouds, rainbows droplets of warm rain fell from the skies above. Seeing her group circled on the lawn under the giant spreading branches of a tree, she used her thought formations to appear in her place in the group.

After being greeted by the other souls who were also living lives on Earth, Anisea's soul settled into the lesson. In the center of the circle was a fountain of light that poured forth white light, breaking into prisms of every color imaginable. Each soul drank from this flowing fountain in order to restore their vibrations, which had been constricted and drained by the personality-selves living life on earth. The souls hungrily drank at the fountain of light, expanding back to their full forms of droplets of Divine Being.

Anisea's soul started the discussion with a description of how Anisea back on earth was just beginning to lose touch with the core of her being. Her inherent sense of joy in

exploring the mystery that was her life was dimming ever so slightly as she began to shut her feelings down. It was not safe to feel any feelings in her house or to talk or to trust. Anisea was beginning to lose her connection and the remembrance of who she really was. As her mind is becoming filled with thoughts of “not good enough” and “I should b,” and “I should not,” her vision of Truth is becoming clouded, and it is more difficult for her to see her Angels and know that sense of joy of Being.

The other souls nodded in agreement. There was a sense of disconnection deep within them, stemming from the feelings of abandonment that the earth personalities were beginning to feel in varying degrees. The earthbound beings were beginning to believe that their earth families and earth life were all they actually were. They were beginning to forget that their true family was the connection of all Beings in Creation. The souls had infinite patience as they observed their personality-selves slowly journeying towards wholeness.

The souls sitting together in the circle knew this was all part of the plan. It was a necessary process for every personality-self to move through. As each human being experienced the previously designed lessons of their lives, choices could be made to realize the true autobiography of the Self or a different choice to remain in the delusion of earth reality. The personality ego had a choice in every moment. It could be based in fear or love.

A choice in self-realization meant a choice in releasing control of their earthly lives. It meant allowing the soul to be in the driver’s seat of their lives and that the ego would be the passenger. Most human beings drove with their ego firmly at the wheel,

gripping the controls with a defiant commitment. This felt to many people to be the safest way to travel.

But in actuality, it was a façade of protection. The ego could only think its way to safety. It was doing the best it could. Trusting was not an abundant skill in its toolbox. The ego was excellent at making decisions, formulating solutions to problems in daily life. Surrendering to the soul was a necessary step for the ego, and it really wasn't interested in losing control. Working together, the ego and the soul could walk the Earth with an open heart in service for the highest good of all on the planet. But for now, the heart was left to find its own way home.

This process of self-actualizing and finding the authentic Self took much courage, and it was a challenge that every human being would have to address at some point in some life at some time. Most humans preferred to put it off. They would dim their recognition with addictions of varying types of escape, not feeling what their soul urged them to do. But each life could be counted on to provide an opportunity to hit bottom and to crack open to the essence of their true Self.

Anisea had life lessons coming onto her horizon that would be designed to help her to see the reality of who she really was. Her soul was excited to move forward, as painful as it might seem at times. The bigger picture was to be reunited with the Creative Force, and that was truly Home. Bidding adieu to one another as they drank from the sparkling fountain of higher consciousness, they thought themselves back into each of their homes respectively.

As the soul slipped back into Anisea's body, it whispered into her ears, "We are always with you, you are truly never alone. Whenever you forget and feel that pain that comes with forgetfulness, that pain of despair and abandonment, allow yourself to use that pain as a clue to a remembrance of your own Divine support and guidance that is always, always with you. You are never alone. Fear is the illusion that creates such pain."

"Your parents are human and have elements of unhealed traits that are projected onto others, and onto you specifically. They can never fill you up with what you want. Staying dependent on them providing the love for you will keep you dependent on them for your happiness. You can and we see that you will understand the depth of that concept."

"Reach out and feel our presence beside you no matter where you are. Allow us to love you. Allow yourself to receive it. This love is what you are." Anisea murmured sleepily, "I love you, too."

Walking On Eggshells

"Iron, when heated in flames and pounded, becomes a fine sword. Worthies and sages are likewise tested by abuse."

Nichiren (Gold, 2002, p. 53)

The mother's energy filtered thickly through the house. Even if you were on her good side for the moment, you still felt nervous, because a change would come. You just never knew if she was going to fly off the handle and right into your face. Anisea's mother controlled the emotional atmosphere of the house at all times. Feelings were suffocated to death in the intense emotional turmoil that roiled through every room. There was no room to allow them space to be, to grow, to move, to change, to develop, to learn

from them. It was illegal. The mother remained on patrol at all times, to punish anyone with a feeling.

The members of the family settled into the gaseous air of the house and soon learned to fall asleep. Feelings became packed into the deep reaches of the closets of their minds, doors locked, like too many shoes in too small a space, all packed in and thrown together in a pile. It was too dangerous to open that door.

The silent child walking on eggshells became a model student at school. Such a tight rein on emotions was rewarded at school by hearing, "What a nice young girl." Anisea felt the best at school; it was a relief to be around people, large and small, who treated her with respect, as though she was worthy and adequate to join them. She felt appreciated and safe at school. No one knew what her home life was like for her. She was very good at forgetting and pretending it didn't exist. It would be a theme that would help her survive for a while.

There were times when she did wonder why. Why did she seem so different and not good enough in her family? There was a creepy little feeling that was beginning to try to enter her mind and heart. Maybe there was something wrong with her and her mother was right. Could that be true? No, it couldn't. Even if it were, whatever could she do to fix it? The thought gave her a shiver.

Anisea did instinctively know what she could do to ease that little creepy feeling from getting a foothold in her mind and heart. She would just be extra good and wonderful in all possible ways. "I will be so smart and funny and ever so nice and try at all times to be my prettiest. That will be my survival. I will make people like me and then they will stay by me and keep me safe. I will anticipate everything possible that other

people might need and I will be right there for them. They will love that and they will love me and I will feel needed by them. Other people will fill my needs the way my parents never did for me. And I will not upset them by saying anything with which they would not agree. Hey, this is sounding really good,” she smiled to herself. Her ego smiled back.

Anisea took this idea seriously and applied all her power to it. Little by little, over time, her true self and her feelings were being pushed into the background. And she pushed them back as a daily exercise. There was a part of her that understood that her parents didn't know any better. Visiting her grandparents on both sides of the family, Anisea could see that underneath the surface, no one was really being loved for their true selves. Everyone kept a part of themselves safe from the family interactions. Her parents had grown up in their own circumstances of non-acceptance, and they were just passing on what they had learned.

Chameleons survived where others might not. As her ability to blend into the colors of another perfected its process, her own vibrancy began to pale. Anisea began to lose her connection of grounding to the earth. Her angels stood by her side night and day, ready to connect to her with their love and sustenance. A great luminous light of Being vibrated at her elbow, touching her shoulder, whispering in her ear, but Anisea was so busy trying to fit into everyone's else life that she was continually forgetting to acknowledge the love surrounding her.

Continuing to grow in inches and years, Anisea found that being what other people wanted was really not so hard. You could get good at it without too much work. You just started to know and feel how you “should” respond.

Her ego was fully in the driver's seat of her life now, and her soul was quietly riding in the passenger's seat. Her soul, which knew the joy and truthful bliss of who she really was, felt the seat belt tighten around its vibrational system. That which knew no bounds, an infinite Being of bliss, perfect in its knowing, felt suddenly more constrained with the delusions of the personality-self.

Anisea was forgetting to remember who she truly was. When she looked in the mirror, she now saw her human face, sad with fearful eyes. Her connection with her Angels was disappearing. She couldn't see them, and she was forgetting that they were there to love and support her. She felt more and more alone in the world.

She was walking down the street towards her own house after spending the afternoon at her friend's home. She was looking at each house and wondering what it was like to live in this one and that one. Trying to find a home that would be better than the one she had, began to be a game of hope. As she walked farther down the sidewalk, her own house came into view. Her stomach tightened.

She knew her mother was in the kitchen cooking dinner tonight. Her brother would be right next to her, following her every footstep. Her father was off in some part of the house or garage, keeping his distance from his wife. He had given up his power to her. He did not want to cross her path either. He was afraid. Everyone was truly afraid of her to some degree.

Feeling a sick feeling in her stomach, Anisea thought about having to go inside that particular house. The tension was usually as thick as pea soup and she hated pea soup. It was heavy and thick and tasted awful. Continuing to walk toward the house, she could not believe what she was seeing.

Blinking her eyes again and again, she saw a face that looked like her mother's face flying up the street towards her. Terror seized her entire body as she paused as though hung in suspension, frozen at what she was seeing coming straight towards her. Anisea held perfectly still as the mask locked onto her face. She looked out through the eyes and still saw her house. The mask seemed to melt right into her face. What had happened just then? Did she just imagine that thing flying through the air at her? Looking around, she saw no one.

No, she knew it felt real. She felt the click of the edges as it locked onto her face. Inside she was terrified, outside she just kept walking. The angels nodded as she walked right through them. They knew the answer.

Anisea had crossed a line of disconnection with her inner Being. She believed she was on her own. Now she would try to use her wits and body to save herself. At least that is what she was beginning to believe. The Angels looked with love upon her and the suffocating soul within and about her. It had to be so; there was a life lesson to be learned.

Walking slowly, Anisea entered the house and sat down to dinner. As usual everyone ate in utter silence. No one had the courage to speak, and after a while no one even considered it. You just ate quietly and left as soon as you could. Anisea wondered how her stomach could unclench the knot and digest anything at all.

You Are Not The Boss Of Me

*“Everything has to do with loving not loving.
This night will pass”
Then we have work to do.*

Rumi (Barks, 1995, p. 47)

Anisea worked hard not to fall into the deep dark hole by trying to ignore it all. Every morning as she awakened to the new sky, there was a newness inside of her. She smiled to greet the day and somehow felt it would all be better, even though she had no clue as to how that might happen.

Her mother continued to reinforce her distaste for her daughter, letting her know at every turn that she really did wish she had never given birth to this young one. She was the fault of her mother’s depression and anger, and she should be punished for it. What she didn’t notice was that being such a avid student of life, she was learning to punish herself even more than her mother could possibly achieve.

As her years in school continued, her scholastic abilities sparkled every semester. Her friendships were many, and Anisea was always busy with one activity or another. Anisea maintained a fairly passive stance towards life while maintaining her achievements. She was following her father’s model at this point in her life. She rather idealized him; he was funny, successful, capable, and distant. She liked that kind of self-protection. She was proud of her father. His hiding from her mother was pathetic and made her feel unsafe, but he wasn’t outwardly crazy like her mother.

Her penchant for pleasing became more evident in her budding high school relationships. Her veneer was smooth and pliable as she chose boyfriends who needed to be rescued. Healthy ones just didn’t register on her horizon; Anisea looked past their boring ways to the boys who were exciting to her because they needed her.

They had problems of their own, and she was better than a Red Cross ambulance on patrol. She knew her job and did it well. Honoring the rules of a dysfunctional family, she brought the three rules of don't talk, don't feel, and don't trust to her relationships. Keeping her distance while administering aid to the suffering, she felt safe and good about herself. Anisea would have been shocked beyond belief to realize that she was trying to heal her family relationships through these romantic relationships.

Her soul looked rather choked in the energy that emanated from the personality-self of Anisea. It was a dark, dense feeling of despair that was the ego that clouded the soul's joy. The soul's light wanted to dance in its deep knowing of love and compassion and perfection in the spirit of Being. Anisea's thoughts of fear, unworthiness, and sadness were creating waves of thick energy that held the soul hostage. There could be no dancing in this body.

Every time she defined herself as not good enough, limiting her understanding and love for herself, the creative thought that she truly was, contracted into a tight ball of fear. The soul who speaks through the power of intuition, that inner knowing that resonates within, felt as though it had duct tape tightly wrapped around its mouth. It could not be heard by Anisea. Her mind was compulsively filled with thoughts designed by her ego to help her find her way through the puzzle that was called her life.

During a long night's slumber, the soul escaped from its tethered surroundings and stretched its luminous body as it ascended into Heaven. Expanding from the contracted position that it had been forced to carry in the physical body, the soul rejoiced in celebration of its liberation. Using creative thought, the soul projected itself onto the undulating waves of gold light that paved the streets through paradise. There was a

special meeting taking place for souls experiencing challenging situations with personality-ego selves on earth. And a special invitation had been issued for Anisea's soul.

Floating smoothly along the path, Anisea's soul marveled at the rainbow skies sparkling above the horizon. Flowers changed color in rhythm with her soul's creative thought patterns. It was a symphony of radiant colors responding to the soul's energy. This soul felt the vibrant energies of Heaven moving like osmosis through the empty spaces of divine consciousness of its Being.

The meeting of souls living lives of earthly incarnations was being held in the great domed theater in the courtyard. The temperature was a perfect 72 degrees, and the skies held forth in a splendor of colors more beautiful than the most brilliant aurora borealis. As the theater drew the vast array of souls into its protected domain, trees bowed deeply in honor of those souls who had chosen lives of learning upon the planet Earth.

The soul that was Anisea in this lifetime chose a seat close to the front of the theater. The theater in the round was ringed with seats rising from floor level up to the heights of the dome. The initial meditations began with beautiful sound vibrations echoing through the arena. Each soul vibrated in correspondence with the sound, changing colors in rhythm with each tone. The entire audience was a giant tidal wave of moving shades of undulating radiance.

Soul energy expanded and contracted with each wave of the sound vibration, expanding at times until the individual sparks of blissful Self were melded into one united moving mass of energy. It was breathtaking to behold but no one was looking. All were singularly present within each moment, united in Being Awareness.

In such a state of lovingness, the teachings began. A glorious mass of translucent white light materialized upon the stage. In telepathic thoughts patterns, a vision was experienced by each soul. Each soul envisioned itself as it was working in partnership with the physical earth body and the personality-self ego. Seven swirling energy centers were visible as brilliant vibration of various colors as they viewed the physical body of this incarnation. In one long ecstatic moment they saw themselves as the liberated soul energy pulsating blissfully through each center. They felt the exquisite freedom of the movement of their Divine energy moving up and down the spine.

As they themselves had moved as one energy within the theater just moments before, so did they envision themselves as moving as one energy throughout the energy center of the earthling's body, electrifying the system with absolute Joy. This flow was their destiny. It was their yearning to clear the physical body of the dense blocks that held this flow of soulful energy prisoner deeply within. The hostage of fearful thoughts created in the human mind desired most earnestly for freedom. By recognizing and realizing the Truth of its Self, the smaller ego self could release control and allow the soul its rightful place of Being in connection with All That Is and would ever be.

As though a giant prism was being passed through this gathering of light, magnificent rays of colored light broke out from the central white mass of light. Each ray spoke with a message that was transmitted instantly by thought pattern into the energy fabric of the spark of the soul.

The red ray was the first to coalesce into a spinning garnet sphere, throwing flashes of energy into the audience. Its message reverberated throughout the soul that was Anisea. In the tone of its sound, the soul saw the fearful thoughts that Anisea created

to block the flow of the soul in the lowest energy center in her body. These thoughts centered in a disconnection with the Infinite Mother. Her own earthly mother was unavailable to her for nurturance. Not because of happenstance, but according to the divine plan of evolution of her growth. Now Anisea was presented with the opportunity to dig deeply beneath her fears of survival, anxiety of trusting and caring for herself, to find her personal connection with the Infinite Mother. Her earthly mother was simply a reflection of her pattern of disconnected thoughts and feelings. This mother wasn't a monster, she was Anisea's teacher of how to connect with the creative force within her. The soul was met with a wall of fear that rejected much of the soulful movement of connection and trust with the Source of true protection.

The second ray to spin out from the prism was orange. Its message of abundance and creativity needed flow from the first ray to expand into a joy of feeling empowered with the uniqueness of the Self. The soul could feel the blockage in Anisea's thoughts about pleasure and abundance. There was a reoccurring sense that had to work harder and harder to protect herself. Struggle would pave her path to security.

Her life, which had begun with a connection with her inner Being and nurturance from the Angels, was becoming barren over time. Joy was seen as a mirage in the desert. Emotions were beginning to control her because she wouldn't acknowledge them and allow their passage through her system. Anisea's soul could barely sneak through the clutter of this energy center that in childhood has been wide open with ecstatic flow.

The bright yellow of the sun dazzled the souls in the audience. Yellow resonated with the vibration of power and confidence. Anisea had a sense of her own beautiful unique power in school and with her friends, but her creative thoughts were becoming

more negative as to her true worth. The soul felt the knot of blocked distrust and insecurity and had to contract its expanded Self, waiting patiently outside the golden door.

