

The Eyes of the Golden Hall

~ A Newsletter of The Center for Human Awakening ~

May 2017 Newsletter

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1. MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER:

You Always Are: Thoughts on becoming overwhelmed by the Center for Human Awakening

Someone visited the Center last month and reported that they felt overwhelmed by the depth of the offerings. Perhaps the surprising thing about it is they had a PhD in metaphysical studies. I am currently organizing material for my next book and the question has come up who will understand this material. I had worked up to now under the banner of: I write, teach and lecture to make deep spiritual truths accessible to ordinary people who don't necessarily consider themselves serious intellectual readers or erudite. I proposed the idea that I have to rethink this, as clearly I have failed, in particular if someone with a doctorate in metaphysics may not be able to fathom my teachings.

Life of course is our teacher and via synchronicity I happened upon a lovely talk by the sublimely practical Sufi teacher Irina Tweedie. Read her *Chasm of Fire* for a grueling, realistic account of spiritual training and realization. In the talk she reported that Sufism, rather than being mystical Islam as popularly supposed, was actually an ancient way that always was. She likened it to the *Upanishads* and the ancient Vedas and other pre-organized religious-spiritual teachings. I had seen this talk on YouTube before, but I had to see it again to remind me of my inherent conviction that I really have no choice. I could be speaking to one person or many: it's not my choice. Reality, Truth, Divinity has its own way; it's not my agenda, even if I was attached to one, that counts.

Tweedie recounts that her own teacher remarked that not many would ever be drawn to her school of Sufism. And that it was not because she or the followers were in any way special or chosen or exceptional. The reason was that on her path pupils were not, as she put it, *spoon-fed*. You had to work it out for yourself. You were not given a formula, a set of exercises, or a dummy to suck on, as it were. The implication is that the majority want to be shown, want a blueprint, want a time-tested method, a set of rules, maxims and instructions. Ultimately of course this amounts to the childish need for approval. How many times have I worked through life statements, emotional patterns, and defensive character with a client in personal therapy, only to ask, "What keeps you attached to your suffering?" and the reply comes back, "To get my mother's (or my father's) approval." What then?" I usually say and the answer comes back, "Then my mother (or father) will love me."

It's true that humankind is in the remedial state of infancy. It's true that people are infantilized by commercials, propaganda, fashion, the need to fit in, and enslavement to the desire and fear bodies. It's true that people want to be loved in a world that seems to have terminally forgotten that love is the very nature of a human being, so love is not something to get, to give and receive, to exchange and reciprocate and long for and feel the lack of. We are swimming in love and all it takes of course is the realization of truth to discover the truth of this.

The Way of Sacred Attention, the teachings of the Center for Human Awakening, meets this anomaly square on. We separate human psychology from spirituality because at the present time it is crucial that people grow up and that some of us, in order to face spiritual challenges, grow strong enough to withstand the powerful initiations of real spirituality. You can read about them in my books or in Irina Tweedie's. You can avoid them by reading the mass of popular books written by spiritual celebrities. I am sorry to say that spiritual resilience and attaining spiritual states is not easy reading, not an easy ride, and that it has absolutely nothing to do with satisfying your desire body or avoiding your fears. It is therefore of no popular interest and unlikely to be an attractive prospect to the rank and file. For those who are serious about spirituality though, it contains a

mysterious allure, an answer to a deep longing, a response to a sacred calling, one that that they may have harbored deep inside their soul since before they were birthed into this incarnation.

Do you know the saying, “It is better to spend ten years searching for the right teacher than ten years working with the wrong one?” We abhor resilience, persistency, patience, and the long way round. We abhor it when we are indoctrinated to have what we are told we want, what we think we want, *now*, with as little work or effort as possible, just given. We want this, we want that, we want the other. When we are not wanting, we are afraid. Wanting helps us avoid the fact that we are afraid all the time. It is the modern human condition. It is expressed in the conviction that I am I, myself, me, mine, the individual creation of my early life conditioning. But that one is not who I am. When I learn that that is the case, then what role has desire and fear in my life? If I want nothing, if I am afraid of nothing, what remains?

If these thoughts resonate with you, you must lose no time. You must prepare to meet a teacher, a teaching, and a group – what Tweedie called a school – and dedicate yourself to working out your salvation in the moment, step by step, as it unfolds. Some will seek an easier way wanting to be spoon-fed. They will of course never reach their goal. Some will settle for compromise but they will never enter the spiritual fire. Others – the rare ones – will settle for nothing, knowing nothing, needing nothing, asking for nothing. These are the ones who have an intuition of the ancient teaching that always was and the inherent wisdom in that teaching is this you are, you were, and you will be – you are always, for you are all and everything, the totality. You fear nothing and you desire nothing. Everything is you; it is what you are.

The teaching that describes this state of reality-truth is seemingly complex, but at its core it’s extraordinarily simple. The teaching is designed to reveal one thing, through your inner complexity: Consciousness and you are one. There is nothing more. There never was. You always are.



~ Richard Harvey, Founder of The Center for Human Awakening ~

2. Our Mission Statement and Core Activities

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Center for Human Awakening is dedicated to personal growth and spiritual development, alleviating individual and collective suffering, education in spiritual wisdom, raising awareness, and the promotion of transformation, understanding, cooperation, tolerance, and peace in the global community through personal liberation.

Our mission is to awaken individual human consciousness, further global healing and the collective awakening of humanity, in order to establish the spiritual-sacred foundation for a new era of consciousness, compassion and peace.

THE WAY OF SACRED ATTENTION

The Center for Human Awakening is the home of Sacred Attention Therapy which aims to inspire and enable individuals to awaken by raising awareness and consciousness through personal discovery, living in authenticity and compassion, practicing the psycho-spiritual rituals of ceremony, initiation and rites of passage, and establishing the sacred-spiritual practices of devotion and spiritual life-discipline in order to align humanity with ultimate truth, absolute reality, and real divinity by overcoming the challenge of self-contraction, the powerful dilemma of the 21st century, when ego-processes have accelerated and intensified ignorance and self-delusion.

It is also the home of The Way of Sacred Attention, a full and comprehensive psycho-spiritual approach to the development of the individual in the present stage of human evolution; The Creation of a Divine Meta-Psychology and The Art of Conscious Living.

OUR CORE ACTIVITIES

- The provision of psycho-spiritual psychotherapy for individuals, couples, groups, and communities
- Education and research
- Collaboration and partnership with individuals, colleges, communities and healing centers practicing personal growth and spiritual development
- Creating local and global networks for disseminating information and education about personal and collective transformation
- Humanitarian philanthropic work to provide healing and support for people in need

3. How you can Become Involved in the Center for Human Awakening, by Richard Harvey

We are grateful and heartened here at the Center for Human Awakening when we receive responses like, “How can I get Involved?” In conversation with Robert Meagher, Co-Founder, only the other day I did suggest that the offerings were so abundant that I can imagine having great difficulty navigating my way through it all if I had not had a hand in creating it!

So, to encourage your participation or increased contribution let’s embark on an exercise in clarity. The Center offerings fall into three main categories. These categories actually reflect the three, primary energy centers in the human organism, viz, mental, emotional, and physical. They are *study*, *therapy*, and *action*.

Study

Immense resources for learning the teachings are accessible from the Center website. They are designed to inform, inspire, and educate you in all levels of a radical innovative psycho-spiritual approach for the modern era. They include online courses, either short one- or three-module courses or the longer Sacred Attention Therapy Online (SAT) Training Course. Audio-visual lectures are accompanied by PDF documents for downloading with resources for further study, exercises, and the chance to apply for a certificate of course completion or formal certification in Sacred Attention Therapy.

Among the books and articles associated with the Center are nine books and 200+ articles. *Your Essential Self* is the recommended starting point for those seeking guidance in approaching an understanding of the Way of Sacred Attention. The articles give you a chance to focus on a wide selection of diverse topics.

The Center now offers over 200 video presentations on its YouTube channel. There is a great spectrum of psycho-spiritual subjects and studying the video material alone will bring you to an understanding of the SAT approach. Seven series of lectures are available through the Center website, featuring 42 lectures in total, and you are encouraged to study them in whatever order appeals to you. Finally, explore Bundles for a theme-focused and enjoyable meditation and informal study of the subjects on offer.

The SAT Study Group on Facebook offers you the chance to interact with others and share your insights and ask questions.

Therapy

The provision of therapy is central to the Center’s aims. SAT-trained therapists offer individual sessions, couples session, group sessions, and in some cases practitioner’s supervision. Personal Retreats also are available in Andalucia, southern Spain.

