

Eternal Wisdom and the Practice of Transactional Analysis

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Abstract

The author presents a practical method for developing and sustaining cognitive, emotive, behavioral and physical health. This system of ethical living is drawn from a synthesis of ideals expressed in ten of the major human existential wisdom systems that are actualized through a series of Transactional Analysis practices. The author has successfully taught this methodology to: 1. Individuals seeking to maximize their life experience; 2. Couples seeking a more spontaneously loving and committed relationship; 3. Parents seeking guidance in raising their children to be happy, creative, responsible and autonomous adults; 4. Persons whose presenting problem exhibited symptoms of abuse and depression; 5. Incarcerated persons; and 6. Groups seeking a positive method for communication and problem resolution.

Introduction

What we are today comes from our thoughts of yesterday. And our present thoughts build our life of tomorrow. Our life is the creation of our mind.

- The Buddha (in Cleary, 1994, "Turning of the Wheel," v. 1)

The most significant issue in realized cognitive, emotive, behavioral and physical health is the conscious governance of the internal dialogue (Sigmund, 1998, p. 24). Objective reality is not determined by externally perceived persons, situations, objects or environments; but by the manner in which we speak to ourselves about those persons, situations, objects and environments. "For as he think in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7, Scofield, 1909, p. 688). Whenever we speak to ourselves in a negativistic manner, no matter how capably we believe we can use our intellects to rationalize and justify the negativity, we create unnecessary suffering for ourselves; and we will, at some point, externalize that unnecessary suffering in some form to other people, situations, the environment and even objects. This consequence from negativistic ideation is inevitable and unavoidable. We are all the same in this manner.

The following is paraphrased from the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna: Every time you think a negative thought, you put a thread in the veil between you and the God within you. Every time you think a positive thought, you take a thread out of the veil (Vivekananda, 1953). The more pervasive our negativistic internal dialogues are, the more we will experience conflict, drama and interpersonal distance as a consequence. Throughout history, significant life teachers have stated and demonstrated that life, for good or ill, is the creation of our thoughts as expressed in our internal

dialogues. Albert Ellis, one of the founders of cognitive behavioral therapy, stated that "painful emotions stem more from people's belief systems than they do from reality. He

postulated that thoughts create anguish. Ellis counseled patients to relieve emotional stress by changing the content of their thoughts – challenging their beliefs and testing new possibilities” (Ellison, 2006, p. 76). Allowing our motivations for thoughts, feelings, speech and actions to be dictated unconsciously; or, at best, preconsciously guarantees that we will create mistakes and unnecessary suffering. Yet we have a choice. By bringing the internal dialogue from the preconscious into conscious awareness, and learning to direct that internal dialogue so that its content serves us, we can create a life that is meaningful, happy and filled with the blessings of reciprocally intimate relationships. “Neuroscience is furnishing hard evidence that the brain is plastic, endowed with a lifelong capacity to reorganize itself with each new experience. ‘We now know that neural firing can lead to changes in neural connections and [change in] experience leads to change in neural firing’...through repeated practice in focusing attention [we can strengthen] the neural circuitry involved in the voluntary control of [consciousness]” (Ellison, 2006, p. 74). “The only view that has absolute validity sees changeability in all conditioned things. Everything we are is a manifestation of an ever changing body and an ever changing mind” (Khema, 1999, p. 17).

The following article presents the author’s methodology for developing and sustaining conscious governance of the internal dialogue. The Eternal Wisdom portion of the model is synthesized from the attributes common to humanity’s existential wisdom systems, which include: Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Bah’i, Confucianism, Jainism, Taoism, and Vedanta. The attributes synthesized from the teachings of these systems of probity are organized under the heading of “Eternal Wisdom.” They include: compassion, empathy, understanding, forgiveness, love, truthfulness, cooperation, and conscious self-direction. The author teaches a method for the practical application of these attributes in combination with the theory and practice of Transactional Analysis to individuals, couples and groups. The Transactional Analysis practices taught include: the nature of and types of transactions (Berne, 1964), human psychosocial development (Erikson, 1950; Schiff, *et. al.*, 1975), the structure and function of ego states (Berne 1957a, 1964), communication between ego states (Berne, 1964), egograms (Dusay, 1972), symbiotic and healthy personality structures (Schiff and Schiff, 1971), symbiotic relationship structures (Schiff [Sigmund], 1974; Mellor and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975a, 1975b; Schiff, *et. al.*, 1975), exclusions and contaminations (Berne, 1964; Schiff, *et. al.*, 1975), the four life positions (Berne, 1964), the Drama Triangle (Karpman, 1968), frames of reference (Schiff, Schiff and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975), passivity theory (Schiff and Schiff, 1971), discounting (Schiff and Schiff, 1971; Mellor and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975a), redefining and the redefining hexagram (Mellor and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975b), games (Berne, 1964), life scripts (Berne, 1972), life style analysis (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1956), “The Ghosts of ‘What If...’” (Sigmund, 1994b), The ‘It’ Monster” (Sigmund, 1994a), the Ten Minute Practice, the Five Steps to End Abuse and the Four Problem Resolution Steps (Sigmund, 1995a), the Rules of Abuse and Depression – And