Emerald green beams of compassionate light activated a sound that created exhilarating surges of love throughout the theater. The soul that was Anisea remembered joyfully the years of open-hearted flow that poured from her little childhood heart. The soul had a foot in that door, but the growing pressure of unloving thoughts continually bombarded the opening. The soul wanted to push that door open with all its might, but it knew that the mind had to let go first.

A deep sapphire blue issued forth from center stage, in blazing colorful radiance. The vibration of the color blue served to open the voice of each personality-self so that the soul could shine through, speaking from the Truth of who it is. The soul that filled Anisea choked on the visualization of Anisea's physical body and the depth of her silent voice. The gateway to speaking her truth was wrapped several times over in duct tape. The soul poured the powerful blue ray into the area of Anisea's throat as she slept in her bed back on Earth. How the soul wanted to move its energy through and dance on the sounds of the True Source as it poured forth from Anisea.

The prism moved slightly to emit the most intense deep purple, and all the souls in the theatre leaned forward as though to drink mightily at a long forgotten trough. This was the source of soul intuition located within the third eye region of Anisea's forehead. Through this portal would come the voice of the soul itself. The soul's whispers could be heard when one was quiet enough to listen deeply. As a child, this eye had been open and fully functioning for Anisea. She had listened with joyous abandon, but now she was

losing her sight, becoming third-eye blind. The soul flooded this middle eye with the radiance of the deep purple, yearning to pull the lid up again for a deeper kind of connection with Anisea.

Finally, the theatre was filled with an incredible neon shade of violet. All the souls transformed into violet streams of energy. Here was the violet energy of Beingness, a deep knowingness of that which is the Source of the Self. As the personality-self ego balanced the energy swirling within each center and realized the nature of each soul's personality reality, the soul was liberated to move fluidly up and down the spine, reconnecting as a drop of rain water being drawn back into the ocean of spirit. The soul that was Anisea yearned for her ego self to make soulful choices, large and small, allowing the doors of perception to swing wide open in self-realization.

The souls were recharged with the heavenly vibration as they headed back to their respective homes and slipped into their earthly bodies. Deep sleep had crept into the young woman's room and had washed over her tired body. It takes a lot of energy not to be your authentic self, to lose connection with your own intuition and to suppress your own voice.

The Queen Of Hearts

“Adversity is the raw material of indestructible happiness. That's why, when young, you ought to experience all sorts of hardships, even at a price.”

Josei Toda (Gold, 2002, p. 33)

As a young woman, Anisea had learned to be a player of hearts. Hers was not available. She didn't let anyone close enough to hurt her. Her family had taught her well. But she wanted others' hearts to love her, and so that was a problem. Get but don't give. She wanted the power in the relationship. Using any conflict to sabotage any chances for

intimacy that could expose her, she kept her mask on to play safe. And the most hurtful of all, she could not feel compassion and love for herself.

At birth her heart had been innocent and pure, ready to love and be loved. Every cell of her little body knew she was worthy of love, both the giving and the receiving. She had felt so connected to Love and felt it everywhere.

Over time, as each hurt, large and small, registered itself within her psyche, a tiny shield kept growing around her heart. Judgment from others turned into harsh self-judgment, and self-judgment turned into shame. Shame bled into a feeling that she was just somehow wrong, not in thought but in Being. This process could lead into codependent patterning of fixing and controlling relationships that might repeat itself over and over for life and lifetimes to come.

The conditioning of the family had permeated her to a degree that she didn't fully understand. Anisea could see the consequences of her choices in life, but she had trouble connecting the dots. And the consequences were not always pretty. Her relationships seemed to be serially murdered. She was pretty sure it was their problem, not hers. But there was a lurking, foreboding feeling underneath that she couldn't understand.

Her mother said it was because she didn't believe in Jesus. Nothing good would ever come of her if she didn't believe in God, her mother's God. Some mothers were after their kids to brush their teeth after every meal. Her mother sent her idea of Jesus to clean her soul after every meal.

The Angels were concerned. "If she doesn't take responsibility for finding her own power of love for herself, then she will reach out externally to cling to something or someone to love, but it will never be enough to soothe her heart," they whispered to each

other. They saw her balancing on one leg, reaching out with one arm to get what she needed. Anisea would extend, further and further out, almost reach it, almost touch it, just a little bit more and then . . . and then her balance would fail, and she would topple right over and collapse.

The soul that was Anisea peered from its cramped space behind the heart and looked helpless to move. “I need Anisea to feel mercy and compassion for herself as well as for others. I need her to love herself from the inside out. I need her to realize that she is Love itself as she knew as a child. I need her to remember that she is connected to everything that is creative on this planet and in this universe. She is made from the elements of this earth, breathing in the same breath that billions of others have breathed. I need her to open the door to her heart so that we may flow together in joy. I need her to remember that this earth is a schoolroom for her growth in love. I so desire her to look beyond the curtain,” the soul stated in earnest.

With a grimace, the ego replied, “We don’t have time for that nonsense.”

A brilliant green radiance fell over Anisea as she slept, permeating her body and soul. Her heart drank it in big gulps. Her vision expanded to include her universal family, all those whom she loved and was loved by in all her lifetimes. She saw the beauty and wholeness of the earth planet. With a deep breath she saw her body expanding to incorporate all the mountains, trees, all creations, animals, and plants of the world. All That Is was experiencing itself through her eyes and senses. Her sense of self was no longer small and constrained to her body, her life, her mind. The Big Self had reappeared through the mist of illusion in its entire splendor.

As the door to her heart opened, if only for a moment in dreaming sleep, the soul immediately stretched out of the heart space to surround her body. It emanated its light in luminescent sparkles as it danced and flowed in space. A beautiful sound was uttered as the soul drank from the cup of freedom. Anisea sighed deeply in her sleep, smiling with a peaceful understanding.

Walking Through Walls

We begin with Love; we only learn fear when we are here.

Marianne Williamson

High school was a time of succeeding academically and falling into a hole emotionally. Anisea started to drink to help her numb her feelings. If you had asked her that at the time, she would have laughed right in your face. That reaction was only to cover her confusion, as she had no idea about what you would be talking.

Anisea liked the feeling of not feeling anything but laughing in an altered state of slow-motion consciousness. She was used to not feeling, but this had fun combined with it. Her parents had no idea. They had no idea who she was at all. They were too busy struggling with their own painful lives.

Keeping her grades up and finding a boyfriend who could drive her away from her house was her primary concern. Sneaking out of the house very quietly, she would stand on a corner waiting to be picked up by her friend and whisked away, somewhere, anywhere. Depending on a guy to save her came early in her career.

A bad day meant having to stay home. The mother was most likely on a rampage, with anger spilling over to the teenaged siblings. The younger brother was no longer treated as a favorite. The younger son was devastated and confused. He no longer understood his role and began to drift onto a similar sea of despair with Anisea.

Cinderella multiplied by two was what they felt like. They were shrieked at to get down on their knees and scrub the kitchen floor. The mother would stand over them, yelling about the terrible job they were doing. The litany of their offenses would begin again. It began with they never did anything right and led to she was so sorry that she had ever had them. It was entirely their fault. She would be perfectly happy if they hadn't been born. They said not a word and just kept scrubbing. When they were alone, the siblings didn't discuss what she said repeatedly to them. They kept their thoughts and feelings of pain to themselves.

Escape came in the form of college. On campus, Anisea found more friends and more alcohol. She was lost in classes of 500 students with television sets projecting the image of the professor miles down the lecture hall. She felt disconnected, so she disconnected herself; she stopped going to classes.

One night a girl on the floor of her dorm must have smelled the loneliness of the young earthly soul because she asked Anisea if she would be interested in accepting the Lord as her personal Savior. "Well, what the hell," she said to herself. She was becoming very desperate for a structure to hold onto for dear life. So she kneeled with this girl, and tried her very best to accept the Lord.

This other girl seemed to really feel the Lord, like he was right with her. She talked as though Jesus and she were best buddies. This girl didn't seem afraid like Anisea felt deep inside. Anisea wanted some of that. She listened very carefully and really, really asked. Nothing happened. She didn't feel any arms around her and good things being whispered in her ear. But she smiled and told the girl she did feel better. She didn't want to hurt her feelings. Jesus didn't like Anisea; her mother was right.

Another resident of the dorm had another idea to solve the problem. She jumped right out the window on the fifth floor. This action set Anisea to thinking. She discussed several plans with herself but could come up with nothing that was acceptable. She had certain criteria to uphold: no mess, just dignity in dying. Jumping was too theatrical, pills she didn't have, and she might not do that right and end up a vegetable, like the stories she had heard. Anisea thought guns and knives would hurt, and what was the point of that. She just wanted to die, not hurt herself.

That night as the young woman slept, Anisea's soul crawled out of her body and headed for Heaven. There was serious business with which to deal. The soul was heavily contorted and full of folds as it stretched out into the arms of blissful Heaven. It was limping as it crossed into the gardens of healing. Shaking itself in all its vibrating molecules, the soul was attempting to release the grip of fear that was about it.

The soul knew that Anisea's personality mind was lost in the negativity and hopelessness of her life. She was totally forgetting that she had planned this life with choices to make and responsibility to take for them. These were her lessons to learn in order to deeply love the entire Being of who she was in every moment. Anisea was lost in the depression of the role of the victim.

Angels gathered at the gate to meet the soul as it was crossing over and to accompany this beautiful energy to the healing grounds. Settling into a seat in the garden, the angels created thought patterns that could manifest a wide array of flowers whose color vibrations were immediately healing to any soul in need.

Row after row of flowers sparkled with a blinding light emanating the particular healing powers of each species. Nurturing radiated into the soul, releasing the fear and self-loathing that Anisea's ego thought would help her to stay safe. The fear was dense and sticky, but the flowers' power melted it away, molecule by molecule. Colors danced in the crystal clear atmosphere of Heaven, permeating darkness and shining the light to dissolve it. Soon the soul was breathing deeply and feeling much better.

Her beautiful Guardian Angel smiled and fanned his wings, blowing a gentle breeze in her direction. It enveloped the soul in a shining golden light from head to toe.

The breeze whispered in her ear, sending a message to the ego, "We are always with you, you are truly never alone. Whenever you forget, that pain that comes with forgetfulness, that pain of despair and abandonment, allow yourself to use that pain as a clue to a remembrance of your own divine support and guidance that is always, always with you.

You are believing that what you are living is reality. It is not. It is not who you are. You are not what you do. You are not what other people think you are. You are a child of the Universe; your true family is the Universal family. This is your school room and nothing else. You are never alone. Fear is an illusion that creates such pain. The fear of the ego holds you back. Reach out and feel our presence beside you no matter where you are. Allow us to love you. Allow yourself to receive it."

The soul that was Anisea felt its energy field expanding all around her. Looking back into the bedroom where Anisea slept, the soul tenderly drew her earthly self into her heart. She rocked the young woman and smoothed the worried lines of her forehead. "All is well, you are safe, you are always safe because you are with me," the soul whispered

softly. "And together we are with the loving presence that Always Is. There is only love in our Being. Rest in that love eternally."

Teetering Toward The Edge

Problems can be spiritually deflating-dropping us to our knees-although in the end serving as a powerful redirection of our lives.

Bernie Siegel

She talked her boyfriend into having her move with him. He wasn't really ready, but he loved her and was so kind to her that he agreed. This one told her how much he cared for her, and that was very inviting. He didn't seem to notice or care that she was so numb.

His parents didn't like her. They knew she was trouble for him. They said her eyeliner was too thick and she wasn't of their religion. She was numb on many levels, and that made for not embracing much of anything. But she tried to be part of the structure. She attended and went through the motions in church, but it just didn't seem real in her heart. There was a lot of yelling and damnation, and it just didn't seem comforting to her. She didn't know why she wanted a God, IF there really was a God to be comforting and loving, but she just did. She hadn't found him yet; he was reported missing.

With hair rollers and bags and an iron with its cord dragging behind because it just couldn't be stuffed into the bulging suitcase, she descended the steps of the airplane. She tripped on the cord, and the rollers did their best job of rolling all the way down the stairs and then in every direction possible. Watchful Alaska Native men, who had been sitting on the bench outside the small white terminal building, jumped up and caught the rollers.

They looked at her with bemused smiles as they loaded her arms with the rollers and iron cord. Their willingness to help her warmed her heart and welcomed the city girl to the Last Frontier. Here was her opportunity for a new life, and she was very excited.

They were married in a very simple ceremony in a tiny church. They both seemed rather in shock at how quickly it all happened. A local man had heard about their marriage and offered his cabin out in the bush for a honeymoon vacation. Immediately after the ceremony, they drove to the grocery store to buy supplies for the week to be spent all alone together.

She did not know how to cook other than the potato soup and blueberry muffins that she had learned in Homemaking Class in high school. He was not aware of this impending kitchen catastrophe until he saw her filling up the cart with piles of boiler bags. Kindly, he said nothing. A small plane flew over miles of tundra carrying them and their bags of plastic to serenity and the land of bears.

The Uptown Girl loved the Last Frontier. She loved the direct, down-to-earth way Alaska spoke to her. She felt so at home in the wilderness. Husband and wife fished, cooked, kissed, washed dishes in lake water, and hiked very carefully in harmony with the bears, blissfully cut off from any electrical appliance, including the phone. Ordinary bull-shit could be reduced to rabbit pellets when survival was the utmost goal. Unfortunately, she brought her own baggage stuffed full of her own brand of bull-shit, away out there in the wilderness.

Her feelings were immediately driven underground as she assumed the role of wife. She had no idea why or wherefore, she just shut down. He was always kind, saying not a word. She started picking fights, letting him know that she was not about to be pushed

around. It didn't matter that he was not interested in pushing her around, and never made the slightest attempt to do so. He was trying to love her, and she wouldn't have any of it. She picked a fight about his religion. She forcefully made the point that she wasn't about to live anywhere near his parents. She said this knowing full well that he wanted to live in the wilderness as well. He looked confused.

Fresh from the wilderness, they both went back to work. Just before she drove him to the dock, he finally got her attention. He looked at her and spoke to her in ways she had never really heard. She could see in his eyes and hear in his voice that he truly did love her. There was a sense of imploring her to believe him. Her heart felt touched as it had never been touched before. She felt her walls crumbling as she held onto him tightly. She knew she would always remember that moment.

In fact, she clung to that moment when they told her that he died. They had been married eleven days, and a safety violation at work had taken him. He was working on an oil rig out in the ocean, and it turned out that the company had violated safety regulations. Something was open when it should have been closed, and he fell through the opening and into the ocean. He had just contacted her the day before, telling her he couldn't stand to be away from her and that he wanted to trade shifts with someone to come in early.

This couldn't be happening. How could this be? Why? He was only 21 years of age, and she was barely 19. She could not comprehend what this meant. She only knew that with him dead, her body became a corpse.

She found herself outside of herself up in a corner of the ceiling. As she looked down from her perch, she saw a roomful of people with their hands outstretched on her body. The part of her that was in the bed was screaming and crying hysterically. The

people were telling her that if she didn't accept Jesus Christ as her Savior, she would never, ever, ever see her husband again. Never, ever, ever? She could hear it but she couldn't feel it.

Her doctor made a house call. She remembered thinking that it was a very big emergency for him to come to her. As he opened the door with one hand, he pulled back the covers with one swoop. He grabbed her wrist and pushed her out the door and into the car. She was saved. The car stopped at her mother's house. She was screwed. [hmmm. I thought that she was still in Alaska; is something missing?]

There was nowhere else to go. It wasn't long before her mother took the opportunity to tell her again that bad things happened to bad people. The proof was in the pudding now. You couldn't deny it. Everyone in the world could see it and her for what she was. This wouldn't have happened if you were good enough for God to love you.

The hysterical young woman vomited as she fell to her knees. She screamed at the night sky. She was angry beyond words. How dare the stars keep twinkling as though life would carry on? Her life had ended. She enunciated very clearly as she yelled up to those stars, "Fuck you, God!" There is no God; she knew that now. All the silly people wasting their time in church and praying for God to be on their side and he doesn't care how much pain you are you have. "Do you hear me? Do you hear me say I hope you rot in hell?" Anisea was ready to tell him what she thought of him after all these years.

"Fuck you, God!" She saw him as the white haired old man sitting on the ornate throne trimmed in intricate curves of pure gold. He had a big book on his lap and was poring over it. He took a moment and paused as he peered over his rimless glasses at her, his long beard trailing down his enormous chest. "Fuck me?" he asked. "I think not. It is

you who will suffer these consequences!” He smiled. “I despise you with your arrogance! Anisea cried. “How dare you take my husband? How could you take the only love I have ever known? How dare you leave me all alone? How dare you put me in such a hateful family? How dare you abandon me to such craziness and loneliness? I hate you and I hate me. It’s true. That stupid mother you gave me is right. I am not good enough for anything.” Sobbing, Anisea fell into her own puddle of tears at the foot of the one she believed controlled it all.