Research to create the basis of a Divine Metapsychology is taking place through a blessed collaboration with a group of international healing practitioners. This is the Sacred Attention Project and if you are a therapist, counsellor, or healer you are invited to consider joining the project.

Action

Under the umbrella of service you may wish to assist the Center in any number of exciting and diverse ways. From offering your IT skills, assisting with social media marketing, typing lecture transcripts, or acting as a client in SAT student assessments, and more!

The Center community offers an affiliate program, the Arhat project, the Eyes of the Golden Hall – the Center for Human Awakening Newsletter, and Human Awakening groups.

Much of the Center's humanitarian, philanthropic work depends on the financial contributions of benefactors. Contributions may be offered and dispensed at the Center's discretion or specifically given in support of the Center's bursary fund for therapy clients or SAT students who are in need of financial support. The Center is sensitive to women, particularly mothers with young children, who are unable to support themselves.

Finally, we hope in time that through the generosity of benefactors an expanded, physical center for the Center for Human Awakening will be realized.



I have refrained from including URL links here. There is a long list of links at the bottom of the newsletter. In addition, all the ways to get involved are easily located at the center website (www.centerforhumanawakening.com). If you have any questions, please contact us.



~ Richard Harvey, Founder of The Center for Human Awakening ~

4. Character Strategies: A Diagnostic Tool for Sacred Attention Therapy – Part 6 – Phallic Character Strategy, by Robert Meagher

This is the sixth in an ongoing series of articles about the Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) core element, Character Strategies.

Between the tender ages of three to five we enter the phallic stage of character development and become aware of, for the first time, gender differentiation. This gender differentiation may present itself as a sense of maleness and femaleness that progresses into a distinction between male and female.

During the phallic stage of character development, we look to the male figure, the father or male figurehead, for guidance. As we explore these relationships the phallic character takes in the male messages about the outside world. These messages revolve around: work; power; doing and action; and accomplishment. The overriding beliefs born from this stage of character development are that you are valued for what you do, because doing is more important than being or feeling. Remember, the world of feeling was left behind by the child in the psychopathic stage of character development.



During the phallic character development, the boy emulates his father, the girl mimics the mother. It is here that the ‘electra’ and ‘oedipus’ complexes will enter the picture. The oedipus complex, for boys, is characterized by unconscious sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex, thereby excluding the parent of the same sex. The electra complex is the same as the oedipus complex, but enacted by girls.

So it is at this stage in psycho-spiritual development that the child seeks his or her worth through doing and action. The child’s sense of self is defined by what they do, by accomplishment, and valuing the fruits of their labors. The major life themes emanating from this character strategy are “Work hard and don’t let anything distract you” and “Get it right!”

The person engrained with the phallic character strategy is often serious, prone to workaholism, and is uncertain of their worth—they are hiding behind their ‘doing’ to avoid feeling. The phallic character feels unappreciated and constantly under pressure to perform. Their commitment to outward endeavors prevent them from experiencing their feelings. These traits and characteristics may present themselves within intimate relationships by sex taking priority over intimacy and love. The phallic character is ‘contained’ and measured in their expressiveness and tends to hold onto anger and frustration through a ‘business-like’ façade. The unconscious life statements that characterize this stage include:

- *You’re not good enough*
- *I’m not important enough to listen to*
- *I can be free only if I do not want*

The therapeutic approach for the phallic character strategy is, in some ways, more simple than other character strategies. Simply being with the client and giving them time, valuing their emotions, can be enough. Touch, in a non-physical way, is more important than words—your smile, your attention, your willingness to listen. Do not over-talk in a session with a phallic character; let them do the talking. Let them know it is okay to ‘be,’ versus ‘do’—let them know it is okay to rest. Give them permission to be with their feelings.

The next article in this series will explore the ‘Hysteric’ character strategy.



Robert Meagher: is Co-Founder of The Center for Human Awakening; Vice-Principal, Senior Tutor, and Registrar of the Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) Online Training initiative; and Coordinating Editor for the SAT Project. Robert is a Certified SAT Therapist (Level 1). He has been an understudy of Richard Harvey since 2012.

5. Introduction to The Intelligent Social Change Journey – Part 2: The ISCJ Model, by Alex Bennet

In the previous newsletter, we introduced the Intelligent Social Change Journey as a developmental journey of the body, mind and heart, moving from the heaviness of cause-and-effect linear extrapolations, to the fluidity of co-evolving with our environment, to the lightness of breathing our thought and feelings into reality. Grounded in development of our mental faculties, these are phase changes, each building on and expanding previous learning in our movement toward intelligent activity.

To help connect the dots, we have prepared a larger version of the Intelligent Social Change Journey, which is available for free download at www.MQIPress.net. The Overarching ISCJ Model focuses on the relationships of the phases with other aspects of the journey. For example, three critical movements during our journey, consistent with our movement through the phases, are reflected in expanded consciousness, reduction of forces and increased intelligent activity. *Consciousness* is considered a state of awareness and a private, selective and continuous change process, a sequential set of ideas, thoughts, images, feelings and perceptions and an understanding of the connections and relationships among them and our self. *Forces* occur when one type of energy affects another type of energy in a way such that they are moving in different directions, pressing against each other. Bounded (inward focused) and/or limited knowledge creates forces. *Intelligent activity* represents a state of interaction where intent, purpose, direction, values and expected outcomes are clearly understood and communicated among all parties, reflecting wisdom and achieving a higher truth. We will repeat this definition where appropriate throughout the book.

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INSIGHT: The ISCJ is a journey toward intelligent activity, which is a state of interaction where intent, purpose, direction, values and expected outcomes are clearly understood and communicated among all parties, reflecting wisdom and achieving a higher truth.

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Immediately below each phase of the Overarching ISCJ model are characteristics related to each phase. These are words or short phrases representing some of the ideas that will be developed in each section supporting each phase. **Phase 1, *Learning from the Past***, characteristics are: linear and sequential, repeatability, engaging past learning, starting from current state, and cause and effect relationship. **Phase 2, *Learning in the Present***, characteristics are: Recognition of patterns; social interaction; and co-evolving with the environment through continuous learning, quick response, robustness, flexibility, adaptability and alignment. **Phase 3, *Co-Creating Our Future***, characteristics are: Creative imagination, recognition of global Oneness, mental in service to the intuitive; balancing senses; bringing together time (the past, present and future); knowing; beauty; and wisdom.

Still exploring the overarching model, at the lower part of the graphic we see three areas related to knowledge in terms of the nature of knowledge, areas of reflection, and cognitive shifts necessary for each phase of change. For ease of reference, we have also included the content of these three areas in Table ISCJ-1.

In Phase 1, *Learning from the Past*, the nature of knowledge is characterized as a product of the past and, as we will learn in Chapter 2, knowledge is context sensitive and situation dependent, and partial and incomplete. Reflection during this phase of change is on reviewing the interactions and feedback, and determining cause-and-effect relationships. There is an inward focus, and a questioning of decisions and actions as reflected in the questions: What did I intend? What really happened? Why were there differences? What would I do the same?

What would I do differently? The cognitive shifts that are underway during this phase include: (1) recognition of the importance of feedback; (2) the ability to recognize systems and the impact of external forces; (3) recognition and location of "me" in the larger picture (building conscious awareness); and (4) pattern recognition and concept development. These reflections are critical to enabling the phase change to co-evolving.

In Phase 2, *Learning in the Present*, the nature of knowledge is characterized in terms of expanded cooperation and collaboration, and knowledge sharing and social learning. There is also the conscious *questioning of why*, and the *pursuit of truth*. Reflection includes a deepening of conceptual thinking and, through cooperation and collaboration, the ability to connect the power of diversity and individuation to the larger whole. There is an increasing outward focus, with the recognition of different world views and the exploration of information from different perspectives, and expanded knowledge capacities. Cognitive shifts that are underway include: (1) the ability to recognize and apply patterns at all levels within a domain of knowledge to predict outcomes; (2) a growing understanding of complexity; (3) increased connectedness of choices, recognition of direction you are heading, and expanded meaning-making; and (4) an expanded ability to bisociate ideas resulting in increased creativity.