How to Break Them! (Sigmund, 1995b), The Saber Tooth Tiger Rule (Sigmund, 1998), The Four Year Old Rule (Sigmund, 1998), re-integrative, self-directed regressive interventions (Sigmund, 1998), and “*Ho’o Ponopono: A Traditional Hawaiian Practice for Setting Relationships Right*” (Sigmund, 1999).

The combination of the above listed wisdom system attributes, Transactional Analysis

and Adlerian Individual Psychology is highly effective in developing and nurturing the practice of conscious living as a resolution to the drama, conflict and interpersonal distance that are the consequences of an unconsciously motivated life. Populations presented with this instructional therapeutic model include: Individuals, couples and families in the author's private practices on the islands of Maui and Hawai'i (the Big Island); various groups with specific task-oriented goals, such as, community service based organizations, sales organizations, boards of directors, parenting classes, school counselors, incarcerated persons; and through several of the author's students, to individuals who are court mandated to participate in groups offering instruction in alternatives to violence, drug abuse and sexual abuse (Sigmund, 1996).

Transactional Analysis is ideally suited to this model because of its emphasis on the analysis of specific, literal units of communication, and the ways in which differently worded and expressed communications result in different perceptions of reality by persons to whom those communications are directed. This analysis of the specific content of communications is especially powerful, as the analysis takes into account both the internal dialogue and the way in which this internal self-communication is the source of all external communication and behavior. Positive internal dialogues produce clear and meaningful communication and behavior and a readiness for problem identification and resolution. Negativistic internal dialogues produce distorted communications and inappropriate behavior, and result in the individual's escalating an existing problem or the creating an additional problem through ill-advised words or actions made without awareness of or regard for the consequences (Edleson, 1984; Sigmund, 1995a). The Buddha's formula was: "Not to let an unwholesome thought arise that has not yet arisen. Not to sustain an unwholesome thought that has already arisen. To arouse a wholesome thought that has not yet arisen. To sustain a wholesome thought that has already arisen" (Khema, 1999, p. 24).

Further, understanding the Transactional Analysis theory of ego states (Berne, 1957a; 1964) allows individuals to be aware of the source of their positive or negative dialogues, and to identify their historic and developmental antecedents. Inconsistencies in a person's perception of self, others, situations and the environment can be identified as resulting from a disruption in the integrated functioning of ego states within the personality. These developmentally fixated and fragmented portions of the ego states may then be integrated with the personality as a whole through appropriate therapeutic interventions.

The following article also presents the author's model for healing the unnecessary suffering caused by negativistic internal dialogues. This model includes: 1. A five point statement of issues that are of paramount importance in embarking on the process of healing oneself; 2. A six-step model for de-escalating the fear, hurt and anger that result

from negativistic internal dialogues; and 3. The Eternal Wisdom Outline as a guide in the practice of moral and ethical living that fosters the development of responsibly autonomous functioning and reciprocal intimacy. The author integrates Transactional Analysis methodology into the model as it becomes significant to the therapeutic interventions.

The Model

The foundation for the therapeutic model presented in this article has been germinating throughout the author's practice of Transactional Analysis in his own growth; and with other persons in multiple residential, confinement, outpatient and educational settings from the late 1960s to the present. Paralleling and expanding this immersion in Transactional Analysis has been the author's study and practice of human wisdom systems – the codification of humanity's collective knowledge of correct relationship with oneself, other persons and the environment. The author has synthesized certain behavioral values from these learning experiences that are present in every major model for how to be an ethical and moral human. These values can be summarized by paraphrasing Albert Schweitzer, who describes in his autobiography, *Out of My Life and Thought*, his creation of the concept Reverence for Life: harmlessness in thought, word and deed to self, others and the environment (Schweitzer, 1933, pp. 156-159). These practical instructions for a life that does no harm are reinforced by the application of Transactional Analysis in healing any incorporated cognitive, emotive and behavioral issues. Health is about “developing a new kind of living relationship with one's own experiencing...it is not enough just to have spiritual realizations. It is also essential to deconstruct the subconscious emotional and mental patterns that are held in the body and mind, and that prevent...[us] from fully embodying a larger way of being in...[our] lives....Another way of saying this is that in addition to waking up to our ultimate spiritual nature, we also need to grow up – to ripen into a mature, fully developed person” (Welwood, 2000, pp. xiii-xviii).

