

Friends of Sacred Attention Therapy

...listening with the whole self to the soul of the other.

~ Richard Harvey

October 2016 Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 4

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1. MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER:

Doubt

Doubt is an ambiguous topic in psycho-spiritual development. Initial enthusiasm or necessity is often balanced by doubt. But it may take a little time to emerge. The newly convinced convert to therapy and counseling revels in the therapy process, the excitement, the insights, and the attention in the initial stages. But when they meet a steep incline in their therapy work, one that demands some real sacrifice or loss, they balk, they turn, and just before they run, they experience doubt.

My life was actually OK until I embarked on the inner journey, Surely I was really happy with so-and-so but therapy convinced me to break up with them, My therapist seemed so wise but now all I see are the cracks -- he's just like the rest of us, Therapy promises a lot but where's the payoff really? What good does it really do -- I was actually much happier without it!

Sentiments of this kind can lead to bailing out. We move onward, but backward, and in time the dissatisfaction grows again or yet again we face a crisis of personality and character.

Something similar happens in spiritual practice. With everything in place – teacher, teaching, and supportive structures including a group – the aspiring adept enters the honeymoon period. Everything is bright; everything is beautiful. We even romanticize the challenges ahead. Our personal forbearance and ideas of what is to come exalt us in our own eyes. Self-importance creeps in, alongside the glory of the selfless enterprise of spiritual awakening. We can hardly decide if we aspire to “bodhisattvaism,” saving the world and ending suffering itself or to give up our very drop in humility and self-renunciation as we merge with the ocean like Ramana Maharshi. In any case our spiritual destiny is assured, our grasp on the means to enlightenment is firm.

But yet again when the going gets tough... Sometimes you rebound from the doubt, the confusion, the insidious penetration of the ego-processes in your consciousness appearing and disappearing, but always undermining you. You may relax into surety now only further hallowed by your having withstood the test of spiritual doubt. You may cleave to the teacher, the teaching, and the supportive group more, now you have faced the ordeal and survived the test. What you need to know however is this.

The fluctuations of the ego-self always rebound between two opposites. The place of true divine wisdom within you has no such opposition, no such reference points. Be extremely careful, the genuine spiritual aspirant can only handle so much negative influence. If the people you hang out with in the main are not involved in spiritual *sadhana*, or, in the case of the inner journey, therapy or counseling, change who you hang out with. It is a strong being indeed who can withstand the pervasive atmosphere of cynicism, constant questioning, and destabilizing doubt over time.

Within you too these doubts sprawl across your consciousness. But remember there are only ever two things going on: the delusion of separation (or ego) and Truth. From delusion no reality will spring; from Truth only reality may spring. Your doubts deserve a place at the table of the ego-self. That is where you can place them in order to survey them clearly and see that they lead you only to despair and disillusionment. The true way is deepening into your being. There you find no aspirations or setbacks, only blessings. There the case for doubt crumbles – as does the case for certainty. The way to Truth, as ever, is between the opposites. Notice your see-sawing mind, your vacillating sense of your false self, generating and regenerating dramas to give credence to itself.



Doubt is just one more stop along the way. Don't banish it, don't marginalize it – but don't believe in it or attach to it either. Your heart never doubts. Your will to awaken remains pure. In spite of the doubt, you live the reality of truth, the reality of love, the conviction that all is the same and You are That.



~ Richard Harvey, Founder of Sacred Attention Therapy ~

2. Tell Me Who You Are?, by Richard Harvey

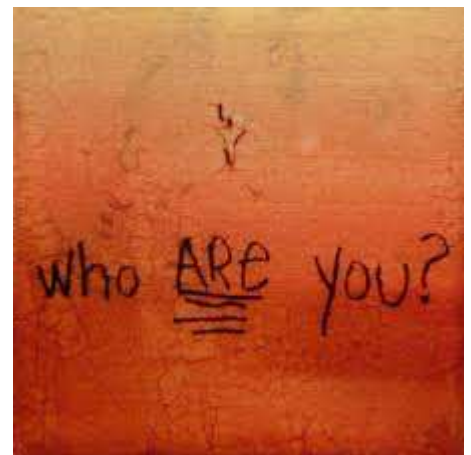
For some days I had been engaged in a communication exercise on a Tantric Buddhist retreat. Long spells of sitting meditation interspersed with slow walking gave way to successive forty-minute sessions in which we would pair up with someone, sit opposite them and on the strike of a bell ask, “Tell me who you are?” When the bell struck again the other would ask the same question.

The question is, of course, maddening. Once you have exhausted your personal details and statistics, faults and virtues and your interminable history, you scratch your head. You have been instructed to carry on responding and so you begin to face the knowledge that either there is no answer because no one is there, or, if you are truly there, you do not know the answer. The question is a *koan* – it has no logical answer – it is designed to awaken you.