In Phase 3, *Co-Creating Our Future*, the nature of knowledge is characterized as a recognition that with knowledge comes responsibility. There is a conscious pursuit of larger truth, and knowledge is selectively used as a measure of effectiveness. Reflection includes the valuing of creative ideas, asking the larger questions: How does this idea serve humanity? Are there any negative consequences? There is an openness to other's ideas, a questioning with humility: What if this idea is right? Are my beliefs or other mental models limiting my thoughts? Are hidden assumptions or feelings interfering with intelligent activity?

| Phase of the Intelligent Social Change Journey | ISCJ: Nature of Knowledge | ISCJ: Points of Reflection | ISCJ: Cognitive Shifts |
|--|--|--|---|
| <i>[Detailed in the Introduction to the ISCJ and reflective of the Overarching ISCJ Model in Appendix A.]</i> | | | |
| <p>PHASE 1: Cause and Effect (Requires Sympathy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Linear, and Sequential •Repeatable •Engaging past learning •Starting from current state •Cause and effect relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A product of the past •Knowledge is context sensitive and situation dependent •Knowledge is partial and incomplete | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reviewing the interactions and feedback •Determining cause-and-effect relationships; logic •Inward focus •Questioning of decisions and actions: What did I intend? What really happened? Why were there differences? What would I do the same? What would I do differently? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Recognition of the importance of feedback •Ability to recognize systems and the impact of external forces •Recognition and location of “me” in the larger picture (building conscious awareness) •Beginning pattern recognition and early concept development |
| <p>PHASE 2: Co-Evolving (Requires Empathy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Recognition of patterns •Social interaction •Co-evolving with environment through continuous learning, quick response, robustness, flexibility, adaptability, alignment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Expanded knowledge sharing and social learning •Engaging cooperation and collaboration •Questioning of why? •Pursuit of truth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Deeper development of conceptual thinking (higher mental thought) •Through cooperation and collaboration ability to connect the power of diversity and individuation to the larger whole •Outward focus •Recognition of different world views and exploration of information from different perspectives •Expanded knowledge capacities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The ability to recognize and apply patterns at all levels within a domain of knowledge to predict outcomes •A growing understanding of complexity •Increased connectedness of choices •Recognition of direction you are heading •Expanded meaning-making •Expanded ability to bisociate ideas resulting in increased creativity |
| <p>PHASE 3: Creative Leap (Requires Compassion)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Creative imagination •Recognition of global Oneness •Mental in service to the intuitive •Balancing senses •Bringing together past, present and future •Knowing; Beauty; Wisdom. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Recognition that with knowledge comes responsibility •Conscious pursuit of larger truth •Knowledge selectively used as a measure of effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Valuing of creative ideas •Asking the larger questions: How does this idea serve humanity? Are there any negative consequences? •Openness to other’s ideas; questioning with humility: what if this idea is right? Are my beliefs or other mental models limiting my thought? Are hidden assumptions or feelings interfering with intelligent activity? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A sense and knowing of Oneness •Development of both the lower (logic) and upper (conceptual) mental faculties, which work in concert with the emotional guidance system •Applies patterns across domains of knowledge for greater good •Recognition of self as a co-creator of reality •The ability to engage in intelligent activity •Developing the ability to tap into the intuitional plane at will |

Table ISCJ-1. *The three Phases from the viewpoints of the nature of knowledge, points of reflection and cognitive shifts.*

Cognitive shifts that are underway include: (1) a sense and knowing of Oneness; (2) development of both the lower (logic) and upper (conceptual) mental faculties, which work in concert with the emotional guidance system; (3) recognition of self as a co-creator of reality; (4) the ability to engage in intelligent activity; and (5) a developing ability to tap into the intuitional plane at will.

Time and space play a significant role in the phase changes. Using Jung's psychological type classifications, feelings come from the past, sensations occur in the present, intuition is oriented to the future, and thinking embraces the past, present *and* future. Forecasting and visioning work is done at a point of change (McHale, 1977) when a balance is struck continuously between short-term and long-term survival. Salk (1973) describes this as a shift from Epoch A, dominated by ego and short-term considerations, to Epoch B, where both *Being and ego co-exist*. In the ISCJ, this shift occurs somewhere in Phase 2, with Beingness advancing as we journey toward Phase 3.

[In the next newsletter, Part 3 of this Introduction will look at the relationship of these phases with levels of learning and change developed by Bateson (1972) based on the work in logic and mathematics of Bertrand Russell. This Introduction to the Intelligent Social Change Journey is excerpted from the first book (Part I) of Dr. Alex Bennet, Dr. David Bennet, Dr. Arthur Shelley, Dr. Theresa Bullard and Dr. John Lewis (2017). *The Profundity and Bifurcation of Change*. Frost, WV: MQIPress. The full book (in five Parts) is available on Amazon (in Kindle format) and from www.MQIPress.net (in PDF format).]



Alex Bennett: is Professor of Knowledge and Innovation Management at Bangkok University, and Co-Founder/Director of the Mountain Quest Institute located on a 450 acre farm in the Allegheny Mountains of West Virginia. Alex is the former Chief Knowledge Officer and Deputy Chief Information Officer for Enterprise Integration of the U.S. Department of the Navy. She has authored five books with her physicist partner, Dr. David Bennet, including a new theory of the firm based on the Intelligent Complex Adaptive System model for organizations. Alex is a contributor to the Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) Project. Alex can be reached via email at alex@mountainquestinstitute.com or through her website www.mountainquestinstitute.com.

6. Insecurity and Politics, by Jim Robinson

Insecurity

Personal as well as societal development comes, as I understand it, from the healing of insecurity. Whilst I am not a total fan of Wilber's (2006) 'Integral' taxonomy, it is based on many different people's research and I don't know of anything that better describes the stages of personal and societal development. He does not link these 'stages' as directly as I do with increasing freedom from insecurity, but this is implicit in that the developmental direction, through the process of "include and transcend", towards the ever-greater wholeness, integration and openness that we are capable of.

Our resistances, refusals and difficulties on this journey of development arise because of our insecurity, which comes from our need to maintain our avoidance of unreconciled trauma (in its broadest meaning). Trauma arises from deficits of unconditional love, the lack of support, over-support or miss-attunements of some sort, to surfeits of criticism, judgement or punishment. From the deep generational attitudes generated by centuries of religious beliefs around "original sin", i.e. that children are born evil and must be made good. It also arises from Wars, from grindingly harsh conditions of ingrained poverty or from innumerable forms of neglect and abuse within all classes. Also, due to the complexity and length of our developmental journey from conception to adulthood none of us emerge without some level of developmental trauma. Growing up is hard and we naturally resist the pain of it at various stages with anger, depression, tantrums and sulking along the way. It is almost impossible to negotiate all the complex developmental transitions in an ideal way. On top of this are all the specific incidents of traumatic experiences that accidents throw at us.

The nature of trauma is that it is an experience that we can't deal with, that is too much to bear, causing us to bury and repress the hurt, pain, fear or distress we could not face. The adjustment we then make to our self in order to maintain the avoidance, causes us to set up patterns of defence against re-connecting with those feelings. When this happens, as it so often does, in childhood, it causes us to avoid growing up and taking responsibility for ourselves emotionally, especially around those vulnerable and wounded areas of the self. We naturally want to avoid the pain and stay as we are. All of this is automatic, an unconscious process, but it leads us to develop all sorts of compensatory defensive attitudes and behaviours which profoundly limit our relationship to our lives.

In order to maintain un-awareness, we split the connections between our head, heart and body and become dominated by repetitive emergency fight, flight or freeze responses. All this inevitably gets deeply lodged into our bodies and our feelings and thinking become stuck. Our habits of avoidance mean that we live in fear and conflict. It also means that we end up with a deep belief in our own inadequacy in some way. We are caught in "victim mode" which Jill Hall (1993) describes so well.

Obviously, there is a huge spectrum in all this, with at one end those suffering mental illness due to profound trauma, to those blessed with wonderful parenting and only minor difficulties at the other. But, as above, most people experience some level of trauma and the subsequent insecurity limits their lives and curtails their creativity and growth in some way. We all know something about anxiety and depression. These experiences sit on top of an almost genetically determined level of insecurity we all have from millennia of living with ever present threats to our very existence. One consequence of this is our tendency towards a deeply negative bias (i.e. in the news), or we adopt an unrealistically optimistic stance.

We are though very practiced at putting on a front to hide our insecurity. There is huge pressure in our society to appear competent and the master of our own lives and this comes from people's unconscious repression of their own insecurity. From this flows the need to deny, blame or punish any expression of insecurity in ourselves or the other. At times, it as though there is a giant conspiracy against this aspect of our existence being accepted for how it is, with everyone unconsciously pretending to be 'fine' without any debilitating insecurity. The cliché of clients coming therapy saying that they had a wonderful childhood is true. The need to deny being a victim is huge and those of privilege and power are especially good at hiding their insecurity, they so strongly believe in their superiority that their insecurity has become invisible to themselves as well as others. But scratch the surface and it is there. It is there in selfishness and greediness and all manner of defensiveness.