Of Paramount Importance

The author presents the following five precepts as of paramount importance in embarking on a journey of self-healing and the nurturing of a moral and ethical life:

1. To realize that my life is sacred; to accept this fact and to guide my thoughts, speech and actions based on this awareness;
2. To determine, “What do I want to create with my life?” (i.e. with my creative-intuitive intelligence);
3. To focus on what I have decided to create with my life, and to direct my creative-intuitive intelligence to the process of creating and sustaining that goal;
4. To practice *ho'o*, a term from traditional Hawaiian healing (Sigmund, 1999):

to take responsibility for that which I breathe the breath of life into, as a reminder that there is no personal autonomy without personal responsibility;

5. To remain aware of the sacredness of life; to notice the discomfort, the unnecessary suffering that attends that loss of awareness, and to bring myself back to that awareness in the next moment.

The experience of being alive, of thinking, feeling, speaking and acting, is a sacred gift. Part of what makes this gift sacred is its finite nature. We are born; we experience the unfolding of life; and, at some future point, this miracle of life ends. Learning to respect this gift, to remain focused and present in the moment, is a significant step in the realization of health and happiness. “The greatest support we can have is mindfulness,

which means being totally present in each moment. If the mind remains centered, it cannot make up [negativistic]...stories...when we are mindful, such verbalizations stop. Being mindful means being fully absorbed in the moment, leaving no room for anything else” (Khema, 1999, pp. 22-23). Each moment is special and unique, and practicing giving one’s life fully to whatever is unfolding has been recognized throughout human thinking as highly significant. The author frequently reminds clients of the classic Zen *koan*: “Chop wood, carry water.” The *koan* is neither mystical nor full of esoteric meaning; it means exactly what it says: If you are cutting wood or carrying water (i.e. going about the normal activities of life), be fully focused on what you are doing in the moment. If you aren’t, you could chop something besides the wood or spill the water. In other words, if you are not fully present for the experience of your life in the present moment, the potential exists for you to create unnecessary suffering.

The mechanism for manifesting what we want in life is our creative-intuitive intelligence. This intrinsic intelligence is also called the “adaptive unconscious...a kind of giant computer, that quickly and quietly processes a lot of data we need in order to keep functioning as human beings...[a] decision making apparatus that’s capable of making very quick judgments based on very little information” (Gladwell, 2005, pp. 11-12). This”...adaptive unconscious does an excellent job of sizing up the world, warning people of danger, setting goals, and initiating action in a sophisticated and efficient manner” (Timothy Wilson in Gladwell, 2005, p. 12). It is the creative-intuitive intelligence that focuses on whatever positive or negative thoughts we are thinking, and directs us to manifest those thoughts as speech and actions in our lives. The creative-intuitive intelligence by itself does not distinguish between positive or negative. Conscious awareness allows us to determine which thoughts to focus on and to create.

De-escalating Fear, Hurt and Anger

The author’s six-step model for de-escalating the fear, hurt and anger that result from negativistic internal dialogues is as follows:

1. I accept responsibility for myself: I form a mental picture of the person I want to be, the “best” of myself, and I work responsibly to maintain that ideal, even in the face of perceived offenses;
2. I practice breathing correctly at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances, including in the face of perceived offenses;
3. I do the Ten Minute Practice (Sigmund, 1995a) daily;
4. I practice the Five Steps to End Abuse (Edleson, 1984; Sigmund, 1995a) when faced with internally perceived discomfort and externally perceived offenses;
5. I practice the Four Problem Resolution Steps (Schiff and Schiff, 1971; Sigmund, 1995a) in response to perceived problems;
6. If I make a mistake, in the next instant, I recreate myself based on my own ideal.

This step-by-step process is taught in a circular form, so that step six naturally brings the practioner back to step one to begin the practice again.

Step one requires the practitioner to spend some time clearly delineating what his or her ideal self, the “best” of the person, would be. Frequently, people have a vague concept of what they would be like if they were functioning from the “best” of themselves, but haven’t pursued the notion to a concrete, operational awareness. The ideal self is a model of how to be ourselves that saves the good things we incorporated from our families of origin while eliminating and replacing the aspects of our “self” that were created by our parents and our immediate childhood environment that may no longer serve us today. The author suggests that people who are experimenting with this model spend some introspective time alone, and then write out a description of what qualities this ideal self would reflect. In practice, the client receives a detailed outline of elements to consider in the process of discovering his or her ideal self. The client then fills in these suggested elements according to their own individual description of their ideal self. Writing out a description of the ideal self after a period of introspection gives concrete form to the goal, and makes it much easier for the individual to remain focused in working to achieve and sustain the goal.