What Are You Doing Here?

*When life is challenging we look to find God only to see that the upheaval has
God’s hand on it.*

Hebrew Proverb

Her ego wanted her hand to stretch out with open palm and receive what was being offered in her friends’ out-stretched hands. Her soul poured energy into the body and mind, surrounding the heart with love.

“You don’t need it. It will not give you what you are seeking,” the soul said.

The ego laughed. “Of course it will. It will protect us from thinking and feeling. It will soothe the pain.”

The soul seeing beyond the instant gratification, said, “It will not last!”

The ego retorted, “Who cares . . . it will do for now.”

With a swallow of the small white pill or the beautiful blue liquid, or an inhale of the carved pipe, or the glass full of ice cubes and liquid courage, Anisea was gone. The soul sighed and contracted into the body to wait.

It was at these times she saw and felt more than she could conceive that she could be. Her heart swelled with love for all beings everywhere, and she cried for the pain of

the Earth and its inhabitants. Long dead Christmas trees, still standing in her friends' houses past January, sprouted new green branches and needles with the chemicals in her brain. Unbelievable Christmas decorations poured from the limbs. There was beauty everywhere.

And then it was gone. One minute she could look in the mirror and see her face melting into beautiful colors of the rainbow, and the next minute, or so it seemed, she was staring at her empty eyes wondering from where the next excitement would come. The soul nodded its agreement and sent her a warm pulsating blanket of comfort. She could make other choices, ones that would connect her to an eternity of peace in her heart, steady and present, lusting for nothing, filled to overflowing with love.

But now was not the time. She reinforced this idea to her friends as they handed her a tablet of LSD. These friends were surfers who worshipped the sea. God ebbed and flowed for them, but they always knew where to find one of the most beautiful synthetic manifestations of Spirit. She enjoyed the sixteen-hour excursions into an altered state of consciousness. It had been a long time since she had sat quietly watching in awe as the sun bid a colorful farewell for the day.

Gum packages looked like they were going to explode and sent her into peals of laughter. Everything was beautiful and took on such a wonderful, magical sense of life. Her senses were heightened, and flowers and trees and tiny little things like ants that she had passed by in a such a hurry in previous times suddenly became a fascinating study of God's work that could last for hours and hours. Anisea felt full of love for everything and everybody. A feeling of deep connectedness washed through her for the better part of sixteen hours several times a week.

Perhaps things were getting better, she thought. She felt happy most of the sixteen hours. One problem she didn't want to think about was how she felt during the other hours. She mostly spent that time thinking about the next time she would be in that high space of chemically altered consciousness. Time was also needed to make sure she had an adequate supply of the essentials, and so the time passed.

Her hand would stretch out and a new pill would fly directly into her mouth. They had names, but it didn't matter. When she needed energy, there was one to get her back into the race again. When it was time to rest on the sidelines, the appropriate one disappeared down her throat. She tried to find comfort in men, but they were still really little boys, just as she was still just a little girl.

She became very skinny and amphetamine-fast in a slow-motion kind of way. Feelings were so deeply buried that she had forgotten about them. She moved robotically between work, cross-topping pills through the day, and playing, hallucinating on something or other throughout the night.

She felt her energy ebbing away slowly at first, and then the cycles increased. There was no joy to be found anywhere. She was a failure; nothing she tried worked out as she planned. The wind blew right through her heart. Her mother was right after all. There was something very wrong with her. God didn't love her. God didn't even care. Oh, get over it. There is no God. You are on your own.

Looking in the mirror, she saw her mother's face. It was still locked onto hers. How would she ever pry it off? She hated herself for being so weak. There seemed to be no answer for this bad girl trying to find good.

Chocolate Covered Karma

“Even withered trees give prosperity to the mountain.”

Japanese Proverb (Gold, 2002, p. 32)

An alarm sounded in Heaven. Young woman on the ropes, and she is going down. All guides to the conference room. Looking at the Board of Possible Paths, they could see she was seriously off her path. Her light was veering off her soul’s chosen path into the deep woods of isolation and despair, and victimhood was rearing its ugly head. Her life energy was dying, and her light was dim. It was time to intervene.

The sleeping young woman was brought to the main room of the Building of Regenerative Connection. It was a beautiful illumined room without walls, set in a healing garden of herbs and flowers. Their therapeutic aroma filtered through, and around, the area of transformative healing. Her body was placed in the center of the theater on a cushioned platform. Descending theater seats were filled with Healers from all points of Heaven.

As the healers began emitting a harmonious sound of chanting, a vibrant shade of violet filled the theater, circling in swirling energy movements around and through the room. They began inhaling her fear and despair, and exhaling loving energy into her cells. The cycle of breaths increased as her body began to absorb the healing energy.

Her soul had created this lifetime of losses for her personality-self to learn how to surrender to her Authentic Self. She was here to heal the many other past lifetimes of distrust and disconnection from her true source of Being, the Divine. Her habitual thought patterns had been to believe that she was truly alone, that she, by herself, was the source of her problems. This wasn’t the only lifetime where she had trusted in the power

of other people or things as the source of her security. This was old stuff recycling, hoping for healing release.

And her way of solving the problem of being lost was pretty much always the same: money, relationships, drugs, dependency, power and control. Her soul yearned to heal these fragmented parts of herself that remained unhealed, lifetime after lifetime. Perhaps now was the time.

She woke up with a raging fever. She wasn't certain where she was. Looking around, it seemed like her bedroom, but then again it didn't. Her head felt like it had been hit with an axe; touching her head was extremely painful. The intense heat of her fever gave her a very strange feeling like she was high, but with a very strange sense of altered consciousness. She felt like time was suspended in space; nothing was moving, but she was everywhere all at the same time. She was in everything at the same time or everything was in her. She couldn't be certain.

Sensing a presence, she shifted her eyes to see what it was. Her vision became her knowing. She knew her husband was with her. Suspended out in space, he was with her. A part of her was observing herself, thinking this was strange that he could be with her. She didn't really believe in this stuff. But there was no denying he was right there.

His loving presence soothed her through every cell of her body. She drank freely of this loving presence. She wondered if she was dying. Did he come to get her? To go where? Somehow she was okay with that. It felt right to go with him. She wanted to go with him.

Vividly colorful pictures of their life together popped into her mind. She was recalling details of conversations and events that she hadn't thought of in a long while. It

seemed so real as she watched this movie reel of their life together. Love permeated every scene. She held her breath as she relived their love, moment-by-moment.

Another part of her bellowed . . . WAIT! . . . I don't really believe in this. But he is trying to tell me something. I need to hear what he is saying, please be quiet. A new picture entered her mind. Suddenly, they were walking on the beach that wasn't where they grew up; it was of a different climate with high cliffs above them. She had never seen this before. Dressed in a Victorian type of clothing, hand-in-hand they walked the beach, hugging and kissing. Her heart felt like it would burst.

The scene shifted to somewhere in South America, where they were trudging up a beautiful mountain hillside with heavy baskets on their backs. Their hair was long and gray, and their skin was tan and wrinkled, with clothing colorful and soft against their skin. She didn't know who was who, but she knew without a doubt that it was them. One was struggling on the path up the hillside and the other was lovingly helping the other up the trail. The caring between them was beautiful and timeless.

As she looked at him with a puzzled expression, he told her the tale of their love. They had been together in many lifetimes each playing the male or the female parts as envisioned by their souls. The soul sought learning in every role and every emotion possible. He showed her a scene of a lifetime where she had died early in her life and he had been heartbroken. He had gone through exactly the same range of feelings that she had just experienced. She had left him alone and crying.

So this wasn't their only lifetime together; this different multi-layered perspective of what life might be was sinking into her consciousness very slowly. He was telling her that she didn't just come into existence on the Earth and then die. Dying wasn't even the

right word. She transformed into another form and then came back again. She was like the water as it flowed down the river; it evaporated into a cloud, and then rained back down as herself onto the Earth.

He was showing her that she had ridden this Ferris wheel of lives many times before. She was seeing a kaleidoscope of lives turning from one into another right before her eyes. Observing the parade of snapshots of her lives, she could distinguish herself as a child, a mother, a father, grandparent, a healer, a judge, a thief, a sickly patient, a pauper, beautiful, disabled, royalty, deformed, all colors and races, a monk, and a whore. She watched in fascination as the pictures of herself rolled by. Her heart reached out to touch each one as they roiled through the valleys and peaks of experience.

He continued to explain what it looked like from where he sat in Heaven. “Your soul created each of these incarnations; it specifically chose your body and the particular aspects of your personality. Each choice represented an opportunity for you to release control and realize your true Self. The temperament of each personality your soul designed generated feelings such as anger, joy, fear, compassion, inclusive of the entire range of human emotions.

Every feeling that is generated in each lifetime is perfect for the soul’s learning. That means that love and loss, compassion and resentment, love and fear, caring and anger, nurturance and hate are all qualities that your soul creates for the personality-self healing into wholeness.

So when we suffered the loss of our relationship and our love, there was a reason for that. It wasn’t a random hit on you. It wasn’t because you did anything or were

anything wrong. It was your soul that wanted to learn from that experience in this lifetime.

“Well, I would like to speak to my soul,” she complained. “There must have been some other way to learn that.”

“Aha, you are thinking you know more than your soul?” he asked her.

“I still don’t know exactly what my soul is,” she replied.

“It is that part of you that is immortal, that never dies. Your personality and your body for this incarnation or lifetime will pass away but the soul resides within the eternal higher consciousness of love,” he whispered softly to her.

“You know how you like to be in charge of things, taking care of everybody and everything to make sure they are happy even though sometimes you feel resentful, unappreciated and tired of it?” he continued. Not giving her time to answer, he kept on. “That is your soul talking. It created that part of your personality so you could deeply feel what it would feel like to be a rescuer, the pain of it, so that you would heal that pattern of caretaking. Allowing others to take responsibility for what they create means that you can focus on taking responsibility for what lessons you have created for yourself.

The loss of our relationship brought you down into the depths of yourself so deeply to feel that “abandonment” so that you could realize that you are never abandoned. . . .If you feel abandoned it is because you have abandoned yourself.” No matter how disconnected the personality-self feels, your soul is always connected to the energy of love that is the glue of the universe.

While her brain was processing all of this new information at high speed, she said simply, “I am so glad that you are here. I haven’t really lost you.”

“And you are finding yourself; you are not lost either,” he smiled his beautiful smile in her direction. “You are aligning your personality with your soul.”

“So, I was working hard on my soul when I thought I was going down. Is that what you are saying, and you were a teacher for my learning?” she quizzed him.

“Yes, this earthly world is just a school for your learning. We are always united as we are a part of the whole of all that there is. We are never apart,” he spoke to her with his blue eyes twinkling. “When you wake up to the connectedness of all life, there is no separation. You are stuck with me for eternity!”

“Thank goodness,” she laughed. “But I still don’t understand why such awful things happen in life, I don’t get it.”

He was waiting for this question. “Your soul as well as all others must balance the energy that has been generated throughout all the lifetimes. There is no good or bad; it is just energy. We are not able to see the wholeness of all the lives at one time. So we can’t judge what is being healed through the interactions. Look at your relationship with your mother.”

“I would rather not,” Anisea said defiantly. “She was just plain mean and a bad mother!”

Her husband looked at her intently. “That is a judgment, and by not looking beyond your personality-self and seeing it from the aspect of the soul, karma is created. It is just cause and effect, there is no good or bad to it. Can you imagine that at some time you were in control of your mother in another lifetime and you treated her badly? Do you recognize that shadowy part of your personality that can be mean as well?” he spoke slowly as he knew he was treading on eggshells now. “Is it possible that you were

experiencing the other side of that coin in this lifetime? Can it be viewed from a nonjudgmental perspective? Can it be a soul lesson?"

She loved him and trusted him, but now he was skating on the edge. She had to think about this for awhile. But somehow in her heart she knew this was entirely possible, not that it made sense to her as yet, but possible, yes.

Remembering back to a visit to New York when she was young, she saw herself stepping carefully over a disheveled man lying passed-out, drunk on the sidewalk. A part of her was scared and another part felt such compassion for him. She had no idea how or why he ended up on that street, lying face down in his own vomit, but she remembered her heart going out to him.

"Yes, that is what I mean," said the love of her life. "You were appreciating the work of that man's soul and not questioning it. You didn't have to make him good or bad. He just was."

"Let's look at another one. Remember how the war saddened you, how you took part in the peace marches, wrote letters, spoke your truth with anyone who would listen? Your heart wanted the killing to stop, so you acted out of your heart. But you were also very angry. That anger and negativity in your thinking and speaking patterns added to the violence in the world as well.

Look at the whole process now. Can you see that the war brought important learning for an entire world? Perhaps there was more of a sense of reverence for life after that experience. When you look at it from the viewpoint of the soul's perspective, there is no judgment. There is a trust, a faith that what is is perfect for humanity's learning,

individually or globally. It just is. You may not like it, but you do learn to accept it, all of it.”

“Oh, oh, that sounds like I have work to do,” she said with a tinge of apprehension.

Smiling serenely, her husband said, “There is something I would like you to see.

Are you ready?”

“Probably not,” she replied. “But I am feeling as though I am about to learn something you think is important.”

A Lifetime Guarantee

“Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.”

Mahatma Gandhi (Gold, 2002, p.10)

Anisea and her husband watched as a scene from the Earth School curriculum appeared in front of them. It looked like a very colorful play with actors on a stage. Anisea grimaced as she saw that she was the star pupil.

Floating through the door of the classroom, she noticed the sign on the wall flashing a neon welcome to all of those who were swimming in self-hate lessons. “More like drowning,” she thought as she slid into her waiting seat. The room was packed with flickering lights of struggling energies.

Nodding to the other members of the Group, the leader acknowledged her entrance by transmitting the thought that “you are feeling like you are drowning because you actually believe that you *are* what has happened to you. You still think you are your story.”

“Yeah, what’s your point?” She muttered to herself, forgetting that all thoughts could be heard around the group. “I mean, what do you mean I think I am what has happened to me?” She smiled nicely.

“See yourself as a little girl growing up in that house. See how you were taught, see what you were taught. See how you responded to it. It was painful to see that little girl being told all those hurtful things. The little girl was cringing. The little one believed it. She didn’t question it. She couldn’t. She had to survive in this house. If she stood up and talked back, there would be more of the same and worse. So she was very quiet,” the leader continued.

“She learned to suffer and to do it well. After a while, she became suffering. It was her identity; she had to maintain it. Everywhere she looked, she looked with judgment. This hate kept her separated from who she really was. She couldn’t even touch that place of who she really was and couldn’t allow herself to believe that there was goodness in her. Self-hate grew into its own life; it became an entity of punishment for her. It wanted to be fed, salivating for more misery. It looked everywhere for something to shred. It was always ready to slam her, whether it was her looks, her abilities, her character, or whatever; anything was fair game.” The leader received nods from members of the group. Anisea just stared in disbelief.

“Do you see the energy that is self-hate operating on its own, permeating you, but do you also see that self-hate is not who you are?” Heads nodded toward the leader. They saw their little persons caught in swirls of this dark energy. It was like an overwhelming stench. If you sat in it long enough, you began to think you were the stench and

everything that caused it. There was no separation. She just wanted to lift her little girl right out of this sewer.

What she did was to send her loving energy beaming right to the little girl. Pink light enveloped the child, her vibration of fear melted into the higher frequency of love. She put her hand out to the little girl and asked if she could help. The little girl looked confused but nodded yes. Something about this feeling was good.

She told this sweet innocent child that she was an older part of her that totally understood the sadness, fear, and loneliness that she was feeling. She told her that she was from her future, and was here, now, to give her all the love and comfort that she so needed. The little one fell apart in her arms. Sobbing with relief, the innocent one welcomed the soothing words and touch.

As pink light illuminated all parts of her, the little one heard that she was neither THE problem nor A problem, as the parents had said over and over to her. She listened intently as her “future” voice reminded her that she was an innocent, perfect little soul. In trying to get the approval and love of her family, she had turned on herself.

The family had set up the conditions upon which she would be OK. She was carrying a big stick and beating herself daily so she could fit into the conditions. The problem was that the conditions were always changing, and when she thought she had one in the bag, the bag changed into a suitcase, spilling over with more and different needs to be met.

She was highly critical of herself and everyone else around her. She hated them all, but she reserved the best part of the deepest rejection for herself. She was bloody, but it didn't show on the outside. “What a beautiful smile,” people said.