Proof of all this is in how so many of us are addicts in some form, whether to food or substances or behaviours, or in our wondrous variety of hang-ups, reactive no-go areas, compulsions, in the defeatedness of depression, or the panic of anxiety. Patterns of trauma and insecurity are often passed down from one generation to the other, we tend to treat others as we have been treated. I do find it wonderful though, how through therapy, many can break these generational chains.

Our underlying human nature

Humanistic psychologists and philosophers were not the first to argue that there is Goodness and huge potential at the centre of human nature. I think that all the world's great religions have long been saying this in their esoteric cores. It is what the mystics from all traditions have been saying for millennia, that at our centre there is God, Love, Consciousness, whatever you prefer to call it. Rumi expressed it his saying, "we cannot aim for Love, all we can do is work to remove the obstacles to Love within us". In S&S (Dec 2016) a lovely article looked at the Christian medieval writing call "The Cloud of Unknowing" pointing to how beyond our identified sense of ourselves it is possible to sense and be God, to 'Be' without our ego getting in the way. It also points out how close it is to the "Upanshadic maxim, 'That thou art'", it is there in Buddhism, in the Tao and Zen.

Humans are both Animal and God, and destined to struggle with this paradox, but it is clear from so many descriptions of the process over so much time, that it is possible to develop towards, and if very lucky, to embody and actualise the God aspect of our nature. Not through rejection and denial of our animal nature but by transcending it. Gurdjieff (1973) powerfully articulated this possibility for modern western man through the middle of the twentieth century, as did Perls, Hefferline and Goodman (1951) (healing towards living in the flow of the Tao) and of course many, many others from all sorts of perspectives.

This is about how, as humans, we have choice. It is an essential aspect of our nature. It means that we cannot escape the fact that we are developmental beings. There is no getting away from this, as much as we might want to (our wish to deny self-responsibility runs very deep). It means that we are stuck with this paradox, we have choice and yet constantly find that we are powerless to choose or change, the automatic aspects of ourselves seem to run on regardless. When we look, we find that we are deeply mechanistic with our habitual ways of being ruling us. We know that change is a mysterious process, we cannot change and develop by simply deciding to do so, it happens at a level below our ego consciousness, we have to somehow connect to the wish for life buried deep in our "goodness" and choose it.

But this is the miracle of our human nature, that we have the always active process within our sub/un-conscious wisdom that is always trying to help us heal and find our freedom. Without this we would be hopelessly lost. With it, given half a chance, we do heal and develop because that is what we deeply want for ourselves and others. This 'direction' is towards the place where insecurity does not impose its consequences, where "do unto

others as you would be done by” is naturally felt and expressed, where there is love and compassion, understanding and acceptance as well as self-responsibility. It is a place where we live more in the here and now, dealing practically and creatively with life as best we can.

This is not easily come by, but as insecurity is faced and healed, it is what we open to naturally. This is what corresponds to our deeper human nature, what emerges from the profound innate wisdom of human beings when de-cluttered from all the compensatory compulsiveness that flows from our insecure ways of being. Our hearts can become less afraid and more able to open to Love. Our heads are freer from the constant chatter of self-justification and blame and our bodies less tense and more connected to the energy of life.

Our ‘God’ nature has within it this profoundly wise force pushing towards psychological health and wholeness, just as our ‘Animal’ nature does on the physical level. What blocks this force flowing is that we partially shut ourselves down due to trauma. It is the wonder of therapy that helping us to re-connect head, heart and body allows us to heal and our growth and development to naturally progress. Re-making these connections un-blocks our feelings, frees our thinking and re-sensitises our bodies, and provides the ‘data’ we need to heal and re-find our creativity. Head, heart and body, all increasingly free and communicating with each other, represents our optimal functioning, enabling us to ‘be’ more ourselves, as well providing the ground from which we start to have choice and the freedom to ‘do’ without it being from compensatory compulsions. Slowly we can find our power and freedom to be our “authentic selves” (Harvey 2013) and stop projecting our deficits onto the world or onto beating ourselves up.

Everyone (rich or poor) acting from insecurity needs support to develop their awareness, but people also need to become responsible for themselves and their behaviour. Having choice means there is the freedom to choose the negative, the destructive, death over life. Without this possibility choice is meaningless. The issue here is about “free will”, which is central to human nature. The fact that the negative emerges as a consequence of trauma and insecurity does not remove our existential need to choose, to take responsibility for ourselves. How much ‘free will’ do we have? Not much, it is true. But there is always a little bit and this is central to what it is to be a human being. Without it we are totally animal in nature. We are back to the paradox at the heart of human nature.

We live with this fundamental paradox, it transfers to the two very different processes at the heart of our development, that of support and challenge. *We can’t take responsibility for what we are unaware of and we can’t become aware of what we refuse to take responsibility for.* We can’t ‘be’ without doing and we can’t ‘do’ without being. It is through these two processes of developing awareness (support and the relational aspects of our nature) and facing the reality of ourselves and the world (challenge / our existential aloneness) that we have the possibilities of freeing ourselves from insecurity. We need the intertwining of both, each reinforcing the other in the developmental spiral of our becoming. Wilber expresses this by talking the duel process of “waking up” (developing our self-awareness and understanding) “and growing up” (taking responsibility for ourselves).

This is the work of accepting the very human reality of ourselves, of growing through the middle of our insecurities with compassion, rather than hanging onto habitual patterns of avoidance with all its strategies of defence and attack. Healing insecurity through slowly opening to it, facing it and making it into our ally, makes us more compassionate to ourselves and towards the world, it allows our hearts to open. This is about *allowing and meeting* the suffering we could not previously face. This is how we heal ourselves.

For Wilber (2006) this is the move through the “Second Tier” stages of consciousness, for R. Harvey (2013) it is the “Authentic Self” second stage where our insecurity is known and faced. Both have a third stage (many ‘paths’ have this three-stage schema) which is concerned with finding ways to embody living ever more

connected to God, to Being, to the Tao, to the un-nameable because it is beyond our ego. Towards the possibility of letting ourselves simply live in 'Beingness', actualising our 'God' nature.

Our social structures need to leave space for choice, allowing for it and living with the tension and chaos that "free will" brings, whilst simultaneously imposing boundaries as wisely as possible to mitigate the worst destructive consequences that flow from the unconscious projections of insecurity.

Blame

An important consequence of insecurity is blaming, be it ourselves or the other. Both are denials of taking self-responsibility for our insecurity. Blaming is always a projection of that which we have not been able to face in ourselves and why there is such a strong blame culture in societies, especially in those where there is much trauma of whatever sort.

The political right, usually those with wealth / power and especially those privately educated in boarding schools from an early age (Duffield 2014), tend to blame, they dismiss and judge their own and other's fragility, grief (self-pity), loss, distress and trauma, by saying "get on with it ... don't be a sissy". They blame the weak for being weak. The left also dismiss their insecurity by saying "don't be a sissy" but here the blame is aimed at those in power. The left often identify with being victims and the right with denying they are the victims, whereas both are avoiding the reality of their victim-ness, their insecurity.

We have to separate blame from responsibility. Self-responsibility has many aspects, we need to take responsibility for what we think, for what we feel, for our bodies and our health, as well as our finances. Taking responsibility for ourselves is I think the most difficult developmental challenge we face, the journey to fully embody it takes a lifetime for most of us. Whereas blame is simply a projective process, where the deep unaware inadequacy that inevitably flows from unreconciled trauma, is dumped onto either our self or other, in the form of badness and rejection. Self-responsibility is our existential reality, no one else can do it for us. As adults, even when un-aware of what is driving us, we are still responsible for our choices and actions, that's the tough reality of life, something that the law recognises.

Seeing society and people as struggling with insecurity transforms the political picture, it enables us to move into a place where we can hold both left and right political perspectives from a place of some sanity. We can let go of the archaic good and evil, right and wrong positions and move away from our out of date "blame culture", towards something that is more creative and enlightening. Blame is the projection of badness onto the self or other, whereas seeing people as coming from insecurity promotes a more human, growth and process orientated perspective. This is why the "first rule" is to try and forgive, it is this that enables us to get past blame towards curiosity, inquiry and understanding. Towards at depth, compassion. Compassion with boundaries, and boundaries with compassion.