Breathing is fundamental to healthy and correct functioning of the body and of consciousness (Tohei, 1966; Schiff and Schiff, 1971; Edleson, 1984; Sigmund, 1995a). Yet, in the author’s experience, most people are fairly unaware that when they speak negativistically to themselves, their breathing pattern reflects the shallow breathing from the upper lobes of the lungs that is typically associated with that of a frightened child. This type of “frightened child” breathing is called a rib-cage breath. The amygdala perceives this shallow breathing pattern as a life-or-death threat. The amygdala is an extremely primitive, alert-reaction part of the brain. Because of its primitive, either-or reactive nature, it does not measure the seriousness or intensity of the perceived threat in the negativity; it simply reacts. “...just a quarter of a second [exists] between the trigger event and the reaction of the amygdala” (Ellison, 2006, p. 76). The reaction of the amygdala triggers the hypothalamus, which then signals the pituitary gland by producing a hormone called the corticotrophin releasing factor (CRF). The pituitary gland then

signals the adrenal glands, which begin producing epinephrine, norepinephrine and cortisol. These stress hormones then shut down non-emergency services; such as, digestion and the individual’s immune system, and redirect the body’s resources to breaking contact with, creating distance from and escaping from the perceived threat - what is colloquially known as the “flight or fight” reaction in humans. In this energy resource redirection, the individual’s heart rate speeds up, his or her lungs begin to pump at a greater rate and the individual’s muscular structure is infused with a “blast” of glucose delivered to his or her liver. This chemically induced threat state in the body escalates the defensive nature of the person’s negativistic dialogue and creates a physical believability in the body that reinforces defensive aspects of the negativism. For example, if the current negativity reflects either a past negative or traumatic experience or the fantasy of a future negative or traumatic experience, the cortisol that is produced narcotizes the individual’s hippocampus so that the individual can no longer discern the difference between the past negative or traumatic event, the future fantasy of a negative or traumatic event and what is being perceived to occur in the present moment.

Any good breathing practice that can be generalized to daily life – from meditation, yoga, the martial arts and sports activities – will be a good general breathing pattern to

practice at all times as one moves through life. Simply reestablishing a relaxed, gentle, deep breathing pattern will help to de-escalate the effects of the amygdala's threat-alert chemical reaction in the body. The author recommends what is termed a diaphragmatic breath – a gentle inhalation through the nostrils that fills up the body to a point approximately three inches below the belly-button and exhales through the nostrils by gently pushing out from this point until the upper lobes of the lungs are the last to empty. This nonthreat-determined breathing pattern will clear the individual's consciousness so that he or she can achieve effective awareness of thoughts, feelings, wants and needs; and implement appropriate choices for communications and actions. The author frequently reminds clients of the old, colloquial injunction to "take ten deep breaths" when they are upset, before speaking or acting. The source of this aphorism is the awareness that creating an upset state of consciousness and emotionality causes shallow, incorrect breathing that merely escalates the negative aspects of a situation.

Step three in this model instructs the practioners to use the Ten Minute Practice (Sigmund, 1995a) daily to bring any negativistic thoughts from the unconscious and preconscious into consciousness. For specific instructions on how to do the Ten Minute Practice, please see: Sigmund, E. (1995a). "A Five Step Paradigm for Problem Resolution in Difficult Relationships." *Transactional Analysis Journal*, 25 (3), 211-214. The Ten Minute Practice is a fundamental exercise which literally rewires the neuropath ways individuals have developed in childhood that contain and result in the negativistic patterns of thinking. Doing so both enables them to become more aware of the negative way in which they are speaking to themselves, and to gain insight into the content of that negativity. Positive and negative thoughts arise in consciousness with equal value. "Thoughts come and go all the time, just like the breath. If we hang on to them, problems arise. We believe our thoughts and have to do something about them, especially if they

are negative" (KHEMA, 1999, p. 24). It is how we direct our creative-intuitive intelligence to one or another thought-form that determines how speech and actions are manifested. The thoughts themselves, our loftiest and best and our lowest and worst, have no more substance than a single breath. By reversing the negativity to its polar-opposite, positive statement, we gain a realization of the insubstantiality of the negativity, and that we have the ability to choose whether or not to speak to ourselves and to others in that manner.