The little one doubted that she wasn't the problem. "Thank you for saying all those good things, but I don't know how that can be true. That sounded really good but honestly" . . . the pink illumination of self-acceptance began to fade.

The dark secret inside her whispered that she really was a bad person who was not worthy of being loved. She stomped on that secret to get it to shut-up, please be quiet. Good girls don't say shut up. While keeping herself suffocated inside, she displayed her best at all times. She could not fail. Her life depended upon doing it right so everyone would accept her.

The little one cried as she contracted into a ball. Her Self embraced her again. "You have been stuck out there for a very long time; we will practice and practice and it will lighten up." The little one looked up with dimly lit hopeful eyes. "I just don't see how."

"Well, listen to all these messages that you are allowing to fill your head. They are controlling your mind and you are feeling that low, dense vibration of fear in your body." soothed the Self. "And these thoughts are just thoughts you are choosing to repeat. They are *not* true."

"Consider the source of these thoughts. Do you respect that source as a nurturing person for you who can really be there for you? As a child, you had needs, needs that were not met by the people who were in charge of you. So you have tried to meet your own needs. On an unconscious level you feel bad for having that need and being rejected for having it. So you struggled to be perfect, and that didn't work either. So you started judging and criticizing everything that you did and thought until it became a way of life for you. You decided you were unlovable and started living your life as though that were true."

All you want is to be loved and accepted. And I am here to give you that love. I am your Eternal Mother ,who lives within you always. Your relationship with your Earth mother was your motivation to seek the Mothering compassion within you, not outside of you. My energy lives within you always.”

The pink light of her aura expanded to fill the room and beyond as the Self continued, “I am here, and I will never abandon you. I am here now, and I will never ever leave you. I love and accept you totally for who you are. You don’t have to be different or perfect or sad anymore. Let me comfort you, hold you, and rock you. You are safe now. I will never, ever leave you. The past is over, and you are with me now and forever. There is no need to go back and live in that energy. Come be present with me. Would you be willing to come live in my heart? Would you be willing to leave this Earth family lesson now?” A pink beam of light issued from the Self’s heart on a path to the little girl.

As she took the step of courage onto the pink beam of light filled with the heart of all loving compassion, she lay back to rest in a deep serene feeling, cushioned in the folds of the ever soothing vibration of pure love and acceptance. The love that transmitted through her every cell transformed into an awareness of a connection that she knew now had never and would never be broken. She was and would always be Home with her Infinite Mother.

The Classroom

*The beautiful lotus flower blooms most abundantly
from the darkest environment.*

Josei Toda

A hand reached out to touch her, and she remembered. Grabbing her husband’s hand, she was pulled back into the ecstatic vibrations of Heaven. They were sitting in the

park, and it was beautiful. The love in her heart just about exploded as she looked at him and at the other souls around her. Luminous bright lights surrounded each of the souls as they moved through the courtyard. The buildings seemed familiar to her, but she couldn't remember exactly why. Souls were moving in and out of the buildings as though they were diligently studying something important. They gathered in small groups at tables to discuss whatever it was that they were learning. It seemed as though they were totally immersed in their conversations and enjoying every minute of it.

Anisea could still feel the nurturing mother and child within her. Tears flowed from her eyes as she gazed at her husband. How could there be so much love in the universe? And she deserved to be loved; she could see that now.

Hugging together in a tight embrace for the longest time, Anisea looked at her husband. She just wanted to stay in Heaven with him forever. He read her thoughts telepathically and responded, "I know that you want to stay here with me. But that is not your plan. It is best for your highest learning that you return to Earth and live more of your life."

Straightening herself very tall, she replied to him. "But I don't want to go back."

"You are feeling and thinking that way because of what you have experienced as a child. Let's see how you can release those negative patterns as an adult in relationship with yourself and others. If you can discover what holds you back in learning how to be in relationship with yourself and others on Earth, you will love living your life," he responded gently, but with a tone that was firm. "I am inviting you to view yourself once again, this time to see what beliefs you can release to freely love on Earth. That is where

the quizzes and tests are; Earth is where you realize your ability to connect with all beings.

Groaning, she looked at him. “Well, I know it is for my highest good. I want to learn and I know I will understand more and feel better. Maybe we could just peek in and see if. . . .”

Smiling at her with tenderness, he said, “Think it, and it will be.”

The Trial

In times of hardship open your heart as wide and long as you can, not only for yourself but also for others.

Morrie Schwartz

The handcuffs were tight on her wrists. They began reading the charges as they brought her into the courtroom for the trial. She couldn’t believe this was happening to her. Her heart began pounding at the realization. The room glowed in a translucent display of all known colors of the rainbow and more. It was ruby beautiful, but she couldn’t see any beauty in her surroundings at the moment. The jury sat at attention in red plushy chairs, waiting to hear the charges as well.

The judge sifted through the papers, finally finding what she was looking for. Aha, here it is. The charges read as follows:

“In the Matter of the Universe vs. This Young Woman

The first charge reads as follows:

In the first degree, we find that you have been:

1. Looking for Yourself Where You are Not
2. Denying Your Feelings
3. Focusing on the Outcome, Not the Journey

You are charged with using unhealthy habits, such as criticizing yourself and others, snubbing your intuition, living out of your body in the past and the future

(sometimes simultaneously), rationalizing your behaviors, worrying as a means of solving problems, and indulging in a certain amount of self-righteousness, all serving to keep you separated from who you really are.”

The jury gasped loudly. This was a serious case. “The trial will begin immediately,” bellowed the judge. The prosecutor nodded and pulled out his briefcase. Stunned, she looked around for help. Surely, she had a defense attorney to get her out of this.

But no one was there. The jury stood up to stretch and then settled back down into the comfy, red plushy chairs; this could take some time. The prosecutor began the opening arguments. “Wait,” she said. “I don’t have any defense. I am entitled to an attorney to defend me.”

“We know that, my dear; but it is time for you to stand up for yourself. No one is going to rescue you. We know that you keep hoping for that to happen. It is time for YOU to take charge of your life,” stated the Judge firmly.

The prosecutor began his case. “Here we hope to delineate for you the difference between the mentality of the victim role and that of the nurturing Earth mother. We can see from the nature of the charges you have incurred that you have been in the habit of choosing the victim role. Our work here includes your learning to manifest on a physical level that which is beneficial and caring for ourselves. Here we may learn independence so that we can experience a oneness with All That Is. We are advised that you have chosen not to take responsibility for your Greatness.”

The prosecutor continued. “This young woman is charged with Looking for Herself Where She is Not. This process has been going on for a very long time. This lifetime is

just chock full of it. We will present evidence that shows beyond the shadow of a doubt that she is guilty of entertaining this core dynamic in many areas of her life.”

“Objection!” she said as she jumped to her feet. The judge clanked her heavy gavel with a thud. “You can’t object during the opening statements,” she replied. “Please sit down, you will have your turn.”

“Just as well,” the poor defendant replied. “I don’t have a clue as to what I would say to all of this.” The prosecutor continued. “We now have the opportunity to realize the power that we all have to fulfill our own needs, physically and emotionally. Our concern here is that her conditioning in childhood did not provide this one with a sense of trust and security upon which to build her life. This defendant doesn’t believe she is capable of taking care of herself, nurturing her body and emotional self. She wants someone else to do it for her, to help out her victim self.”

Ooohs and aaaahs issued from the gallery. She’s stuck in the lower chakras, how sad and what a shame. They nodded to each other, remarking how painful a place that could be.

“Let me continue,” declared the prosecutor. “Between the ages of 1 and 8 she took on the belief system that she couldn’t trust herself, so she continually looked outside of herself to be helped. Completely missing the point that she is totally capable of taking care of herself, she slips into victim mode and wants to be rescued. Not even trying to take care of herself, she uses all her energy floundering around on the sea of despair, trying to latch onto someone or something that will bail her out and perform resuscitation.”

“We will examine a few of the numerous ways in which she numbs herself to her own self-responsibility and sits waiting by the side of the road with her thumb stuck out, or do I mean stuck in her mouth, for someone to give her a ride to paradise.”

She didn't like this prosecutor. He continued on regardless. “Let's begin with relationships. In the process of hoping to be saved, she chooses relationships where she can be the rescuer. This assures her of being needed but not loved. She is attracted to men who need her but cannot love her because they have not evolved to a state of loving themselves. Casting about for men who have something off center that needs to be fixed, she flies to their aid in her ambulance. Generally, she picks men who look good from the outside but have insides that are wounded. They act strong and secure but are really just children crying for attention inside.”

“Busying herself with the work of the Red Cross, she attends to them night and day, forgetting about herself. Florence Nightingale would gladly accept her as a colleague in spirit, because it looks so good on the outside. This feels good to her because she considers this selfless work, but in actuality she is addicted to all that which is where she is not. In denial, she does not work on her own growth but focuses on those outside. This makes her feel good initially, and she claims she doesn't have time to take care of herself. Developmentally, she languishes by the roadside.”

“Sadly, there is an anxiety about her that demands attention. Her fear is so great that she will be abandoned as she was in various ways and in various degrees in childhood, that her full attention and energy are directed to finding the man who will be there for her. On bad days, she casts about for backups, just in case the current prey does not turn out correctly.”

“Because these men are not emotionally available, due to their own misdirected personal development, she realizes she is receiving nothing in return. Beginning to feel resentful and confused, she again tries to address the lack of connection by being a better fixer and caretaker. This might calm the waters for a while, but again she is ignored. This repeats the pattern of her childhood, which unconsciously she is trying to replay so that she can repair it this time. If she can get this man to finally pay real attention to her, then she feels worthy as a person, and this soothes her anxiety and need to address her parents’ inability to reflect back to her, her own goodness.”

Would he never stop this tirade? Still going strong, the prosecutor kept it up. “For this young one and so many more walking the Earth in sadness, love is elsewhere. All of us feel a degree of abandonment from our parents. They are but human and cannot give us the unconditional, always present love that we so long to have. These parents did not receive it either. So we create stories and songs about this yearning for connection and love. It is forever out there, faraway out there, unattainable, somewhere in someone, something, somehow. If only we could realize that this yearning is a longing for our connection with the Divine within ourselves! On Earth, we are working with what we know and of which we are aware; hence, our search for the mystical partner who will ease our pain.”

“Actually, this relationship pattern is a gift for this young woman. Through the pain comes the lesson for her, if she will honor her true feelings about how she feels in connection with the other. She will have to slow down and have the courage to feel her feelings. Here we recognize the associated problem of denying her feelings as well. She doesn’t want to feel them because they remind her of the little girl inside herself who

could not do anything right in order to establish the bond with her parents. That would be very painful to feel.

But feel it she must, if she is to heal this childhood wound that will keep reappearing in her adult life. Grieving the loss of her childhood demand for love outside of herself will allow this young woman to begin to see that she can take responsibility for her own desire for love and redirect her energies to loving herself.”

“Loving herself doesn’t seem very likely. Why would she, when her parents didn’t? Surely, they would have paid attention and really loved her for who she is if they had seen that she was worth it. Obviously, she wasn’t. At least that was her interpretation.”

“She is like a leaky faucet, continually dripping her love away in directions that don’t know how to use it properly. The bill is costly, and she pays dearly. We have to give her credit; she is persistent in her striving for love.”

“Oh, good grief,” she muttered as she sank down into the plushy red chair. “How could they know all of this? Where is my attorney? I do need someone to save me now.”

The prosecutor just wouldn’t stop. “Let me review where we are to this point. How her needs were met as a child, with consistency or not, continued to have an effect on her adult relationships. If they were not met adequately, she may believe that she doesn’t deserve to have her needs met. That means that she chooses to have relationships with people, including men, who do not pay attention to her needs. It also means that she learns not to take care of her own needs. She looks for someone else to do that. Her parents are human and undoubtedly did not have their needs met by their own imperfect human parents, so they passed this lack of self-love and self-discipline on to her without

even knowing it. It is her responsibility to heal this lack of self-love in this lifetime. It is time to stop blaming parents and to take responsibility for her own needs.”

There was just nothing to say to this so she just rolled her eyes. “Like he’s perfect?” she thought to herself.

The judge nodded to the prosecutor to continue. “Rather than playing the victim role and waiting to be rescued, she must learn to find her own nurturing mother inside herself and activate it. This nurturing mother is always available to her, ready to fill her with unconditional love and attention. She has denied this inner nurturing mother and has chosen to be the victim, waiting on the bank of life to be rescued from the flood. She continues to look externally for who she is, rather than growing from within, nourishing her self-mastery and self-reliance.”

Tears filled her eyes as she realized she was caught and that there was no escape. These people had been voyeurs, peering and peeking behind the shadows into her life. Maybe I should just plead guilty and throw myself on the mercy of the court. But she knew there would be little mercy here. And how in the hell would I know how to be a nurturing mother to myself? I had no mother to nurture me. Where is the modeling? You expect me to just conjure this great mother up out of thin air? She was pissed now. Why did I not get a good mother? Other people have them. I should have been given one.

“We will call our first witness,” the prosecutor pronounced, with a little too much satisfaction in his voice. She raised her teary eyes to see who this could be. She quickly put her head down again.

An old boyfriend took the stand. The prosecutor posed the first question:

“What role did you play in this young woman’s present life?”

“I agreed to be one of her teachers,” the boyfriend offered to the court.

“And what would you be teaching her?”

“I reflected for her the degree of abandonment that was apparent in her childhood from her parents. I was in her life but not really available to her.”

“And why would you do that?” the prosecutor asked.

“To help her realize the degree of conditioning she experienced as a child and how it blocks her from having healthy relationships. She keeps trying to find the parent who will approve of her, not leave her, someone whom she can trust to care for her.”

“And why can’t that be you?” the prosecutor inquired.

“I am just another figment of that childhood conditioning. I am just another representation of how she keeps looking outside herself to find that approval, trust, loyalty. I mirror to her how she is not giving those qualities to herself but continues to expect that someone else will give them to her. Then she feels angry and hurt and blames us, so she can fully enjoy the victim role. That way she never has to take responsibility and grow up to nurture herself. She needs no one’s approval but her own. She is confusing love with neediness.”

The boyfriend glanced at her as he continued. “I agreed to help her with this lesson. When we were planning our soul contracts with our guides in Heaven, I offered to play this part. She really wanted to stop this pattern from so many lives of confusing love with neediness, and so we wrote this script to play. It is just a school lesson; not to be taken so seriously as fatal. We would meet, we would be very attracted to each other, we would have a romantic relationship. She would play out her old patterning of looking for her inner power in me, and I would refuse to play that part. I wouldn’t keep my commitment

to her in this partnership. I would abandon her with all the pain associated with the rejection. She could choose in this lifetime to heal this old conditioning and realize that her power and security lies only within herself.”

“Love could show its true face: acceptance, absence of fear, a presence of pure awareness, a being not a thing, a place of self-sufficiency with needs being met by her own self.” The jury smiled and relaxed into their chairs just at the thought of such a vibration. The young woman looked at him with shock. It passed right over her. “I chose you to play this part? You are helping me?” she said to herself with disgust.

There was an audible sigh from the jury. She looked in their direction just in time to see them all nod to each other in agreement. This was not looking good for her. She tried to think what she could do to reverse this growing tide from presumed innocence to slam dunk guilt. As she began to cast about for possible options for her cross-examination of this old boyfriend, they continued.

The prosecutor wanted to summarize the testimony so far. He was hoping she would get it one of these times. “What you are saying is that this young woman is looking for completion from outside herself. She operates from the illusion that she is incomplete and that she needs something to be whole; she has forgotten who she really is, her pure essential nature. Because her parents couldn’t be there for her, she has always felt a sense of abandonment, accompanied by a deep longing to find a part of herself that would fulfill that emptiness. She keeps attaching to the illusion that things should be different rather than accepting that this is her lesson. She looked to find that missing piece in you. Is that true?”

“Yes, she became very attached to me,” the boyfriend replied with emphasis on the very. “Having expectations of how I would complete her, she began to identify with me instead of herself. Then she started to become dependent on my completing her, fearing that she would be lost and empty without me.”

“Her power began draining from her as she focused on keeping me as the lost piece of wholeness. She started to lose her identity, and she didn’t seem to notice or care; her anxiety increased as she felt out of control and powerless in this relationship. The relationship became suffocating as she tried to control her missing piece. Whatever behaviors I projected out into life that were unhealthy, she was always there to fix them. She became like a marshmallow person; ready to adjust to whatever pressure was applied to her; there was no sense of her unique self, no boundaries. She was like a shape-shifter; losing herself in trying to become the missing piece of the puzzle to fit into my life. I hoped the pain would be enough that she would stop and take another look at what she was doing.”