Insecurity in Society

So, it is clear, many of society's problems come from insecurity. We need to understand that it is this that drives all the negative tendencies of people. No one is born bad! Selfishness, laziness, greediness, anger and aggression, boredom, small mindedness, meanness, making the other or self bad, are all forms of defensiveness. It is insecurity that makes people un-creative and un-productive because it demands so much energy and attention. Obviously, the converse is also true, that the drivenness created by insecurity is behind much creativity (many wealthy people get there because they are driven by insecurity). However, I suspect that the

activity that arises from this “driveness” is often a double-edged sword with negative consequences, whereas the creativity arising from wholeness and integration does not suffer from this.

Understanding the huge negative impact that insecurity has on so many people and how it is behind so many of society’s ‘problems’, is I think, essential for the politics of building a better society. All the qualities we want within our society of greater equality, more meaningful community, greater openness, freedom, compassion, inclusivity, creativity, etc., etc., can only come through the healing of insecurity on the personal, communal and institutional levels. In each we need developmentally orientated approaches to facilitate such change. Insecurity needs to be seen clearly as the driving force behind all the negative aspects of ourselves and society, but this is hard because the resistances are so strong.

This is especially so within larger groups and communities and especially organisations and institutions. Here its negative aspects get processed in powerfully unconscious ways, anxiety is infectious and the pull towards the lowest common denominator powerful. It is as though the larger the group the more regressive is the expression of insecurity can be. Our need to be accepted by ‘the group’ is so powerful that it unconsciously overrides personal needs and self-responsibility, forcing us into collective obsessional behaviour. The needs of the neediest tend to dominate because there is an intuitive recognition that for the group to find its power and optimal functioning, the most pressing needs must be attended to first (Maslow). The issue of power becomes so important here, the more insecure people are, the more they react unconsciously to power issues, defensively, or aggressively seeking to defend from powerlessness, acquire or hang onto power.

Wilber (2006) argues that the wisdom or sanity of any group or community comes from the aggregate level of development of those making up the group. If the centre of gravity of those in a group is at the level of pathological projection emanating from deep unreconciled trauma, then they can be Nazis, fundamentalists, ultra-conservatives, ultra-socialists, or any group committed to imposing their views on everyone else. This is also why it takes so long for societies to mature. As long as there is a majority of people at levels of development that mean they are tied to unconscious projective behaviour, it is very difficult for the more enlightened to be heard and have power and influence. Indeed for ‘common sense’ to rise to the surface.

The analogy with personal development is that it takes a definite ‘weight’ of awareness and clarity and self-responsibility to build before our behaviour can change. With communities and institutions that “weight” is based on the aggregate of member’s development. The rejection of State Communism in Eastern Europe was, I think, a wonderful example of societal shifts that are possible. Another example of this is the recent general acceptance of the need for a “living wage”, the ‘common sense’ of it became overwhelming.

Discernment and assessment - ethics

All this leaves us as ever, with our need to assess the developmental level and wisdom of individuals, groups, communities and societies. We are constantly judging our environment in all sorts of ways and by using this ‘lens of insecurity’ it seems possible to do it in a more compassionate and creative way. It supports the assessment of motivation and development when navigating through the confusing fog of life and politics, providing a space for discernment (assessment / judgement) that promotes compassion and inclusion rather than punishment and exclusion.

This “hierarchical” discernment goes against our current “modern” and “postmodern” zeitgeists. Neither understands the teleological nature of our development towards post-insecurity ‘Beingness’, and postmodernism argues against any hierarchical power and control, saying that everything is subjective and culturally

determined and that there is no objective meaning. But I agree with Wilber and many others that development is real and measurable and assessable (and ultimately towards the transpersonal). To me, practically, this is about assessing the degree of freedom from insecurity.

We are back to boundaries, back to what we do all the time anyway, assessing the value and meaning of behaviour. This is about a basis for ethics, about being clear about what we are basing our understanding and evaluation of human behaviour on. This is about discernment and judgement and I am aware of the potential arrogance of this, but surely we need definiteness if we are work towards clarity. So, assessment based on an ever more comprehensive understanding of human nature, rather than on projective ideologies. This is the basis for this tentative enquiry into politics.

What are the implications of all this for politics?

From this ethical stance, what is the nature of a government that embodies these themes? “Support and challenge” implies both state support and fostering self-responsibility.

The Conservatives argue that they are offering this. But they are surely not addressing the suffering of too many people, the term “poverty deniers” does seem to fit. Overall what they offer to those in crisis is challenge and negative judgement whilst enabling the rich to get richer. The repression of feelings makes it is easy to feel “entitled” (Duffield) and look the other way in the selfish avoidance of suffering.

The Left wave their economic ‘magic wands’ creating false hope for those who projectively wish for liberation through some state run utopia. Both sides blame the other and avoid self-responsibility at some level.

The difficulty here is that when we look through the lens of either support or challenge, each tends to become totally convincing and the other disappears – “the underprivileged and those in need deserve support and those with privileged, wealth and power, need to pay for it” or “you make your own luck in life, it is all about the choices you make and only you can take responsibility for yourself”. Is it more ‘human’ to support and risk dependency in the hope that self-regulation will take root. Or is better to “challenge” and risk damaging hardship, in the hope that it will facilitate self-responsibility? There can be no definite answer here because it is connected to the profound mystery of ‘free will’.

When the Left and Right make their case well, both are compelling, because both are saying something fundamentally true about the human condition. We need to accept both “self-responsibility” and “support”, it is not “either or”. We need to embrace the complexity and resist the simplistic, and at times, the so seductive option of attaching to one side or the other.

The two apparent paradoxes of, the individual versus community, and challenge (responsibility) versus support (awareness), are in fact one. On the one hand, individuals need to grow up and take responsibility for themselves, facing their existential aloneness and choice. On the other hand, the other is myself, we all profoundly interconnected and need support, community, relationship and connection (including a connection to the transpersonal). The resolving of these paradoxes always comes from the movement into the reality of ‘the here and now’ with its openness, awareness and choice and deep practicality. Ideologies are surely always a projection of insecurity.

What to do

It seems to me that the first thing we need to do is to better help those in crisis. Here the Left are surely correct, in this rich country of ours nobody should need foodbanks and be without decent housing. We also need to be more imaginative and relational about helping people out of situations of ingrained or trapped poverty. People are either in crisis through no fault of their own, or they are needy, passive, defeated, negative, etc., because of the consequences that flow from insecurity, not because they are bad! After all, we all struggle with taking responsibility for ourselves in all sorts of ways!

Local authorities obviously need to be funded to provide a better safety net. Beyond that there are exciting opportunities that community building projects of all sorts can bring, be it through improving the local environment physically or emotionally, or intellectually, (the arts can combine all three!), empowering communities through creatively designed support. This sits within the overarching need to devolve power to the lowest possible level.

There will always be those, within all classes of society, who refuse to face their insecurity and project their selfishness in destructive ways onto others. It is obviously important that there are strong boundaries to contain the negativity of these people as far as possible. What is tough though, is that this often happens in situations where societies 'boundaries' cannot reach. Dictatorships, bullying and harsh hierarchical structures are still rife in our society, whether in families, communities, institutions, business, and education (especially secondary!). This is another reason why the issue of insecurity needs to be at the top of the political agenda, to create a new cultural awareness that makes the issue of insecurity and its consequences, as clear and visible as possible.

Flatter Hierarchies

There are many movements within businesses and organisations that are modelling and embracing this new approach of empowering people rather than infantilising them. These new structures have flatter hierarchies, they are open and supportive whilst giving little space for insecurity to hide. They are concerned to empower people and deepen democratic structures, to emphasise personal development within organisations so all parties have a chance of getting their needs met. Enabling people to feel empowered and engaged, rather than anxious and defensive.

Strong hierarchies with fierce boundaries create fear, insecurity and regression which are the enemy of openness, creativeness, communication, fun and compassion. Examples of how alternative approaches can work come from Ricardo Semler, offshoots of Wilber's Integral approach, Gestalt and many other "Organisational Change" programmes like "Relational Change", the Co-operative movement, community empowerment movements (e.g. Frome Town Council), etc., etc.

A knowledge of, and trust in, people's underlying goodness

The knowledge of our basic goodness or 'Godness' has many implications, personally, and politically in terms of clarifying the need to increasingly devolve power and deepen democracy. Having a basic 'ground' of trusting people, rather than always trying to control them, creates a different environment. Reducing rules and bureaucracy to a minimum has to be liberating for all concerned. We need to somehow reverse our "blame culture".

The trend for the ‘legalisation’ of all boundaries in institutions is horrific, the incessant defensiveness against being sued and the insidious influence of insurance companies means that rules are spelt out and bureaucratically monitored, it ties up so much of our resources as a society in bureaucratic knots and sucks the lifeblood out of so many jobs. We desperately need to find ways of getting back to using common sense and personal responsibility in our institutions. Again, it is about supporting people’s creativity and goodness by putting the need for openness, participation, democratic control and development at the heart of as many jobs as possible. Having an orientation that believes in and works towards facilitating and supporting people’s development is essential here.