The teacher was waiting for me in his room. I walked slowly through the meadow towards the French windows that opened directly onto the fields. The warm summer wind cut swathes through the lush green field like a comb brushing a giant's head. I could hear the starlings wheeling low, just above me in the magnificent azure sky. The sun was warm on my skin and there was a refreshing breeze. As I approached, I smelt the musky aroma of incense coming from the room. I sat down and looked into his face noticing his kind and alert features.

“Tell me who you are?” he said.

Now, when the teacher asked the question, I felt a fork in the road open up in my consciousness. My mind's eye focused on a very clear and definite choice. I could trot out the same old, tired, unconvincing and dead material from the past, interspersed with a few remarks designed to win approval and make him think well of me and the progress I had made



on my spiritual quest. All of this was well known to me. Alternatively, I could take a leap into the unknown, abandon the usual parameters and safety settings and simply not know. It felt life threatening and yet strangely familiar. I had, after all, been avoiding this moment all of my life. And here was my opportunity...

I do not know how it happened. I do not know what I said or for how long I spoke. I dimly remember seeing a bird flying by and the deep blue sky framed in the window. I remember not feeling separate from the bird, the sky or the teacher. My awareness flew with that of the bird... I remember feeling at one with existence... the self in me dissolved and I was released... I flew and I soared... I knew nothing and everything... I *was* consciousness flying in total freedom.

When I stopped speaking the teacher looked at me and said, “Now *you* are teaching *me*.” We smiled at each other. He gave me a new question and I left to return to the group, who were sitting in pairs engaged in the communication exercise.

As I returned I can remember my old self returning, beginning to take hold again, pulling me out of the glorious feeling of oneness with all things. I started to relish the achievement, the graduation to the new question. Just after I sat down, the bell rang out. I leaned forward and said proudly to my partner, “I have a new question,” and promptly found that I had forgotten it – at least, it was not so much that I had forgotten it but more that the words were “swimming” inside me and I was not able to pin them down nor arrange them into what felt like the right order to reflect their meaning. I approached the teacher, who had returned and was sitting overseeing the group.

“Would you tell me my new question again?” I asked him.

“Existence is only now. What is it?” he replied. As I was returning to my seat he called to me. I turned. His demeanour was a mixture of intense seriousness, light humour and complete detachment. He had recast my question.

“How is life fulfilled?” he said.

(From the Preface to Richard Harvey, *The Flight of Consciousness: A Contemporary Map for the Spiritual Journey*, Ashgrove 2002. See <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/books/flight-of-consciousness.html>)



~ Richard Harvey, Founder of Sacred Attention Therapy ~

3. Character Strategies: A Diagnostic Tool for Sacred Attention Therapy – Part 3 – The Oral and Compensated Oral Character Strategies, by Robert Meagher

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

As the newborn is thrust into the outside world through the birth process, they enter the oral stage of character development. In this context, oral refers to feeding and nourishment. This feeding and nourishment is not limited to being fed or nourished physically, however. Being held and looked at, being loved and receiving attention, being stroked and caressed, and being spoken to tenderly are equal and essential to the overall nourishment, health and well-being of the newborn in the oral stage of development.

The newborn's fundamental needs are the theme of the oral stage; needs like survival, feeding, growth, and healthy physical, mental, and emotional / psychological development. The newborn may be helpless in having their needs met, so they may depend on others for their caring and needs at this early stage in development. And it is the child's caregivers that bear the responsibility for meeting these needs.

Our connection to the world around us is formed and solidifies through our early experiences with love (or not), tenderness (or not), and caring (or not). If our caregivers are absent, either physically, mentally, or emotionally, are connectedness to the world may be compromised through negative messaging born out of neglect and the withholding of our fundamental needs. In the oral stage of development, we develop our attitudes toward life and carry those with us through later stages of character development. In other words, we grow up with certain expectations based on how our early needs were met, or not.

Because the oral stage of development is based on dependency, our interdependence with others also emerges at this stage in character development. Therefore, the lessons we learn early in life impact our relationships later in life, most notably in the dynamic interactions around giving and receiving.