“While she continually looked outside herself for completion in neediness disguised as love, she also shut down her voice. She acted as though she had duct tape on her mouth, limiting her self expression. She became passive and wouldn’t say anything about her opinions, needs, or feelings, for fear I would be angry or upset and leave her. I knew something was not right because she slammed doors, muttered under her breath, or rolled her eyes, but when I asked what was wrong, she answered, ‘oh, nothing.’”

“Her passive-aggressiveness was overwhelming, and she wouldn’t own up to her real feelings. The more she shut down her voice, the more depressed and anxious she became. What are you going to do with all that? Suffocating herself into what she thought

I wanted, to make me happy, to fix me, she morphed like a chameleon into whatever she thought I wanted. I just wanted to leave.”

“I was hoping that she would learn to become self-sufficient and let her voice sing without fear of abandonment. I was hoping that she would get so tired and resentful of trying to take care of me, with little or no response from me, that she would scream out for her own survival; that she would realize what was happening to her connection to her self, the loss of her self.”

“Getting angry might be a good step in the direction of being aware of the disconnection of her relationship with herself, how much she was giving up of herself to find completion in me. But she stuffed those feelings deep inside herself in a myriad of ways and went on about her business trying to act as if everything were just fine.”

“I wished she would just tell me who she was and what she desired for herself, what would make her happy, be clear about what her values and needs would be and that she was making sure that these principles and needs were being fulfilled. That she loved herself enough to take care of herself this way; that she set boundaries and wasn’t afraid to express her anger in a constructive way. Anger seemed to be like a scary fire to her; if she expressed any it might flame out of control, destroying everything in its path.”

“If he doesn’t stop, I am going to scream,” she thought to herself. Not that anyone else cared. They seemed to be enjoying his encyclopedia of knowledge about her. “This dynamic developed in conjunction with the dynamic of resisting change, both born of the pattern of looking for herself where she was not. She resisted any change in our relationship and in her patterning of wanting me to rescue her and nurture her.”

“No matter what I would do or say, it wasn’t good enough to fill up her anxiety of needing completion. We were on a gerbil wheel of needy love, just recycling ourselves day after day. The possibility of change was frightening to her, another indication that she might lose control.”

“She wanted everything to stay the same. I think she was reminded of the vibration of Heaven and wanted it to be the same on Earth. As we all experience in Heaven, there is a non-changing sense to the vibration here. The being in pure awareness that is never changing here is what we yearn for on Earth. But Earth is a very dense vibration. Things move very slowly there, but they are always in motion and always experiencing change. If we spend our daily lives expecting to find the non-change of pure awareness on Earth, we suffer resentment, frustration, and alienation.”

“To live without resisting change means that she would have to deal with anxiety and insecurity. Learning to live with joy in a state of unending uncertainty would have to be her goal. Fostering the nurturing mother inside herself to soothe her body and mind and heart through the lessons on Earth would be essential. To really understand and live that life, she would have to live in the certainty that she is fully capable of taking care of herself and that she is truly self-sufficient in acknowledging and fulfilling her needs.”

“She would have to know on a feeling level that she is always supported and loved and is eternally a part of the universal consciousness of the Divine and that she is truly worthy of that love and connection. There is nothing outside of herself; external sharing is but the icing on the cake. She is the cake.”

“I am hoping that she will remember that in making our soul contracts, we had decided that I would play this part of the inattentive boyfriend, so that she could work on

healing this part. But she has refused; hence, these drastic actions of court and trial. We are all hoping that she will remember who she really is; that she is a spark of the Divine Light that shines within her; that her true self is not her personality-self. We are all here in the Earth school learning our true nature; it is only through the acceptance of the gift of lessons and learning that we come into our True Being.

“If she can become more aware of her true story, perhaps she will understand that her personality-self is just here to learn that she is a part of the pure potentiality that connects all of us. The Self that we are is a Self that is aware of its basis in Spirit’s love. There is nothing lacking and there never was.”

“I send my greatest love and respect for her on her journey to self-realization, living in her true Essence,” the old boyfriend smiled at her as he completed his testimony.

“What? Wait! I have the right to cross-examination,” she shouted to the judge. All eyes turned to her in sympathy. “There is no need,” said the Judge. “It is clear what has happened here.”

“But we are all under the influence of our society’s misunderstanding of love. Everything we read, watch, and hear is about love being needy. It is about finding the right person who completes you so that you can live happily ever after. ‘I can’t live without you’ is a theme that resonates throughout our generations.” She stood up tall as she screamed her defense at the jury.

“But I didn’t know. I was just doing the best I could. I had no idea how my searching for love was just really a search out of need. I don’t even know what love means. I thought I did, but now it seems like a safety net that I needed.”

“Aha.” . . . The jury murmured appreciatively. “Look at her, just when you think she will never get it, here she comes. Next witness?”

Compulsive Urges

When you stop compulsively resisting the Now, joy flows into everything you do.
Eckhart Tolle

Staring in disbelief, she watched her refrigerator scooting across the floor, wiggling back and forth to get into the witness box. Her face became flushed with embarrassment in a shade that matched the deeply scarlet room; this was not going to be pretty. Thinking she might run, she tried to move her feet but they were stuck to the floor. She had to face the music or, rather, the deep freeze.

“What has been your experience with this young lady?” The prosecutor asked the keeper of things delicious.

“Well, I can tell you that my doors always seem to be opening, her hands searching furtively through the goods.”

“What does she seem to be looking for?”

“Well, even though I offer items of green, red, and orange, leafy and nutritious, she passes them right by looking for what she considers to be the sweetness of life. She wants chocolate coated anything, but she lives on ice cream. She plays all these games with herself, buying little amounts that make her think she really isn’t doing it a lot, except it is a very big amount of little amounts. Then she switches to big amounts that she will dole out in continuous small parts to herself, and then—poof!—they are all gone.”

“Can I tell you how often she straightens the line on brownies and cakes and pies? She pretends she will just have enough to get the line straight so it will look even, but she finds it always to be a little bit crooked and there she goes, and there it goes.”

“Very interesting,” said the Prosecutor. “Do you consider her to have a food addiction?”

“I believe the correct term is compulsive eating,” said the traitor refrigerator. “She appears to think that she will find nurturing and comfort in these foods just like the previous witness said about relationships. I try to hide the ice cream, but she always finds it eventually.”

“What is your explanation for her habitual behavior?” The prosecutor asked sternly.

The refrigerator continued. “I agree that she is looking for herself where she is not. Instead of feeling her feelings fully, she eats them. Again, she is looking to find that nurturing mother, but instead of spending time to develop her inner loving mother, she comes to me to find comfort.”

“Numbing herself with food, she doesn’t have to deal with acknowledging her feelings. She is off in space, dissociated from what is really happening in her life. Denying her feelings means she lives in denial about her experience in the present moment. Is that easier? Does it not exist if you don’t acknowledge it? I guess she thinks so.”

Feeling outraged, she made a promise to herself. That pile of steel was on its way to the dump. How dare she be accused of not feeling her feelings. . . . She was certainly feeling some right now. But is that all she really ever felt . . . anger? Well, let’s not make

an issue out of it. These people might send her to hell if she was too loud about her feelings? Or was she already in Hell?

The prosecutor leapt to his feet. He just couldn't wait to point out her problems. She shot him a withering look and in her head screamed that she hated him.

The prosecutor smiled widely at her as he continued. He was actually talking right to her, of all the nerve.

“Thank you. You don't want to feel it, so you developed this rather addictive way of making up stories and then living them as though they are real. In these stories you sometimes get stuck in the emotion and live out of that story rather than feeling what it is you do feel and observing and detaching from your tendency to be your story.”

“Part of your story says ‘I can't do it’ and ‘It's too much for me.’ Denying your feelings gives rise to that old proverb that whatever you resist will persist. Avoiding feelings keeps them around, pressuring you to acknowledge them, causing pain. The pain will not kill you; it will transform as you allow it the space to be.”

Again he spoke to her. “Expand the space around the feeling that you have moving through you right now. Let it have its energy. Combine it with an expanded view. Look at the whole picture. See the anger or whatever in the context of all that there is. See what is positive and loving. See that anger as a small part of the whole picture. Put anger in the middle of the picture surrounded by loving safety of what you do know to be secure and compassionate. “

What was under that anger? She had to really sit with her body for a while to get a clear answer. It was fear. Fear of what? Fear that she wasn't good enough? Ouch, that didn't feel good, kind of overwhelming. No wonder I don't feel my feelings fully!! I feel

like I could implode and dissolve into nothing if I really felt these things, because it feels so strong and full of energy—painful energy. It feels like dying. I choose not to feel them so I can stay safe. Yes, that's it.

“We heard that last part,” said the team for the offense. “Can we remind you that there is no death? In fact, here you are in Heaven. How can there be any death? There is only a transformation, a change, so to speak, and wouldn't you like that . . . a change?” They smiled smugly.

What happens if you say, screw you, in heaven? she asked herself as though she just might chance it. Continuing on as though she hadn't said a word, the offense team tried to remind her that death was an old wife's tale on Earth. “You plan a lesson of life on Earth, and then you cross back over here and review how you did on your lesson. It is really pretty simple. There is no disintegration of your soul, it just comes back and says, wow, that was interesting. Let's see how it went this time, let's review what happened, without any judgment, just being the observer.”

“What can we learn from this experience on Earth? Your body acts as the temple for the soul, and we do like to review how you treated it, however. Turning from flesh into dust is one thing, but treating it poorly is another. There is a lesson there to learn. Shall we continue?” said the rabid prosecutor.

Feeling somewhat the expert on food consumption, the refrigerator continued on. “She stays stuck in her thoughts, trying to figure everything in her life out by brain connections, instead of connecting to her heart. As a child she was punished for the outcome when she listened to her intuition. She knew in her heart that some things were just not right, not fair, not loving. When she acted from the place of knowing, her parents

generally did not appreciate her response. It was out of line with what they thought she should be thinking and doing. She was punished for being out of line. That brought up all kinds of overwhelming feelings that she did not want to feel. It was just too hard.”

“Over time she learned it was safer and easier to dismiss her own knowing and to do what they expected her to do. She became very efficient at disregarding her own knowing and very sensitive to what they wanted. That way she could fit in and not be afraid of losing them or herself.”

“Her self-doubt led to major decision-making problems. Indecision was her middle name. Should she, could she, would she, what if, was a merry-go-round inside her head. Her heart tried to interrupt but the mind said back off, you will only get us in trouble.”

“The greatest loss is that of learning to trust herself. Because she was punished and scared of losing everything that she needed as a child for her survival if she acted on her knowing, she dismissed herself repeatedly and made herself available for others’ opinions and decisions. She missed that developmental stage of learning through trial and error what her capabilities really were. She comes to me to find that soothing that she so missed as a child. But she can never find enough. I can never have enough within my metal walls to fill her longing for self-love.”

“If she were to listen to her heart, she could explore the idea of what was holding her back from loving herself, mistreating her body in such a way that was harmful to her health. Her mind changes her mind, flip-flopping around which every way she sees the wind blowing. If she were to listen to her heart, that path would lead her to a connection with an eternal sense of Self; the one that is always with her and is based in loving connections,” finished the refrigerator.

“Is there hope for her?” The prosecutor asked sadly.

The double-door complete with ice-maker refrigerator smiled at the young woman. “Of course, she just needs to remember who she really is. She keeps forgetting. She judges herself continually. Feeling not good enough, not only does she escape the present moment in any way she can, and then ignores her intuition, but she also judges herself harshly. It is very painful to watch. Then, at other times, she projects her judgment at herself out onto other people and events. Ice cream with lots of toppings is the drug of choice on those days.”

“When you really want to avoid your inner work, you begin to judge and blame yourself and others. This creates an illusion of separateness and creates an illusion of safety for you. If you don’t want to acknowledge a quality or behavior in yourself, then you want to get it far away from you.”

“You can do that by noticing that behavior in someone else and labeling it bad. When you notice a behavior in someone else and it really bothers you, then you can be certain that you have that behavior. Otherwise, the behavior would affect you neutrally and fly right by you. You would respond not react.”

“Using your environment as a mirror, you can find those unacknowledged places within you when you feel judgmental towards someone else. Think of some behavior about someone else that just bugs you; chances are that you have some form of that same behavior.”

“When this young person judges herself, she is creating separation for herself and others. She thinks this keeps her safe. The origins of such judgment come from earlier times of thinking that she was not able to deal with the realization of her inner workings.

When she could not bear the light shining on her issues, and all humans have their problems, then she projected the concern onto other people and judged them for it. Her feelings of inadequacy, and arrogance can be found here. For others, prejudice and discrimination would have their roots here, as well.”

Inwardly, she let out a scream. The duct tape muffled her sounds. “I have been robbed. My own self has been ripped away from me. They took it. I want it back!” the child inside her cried.

The prosecutor, judge and jury turned to her. The judge looked at her kindly as he said, “We can hear all your thoughts here in Heaven, you know. Please continue, we are interested in what you have to say.” The thoughts in their heads said ‘victim talk.’ Maybe she will transform it now. But, there she goes again.

“No, I don’t want to continue. Bring on the next witness. Let’s see what else you’ve got,” she retorted.

Well, one last question for the kindly refrigerator. “What else has she stored on your shelves?”

“Well, it isn’t just food. The truth is that she hides behind many drugs of denial. Let me open my doors here and let’s have a look.” The jury’s necks craned into formation toward the opening doors.

“Well, let’s see. Here is a fat little exploding Visa card that is waaaaay over its limit. Shopping can be a comfort for her at times. And here is a little rolled cigarette of some favorite herb. Yes, this can hide feelings as well. She counts on this and other things to relax her racing mind, like a bottle of some very good wine. She does have good

taste, I will say. However, sometimes she does look for her courage and relaxation in that bottle.

Old stale cigarettes are here, and we congratulate her for giving up that stick to dampen feelings. Workaholism provides a wonderful diversion, draining her energy so that she doesn't have to pay attention to herself. Add these to unhealthy needy relationships, and we can say that she is certainly looking for love in all the wrong places. How she doesn't see herself worthy of love I just don't understand. She is a precious part of our awareness," finished the refrigerator.

"Thank you so much for your testimony. You have been very helpful in assisting us to more fully understand the dynamics of this young lady." With the wave of the freezer door, the refrigerator careened back out of the courtroom. If looks could kill, the courtroom would have experienced a wave of crushed ice and twisted steel.

She had no more defense than a very nasty look to give. Sullenly, she waited to see what the prosecutor would do to her next.

"Our last witness," called the prosecutor. "Thank goodness," she yelled in her head; "I am so sick and tired of being on the hot seat. I hope this prosecutor freezes in hell."

"I call the young woman herself to the witness stand," the prosecutor gestured in her direction. Sitting up straight in their chairs, the jury smiled with anticipation. She reacted with shock and dismay. This is just going from ugly to really bad. Walking slowly to the stand, she wondered what would happen if she just ran out the door.

"You can't continually run away from yourself. It is time to heal this wound," the judge warned her.

"Stop listening to my thoughts," she yelled at the judge.

“We are only here to help you, not judge you” said the judge. “We are about moving out of fear and into the ever present sea of unconditional love. You have spent so many years and lifetimes in this painful place of separation from your Authentic Self that we felt moved to assist you to perhaps consider other alternative perspectives.”

She sat down with a hruumph. She was very angry. There was that emotion again. Glaring at the prosecutor, she told him to get on with it.

The prosecutor drank a sip of water, stretched his body and began. Trying to work with this stubborn young woman was draining. Her guides must be exhausted. He faced the courtroom full on when he pronounced it was time to look at her control issues. She was always trying to force conditions in life to do it her way. The Universe was tiring of it.

Wild Mind

*“One may defeat a thousand obstacles and adversaries,
yet he who defeats the enemies within is the noblest victor.”*

Shakyamuni (Gold, 2002, p. 8)

“I would like to call forth Exhibit A,” the prosecutor surprised the courtroom. Both the young woman and the jury turned in the direction of the door, wondering who might have such information related to her forcing outcomes. A cart was pushed into the room. On the cart was a large domed plexiglass-looking thing with something rather strange under it. The prosecutor rolled it forward for the jury to see and promptly took off the top.

“Very interesting,” said the jury. “What is it?” some wondered with their eyes wide open.

“It is a replica of this young woman’s brain,” the prosecutor said, relishing his words. He knew he had her now. The young woman felt her hands moving up to her head, just to assure herself. It was there, and it felt like it was working, but how did it also get on that cart?