What to aim for

We are always making meaning, interpreting everything from our underlying philosophy, whether we are aware of it or not and this inevitably reflects the level of our development/consciousness. As we expand our consciousness, i.e. become freer from insecurity, we can have a more and more encompassing and inclusive philosophy, able to better hold the real complexities of life. It is insecurity that limits us. As Wilber has pointed out (and science knows well), the “truth” of any philosophy is about how encompassing it is. We desperately need more holistic perspectives that understand what is involved in personal and societal healing and development. We also need the optimism that emerges from this understanding.

This is why the *aim* of policy is so important. The Right see paying our way and economic growth as the ‘solution’, for the Left a fairer more equal society is paramount. Both are important but what seems clear to me is that both would emerge naturally from a society that repairs and heals its insecurity. Then there is both more creativity, more practicality and humanity (and humility!) and far less waste from blind dogmatic foolishness (E.U.’s premature and unrealistic attempt at unity. Huge re-organisations of Social Security, the NHS and Education, etc., etc.). Rather than the Right’s selfishness, there would be greater sensitivity to suffering. Rather than the Left’s projective wishful thinking, there would be more ‘bottom-up’ change.

So, we need governments to be focused as clearly as possible on how to facilitate the development of the consciousness of its citizens, which means having as its aim the healing of insecurity. By having this aim at the heart of government, by highlighting and facilitating this task of transforming insecurity, people, communities and institutions can be empowered to develop a compassionate and deeply satisfying society.

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7. Authentic Humanship: How Ego Goes Before A Fall, by Paul Hunting

My understanding of ‘Sacred Attention Therapy’ is that the key to healing lies in our intention and attention. Intention gives us our focus, attention gives us our experience. If our intention is ego-centric our attention fixes on ‘what’s in it for me?’ If it is towards honouring the sacred in ourselves and all life, then we will find the divine, the way, the truth, the *Impossible*.

My meeting with Merlin

I’ve just got back from Sri Lanka where I was invited to run a few authentic humanship events for key corporate leaders. For over 20 years, my leadership development unique selling point (USP) has been my horses. I hold a vision of ‘bringing horses into the boardroom’ to reconnect leaders with their true forgotten self.

And very effective it is too.

Face-face with a horse is an ideal crucible for recognising and working through core issues arising from a false sense of identity.



The video

<https://youtu.be/KUF8y0FLY6U>



However, little did I realise in Sri Lanka I would be tested not so much in the boardroom, but in what I dubbed ‘the Inferno.’ By 8.00am each morning, the tropical heat in Colombo would turn my crucible into a barbeque – with me as the sausage!

On one such blistering day, half-way through a group session, Ineke Pitts asked if I would demonstrate the power of the *leadership metaphor* of this work by leading Merlin, a handsome 11-year old, bay gelding into a horse box (lorry). Ineke (left), Director of the stunningly beautiful Ashvaya Equestrian Centre in Kottawa, Sri Lanka, was my client and the horse’s owner. I asked her to show me what happens when Merlin is invited into the box. Sure enough, no way was he going up that ramp into a ‘cave of tigers’!

Perfect reasons is fear

The main difference between a horse showing absolute defiance and a human succumbing to fear, is the human will probably rationalise the fear into a 'perfect reason' for not taking that step. The human mantra goes something like 'I can't because...(reason, reason, reason) therefore it's impossible...therefore I can't.'

The solution to this issue can be found in what I call the 'TRUE' model. Simply stated, when our attention is focused on just getting the *task* done we automatically forfeit Engagement. If our attention focuses on an authentic *relationship* based on Trust-Respect-Understanding we automatically gain Engagement.

Building authentic relationship

No problem. All I had to do was build an authentic relationship with Merlin and voila – he'd walk into the box with me. Out of the cool shady porch I strode – into the blazing inferno where only mad dogs and Englishmen dare to tread. I was not only in the sunlight, but in the spotlight. A small crowd had gathered to watch this mad dog flaunt the mid-day sun. Of course I was wearing my signature Panama, so for five or so minutes I didn't notice the eggs frying on my forehead. My adrenaline was pumping as I introduced myself to Merlin and began what Ineke calls 'the dance of leadership'.

What we call empathy in human relationship is more aptly called 'feel' with a horse. Feel begins with intention and attention. Part of this intention is to ask for a response using as little pressure as possible - *and* as much as necessary. It's finding a real balance point. Another part is to feel (pay close attention to) the most minute signs of a 'try' (sic) and immediately release the pressure to reward the horse. The more he realises I understand him, respect both myself and what he is giving me, the more he will trust and engage with me – and willingly choose to do what I'm asking.

Into the cave of tigers

My needs were rapidly being dictated by the sun. I needed to get back into the shade. I hurriedly led Merlin up the terrifying ramp. I strode up to the top with the lead rope. He followed nearly all the way up. He stuck his head inside. The crowd was showing signs of great glee. Then I made a fatal error – I entertained the thoughts and feelings supplied so readily by my ego. Not only would the inferno soon be over, I was also going to accomplish in a few short minutes what no one had been able to do for years with this horse. I was going to look wonderful. They would think me amazing. And on and on it jabbered at me inside. Instantly this was no longer about my relationship with Merlin. It was entirely about me and my power and glory. I had lost my sacred attention!

Now, instead of following me, Merlin pulled back hard on the rope. He didn't care about my boiling brain let alone my kudos. He was reversing down the ramp. I could now feel the heat literally melting my authenticity. My feet lost their grip (metaphor alert) and the harder I tried to hang on, the further down I was dragged (metaphor alert).

Apart from me, everyone was thrilled Merlin had got as far as he had. I found several good factors to blame for what my ego felt was second best: the surface of the ramp was insecure, the heat was too much for me, I didn't have the right equipment, I needed more time, etc., etc. All of this was so, but the real reason I failed was that I had allowed my ego to jump on the bandwagon and take charge of the situation.

Positive focusing

Thereby hung a tail between my legs. Not for long. I reflected on how utterly amazing it is that a horse can so instantaneously, without benefit of reason, just know when his survival is either in the hands of a predator or a trusted friend. We humans do know this too, but, as Shakespeare said,

‘Thus conscience (judgment) doth make cowards of us all. And thus the native hue of resolution (the natural knowing of the soul) is sicklied o’er with the pale caste of thought (the ego). And enterprise of great pith and moment, with this regard, their currents turn awry and lose the name of action.’ – Hamlet.

In other words, we’ve lost touch with the wisdom and power of the true self. But horses have not – and, when skilfully facilitated, they can remind us who we really are!

Merlin ‘facilitated’ my self-awareness. I returned to the outside of the lorry and the inferno. This time it was not about me, it was about him, and about us. Contrary to his survival instinct, his life does depend on his willingness to load and be taken care of by his loving guardians. It was my job to give him a gift that would make a huge positive difference to his life. I took my time. I waited till we could truly feel each other’s microscopic language.

When we were ready, I asked again. This time he willingly came up the ramp into the ‘cave of tigers’ with me.

If you appreciate the power of metaphors and experiences like this to impart insight, transformational learning, and *I’mpossible* results, do please open a dialogue with us.



Paul Hunting, B.Sc.: has devoted the past 35 years to pioneering soul-centred coaching and leadership development. He soon discovered a rare talent for using intuition, metaphor, and symbology to enable clients to clear deep unconscious blocks to success. This led him to originate ‘horsejoy’, his unique programme of ‘Horse- assisted Transformation.’ His first paradigm-busting book, *‘Why talk to a guru? When you can whisper to a horse: the art of authentic leadership’* has earned him a world-wide reputation as a facilitator, trainer and thought-leader. Paul is married with five horses, eight chickens, and a cat. He lives near Stratford-upon-Avon, UK. Paul can be reached via email at paul@horsejoy.com or through his website www.horsejoy.com.

8. The Three Stages of Awakening: A Personal Exploration, by Cathy Knight

What are the three stages of awakening and how can we recognise and make any sense of them? I've read books and articles and watched videos and, for me, it is not a linear path that I easily recognise. My own map doesn't fit anything I've read about and seems to cross over and around itself. There is one tiny clue; it's a spiral. Your life, understanding and awakening processes cycle around and around. You travel gradually away and may then unexpectedly land right back, up close and personal, to your central theme(s). For me that central theme is my core wound of rejection and abandonment.