The oral character strategy is rooted in the first six weeks to one and one half years of life. As mentioned above, the themes for the oral character are nourishment, feeding, and grounding. These themes may present themselves through the need for survival in the face of uncertainty and insecurity about basic care, nurturing, and attention. These themes may play out in the oral character through such introspective questions as:

- *Can I make it on my own?*
- *Can I take care of myself?*

The person whose character strategy is based on oral trauma is dependent, endearing, and needy. It may not be surprise, then, that the oral character needs to be with other people. This outreach is an attempt to get what she wants as a strategy to deal with the anger resulting from being denied what she / he needed in this early stage of development. The oral person's life statements may include:

- *There's no one here for me*
- *My needs are not important*
- *It won't last*

The therapeutic approach with the oral character revolves around gently, practically, and realistically facilitating understanding of their needs and how they may be met, now that they are no longer a child. Remember, the oral character has adapted and 'got by,' and has coped with the belief their needs have been withheld. The oral character is desperately hungry and carries powerful feelings of sadness, longing, and weakness. The oral character may be full of excuses or reasons for not accepting love and attention, primarily through the life statement 'It won't last.' Once sufficient trust has been built between the therapist and client, the therapist may need to help the oral character to process their anger about not getting their needs met when they were a child.

Associated with the oral trauma is a related character strategy, the compensated oral character strategy. This is the oral character strategy in disguise. The compensated oral character strategies is rooted in the same issues of nourishment and attention, but instead of exhibiting child-like behavior to get their needs met, the compensated oral character goes to the other extreme—avoiding reliance on others and supporting him or herself.

The compensated oral character is all about the introspective question "*Can I count on others?*" And the answer is always "No, I can't!" So whereas the oral character will seek others to meet their needs, the compensated oral character will seek isolation and often be seen working alone. The compensated oral character strategy is based on the belief that life is challenging and presents itself through such life statements as:

- *I have to do it alone*
- *I must protect my independence*

The therapeutic process for the compensated oral focuses, first, on guiding the client to acknowledge the weakness inherent in their cover-up which will enable and facilitate them accepting help from others. Then, like with the oral character strategy, gently, practically, and realistically facilitating understanding of their needs and how they may be met, now that they are no longer a child. Finally, help the client process their anger about not getting their needs met. The next article in this series will explore the 'psychopathic' character strategy.



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

4. In The Middle, by Oliver Baum

The whole hollow edifice of the ego-complex is itself a pattern. We behave within these patterns and perceive within them. Our beliefs and our world-view are bounded by them. The ego must impose its pattern on everything compulsively and this is what you are doing. You impose the ego-limitations, ego-contraction, and ultimately ego-patterns on all and everything. You can see it far easier in another. Notice how family, creativity, spirituality -- everything participates in the same essential set of beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and contraction. The outer and the inner worlds are similarly imposed on, so that it seems the survival of your ego depends on a kind of fascistic dominance. Everything conforms to my pattern and I will impose it onto everything. ~ Excerpt from SAT Online Training, Level 1 lecture manuscript

Right now I'm supposed to be sitting down and writing an article on Jesus' ministry as a metaphor for mid-life; think Joseph Campbell and Adyashanti and at least as clever and meaningful. I may have set the bar a bit high. I'm also supposed to be at a 25th anniversary school reunion, an Old Boys day at one of those great British bastions of educational privilege with Neo Gothic architecture that makes Hogwarts look like a suburban semi. You might have noticed I'm not really doing either...

One represents the old life, class, family, society and all the expectations that came with it, the other well I don't really know where that one's going if I'm honest. If I truly devote myself to writing this article, what will happen? Will I commit myself to a life of poverty, a monk's life, or even worse I might be a nerd and not the Rock Star in the making I was back then...much safer to go back to what I know. OK it was lonely, stark, cold and god help you if you showed emotion but at least I can survive there and have a few beers at the school bar when things get a bit difficult and I want a sense of connection with the world. Except they don't really represent any of that, do they?

Yeah, but I'm all spiritual now (not to mention 43 $\frac{3}{4}$) I work as a psychotherapist not a banker or a lawyer, I have two degrees (maybe I am a nerd). I know what would be the best thing to do on an emotional level...well if I went maybe I could lay some ghosts to rest...err, maybe there aren't any ghosts and I'll just get bored and disappointed. Yes, but writing the article, you know how difficult that will be ...yes, maybe that is your growing edge?

Ok so after nearly 10 years of training and therapy I've realised I have a body so let's use it. 'How would it feel in my body if I went?' ...not great...'How would it feel in my body if I didn't go? ...fine, but hardly ecstatic. Ok so what would be the best thing for me to do on a Soul level, what would feed my Soul, what would be the most Soulful thing to do...turns out my soul really isn't that bothered either way.

Or my inner child, whoa ok he really doesn't want to go back there...so maybe there's some healing that could be done if I went.

Or, I know I could go into default mode and dissociate, drift off into Spirit and channel the article, or ask Peter for some help, he'll know, he was there. Except I wanted to focus on the Garden of Gethsemane and he was asleep for most of that, I also sound like a fortune cookie version of Lau Tzu when I channel.