Step four introduces the Five Steps to End Abuse (Edelson, 1984; Sigmund, 1995a), a sequence of actions that enables practioners to identify negativistic thinking as it is occurring and to redirect themselves into positive speech and behavior at each moment. These five steps are:

1. Notice the discomfort;
2. Correct the faulty thinking;
3. Breathe;
4. Develop an awareness of consequences and say to yourself, "When I change the pattern, I change the result;" and
5. Act in a positive manner.

For specific instructions on employing the Five Steps to End Abuse, please see: Sigmund, E. (1995a). "A Five Step Paradigm for Problem Resolution in Difficult Relationships." *Transactional Analysis Journal*, 25 (3), 211-214.

The fifth step states that once the negativity has been cleared, if an issue is still present,

the Four Problem Resolution Steps (Schiff and Schiff, 1971; Sigmund, 1995a) can be employed to define any remaining problem, its significance, its solvability and the application of the solvability to the problem as defined. For specific instructions on using the Four Problem Resolution Steps, please see: Sigmund, E. (1995a). "A Five Step Paradigm for Problem Resolution in Difficult Relationships." *Transactional Analysis Journal*, 25 (3), 211-214.

The sixth step is extremely important. It directs the practitioner to reestablish the practice of the first step. By following this directive, the practitioner learns to recognize that he or she has made a mistake; and rather than using it to make him-or herself not O.K. (Berne, 1964), to take whatever action is necessary to resolve the mistake by returning to the "best" of him-or herself immediately. Every successful example of conscious living that the author has been exposed to talks about the humanness of making mistakes and how important it is to not remain in the mistake – to not add a further mistake by figuratively "beating oneself up" about the error.

Etymologically Referenced Explanation of the Eternal Wisdom Outline

The mind has the capacity to create good or evil for us.
- Khema, 1999, pp. 22-23

It's not surprising that Adam's first task was to name everything he found in the Garden of Eden...or that Eve was seduced by a conversation with a snake (Genesis 3:1-6,

Scofield, 1909, pp. 4-6). Words have power. Our thoughts are given life by the words we choose to express them. The words we choose to express ourselves lead to our choices in behavior. Every human wisdom system says this is true. We are created, moment-to-moment, by the way we speak to ourselves. Our relationships are created by how we speak to ourselves about other persons. And the situations of our lives and our environments reflect our thoughts, speech and actions as clearly as a polished mirror.

Throughout history we humans have created specific words to communicate specific ideas, from a simple greeting, to words that allow us to describe transcendent spiritual experiences. Learning a word's etymology, its origin and evolution, can be eye-opening. Once we've gained insight into the concept a particular word was meant to communicate, we can decide whether or not we want to continue to express ourselves that way. For example, the word "worry," which describes a series of negativistic thoughts that are related to feelings of fear, hurt and anger, comes from the Old English word *wyrgan*, which means to injure by strangling (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 1540). When we choose to worry, we injure ourselves by shutting off our own breath. Breathing is fundamental to life, and strangling is never any fun for the victim.

The Eternal Wisdom Outline

The following is an outline of the behaviors necessary to manifest and sustain a life lived as one's ideal self.

Eternal Wisdom

Observation as opposed to Expectancy
leads to
Discernment as opposed to Perceiving What Is Expected
which allows me to be
Compassionate as opposed to Critical
Empathetic as opposed to Judgmental
Understanding as opposed to Blaming
Forgiving as opposed to Shaming
Loving as opposed to Guilt Provoking
Cooperative as opposed to Competitive
Truthful as opposed to Deceitful
Self-Directed as opposed to Controlling
which creates
Trust as opposed to Mistrust
Safety as opposed to Fear, Hurt and Anger
Integrity as opposed to Insecurity and Lack of Self-Esteem
Reciprocal Intimacy as opposed to Conflict Intimacy

As previously stated, the author believes that the most significant issue in realized mental, emotional, behavioral and physical health is the ability to bring the preconscious internal dialogue into conscious awareness, which enables us to govern our creative-intuitive intelligence with mindfulness and caring. The following is an etymologically referenced explanation of the above model for actualizing the “ideal” self and developing a conscious practice of living life from that awareness.

It is not what is out there but what I see out there that is
 relevant. “Two men looked out from behind prison walls.
 One saw bars while the other saw stars.