Eventually, after enough external provocations around the same repeated theme or pattern you end up seriously questioning life. I'd been aware of the patterns in my life for years and years and even the underlying causes and emotional triggers (if only on an intellectual level), before I found the courage to seek help. Perhaps then the first stage of awakening is becoming aware of the patterns in your life; beginning to see that life doesn't happen to you. I remember thinking why would the same type of problem or crisis repeatedly come into my life? I could see it wasn't random, the patterns were unwanted but pointed to a larger picture—some order was at work. There was no other explanation for the unrelenting shit that was being dished out in my life. For me the questioning and repeated crises over a number of years, in all areas of my life eventually pushed me to seek professional help. I started counselling and went on a weekly basis for six years, spanning a very difficult time in my life. The counselling enabled me to cope with life events but still the underlying pain persisted and, in part, still does. Eventually, I had no choice but to dig deep for courage and honesty in facing myself, my life and the seemingly endless thwarting of my desires. Awareness then, is key; awareness of patterns, crises and wake up calls. My inner being was screaming for healing, everything in my outer life led me to questions—why am I here, what is it all about, is this it? Recognising your inner element, the still, eternal, and changeless essence of yourself and seeing all the junk, the detritus of labels, history, emotional pain, and events seemingly superglued onto you. Finally, you begin to allow yourself to listen and communicate with all aspects; the good, the bad, and the ugly. We label aspects as good or bad and naturally wish to turn away from the perceived bad bits. However, soul work requires us to be with all of it.

A couple of years ago I knew inside that I needed more therapy, something more intensive than that provided years before through the weekly counselling sessions. I also wanted sunshine, and a break. My online search for such a possibility led me to Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) and the sacrificial fire around which I sat with Richard Harvey. At that time, I had no idea that my seeking psychological help was in any way related to a deeper spiritual search and longing. The abyss in my soul sought expression and healing. Stage one of awakening is dealing, as far as possible, with all of your psychological wounds and leaving the childhood ego behind and developing a healthy, mature adult ego. Even so, the adult ego can still hide some deep pain and more remedial work on a psychological level may be required. When the tears, the tantrums, the re-living, purging of past events and memories and, hidden wounds, seem behind you, be mindful that some ego tricks may still be active and you may yet stumble. Life and spirituality is a continual process, and I'm still not done on my core pain. Don't expect miracles; your path is meandering and unique—no one has trodden it before and that's why the maps can be confusing. The major 'landmarks' should however be recognisable.

Stage two then, is when we have dealt, as far as possible, with all our shit and hold much greater awareness on an ongoing basis. We accept and take responsibility for our lives and become a better observer. Through daily practice of mindfulness and meditation we find the calm inner centre and are able increasingly to remain and operate from this peaceful place. External events pull us out far less often and when they do we are able to

recalibrate ourselves far more easily than in the previous chaotic days. We become less reactive and more responsive. Responding from a calm place we blame outer life circumstances less and less, we realise that our being is the centre of our world and life is our mirror. Life is less about gaining possessions, personal admiration, money and much more about inner health, love, compassion and quietness. We will no longer tolerate that which works against our inner needs and we will change aspects of our lives as necessary. I found I could no longer tolerate my job where I had felt constantly scrutinized and bullied. For years I had put up with the job as a necessity and swallowed the pain I felt. I told myself I'd stay until my daughter turned 18 years old. In the end I quit six months before that date. My first morning back at work after my second retreat in Spain with Richard, I found absolutely that I could no longer tolerate that working environment and I walked out!

My second retreat in Spain was truly beautiful. The first retreat, a year earlier had been full of pain and tears. This time around I was blessed with a couple of peak experiences, they were also 'peek' experiences, in that I glimpsed another world. Returning home, I found myself in a new place of love, awareness and peace. Life became easy and light and I was fortunate that this feeling or knowing stayed with me for three months. Nothing had changed in my outer life, it was quiet and solitude pulled me along. The need to be alone and away from superficial and artificial environments was paramount. My dreams became deeper and more profound, and I enjoyed expressing my creativity in art.

In my case, the beauty granted by the peak experiences gradually faded and some darkness began to take hold of me. I found myself firmly back in the grip of ego and facing a time of doubt, despair and hand wringing. The very core of my pain was exposed once again, even though it made no sense at all; there it was—abandonment! This is more or less where I am now, the last number of weeks have been hellish, not externally, but internally. All the purging and forgiveness in the world, and I was back at this!! I may now be overcoming the worst and will need to dialogue with what is coming up for me. I have had another very profound dream of leaving the underworld (in my case it was the London Underground and coming back into a sunlit world). My walk up to sunlight left me, not at a Tube station, but in a glorious sunlit field, where I had to make one more journey. I won't go into details here, but I will say that in this underworld / underground dream I stopped to look at a map. It was a deconstructed section of the iconic London Underground map, and it wasn't as I know it to be in reality. The colour of the route I was looking at was denoted in the wrong colour. Also, there were tracks running across the tube tracks and stairs and tunnels where there should be none. I mention it as a personal note on the unreliability of anyone else's map to spiritual awakening; if like me, you find the maps, books and knowledge so difficult to comprehend. The obstacles are your unique path and only you can find your way; the maps are guidelines not blueprints.



Stabilizing in stage two, we are more authentic and may move towards surrendering our limited small self (ego) to the Divine will. In stage three, that which has always been, the true Self awakens. There was nothing to do and nowhere to go. It's like going through a door and looking back to see there was no door. It is the settling of the mud in still waters that allows the reflection of the Absolute truth to be seen. The realization is freeing and rapturous. Freedom from duality, division, separation, the tests and confusions along the way have cleared. The personal identity is dissolved, like a spoon of salt into the ocean, where every drop of ocean contains all there is and all there is, is expressed in every drop and wave; all is beautifully and perfectly connected and operating in Absolute perfection. The raindrop falling from a leaf, once seen as solitary is a singular expression of All and returns to the source.



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9. What's New and Upcoming at the Center?

The Center for Human Awakening video blog series, Naked Spirituality, is interested in interviewing healers from around the world. If you are a: psychiatrist; psychoanalyst; psychologist; psychotherapist; counselor; coach; reiki practitioner; yoga teacher; energy healer; or any other healing modality practitioner, please consider participating in our video blog series. You can contact us via email at info@centerforhumanawakening.com or info@sacredattentiontherapy.com. Thank you. To view our video blog series, go to <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLx4lzCsR4bvnEXOxy31TkjrdIJU1LL-6x>

We are pleased to announce that Richard Harvey has joined the editorial board of the International Journal of Indian Psychology. The Editorial Board is comprised of nationally recognized scholars and researchers in the fields of Psychology, Education, Social Sciences, Home Sciences and related areas under its Editor-in-Chief, Professor Suresh M Makvana, PhD. The International Journal of Indian Psychology is a psychological peer-reviewed, academic electronic and print journal published quarterly (see <http://www.ijip.in/>).

We are excited about the new students enrolling in *Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) Online Training* from around the world: Canada, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Mexico, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States. For more information about SAT Online Training, go to <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/SAT-Online-Training.html>

Our *Affiliate Program* continues to grow. We are excited about the family of global, heart-felt supporters that is aligning themselves with the Center. Affiliates are psychotherapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, complementary and alternative medical practitioners and therapists, counselors, coaches, healers, spiritual guides, spiritual teachers, students of spiritual and psychological growth and development, and more. Affiliates demonstrate their support for The Center for Human Awakening through referring people to Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) Online Training. The Affiliate Program costs nothing to participate in, gives you exposure through the Center website, and makes it possible for you to earn money for each person you refer to SAT Online Training and who enrolls in the training. For more details about our Affiliate Program, go to... <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Affiliates.html>

The Center's newest online course has been launched. It is called *Realizing the Divine*. Realizing the Divine is a spontaneous, channeled work. This short course offers an introspective journey through our spiritual experience to reveal the truth of our existence. Along the way, Richard Harvey explores personality cults of religious and spiritual endeavor and shares how to obtain liberation and live in a way that fully embraces spirituality and spiritual life. For more details, go to <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Realizing-The-Divine.html>.