“The technicians in the laboratory recreated your exact mind, cells, and circuits, so that we can learn better what exactly is going on inside you,” the prosecutor smiled kindly. “This study is not only of service to you, but can also be useful to other people. It will speak to us telepathically, as brains can do, and hopefully we can clear all this confusion up and move onto higher ground.”

“Oh, glad I can be of service,” she muttered sarcastically. Inside she was miserably embarrassed. Now the world would know the circus of characters that played like a stuck record in her brain. They were all based in worry, worry, worry. And then control, control, control. Worry, control, control, worry. Where was the joy in this life? You just had to get through this worry and control to get there; she was certain it was coming.

“Mind, we appreciate your great service to this young lady. We see that you are struggling, working under overwhelming conditions. Please draw us a picture.”

“Well, I am working overtime, I can tell you. I am tired, stressed, and burning out completely. I am called upon all the time, and I mean all the time, to make things right. It is not just figuring things out; it is worrying about how to figure things out, if they will work out, what if they don’t, and what if they do? I cannot win. It is full out struggling work at all times.”

“Even when she is sleeping, she is dreaming dreams to relieve the stress; they are full of merry-go-rounds, losing her car repeatedly, can’t find the quarter to make the

phone call, and if she does find the money the phone doesn't work. Over and over, repeating dreams of frustrations. Her dreams are filled with the energy of trying so very hard and never quite getting it right. I wake up exhausted every single night and then she starts it again first thing in the morning when her eyes pop open. What is a Mind to do?"

"And let me tell you another thing, she is all about 'doing.' I mean she is all over it. What she has done, was it good enough, was it enough in general, did people like it, should she do it over, she could do it better, why didn't she do it better, what is the matter with her? Doesn't she know the difference between an intention or an expectation? It is all expectations with that one. I love her, but God help her so I can rest," the Mind said with relief.

"What do you mean the difference between an intention and an expectation?" The prosecutor asked while casting a sideways glance at the defendant, who was still stunned from seeing her mind on a cart in front of her, let alone that it was complaining for the entire world to hear about how awful it was to be her mind.

"An intention is a desire that you have, and you state it in 'I' terms as though it is happening now, and then you let it go. That would be nice, no stress there. An expectation is when the ego gets involved with attachment, so that things are 'supposed' to happen according to how she thinks they should happen. This is an illusion, that she believes she is in charge. She really thinks that she can control what happens. So she spends most of her time and energy figuring out how to make things go as she thinks they should."

"Forgetting that the universal flow of consciousness will move through you to manifest the desire if you get out of the way, you drop from the flow into the 'doer' ego

that has to use the body, mind, and personality to make it happen. That is really hard on me, acting as the mind. It means I am working all the time, and we are disconnected from the potentiality of All That Is. It is lonely, struggling out here all by myself. I don't like it. I need her to realize this," the Mind said, looking at the young woman directly.

"What do you think keeps her from relaxing into the 'being' mode and working with the universe to manifest her intentions?" The jury smiled with genuine empathy for this young one, as they knew where this was going. They had all been there.

"Well, currently, she believes that she IS her story; that she IS her conditioning, her experiences, her body, and her mind. She has an attachment to her self as a character playing a role. If she is willing to release that perspective of herself, she can allow the space to feel her true nature, that of pure potentiality of awareness. She can feel her REAL Self. That is the ultimate comfort. And she can truly rest in it."

"As has been stated, her thoughts are coming from her childhood conditioning. To survive whatever childhood brings us, we have to become conditioned to rely on our thinking process at the expense of our heart and intuition. As children growing up we could not develop and use our own self-trust and inner knowing when our families responded to us negatively."

"Using anger, guilt, and shame, parents try to condition us to be as they want us to be. The results of these actions produce feelings of being overwhelmed in the child, sparking the use of the 'thinking self' to protect the inner self. Feeling more feelings is not sought as a solution because it will only frighten the child more. Thinking provides a distraction and a disconnection to those feelings."

“So this young person sought to relieve her stress and to rely on her mind for solutions, discounting her own ‘knowing,’ no matter how strong it might seem. Over time it ‘seems’ less and less as she grows accustomed to relying on her thinking processes. This process manifests in her developmental growth pattern because she is relying solely on her thinking, and she must be right in order to be safe. She has to believe that she is right and that she has all the answers. She loses the distinction between thinking and knowing.”

“If she were to let in new and different perspectives, then her sense of identity might be threatened. Her story is her life. Her beliefs become more rigid, and her stories about herself grow more inflexible and set. To open up to other perspectives would require flexibility, and she is not willing to experience that perceived loss of protection of who she has determined herself to be. Her thinking becomes polarized with black-and-white thinking. I am this and I am that. I can do this and I can’t do that. I like this and I hate that. This is the right way and that is the wrong way.”

“Her body separates from being a co-creator of her experience. Feeling is shut down. She feels isolated and alienated from the Source of All That Is. The dirty trick of this dynamic is that it is very difficult to realize. When one is becoming a Prima Donna, thinking she knows it all, one isn’t interested in seeing how one’s self is involved in this process.”

“Her key function in her childhood was to survive. When things happened to her, she made up stories about herself to keep her safe. She learned for safety’s sake to interpret incoming or new events as a threat to her security. As an adult, she now looks for the perceived threat in any new situation. Because she is thinking in a fearful state,

she naturally chooses interpretations that would cast a negative slant on any circumstance. Fearful thinking creates fear-based actions, which limit her potential. But she thinks she is safe by always looking for bandits in the closet. It is a boring way of life. You can imagine: she can't trust herself, looks continually externally, but shines a negative light on all happenings. We are not having a party in this lifetime."

"When her mind thinks of ways to explain events, then she thinks she is more able to deal with them. When things don't work out as well as she would have hoped, she blames the event and takes her story for granted that it is true. She has lost touch with her inner knowing. I am working overtime trying to make sense of these happenings, which don't work to the fullest extent. This lack of clarity brings up doubt and confusion and spirals back upon itself, requiring me to create more interpretations to ease the discontent. Or she goes to the refrigerator."

"This process of trying to explain her life causes her pain. Thinking she is in control of outside circumstances, she gets angry and frustrated when something doesn't go the way she wants. It doesn't have to be a big thing; any little thing can set her off. Talk about a mountain out of a molehill!! It can be an anthill and off she goes."

"Her basic modus operandi is anxiety, so if anything comes along that is not in her script, she rides that broom off into the sunset. It isn't as though she amps and then calms down. She seems to have to stay in that angry reaction covering for an anxious state for a long time. Making the assumption that the worst is coming down the path for her, she overreacts with a knee jerk comeback. Then she makes rash decisions made of the moment in a high state of emotion. We are one big reaction working to cover its trail."

“She has a choice to react or to respond. I would like to put a brilliantly lit neon sign on her forehead that says ‘you have a choice’ on how to spend each moment. Your choice, pain or pleasure,” the Mind was not cutting her any slack.

“Do you realize you have a choice?” the prosecutor asked the young woman.

For what seemed a very long time, the young woman stared off into space. “I seem to choose pain but I don’t want to anymore. But I don’t know any other way,” the young woman said sadly. The jury looked hopeful; her anger had transformed into sadness. Possibilities for change are in the air.

“Thank you, Mind. We appreciate your willingness to share your struggle with us. I call my last exhibit,” the prosecutor sighed.

The Heart Knows

You always seek to please others yet wonder why you are unhappy.

Stephen C. Paul

Bursting with joy, in rolled the Heart. The vibration of unconditional love radiated out to encompass everyone in the entire room. Each heart in the courtroom responded with expansion and lightness. Shoulders lifted as smiles began materializing at the corners of each mouth. Deep breaths were taken, and confusion and sadness began to release from each body with the next exhalation. The young woman felt her chest reach out to the Heart for comfort, and comfort was received. For the first time during this courtroom experience, she began to feel some hope. The vibrational energy from the Heart was rebalancing her chakras. Crystal white light moved up through her body, revitalizing each energy center. Somehow, she knew everything would be all right now. She felt it in her cells; she was going to finally get it. Her attitude melted away, and her heart and mind opened for healing. Miracles can happen in a moment.

The jury, judge, and prosecutor would have been shocked at her change of attitude, but they were experiencing the same energy shifts. The prosecutor approached the Heart. “Thank you for assisting us in this project. Please speak to us of healing.”

The Heart expanded with pleasure. “Thank you for your invitation. This young one has been struggling for so long, and now she has the opportunity to choose a new path on her journey. She set this up in her Soul Contract with her guides in the event that she became confused about finding her balance. At the planning time before this present life, all of you were asked to participate in this drama by her and her guides. You all agreed at that time to assist her if you were needed. I am honored to share in her healing.”

The young woman was fixated upon this Heart. For her there was no one else in the room. She was just beginning to feel that this Heart was also her heart. It reached across the room with a burning sensation of complete acceptance that she had never ever felt in this life time. There was no doubt; she had to discover what this Heart was about and find out how she could have this feeling continue. Little did she know that she had this same comforting, healing energy inside herself. She was finally on her way to finding the love in her own heart.

The words issued out of the Heart with a calming tone that all ears in the audience drank into their cells. Both the tone and the words sent a message of warmth lined with safety and trust. One wanted to just float in it forever.

“Dear Ones, let us examine what the human condition has created in this process of trying to live a life from a personality-self point of view. All of these behaviors with which she has been charged are illusions that get in the way of our achieving what we want in our lives. We deserve to have joy and acceptance resonating within our bodies.”

“When we are emotionally healthy, we pursue our intentions with delight, releasing the details to the universal consciousness, elated with the fruits of our labors, unless there is a dynamic that interferes with that desire. This young woman is experiencing blockages in the presence of these characteristics within her that cause conflicts with her sense of greatness.”

“Let’s see why. She was created in a sense of greatness, which means that she could experience the authenticity of her True Self. This vibration of authenticity means that she can be herself with no limitations; trusting and acting on her intuition, free from the constraints of the past and the future, free of judgments, speaking her truth as necessary, free from attachment to emotion, the ability to feel everything, self-sufficient, and independent while sitting in the awareness of interdependence.”

“That which blocks her from this state of being consists of trying so hard to get there without realizing it just is. This state of awareness of self does not come from achievement; it comes from the self-realization of who she really is. There is nothing outside of her that blocks her—not her parents, her knowledge, her successes or failures (if there were such a thing), her appearance, her personality, her smile, or her beautiful frown.” With this the Heart sent an extra ray of energy to the young one. She received it with a resounding acceptance.

“Sometimes she is the Knower; a struggling situation where she has a persistent identification with the ego, that part of her that believes she is separate from the Divine, that she is alone and doing it all by herself, forcing outcomes to find security. Other times she attaches to the Known; a continual identification with objects external to herself, like relationships, food, drugs, excitement, money, and everything else that goes into that pile

of supposed neediness to find her completeness. This leads her to a fear of change, a fear of loneliness, abandonment, of not being seen or heard.”

“The process of Knowing, the process of not feeling her emotions fully, means that she has to rely excessively on her mind. In that way she is unable to be in the present moment. She continues to have out-of-her body experiences. Distrusting her own intuition leads her to addictions, depression, and anxiety. She becomes fearful and disconnects from her Heart. Capable of holding only one thought at a time, the mind and then the body is forced to opt for the energy of fear, excluding love. Fear builds on itself, and living life becomes a scary proposition, always looking over her shoulder for the trouble about to descend on her.”

“Separation became her reality because of her past conditioning. Healing this conditioning requires the courage to feel the feelings that run through her. Allowing them through acceptance to flow through her, they are transformed and she with them. As she embraces the feelings, they dissipate. She rides the waves as a part of them but not of them. She detaches from the grasp of the emotional roll and surfs into shore. The waves come and they go.”

“She learns to trust herself as she masters a cycling groundswell of feelings, allowing them to move through her, and embracing them. She neither resists nor judges. Always remembering to breathe as she moves the energy through her body, her body responds to the waves of energy, the cells becoming clear of remaining vibration as the movement concludes with no resistance.”

“Now feelings no longer have the power to overwhelm her. She is transparent. Staying centered in the cycles, she is able to hear her inner voice. She listens and discerns

what the right action would be for her unique self to choose. Her ability to remain present is increased as she centers into each moment and investigates what it would bring to her for her growth. The need to judge herself and others is decreased as she clears up her own processing of each conflict. Taking responsibility for each moment of her developmental process, she gains a deep sense of self-sufficiency and independence.”

“Feeling secure in her abilities to care for herself, she no longer feels compelled to spend most of her waking hours trying to figure out what and who can complete her. Each step of the healing allows her to fall more deeply in love with the greatness of who she is, in a way that is balanced with self-discipline and compassion. Nurturing herself instead of demanding that someone else do it, and now, she is no longer confusing neediness and love. Love is what she is. She needs none other. Her voice resonates with her truth, realizing and making certain that her needs are fulfilled. Change is welcomed as a joyous adventure for her growth. Self-soothing comes naturally, as uncertainty becomes a more comfortable way of life.”

“Now she can recognize that she has choices about which thought she will entertain. Before, she believed that her mind was in control; now she realizes that she is in control as to what crosses her digital screen. Bringing her awareness to her feeling, she backs up to find the root thought. If this thought is based in fear rather than love, she disconnects from this thought and replaces it with a positive thought. Practice is the key here. After a while, she will move through this progression very quickly.”

“Trusting in herself, she is able to trust in the universal Divine to provide for her needs as she works in co-creation. No longer needing to force outcomes, she sets her intentions as desires rather than expectations. Staying calm in each moment, she

maintains an open heart and mind. She waits for clarity when she feels confused. In meditation of all kinds, she experiences the truth and validity of other viewpoints.”

“In the gap of stillfull awareness, she will begin to experience her essential nature as pure awareness, that place where thoughts do not take form. As she continues to practice, she will experience the universality of this pure awareness as being present everywhere. When she remembers who she really is, a spark of God, then that energy will vibrate through her and her heart will be soothed,” the Heart summarized her plight.

“As much as I hate to admit it,” she said, “I am so very tired of being worried, struggling, and being mad. I am sick of being the knower, the known, and the knowing. That is all I do all day long, and it is getting me stressed and depressed. I know my poor brain is exhausted. We work so hard to figure things out, to get ahead of the game, to win the game, we are beginning to hate getting up for the day. I am sick and tired of it. I do want to find another way.”

Continuing on, she said, “But, that is just fine to say all of that, but what does it really mean to me? Even if I were able to experience one nano-second of this alert awareness, I have no clue how that would happen,” she asked with a puzzled frown. “How in the world do I feel ‘stillfull awareness?’ I wouldn’t know it if it slapped me in the face! How do I get into the silence between words? Even if I had the key; I wouldn’t where to look to find the door.”

“I mean, how would I experience no thoughts coming from my brain machine running full tilt, 24/7? Silence in my head? The voices of nonstop chitter-chatter will have something to say about this state of affairs! What you are saying might be fine for

other people, but you don't know what I am hearing all the time, and I mean all the time!"

"Exactly," said the Heart. "You have it exactly right. The mind is trying to help you, but the doorway you are looking for is in the feeling in the body, not in the mind. Can I say you are knocking on the wrong door? All right, never mind that. What I want you to remember is that growing up you were not encouraged to be in touch with your body. There was no time; you had to figure out quickly how to fit into your home and your parents' energy and their need for you to be a certain way. You, as have many others, have not spent time in developing a responsive relationship with your body. It has become numb from disconnection over time. It is why you eat and don't even notice what you are eating or how fast you are disposing of it. You have lost touch with what you are feeling. This is very normal. You are very normal. Your responses are very normal. It is something that can be healed with practice."

She nodded in agreement. "I do want to heal it. I am so tired of this pain. I do take my body for granted. Please tell me what to do, dear Heart."

"Become more aware of the sensations in your body; they are holding messages for you. For example, where are you feeling discomfort in your body right now?"

She stared into space for a moment and then grasped her stomach. "Here in my abdomen," she said looking down at her stomach as though she had acknowledged it as a working part of her for the very first time.

"Great, good work; you felt it and named the location. What do you call that sensation?" asked the Heart with encouragement.

“I guess it would be like nervousness, upset, maybe anxiety. I feel strung very tightly. My stomach is kind of clenched tight, like a fist.”

“Excellent. So you have the location, and the name of the sensation. Let’s call it anxiety. Now sit with that sensation and really feel it. Experience your stomach as a part of you and bring up that feeling of anxiety.” She looked nervously at the Heart. “I don’t really want to encourage it. I want it to go away.”

Smiling with all ventricles, the Heart nodded. “Yes, we know. We think if we don’t feel it, it will just go away. Well, there you are with denying your feelings again. Feelings come and go. It is when we resist them that they feel overwhelming. Use curiosity here to explore what this anxiety is about. What does it have to say? It is a message from your body that requires reading in order to heal it. You are not your feeling; it is just a sensation that is asking to be heard.”