(Ramesh, 2006, p. 18)

Observation as opposed to Expectancy

The word “observation” is from the Latin *observatio*, whose original meaning was the practice of reverent perception (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 936). “...the medial prefrontal cortex – the brain’s executive control center, is the area of the brain that directs consciousness and therefore the act of observation” (Ellison, 2006, p. 75). The medial prefrontal cortex also “...plays a critical role in decision making. It works out contingencies and relationships and sorts through the mountain of information we get from the outside world, prioritizing it and putting flags on things that demand our immediate attention” (Gladwell, 2005, p. 59). The practice of reverent perception allows us to experience our life calmly, with deep respect, love and awe. Perceiving life with reverence for each moment as it actually exists enables us to realize the positive power inherent in the awareness that all life is sacred (Schweitzer, 1933). The sacredness of life is revealed in the simplicity of its perfection – life is simply what is actually occurring in the moment.

Enlightenment is always there. Small enlightenment will bring great enlightenment. If you breathe in and are aware that you are alive – that you can touch the miracle of being alive – then that is a kind of enlightenment...we can always remain alive in the present moment. With mindfulness, you can establish yourself in the present in order to touch the wonders of life that are available in that moment. It is possible to live happily in the here and now.

(Nhat Hanh in Winfrey, 2010)

Observation instructs us to look at our life experience with a sense of discovery rather than with preconceived interpretations in which we seek to forcibly mold the current moment into the form of moments past or moments that have been fantasized to exist in the future. To perceive what is actually happening outside ourselves, we need to gain insight into what is happening inside ourselves. We must be aware of what is motivating

our thoughts, feelings and actions. Are we being motivated to react: to engage in thoughts, feelings and actions that rigidly conform to past interpretations of our experience; and therefore create predictable, repetitive consequences? Are we extrapolating fantasies of future experience into the present moment and attempting to force the present to conform to the fantasy? Vipassana master, Munindra, in Mirka Knaster's book about his teachings, *Live This Life Fully*, states that: "You live in the present-to-present moment. What's yesterday has gone so why worry about that? Today's today; today's not yesterday; today is not even tomorrow...What is happening now? Whatever [experience] you are having, that is happening now." Or do we correctly perceive our experience in the present and respond with the freshness of this new awareness with thoughtfulness and caring? "Awareness gives you your life back. You can then decide what to do with it" (Ellison, 2006, p. 77). The significance here is that the way we perceive ourselves is also the way we perceive the world; we create a mirror image – whether we are conscious of this ongoing process or not. This intimacy with ourselves is what Dr. Berne called "calibration" (Berne, 1969).

"Expectancy," the opposite of "observation" comes from the Middle Latin *expectantia*, which means "to wait for" (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 478). Expectancy demands that we be confident that a particular event will occur, and that we conform our thoughts, feelings and actions to our preconceived beliefs about the anticipated event. With expectancy, we experience the world through our own introjections and projections. We don't perceive things as they exist in the moment; instead, we filter them through a veil of past experiences and future fantasies of experience as if past/future and present moments were the same. They are not. As Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism, tells us, "All things transform spontaneously" (Lao Tzu, Religious Tolerance.org). With expectancy, we create a version of the world, based on a combination of our genetic heritage and conditioning that allows us to perceive reality through the reenactment of those projected images and fantasies. Most of us are speaking to ourselves about: 1. "What is," where we redefine (Mellor and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975b), shape and fit our experience of current reality into a fantasy of familiarity, identifying the one with the other in an effort to create

safety by re-experiencing what we have experienced before; 2. “What was,” where we are certain that our memories are accurate recollections rather than the composite, repetitive fantasies they are more likely to be; and that these memories somehow magically define, shape and fit our current experience; 3. “What will be,” where our predictions – which are structured, repetitive fantasies – lead us, often fearfully, to believe that the future will occur in the same way as our recollections of “what was.” In addition to creating problems with how we are experiencing the present moment, the pain of what was and/or what will be projected into our current experience of the moment “have been shown to damage the parts of the brain involved in learning and memory and to suppress the immune system as well” (Ellison, 2006, p. 76).

Discernment as opposed to Perceiving What Is Expected

The word “discernment” derives from the Latin words *dis* – apart and *cernere* – to separate which were associated with the Greek word for harvest *krinein*, which meant “to sort the grains, fruits and animals to their appropriate uses” (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 391, 616). Discernment is the ability to be present in the moment and to perceive the current content of our experience without distortion from either introjections or projections. Discernment allows us to *respond* to a given situation as opposed to *reacting* – engaging in a previously determined set of thoughts, feelings and actions that have, as often as not, failed us in the past. “...mindfulness [is] being totally attentive to what we are doing, feeling [and] thinking...it arises in the present moment and has nothing to do with the future or past...the greater the mindfulness, the fewer the mistakes” (Khema, 1999, pp. 58-59). Discernment contains a personal consciousness that makes us aware of our current thoughts, feelings and options for behavior, so that we can make choices that are germane to each unique experience in life. “...mindfulness is a form of intrapersonal attainment...which makes it the perfect tool for interpersonal attunement ...which leads to compassion” (Ellison, 2006, p. 76). Discernment is aided in this process by the creative-intuitive intelligence. “...the adaptive unconscious takes care of all the minor details in your life. It keeps tabs on everything going on around you, while leaving you free to concentrate on the [experience] at hand” (Gladwell, 2005, p. 58).