Further courses that are either in preparation or the planning stages include:

- Sacred Attention Therapy Online Training, Level 2
- Understanding Emotions

- Dreams and Dreamwork
- Borderline Personality Disorder
- Narcissism
- The Psycho-Spiritual Approach
- Feminist Consciousness and Psychotherapy

Your Sacred Calling, Richard Harvey's follow up to '*Your Essential Self*,' was published by Austin Macauley Publishers Ltd. (London) in April. This is Richard's eighth book and a compelling adjunct to support aspirants through the second stage of human awakening, as part of Richard's 3-stage model of human awakening. *Your Sacred Calling* is an innovative and original book on preserving the sacred truths, rituals, and practices that connect us to our divine selves and empower us to grow through our personality to spiritual realization. The central theme of the book is that the sacred is fast disappearing from our world, not only due to the materialistic, non-spiritual culture, but through the influence of the spokespeople and teachers who purport to be speaking out for it. We have become immersed in spiritual half-truths, superficiality, and self-serving compassion. However, the book points the way through this mire of confusion and shows how to turn the adverse circumstances in which humanity presently finds itself into a precious opportunity for awakening. For more details, go to <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Books-Webshop.html>.

Purchase in US dollars (\$) here... https://www.amazon.com/Your-Sacred-Calling-Awakening-Spiritual/dp/1786129035/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1493308719&sr=1-1&keywords=Your+sacred+calling

Purchase in British pounds (£) here... https://www.amazon.co.uk/Your-Sacred-Calling-Awakening-Spiritual/dp/1786129035/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1493308719&sr=1-1&keywords=Your+sacred+calling

10. Soulful Center Offerings

If you would like to support the philanthropic work of The Center for Human Awakening, you can do so through our *Donation Center*. Your donation will make it possible for either: (a) those people who cannot afford therapy and counseling, but who sincerely need the support, to receive it; or (b) those who cannot afford the tuition fees to enrol in the Center's revolutionary and transformative psycho-spiritual training program called Sacred Attention Therapy Online Training. For more details, and to offer your donation, go to... <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Donations.html>

The *Arhat Project* is a residential spiritual community for people seeking personal authenticity and Self-realization where the processes of personal inner enquiry and transformation are accelerated through a neo-sacred, engaged schedule and life-style of spiritual discipline and focus and psychological exploration and awakening. Based on the psycho-spiritual approach described in Richard Harvey's book *Human Awakening*, particularly *The Three Stages of Awakening*, Arhat is a neo-spiritual living project where personal and spiritual development are intensified and potentized through communal life, group work, lectures and study, meditation, spiritual and sacred practices, and spiritual direction. If you are seriously interested in being a part of a residential community based on Richard Harvey's *Three- Stage Model of Human Awakening* (see <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/interview-stages-awakening.html> and <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/human-awakening.html>) and you find yourself in the first, or possibly the second, stage of this model and you would be inspired and enthusiastic about establishing a core group for a spiritual community where personal and spiritual development is accelerated, intensified and potentized in a semi-monastic, secular structure of scheduled tasks and spiritual discipline, then please write via our 'contact us' page (<http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Contact-Us.html>).

Retreats for personal and spiritual growth are offered through the Founder's spiritual center, Cortijo Llano de Manzano. Whether you are looking at a specific issue or exploring your life's purpose, a personal retreat allows you the time and space for personal exploration, clarity and relaxation, personal growth, deepening insights and replenishment. A retreat gives you the opportunity to withdraw and turn inward, away from the world of ordinary everyday demands, pressures and responsibilities. On retreat you make time for issues that are calling to you from your inner world, to relax, recuperate and refresh yourself spiritually, physically, energetically, mentally and emotionally. Your retreat can be self-directed, or themed with guidance, skillful reflection and encouragement from our Founder. Retreats are available to individuals and couples. For more information about the retreats, please visit <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/retreats.php>.

Have you considered becoming a *Friend of The Center*? Friends of The Center for Human Awakening come from all walks of life. Some friends are psychotherapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, complementary and alternative medical practitioners and therapists, counselors, coaches, healers, spiritual guides, spiritual teachers, students of spiritual and psychological growth and development, and more. What all these Friends have in common is a heart-and-soul-felt support and interest in the teachings and practice of The Center for Human Awakening. See the benefits of becoming a Friend at <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Friends.html>.

The Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) Project is a rare, unique and exciting project will produce a body of writing that explores the psycho-spiritual psychotherapy of Richard Harvey through his 3-stage model of human awakening. The resultant published works will endeavor to guide readers through Richard Harvey's model with practical exercises, examples and theory. The work will almost certainly be illustrated by personal material that arises in the process of experientially learning about Richard's Sacred Attention Therapy through this collaborative venture. For more information about the SAT project, please visit <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/About-Research.html>.

There is a plethora of *Resources* available to you on the Center website, many of them free. You can enjoy articles, books, integrated bundles of teaching aids, videos, and more. Begin your exploration of these resources at <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Offerings.html>.

Volunteer opportunities abound with The Center for Human Awakening. If you would like to volunteer for one of the opportunities below, or if you think of other ways you would like to share your gifts and talents with the Center, please email us at info@centerforhumanawakening.com.

- Hosts for European tour
- Social media promoters
- Transcribers
- Writers
- Editors
- Mock therapy clients

For more information about the above volunteer opportunities, please visit <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Volunteer.html>.

Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) Practitioners can work with you through the three stages of human awakening. See the list of SAT Therapists that are available to work with you on your journey of self-discovery, transformation into authenticity, and union with the source of consciousness. Visit <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/SAT-Therapists.html> for all the details.

Richard Harvey's *BLOGs and VLOGs* are posted weekly. Both the BLOG and VIDEO BLOG are spontaneous, short pieces. The material is written or recorded in response to questions, remarks, and responses on spiritual matters that Richard has received or read during the week, interactions in the Sacred Attention Therapy Study Group, or simple inspiration with a feeling for the moment's revelation.

Read the *BLOG* at <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/BLOG.html>.

View the *VLOG* at <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Video-BLOG.html>.

The *Study Group* brings together psychotherapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, complementary and alternative medical practitioners and therapists, counselors, coaches, healers, spiritual guides, spiritual teachers, students of spiritual and psychological growth and development, and more. We gather on our Linked In and Facebook

Groups to build a community of SAT students and practitioners; provide a forum for raising awareness of SAT and for studying and practicing SAT; and facilitate the journey of self-discovery, transformation into authenticity, and union with the source of consciousness. The Study Group moderator posts questions and readings on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week. For more information about the SAT Study Group, and to sign up, visit <http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Study-Group.html>.

Please tell others about The Center for Human Awakening; please tell your friends, your therapists, your relatives, and any forward, progressive thinking people who could benefit from this work. In Richard Harvey's forthcoming book¹ he states the case for us being "custodians of the future" in a world that is being debased as it loses touch with the genuine sacred-spiritual truths and ceremonies. If we do not act in all the ways that our true nature dictates we will become complicit in the destruction of the human consciousness of the inner worlds, responsible in whatever way for the degradation of the outer world, and ignorant and helpless in the insight that there is truly no separation between the inner and the outer, between us and them, and between the human and the divine. Thank you for being with us!

¹ *Your Sacred Calling: Awakening the Soul to A Spiritual Life in the 21st Century*, now published by Austin Macauley Publishers Ltd.

Purchase in US dollars (\$) here... https://www.amazon.com/Your-Sacred-Calling-Awakening-Spiritual/dp/1786129035/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1493308719&sr=1-1&keywords=Your+sacred+calling

Purchase in British pounds (£) here... https://www.amazon.co.uk/Your-Sacred-Calling-Awakening-Spiritual/dp/1786129035/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1493308719&sr=1-1&keywords=Your+sacred+calling

11. Links

WEBSITES

<http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/>

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/>

SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/CenterforHumanAwakening/>

LINKEDIN

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<https://twitter.com/CenterforAwaken>

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCD_pJVba_LktmEzfunc51kfQ

BOOKS

<http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Books.html>

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/books/>

<http://www.amazon.com/-/e/B004WC4YQI>

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-flight-of-consciousness-richard-harvey/1004783095?ean=9781853981418>

ARTICLES

<http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Articles.html>

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/articles/>

http://ezinearticles.com/?expert=Richard_G_Harvey

<http://www.buzzle.com/authors.asp?author=51337>

<http://www.articlesbase.com/authors/richard-harvey/835688>

LECTURES

<http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Lectures.html>

VIDEO TALKS

<http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Videos.html>

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/video-talks.html>

STUDY GROUP

<http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Study-Group.html>

BLOG

<http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/BLOG.html>

VIDEO BLOG (VLOG)

<http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/Video-BLOG.html>

RETREATS

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/retreats.php>

INDIVIDUAL AND COUPLES THERAPY

<http://www.centerforhumanawakening.com/About-Us.html>

<http://www.Centerforhumanawakening.com/SAT-Therapists.html>

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/individual-therapy.html>

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/couples-counseling.html>

PRACTITIONERS' SUPERVISION

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/practitioner-supervision.html>

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<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/richard-harvey-music.html>

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