“Bring your awareness to your mind. Here is where your brain can shine. Sit with your mind and listen to what it is saying related to this feeling of anxiety. Accept whatever comes up. Hear the thought that is connected to this anxiety.”

After a while, the young woman opened her eyes in surprise. “I am hearing the thought that I am not good enough to do all of this!! I don’t deserve to feel good. I am just not good enough. Wow.”

“Yes, that is correct. That is something you heard in different ways and at different times in your childhood. Being a child, you believed it. It hurt your heart, but you had no other choice but to take what was given to you. That is a belief that does not serve you well now in the present moment. Would you like to release that belief?”

“Like right now would be good,” she replied with amazement in her voice.

“Visualize a symbol for this part of you. It can be a color, an animal, a figure from a fairy tale or movie, whatever comes to you. Now, what would you say to that part of you who doesn’t feel good enough? How would you comfort it? What nurturing words would you say to that part?”

“I am clueless,” she responded immediately. “I have little experience in nurturing myself.”

The Heart continued. “It is important to realize the difference between being a victim to our circumstances or choosing to be a nurturing mother who feeds love to her Divine child at all times. What would a loving mother say to her child who is feeling inadequate? What would you say to your child, to your dog, or any other part of your life that you love?”

“Ummmmmm” . . . the young woman struggled with this one. “I guess she might say something like . . . I love you?”

“Say it again without the question mark. Say it over and over to this part of you that is symbolized in a way that feels right to you. Let the words of soothing sounds of nurturance flow over and through this symbol. This symbol is a part of you; you are soothing a part of you. You are learning to soothe yourself, because you didn’t receive the level and depth of soothing that you needed in order to model after that to learn to soothe yourself. Keep it going until you feel a change in the energy and it becomes a feeling of loving to you,” said the Robust Heart.

Tears flowed from her eyes. She couldn’t speak through the choking of her voice. That part of her had waited for so long to be acknowledged and loved. It felt so very good.

After a while, the Heart asked the young woman how she felt. “Wow! Who would have thought that I could be my own nurturing mother? I thought I got in the wrong line and missed out totally when they passed out unconditionally accepting parents. And all the time I had her inside me, always available to me.”

Reminding her, the Heart brought out her soul contract. “Can I say that you scripted this entire learning? Do you remember sitting down with your guides and the Elders of the Council to plan this lifetime in such a way that you would find the nurturing mother inside you? The childhood situation, the lack of loving, the absence of acceptance was all created so that you could have the opportunity to heal the victim mentality that has infused so many of your other lives?”

“Why couldn’t I just get it in a book, watch a movie, why couldn’t someone just tell me? Why does it have to be so dramatic and painful?” she asked with tearful eyes.

“They would be speaking to your mind, and you know where that gets you! You had to feel it, and feel it enough that you wanted to take responsibility and heal it. You had to really want it. Think how you were at the beginning of the trial. You were pretty pissy, with a victim attitude, were you not?”

All of a sudden she was brought back to the reality of her surroundings. Shocked, she looked about the courtroom and the people. She had been so lost in her healing that she had forgotten how she had come to be here.

“You wrote them all into this dream as well. This is not reality. We were all selected to play these parts for you so that you could learn what the true Reality is. You asked us to be your teachers; we love you deeply and readily agreed to help you in this

experience of loving yourself. We share deep gratitude to you for asking us. We hope we have been of help.”

She replied with utter gratitude. “I am so thankful to you all. I am so happy that you consented to play these parts for me. I know it couldn’t have been easy for you. I am a tough case. But it was worth it. I found my heart.”

As she looked down at her wrists, the handcuffs dissolved into thin air. The courtroom faded away, and she was left sitting on a bench in the park. She was surrounded by her soul group, eagerly asking how it went. As she looked into their eyes, she recognized the faces of some of her jurors. “Oh, my,” she said. Looking all around she looked to see where that tough prosecutor might be. Her master guide materialized and smiled. “I was pretty good, don’t you think?”

Who Am I Really?

Your heart wants to grow, waiting for encouragement.

Morihei Ueshiba

The young woman looked at her dear husband with tears in her eyes. “Amazing! There is so much love in and for me!”

“For starters, you have always been loved, throughout eternity!” he replied with earnest.

“It was the strangest thing; I was arrested and being tried for all kinds of things that seemed perfectly normal in my life before. And I had such an attitude about it all. Can you imagine?”

They both laughed until they almost fell off the bench. “You being stubborn? Absolutely!!” He couldn’t help but tease her. He knew her resistance well. “What did you learn?”

She paused for a moment and thought. “Well, I never realized how much of my life I spent being out of my body. I just didn’t want to feel the experiences of my life. I really got a sense of how I keep running to things to numb me. I can’t even tell you how wonderful it was and is to feel the connection with my body, my mind, and my heart. I couldn’t believe how much love there is for me . . . not only from the Divine energy of love but also from myself to myself. I am that Divine love. Who would have thought? To experience love instead of living in fear is the best answer I could ever wish to have. I am so thankful for that learning; I will never forget it.” As her light increased, all the lights of the Universe increased their brightness.

“I am beginning to realize that I am surrounded with guides and my own intuition to help me with these life challenges as well,” she said with relief. “I always felt so alone, and here they were probably trying to get my attention in so many ways. I just couldn’t hear, because I didn’t realize they were there. I want to know them now. I will probably have to clean their houses for a long time, because it must not be easy working with me!!”

“After looking at the Board of Possible Paths and realizing all the choices a person has in each moment that can lead to all these possible paths, how awesome to have guidance that is only looking out for your highest good,” he said. “The old way was to work through an emotion, say like anger, over and over in the physical form. If you lived

from the point of anger, then you would create angry situations throughout your lifetime or through lifetimes, if that is what it took to change the pattern.

Finally, at some point, you would be ready to release the pattern and to look underneath it to the root of the problem and where it can be changed, YOU. Then you respond differently to the situation. Instead of reacting with anger, you respond with compassion, as your soul desires to express. And your patient guides jump for joy as you integrate that splintered fragment of your heart.”

“So, how do I actually tap into this intuition process?” an inquiring mind wanted to know.

“You know when you have hunches, sudden or subtle insights, a gut feeling, or your attention catches on some one thing someone says or you read in a book and your insides kind of resonate with it? An ‘aha’ moment when you realize something? Those are your guides sending you messages to help you on your way.”

“Yes, I know those times,” she replied. “I notice when I am on Earth I get a lot of messages around water, like when I am in the shower, or in the hot tub just relaxing, or out hiking and sitting near a creek. I never put that together before. How else can I know these messages?”

“A pipeline to your guidance is through your emotions. If you bring a sense of mindfulness, a sense of just standing back, detaching from your emotions as they express themselves in your daily life and simply observing them without judgment, you will begin to see what your soul is trying to teach you,” he said with enthusiasm for her curiosity.

“Let us relive an example,” he said, as her face flushed a bright red. “Oh, let’s not,” she said quickly.

Smiling at her resistance, he continued. "Remember when we were on our honeymoon and you went into a fit about my religion and how you wouldn't have anything to do with it? Well, there is an example of a time when you could have chosen to just sit back and be an interested observer of your feelings just then. Instead, you raged on and on at me, not acknowledging that those feelings were your own. I say this only to give you an example, not to embarrass you." He looked for her response.

Feeling herself about to get angry, she just looked at him. "It is happening right now. I am feeling a fire start in my stomach and move toward my mouth! Deep breath, deep breath, OK, I will just sit back and observe this feeling. I am trying something new. Instead of spitting out the anger at you, I am talking myself through this! I am determined to understand why I do this!"

Relieved, he continued to guide her. "You can ask the questions that will bring in your guidance. You can ask, what is this experience and its feeling of anger trying to tell me about me? Why am I so upset? Just sit with it. Sometimes you will feel the response right away. At other times it will come in other forms, like a dream or a thought or a memory that you may experience in a day or so. Someone might say something or you read it in a book and it clicks. So that's what was going on! There is always an answer. After a while, it becomes fun to see where your soul hid it."

"I don't have to wait very long in this case," she said. "I am feeling angry because I am afraid. I was scared that your religion would come between us and that I would lose you. I tried to make it your fault, when it was my feeling I had to deal with in that moment. Wow, I am so sorry."

He put his arms around her and hugged her close. “You were just doing the very best you could at the time it happened. It was all you knew then. You were a frightened, newly married woman who wanted love so badly. We are all doing the very best we can, even though we tend to bring in the judgment right away and make ourselves wrong. By doing this observation of your emotions in the moment and releasing them, by taking responsibility for them, you become lighter and clearer. Your light shines brighter. Relationships are easier, and you feel better about yourself. But can I tell you how happy I am that you see it now?” Their laughter echoed around Heaven for all to enjoy.

The Helpers

Living spiritually does not isolate us from the world but brings us into closer connection.

Henri J. M. Nouwen

Smiling at her with tenderness, he said, “Think it and it will be.”

“What do you mean?” she asked with a puzzled look.

“Remember, your mind is the creator of your reality. I’ve heard you say, you are what you eat. . . . Well, it is also true that you are what you think. The energy of your thoughts is transformed into a manifestation of physical being for you or for anyone else. Is it any wonder you were having such trouble back on Earth?” he laughed.

She thought back to the level of her thoughts on Earth. They were not positive and healing; they focused on what was wrong and the sadness of it, sometimes the hopelessness of it all. Or maybe, it was that she felt so powerless and she couldn’t seem to find the place where her authentic power was hidden. And now it was in her brain? Which, when combined with her heart, . . . look out, because she was a creator!!!

“Well, it seems funny now but wow . . . I can see it now; I was thinking myself right into an oblivion of pain and suffering,” she said with eyes wide open. “And here I kept thinking that if I just was better or did it better, things would change, or if other people changed, but I have the choice. The power is in me! I am the power!”

“How do we get to the Board of Paths in Progress?” he asked quizzically.

“We think it!” she exclaimed with joy. “Look out, here we come!”

They ended up in an ungraceful ball of arms and legs a little distance from the Board. She needed some practice, but she understood the concept of the power of her thoughts now. The challenge would be to use it on Earth, where the vibration was so dense; the higher vibration of Heaven was a piece of cake.

The Board of Possible Paths in Progress was a visual delight to behold. She caught her breath as she stood back to encompass the movements of humanity recorded in busily moving lights on the Board. Some were moving slowly, some quickly, others seemed stuck, and others were moving in reverse. What boggled her mind the most were the brightly lit neon paths of alternative choices for each light. It was an incredible maze of possibilities. At any one moment, a human being could make a choice for a possible path just by changing the perception in their minds from some degree of fear to love. Having had the previous obstacles disappear, a new path would open up for expansion.

Her eyes were wide with excitement. Here was the authentic power of each individual in living color. And it was flexible and moving and had the potential to move in a more balanced use of power at any moment. The ability to move the light in a more positive direction was possible no matter what the circumstance.

She could see the range of traumas with which each light was being challenged at any given moment. Some were big traumas and some were smaller traumas; it didn't matter. Changing the thought pattern from a degree of fear to a degree of love moved the light onto a higher vibrational path. Changing the view of the trauma from the individual's eyes to seeing it through the eyes of the soul could change how each person responded to the trauma. Realizing that each challenge was an invitation from the soul to integrate a shattered fragment was empowering. It wasn't something done to the individual; it truly was a gift.

And many were looking that gift horse in the mouth; she could see that from the amount of stuck, blinking lights that grew dim in their luminosity. Her attention was drawn to each one, because very quietly they each emitted a kind of whining sound. Responding with compassion for one's self and/or another, releasing the victim role, continually connecting with one's soul, immediately put the light on a new path of greater peace. In fact, as she watched, each light brightened when it moved in alignment with the soul. They sparkled like diamonds as they made their choices in the direction of love rather than fear. The incredible power of choice available to each human being at every moment just about short-circuited her.

Looking at the Board, her husband quickly pointed out her light among the billions of other lights moving and blinking. They both traced it back to the beginning of this lifetime. She was shocked! She was right on track. Everything that had happened in her life was exactly as it should be. As she retraced her choices, she could hear the whirling whining victim sound being emitted at certain stops. Her light lost its power frequently

and she had to squint to see it. But somehow it held on and was helped to find a better passage. Somehow she had heard her soul.

What amazed this young woman the most was the commitment her soul had for aligning her personality-self with her soul. For every stuck place of trauma that she didn't heal and change her perspective, there was another one that popped up to help her. If she didn't learn to integrate that fragmented part the first time, she was on a repeating cycle of paths and choices. The soul was incredibly patient. If she didn't get the learning and healing in one circumstance, she would have repeating opportunities in other ways. The soul was bound and determined to bring her into the higher vibrations of the Higher Self.

She was ecstatic for her soul and for her personality-self. She really had to thank that body and personality for hanging in there through all the dark forests of lessons. Extending her hand, they high-fived each other in absolute joy. "Yes, I am right on target," she said with great satisfaction.

Settling down, they looked at the maze of possible paths that she could have taken. All these little neon colored lines were drawn all over the Board. She really could have ended up in some very difficult situations. She could have made choices that could make the strongest personality cry "Uncle." Somehow, she had listened to the whisper of her soul when she didn't even know she was paying attention.

The lines drawn were clear. She could have died; she could have ended up addicted to all kinds of things, drugs disguised as men, food, risky behaviors, lack of self-care, overwork, and illness. She saw herself as she was heading down those paths. Embracing that part of herself who could become lost, alone, and heartbroken, she tenderly brought forth light into the vision and closely held this dear one in her heart. There was no longer

a need to live in pain. She had suffered long enough. Joy flowed into every cell of her Being.

But, I Don't Want To . . .

Love is what we always are, there is no beginning and no end.

Stephen Levine

Sitting back on the park bench, Anisea and her husband sat quietly absorbing the light vibrations of the higher consciousness of Heaven. They watched as souls passed by on their way. Some were planning outings of their favorite things to do: some were going skiing, some were traveling, some were listening to the concerts that were playing in the park. Others were gardening, building houses, and riding horses. Others were busy studying and researching their past and future lives to get ready for their next incarnation. All of this was accomplished with a single creative thought. She had no idea how powerful an intentional thought could be, but she was seeing it in full creative action now. Never again would she take a mere thought for granted. It was the seed of Being.

She remembered her mother yearning for Heaven, saying the streets were paved with gold. Down on her hands and knees, the young woman inspected the paths carefully. There was no gold in the streets. It was an absolutely blissful energy of love that filled Heaven to overflowing, that made your heart sing right out of your chest.

The young woman was trying to make sense of all that was happening. "So these 'hits of heaven' that I have experienced in my life were gifts from my soul to increase the love in my heart and the light of my vibration. But I don't understand the difference between my inner guidance and my soul. Where is my soul?" she asked with confusion.

He loved helping her grow. “Your soul resides in the higher dimensions of vibration. When you incarnated on Earth, a part of your soul that wanted to heal some lower vibrational aspects of itself, the personality-self, came down to the planet with your personality and your body. It is a force field of energy within you that is the essence of your Being which travels with you from incarnation to incarnation. Perhaps you have heard it called the ‘higher self.’ It is confusing the way the words are used on Earth, but ‘higher self’ could be another name for that part of the soul.”

“What happened to Spirit?” she asked with more confusion.

“Spirit is the ocean of the energy of love, and your soul is a drop of that infinite expanse,” he replied. “Your soul is working to be reabsorbed into its wholeness of spirit. Every time you heal a fear-based thought, emotion, or behavior, your soul becomes more integrated. Every time you choose love, compassion, and forgiveness over hate, anger, or bitterness, your light shines more brightly. Every time you move into the vibration of love, the other’s soul is aware of that movement and receives it with love, even if you are not in physical contact with that person.”

“Now you are pushing me to consider my mother,” she said shakily as she stepped out on a plank. “If I am holding anger and outrageous bitterness against her, then I am holding myself hostage. My light is dimmer because of it. My soul wants me to heal it. Oh, that is just asking too much right now. The thought of forgiving her just makes me sick. That is something I will have to work on to bring to that point of love.”

Putting his arm around her, he said, “Eternity is yours. Whenever you are ready, your soul is waiting patiently and without judgment.” Putting the thought of forgiveness into the “to do” basket of her mind, her eyes were mesmerized by two extremely bright

lights coming down the street toward them. Not looking at them directly because the light energy overwhelmed her eyes, she knew they were heading straight for her bench.

“We are pleased to meet you; we are your guides for the present lifetime on Earth.” The beautiful lights said, leaning toward her. “We appreciate this opportunity to share our connection in a way that will hopefully help you back on Earth.”