“**Perceiving what is expected**” is the result of all expectation. When we “wait for that which is expected,” we are not observing or discerning reality, but we are organizing our entire perceptive field to find what we expect. Even if the current moment is actually different from the expectation, we will perceive what we have told ourselves to expect. The experience will seem real to us even in the face of contrary information. Any aspects of the moment that do not fit the expectation will be discounted or denied. We will then react to the current situation in a way that suits the expectation, rather than allowing ourselves to spontaneously respond to the actual circumstances. This causes us to repeat the same mistakes over and over again. A situation arises, we force it to conform to “what is expected;” and then our thoughts, speech and actions replicate what we have thought, spoken and done in previous similar situations – or have fantasized thinking, speaking and doing in preparation for the expected event. Perceiving what is expected is to live life on the wheel of repetitious perception, speech, behavior and consequence. It is a hellish prison when we are caught up in it.

Compassionate as opposed to Critical

Compassion is from the Latin words *com* – together and *pati* – to suffer, (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 284), which meant an awareness of the suffering of another person, accompanied by a deep sympathy and an urge to help. It is a sameness of feeling or an affinity between persons in which we are aware of the motivation for our own or another person’s mental state, emotions and actions. “All activities should be done with one intention. To help, and not to harm [ourselves or] others. Be gentle, be kind, be compassionate, be generous to everyone including yourself (Gyalsay Rinpoche in Pachen, 2000, p. 135).

“...compassion (is) in fact [a skill] – and can be trained to a dramatic degree” (Ellison, 2006, p. 74). Compassion in practice allows us to be aware that when another person is speaking or behaving badly towards us, his or her incorrect speech or action is merely an extension of that person’s own unnecessary suffering. Nothing, in this sense, is personal. All of us, when we speak to ourselves negativistically are abusing ourselves even when we think we can justify, intellectualize or rationalize – prove the righteousness – of the negativity. The content of the negative thoughts is not the issue. All negativity is abusive. Even if we are being negative about someone else, a situation or even objects and the environment, the negativity is abusive to us because its aggression is happening inside of us. Each of us has a threshold inside ourselves past which we can not tolerate the abuse in our negative internal dialogues. When we reach that threshold, we compulsively act-out that aggression by harm ourselves, other persons, projecting harm into situations or harming the environment. If we create abuse and aggression by speaking to ourselves in a negativistic manner, we will have to externalize that harm. None of us acts-out against others until we have so tormented ourselves, through the negativism of our internal dialogues, that the pain over flows from us to the people with whom we are relating. This is the dynamic relationship between introjections, the not O.K.ness we have created inside ourselves, and the projections, the placing of the not O.K.ness onto other people, situations and the environment. The Vipassana master, Munindra, taught that the Hindi word *khanti* was related to the practical application of compassion as a practice in that it means “...[an] endurance of suffering created by others; as forbearance of insults and other unworthy things; as forgiveness of those who [have] wronged [us] in some way; as tolerance and non-opposition; as perseverance in [our] work for the welfare of others; as acceptance of what is; and as the absence of restlessness...Rather than a reaction of anger or violence, there is gentleness and calmness. The proximate cause is insight, seeing things as they really are...*khanti* is...one of the highest protections [and] blessings [in Buddhist practice]...[The Buddha taught that] ‘If scolded, one does not scold in return; if insulted, one does not insult in return; if abused, one does not abuse in return’” (Knaster, 2010).

The practical application of compassion is to discern this truth about abusive speech and actions and to take no harm from the projected abuse. This practice allows us to be released from the endless cycles of being “made” to be hurt, frightened and angry by the speech and actions of other persons. It allows us to observe and discern in any situation so that we can truly respond to the circumstances of that situation. We are free from the negativity of taking and giving offense. Jesus, when he healed a man who had been

possessed by “demons” all his life, told him to go and tell his friends, “...the Lord...hath had compassion on thee” (Mark 5:19 in Scofield, 1909, p. 1053). So, when we experience other persons acting out this compulsion to externalize the internal unnecessary suffering that they have created inside their own lives, we are asked by the practice of compassion not to take offense, not to take on that suffering; but to leave the suffering with the person it belongs to. We are also asked not to harm the other person in return for the perception of projected harm. Nothing in this sense is personal.