At times like these, the Central Character Dynamic (CCD) developed by Richard Harvey comes into my awareness. One of the unique elements of SAT Therapy and training I plotted mine (except it's not really 'mine') in therapy with Richard, the process really bringing to the surface what goes on in my head, particularly when under stress, all the ways I learned to survive that quite frankly don't work anymore. Once the CCD kicks into my awareness, usually just as I want to give up and fall asleep much like Peter, despite my protestations of greatness.

There is something very humbling and human in the pause the CCD gives me, much like Jesus' humanity in the Garden of Gethsemane, a humanity that has always spoken much more clearly to me than his divinity, something I saw as a given.

The transition in mid-life (if we allow it) from all the hopes, dreams, expectations, pressures etc. that seem to come from everywhere has the potential for great transformation. The realisation (to paraphrase Joseph Campbell) that we have spent the first half of life climbing the wrong ladder, the loss in that realisation, the doubt in accepting our fate, the desire that 'This cup be taken from me', the fear of the crucifixion of our 'self,' fear of the unknown after our 'little' death and finally the relaxation into 'not as I will, but as you will.'

As the CCD looms into my awareness, I relax in a similar way to how I relax when I have asked in stressful situations. So what would Jesus do? And so we return to the heart.

In the Gospel according to Matthew Jesus prayed three times, I'd like to think once for each center, firstly his will 'My soul is overwhelmed...' secondly his head through bargaining and finally his heart center, leading to acceptance. 'Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!' has an almost triumphant feel to it, the triumph of a man who has accepted his fate.

So what would Jesus do? To quote Brad Yoder 'He'd mess it all up just like you, except he'd do it with a lot more love'.



Oliver Baum: works as practice director and lead therapist at The Owl Practice in Cobham, Surrey, UK. As well as working with individuals and couples in his private practice and the NHS he has assisted, facilitated and developed therapy groups and training programs for therapists. The roots of his practice lie in the humanistic traditions, particularly Gestalt therapy.

5. What's Upcoming for SAT?

Instead of our previous, phased approach to the **website rebuild**, we are now intending to launch an entirely new website under a new name and more expansive vision for SAT. The new website will be titled ***The Center for Human Awakening*** and will feature all the current SAT website offerings, and more! We will begin building the new website in October and intend to complete the new website by December.

Development of ***SAT Online Training, Level 2***, continues. Richard Harvey is diligently working on writing the lectures and supporting documents. We intend to start production of Level 2 training in January, with launch in Spring 2017.

Your Sacred Calling, Richard Harvey's follow up to '*Your Essential Self*,' will be published by Austin Macauley Publishers Ltd. (London) later in 2016. This will be 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. Enquiries about the date of release and pre-orders for *Your Sacred Calling* may be sent to <http://www.austinmacauley.com/contact-us>.

6. Other SAT News

Volunteer opportunities abound with Sacred Attention Therapy. 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 Sacred Attention Therapy, please email us at info@sacredattentiontherapy.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.sacredattentiontherapy.com/Volunteer.html>.

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.sacredattentiontherapy.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.sacredattentiontherapy.com/BLOG.html>.

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

The **Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) 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 Facebook Group 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 (as 'pinned' posts on our Facebook Group page) on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week. For more information about the SAT Study Group, and to sign up, visit <http://www.sacredattentiontherapy.com/Study-Group.html>.

There are a plethora of **resources** available on the SAT website for your benefit...many are free. Books, articles, lectures, videos, a BLOG and VIDEO BLOG—a cornucopia of materials for your discovery, exploration, study, and enjoyment. And our **study group** and SAT-sangs provide interactive methods to deepen your study of SAT. Begin to explore these resources here... <http://www.sacredattentiontherapy.com/Books.html>.

Please tell others about SAT; please tell your friends, your therapists, your relatives, and any forward, progressive thinking people who could benefit from this work -- the books, the lectures, or the training. In my forthcoming book¹ I state 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 a Friend of SAT!

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

7. Links

WEBSITES

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

SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK

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

LINKEDIN

<https://es.linkedin.com/in/sacred-attention-therapy-37694877>

TWITTER

<https://mobile.twitter.com/RHphilozovo>

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCD_pJVba_LktmEzfuc51kfQ

BOOKS

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

VIDEO TALKS

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

STUDY GROUP

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

BLOG

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

VIDEO BLOG (VLOG)

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

RETREATS

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

INDIVIDUAL AND COUPLES THERAPY

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

MUSIC

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

DONATIONS

<http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/offer-support.html>

Robert Meagher
Registrar

Friends of Sacred Attention Therapy

...listening with the whole self to the soul of the other. (Richard Harvey)

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