For once she was speechless. She actually had her own guides? You mean they were helping her and she still was having such a difficult time? Her thoughts were rapid-fire. And then, she was embarrassed. They knew everything about her if they had been with her all the time. They sent a beam of pink light to envelope her and dissolve her fears. It was like taking off a heavy winter coat. “Choose love, not fear,” their message flowed over her and warmed her soul.

“We are available to you whenever you ask for us; you are never alone,” they transmitted the thoughts telepathically to her heart. “You can hear us. And we will hear you. Speak to us as you go about your day; call upon us whenever you like; no matter is too small; you cannot bother us with what you might consider to be details. We made this agreement to be with you in this lifetime before you incarnated. We have been watching over you with love, comforting you through the challenging times and rejoicing with you in the joyful times. We are always with you.”

Tears flowed as she realized on another level of her Being that truly her soul was connected to All That Is. There was an entirely new family for her to acknowledge; it was her birthright as a soul to have a family of spirit. And here was another part of it. They loved her unconditionally, which was hard for her to imagine right now, but she was

feeling the potential of that thought very deeply. They were helpers to assist her in aligning more fragments into the wholeness of her soul.

“We respond most deeply to your desire to connect; we are always with you in every moment.” they answered as their lights brightened immeasurably.

Her heart filled with an electrifying vibration of a love that she had never known. And then they were gone.

He looked at her and she looked at him. “Did that just happen?” she asked hopefully. “Did I just have a little dream or were those wonderfully loving lights really my guides?”

“Yes, that was an arrangement you made before you incarnated. Everyone has a guide to help them on their way. It is only when you begin to awake from the illusion of your Earthly experience that you are able to connect with them,” he said reassuringly. “Congratulations!”

“But how do I talk with them?” she asked.

“It is in the question that you ask, whether out loud or quietly,” he answered. “They will never solve your problems for you. They will answer your questions, whether by your hearing, your writing, in your dreams, or in something that will resonate with you. You just need to be open to receiving it. Allow it to transmit through to you.”

“Well, there was a part of me that said, yes, they will take care of me in this life, but I see what you are saying. They will just help me to make choices that move me closer to my soul than to my personality,” she said with a sigh. “Some days I just want it done for me. But on the other hand, I can’t believe they are with me always! I am so excited and relieved to know that.”

He looked thoughtful. "I know you are feeling very strong right now in this vibration of Heaven. I just want to remind you that the vibration of Earth is very dense. Experiencing the situations in your life on Earth is very powerful. These experiences can overtake you and make you forget your Divine origin and connections at the time they are happening."

"It is important that you take good care of your health, your emotions, your thoughts, and take time every day to connect with your soul by asking the questions of its purpose in your experiences. Remembering to include your guides in every choice you make will assist you in moving in that direction. It is also important to spend time alone every day, being quiet and communing with the beauty around you. That can be done by walking, sitting, or even washing the dishes. Bring a sense of contemplation and awareness into your life in everything you do."

They were sitting closely together on the bench. She truly was in Heaven. Souls were so expansively peaceful in Heaven. Some were listening to a concert and some were having picnics, talking or playing games under the ever-changing dome of illumination. Everything was perfect; her heart was full to bursting. Listening to the music wafting over to them, she recognized familiar voices singing together. It was a song she knew so well. "I can't believe John Lennon and George Harrison are singing together, right over there," she kind of squealed. Grabbing his hand, she said, "Let's go listen, hurry."

As she jumped up from the bench something started to pull on her feet. Jerking them up, she looked down at the ground. Nothing was there. She tried to move to go to the concert but something was holding her feet firmly. She looked at him steadily, asking, "What is going on?"

His eyes, forever blue as the ocean, looked straight into her eyes as he said, "It is time for you to return to Earth."

"Oh, no! I can't, I won't. . . . I need to stay here longer. I can't leave you yet," she cried softly. Her increasingly loud sobs drew the attention of souls walking by. They sent her beams of loving pink light; they understood perfectly.

He held her tightly as he whispered in her ear. "I am always with you. I have always been with you. I will be there when you call to me, just like your guides. You have much awareness of who you really are now. I think you know now that you are a soul walking around Earth, healing bits and parts of yourself so that your personality-self can align with your soul. When that work is done your soul will return here and I will meet you in such great joy."

He continued as she hid her face in his shoulder. "There is much work left for you to do. As you heal your karmic wounds over time, you will be able to help others on their path. It is part of your contract. You are under contract with your soul. You have me, your guides, your intuition, and the knowledge of who you really are. There is also a spiritual partnership waiting on Earth for you. It is a member of our soul group who is waiting to grow into learning about love with you. It is a very important part of your contract. It is a soul that we both love very much."

"How can you even talk about another relationship?" she asked with a tinge of accusation in her voice.

"Because it is for your highest learning, and that is what spiritual partners do for one another; they commit to each other's growth incorporating the soul in the relationship. There is a consciousness in the relationship that takes into account the

evolution of each soul. Choices are made from that perspective. It is not like a marriage, where each spouse assumes the perceived role of a husband or wife. The focal point of a spiritual partnership is how that relationship is experienced by each person in relation to the soul's calling. Communication and choices are based on the soul. This is a very important learning for you in this lifetime." He was hoping she was able to understand the larger viewpoint of this new concept in relationships. "I need you to trust that going back is for your highest good."

Wiping her tears, she thought about realizing and living in her own authentic power and self, and what it meant to trust that what was necessary for her growth was always being provided. She had to be responsible for her choice to grow in alignment with her soul. Being much more aware now of her soul's calling, she knew she wanted to answer with love. She knew she had to release her control on how she wanted it all to be. That was acting out of the personality-self. It was time to get out of the driver's seat of her life and let her soul drive. It had been a back seat passenger long enough. She needed to use her guidance and consciously make her choices.

His and her lights melded together for an instant of bliss, and then the pull at her feet sucked her right out of Heaven and into her bed.

With a body temperature still raging, she slept for over a day. Upon waking, her fever was gone. She was exhausted and weak but content. What a magnificent dream she had had. The kind that is so vivid, it seems imprinted into your memory forever. She looked up at the ceiling and smiled. "Hey, you," she thought. "Thank you for loving me no matter what." She missed him very much but she was not sad anymore. She was so flooded with love.

Knowing he had only left the Earth school of learning, and not her forever, was a spectacular gift in itself. But the true gift was in his leaving her in death. Who would have ever thought she would have said that? His death had activated an opening in her to help her to see beyond the Earth self, and that was a most precious treasure. She had been shattered into love itself.

She thanked her guides for being willing to work with her even when the chips were face down and headed for disaster. Honestly, she couldn't imagine a more frustrating job than being her guides. The times they must have been jumping up and down, when she wouldn't listen and thought she had it under control, must have just pressed them to the wall.

She thanked her body for putting up with all of her unhealthy non-soul connecting choices that she had made for so many years. And she knew she had work to do, but now she was looking forward to it. She wasn't alone anymore; there was a family beyond the Earth family. It was the unity of all Beings in the Universe. It was her true family. Anisea whispered into the ethers with a bright smile. "Thank you, Earth mother!"

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This dissertation began as an idea birthed in my therapy office. Clients who were working on the resolution of trauma in their childhoods from the perspective of transpersonal psychology requested a referral to a book that would summarize the progression of our work together.

From the standpoint of transpersonal psychology, clients were comfortable working in the concept of spiritual beings who were experiencing human lives. A number of clients held a metaphysical perspective within which they formulated their therapy process. Their internalized belief systems included concepts of reincarnation, karma, soul contracts, chakra energies, and multi-sensory personality characteristics such as intuitive connections with guides.

Trauma encountered in life was seen as creating a personality-fragment that required healing. Through this transformation, the personality-self integrated into a sense of wholeness becoming aligned with the soul. Ego-state therapy became an integral part of the process of healing the separated, wounded fragment of the personality. Cognitive therapy provided an avenue for changing destructive thought patterns into affirming statements of connection and alignment.

The mythical journey of the young woman represents the heroic tale of moving through stages of development to find the true sense of her Being. Her reincarnation and subsequent life lesson on the planet Earth may be encapsulated in the following summary.

In a parallel reality not far from Home, a life is being lived on planet Earth. It is a life planned with great care. The subject of this life is a further study on the subject of love. How does love work, and what occurs when it doesn't? In order to study this subject of love in depth, this personality-self wanted to have human experiences in order to expand into the higher soul consciousness, becoming one with the vibrations of compassion, forgiveness, and love of self and others. The School of Earth would hopefully provide some answers.

The soul and its guides carefully choose the environment, the family structure and roles, relationships dynamics, and the personality characteristics that enable this soul to fully experience this concept called love through the experiences of the human body. As a droplet of the Universal Consciousness, the soul descends into the dense physical body it has specifically chosen. The personality-self of this body is given the lifetime task of aligning this personality-self with the soul. In order to do so, she must gather the fragmented parts of the traumatized personality-self into wholeness. This process allows the soul to blossom in its fullness while experiencing life on Earth.

The child is born into a family that has not yet learned to love freely, because their own parents before them had not learned, and those beyond in multiple generations. It is no accident that she feels abandoned and rejected. This particular soul-created family situation would reflect back to her the parts of herself that continue to vibrate in the dense

energies of rejection, abandonment, and the condition of not being good enough. It is not long before her sense of childlike wonder of the world contracts into a sense of unworthiness, fear, and addictions. It was planned to be so. It may be seen as a gift or as a burden. It is her courage to surrender to her life experiences that allows her to experience the truth of who she really is.

Relying on her five senses, she tries to process information from the world around her so that her mind can protect her. The mind takes on the role of chief problem solver and protector of her life. The mind runs rampant with thoughts of fear, trying its best to ensure her survival in a world of chaos. There is no room for connection with her heart, as that has not proven to be a safe avenue upon which to walk. Hearts can be broken; minds can defend and attack.

By why is she here? What is to be proven from a life of troubles? The soul yearns to be fully expressed in all its potentials in the highest energetic vibrations. The ego stands in the doorway as the bouncer of all things that would unseat its power, wanting to command and control how her life will be.

As her life proceeds with the ego in control, the personality-self continually fragments into shadow qualities of bitterness, anger, judgment, fear, hate, and a sense of victimhood. Dropped to her knees in surrender, the mind finally cracks open to allow the heart space for the higher vibrations of higher consciousness to flow within, allowing the healings to begin.

Slowly, she begins to understand that her personality-self is not truly who she is. The whole is, indeed, more than the sum of the parts. As she clears her fearful thinking by embracing the truth of who she is, a multi-dimensional self begins to emerge. This self

is aware of the power of intuition, the radio of the soul. She begins to allow her direction to come from her soul rather than her mind. She begins to choose love rather than fear, for herself and her perception of those around her. The street signs of her heart become illuminated as love, compassion, and forgiveness shine through her.

The mythological journey represents, in varying degrees, the common trek that many humans experience in their lives. The common childhood themes of rejection, abandonment, defectiveness, and separation from the inner Self are illustrated as lessons designed to reconnect the personality with the soul through the developmental process of change. The role of the soul in trauma resolution becomes a transformative, integral foundational aspect in the role of healing—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

Discussion

Mahatma Gandhi is credited with the quote, “What is possible for one is possible for all” (Gold, 2002). This dissertation is designed to illustrate the healing path of one as a symbol for the possible healing of all.

This dissertation provides a metaphorical journey for the client who has chosen a healing path in which to align the personality-self with the soul. In *Spontaneous Awakenings* (2005), Adyashanti discusses the path of healing as beginning with remembering who one truly is, the essence of the Divine Being that one is. The “pruning,” as he describes the clearing of the self’s shadow, occurs after this realization of the larger Self.

This dissertation offers a mythological pathway to the pruning and clearing of the shadow. This process expands and validates, reinforcing the concept of realization of the

True Self with each step of transformation, embracing, accepting, and moving to integration of the shadow. Therefore, the smaller self becomes assimilated into the higher Self.

The concepts that assist the client in resolving childhood trauma from the viewpoint of the soul include the realization that one is a spiritual being capable of operating from a multi-sensory state of being. Creating responsibility for one's life is inherent in the perception that one's soul designs the main life lessons for each being as one incarnates upon the Earth. Victimization in any form is energy that dissipates in the face of increasing responsibility for self.

As the wounded personality fragments are acknowledged, nurtured, and integrated into the heart energy, the wholeness of the personality-self or ego becomes increasingly amenable to the process of surrendering to the soul. Addictions dissipate into non-existence and clear depleting energy for the increasing energizing power of the soul. The toxic emotions of shame, guilt, and judgment gradually subside, yielding to the higher vibrations of love, resonating throughout the Being.

Balancing of the male and female energies begins to occur as the healing process transforms the vibrational resonance. Excessive male qualities, such as aggressive behaviors and forcing outcomes, combined with excessive female qualities, such as passive, chameleon-like behaviors and submission to outcomes, begin to resolve into intuitive, rational, sensitive, decision-making, assertive, expressive, respectful, confident, and receptive behaviors that enhance and balance the growth of the personality-self.

As the client moves through this transitional vibrational state of being, the ability to communicate with the soul increases with a higher level of intuition and guidance. Life

occurrences become recognized as forms of communication from the higher realms of spirit, messages that serve to help the incarnate self-correct on its path to alignment.

Personalized traumas move from recycled woundedness and victimization to objective lessons with a purpose. Childhood traumas, viewed from the perspective of the soul, become a path of awareness, healing integration, a releasing of toxic emotions, and forgiveness of self and others. A feeling of gratitude for the role of teachers in the form of life experience and relationships becomes the basis of daily living. A deeper love and acceptance of self comes from the remembrance of the source of one's Self.

A gradual ability to live from the point of self-realized essence develops as the client moves through the transition to higher Self. The soul is then able to work through the personality-self or ego in full potential of All There Is within the being. A paradigm shift occurs within the individual, allowing the foundational experience of Self to be grounded into the personality-self. A healing process based on acknowledgment and exploration of the role of the soul in the resolution of trauma provides a paradigm shift for the client into the transpersonal sense of Self.

Recommendations

As a heuristic study, this dissertation is based on my experiences as they relate to my professional therapeutic mental health practice. The contribution that this dissertation offers to the multi-disciplinary field of transpersonal emotional healing is highlighted by my personal and professional experiences with clients. This dissertation offers a concrete myth that summarizes the voyage that clients embark upon when healing traumatic childhoods within a metaphysical perspective.

As stated in Chapter 1, Limitations of the Study, although I used variations of this myth over a period of thirteen years as a therapist in private practice, the work itself has not been evaluated qualitatively for long-term effectiveness with clients.

The myth itself as a whole has not been available to clients as a supplemental tool for recovery from traumatic childhoods. Separate components of the cognitive concepts have been received by clients as homework assignments at different junctures of the healing process. The experiencing of the sequential narrative as a whole process has not been available as a therapeutic tool.

I recommend that further study be conducted to determine the applicability of this narrative for other clients and workshop groups. Three main areas require validation for this study:

Presentation of the material covered in this dissertation to a larger sampling of therapists. A pre- and post-assessment could be conducted to determine if peer therapists in the field would find the material relevant to their practices and potential clients.

Presentation of the material covered in this dissertation to a larger sampling of clients who have experienced childhood traumas. Pre- and post- testing could be conducted to determine if the narrative of a healing process involving the soul would be effective as an adjunctive tool to therapy. Important factors to consider might include:

- e. Did the narrative positively support therapists and their clients in addressing the challenges of ongoing therapeutic healing of childhood trauma?
- f. Did clients feel empowered in their process of integration by their ability to refer continually to a source of remembrance of the role of the soul in trauma resolution?
- g. Did the narrative assist in strengthening the therapeutic relationship between the therapist and the client?

Presentation of the material covered in this dissertation to a variety of ethnic populations and spiritual practices. The soul appears in various roles in certain ethnic populations and spiritual practices. It would be interesting to explore how

this narrative might possibly enhance or expand the connection between healing and the role of the soul as commonly accepted in various cultures and practices.

I believe that additional studies, such as those described above, would have the potential to validate and further expand the thesis that therapeutic intervention from the perspective of the role of the soul in healing childhood trauma is empowering to both client and therapist. Considering the power of an experiential narrative that demonstrates both the victim and the warrior stance in approaching the healing process, the field of mental health in general may reevaluate the potential of the role of the soul in the therapeutic process.

In those healing practices where the metaphysical journey is recognized, this narrative of a young person yearning for spiritual re-connection to an energy from whence she was conceived, yet finding herself falling deeper into the shadow world of shame and doubt, may provide sustenance and reassurance to those walking a similar path of the earthly life.

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