“Treat others with a compassionate heart. When pride is removed, basic wisdom can be revealed...There is no distinction between friend and foe” (Gyalsay Rinpoche in Pachon, 2000, p. 135, 200).

None of us acts out against others until we have so tormented ourselves, through the negativism of our internal dialogues, that the pain overflows from us to the people to whom we are relating. This is the dynamic relationship between introjections, the not O.K.ness inside ourselves, and projections, how we define others, situations and environments as not O.K. In this way we are all the same. And by that dynamic, projections are our attempts to equalize the balance of not O.K.ness between ourselves and others. This is why the projective and introjective life positions always devolve into the futile life position (Berne, 1964; Sigmund, 1998). After healing a man who has been possessed by demons all his life, Jesus instructs him to go and tell his friends: “...the Lord...hath had compassion on thee” (Mark 5:19 in Scofield, 1909, p. 1053). The realization, through the practice of compassion, that we are not *made* by the speech and actions of others is a great liberation. So frequently, the author has heard people say, “So-and-so did thus-and-such and *made* me think, feel or act in this-or-that manner.” The perception that we are *made* by others is not a compassionate view. It is a holdover from when our parents did *make* us – defined us as a good or bad child, *made* us eat green beans – and creates the constant potential for adapting positions on the Drama Triangle (Karpman, 1968, p. 39) at all times and in all places. But as adults, we have the great privilege of *making* ourselves. The truth is that another person says or does something; and then, I either react (not thinking or caring) or respond (thinking and caring) to the perceived speech or action. “Practicing compassion has been found to increase gamma waves in the left prefrontal cortex. This area of the brain has been correlated with reported feelings of happiness. These results give scientific support for the Dalai Lama’s proposition that: A person meditating on compassion for others becomes the first beneficiary” (Ellison, 2006, p. 77); and the *Qur’an* tells us that we should practice “Compassion as sensitivity to the suffering of others, animals and plants” (*Qur’an* 17:70: Bodhicitta.net).

The opposite of compassion is criticism, a word drawn from the Greek *kritikos*, which means a person who indulges in an analysis of the qualities and comparative worth of the self, other persons, situations or the environment through finding fault, censure and disapproval (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 329). It should be noted here that under this use of “criticism,” no positive outcome is possible. This use of the term “criticism” is distinguished from contractual agreements between persons designed to monitor, provide feedback and improve some activity; such as the director of a play providing a critique of an actor’s performance or an editor criticizing an author’s work. These uses of criticism

are undertaken to both correct mistakes and improve a creative process through constructive feedback. Criticism in the negativistic sense is a behavior reflective of the projective life position “I’m O.K.; you’re not O.K.,” which automatically devolves to the futile life position (Berne, 1969). The person who employs criticism to find fault and

express censure and disapproval is merely reflecting his or her own insecurities, which have been created by that individual’s harshly self-critical internal dialogue. The teachings of Jesus as recorded in Luke 6:37 clearly point out the incorrectness of criticizing: “...condemn not and ye shall not be condemned” (Scofield, 1909, p. 1087). The Buddhist view of criticism is elucidated by Gyalsay Rinpoche who instructs us: “Develop acceptance of all situations, all people...experience them free from limiting thoughts” (Pachen, 200, p. 135).

Empathetic as opposed to Judgmental

“Empathy” takes its original meaning from the German word *einführung*, or feeling. It means to be aware of another person’s feelings by being aware of one’s own emotions (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 445). Because I, as a human being, have experienced a range of feelings in response to other persons, the circumstances of my life and the environments in which I find myself, I can comprehend and be supportive of another person’s emotions. “Neurobiologically we seem wired for empathy...scientists have found that the human brain has a system of mirror neurons, activated both when we perform an action and when we observe a similar action by others...such activation allows us...to infer other’s [sic] feelings” (Ellison, 2006, p. 77). The author frequently encounters people who confuse the practice of empathy with the type of feeling replication that occurs in symbiotic relationships (Schiff [Sigmund], 1974; Mellor and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975a; Schiff, *et. al.*, 1975). This mistaken symbiotic experience is a behavior from the rescuer’s position on the Drama Triangle (Karpman, 1968, p. 39; Mellor and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975b). Instead, we can be aware of and sympathetic with another person’s feelings, thus allowing him or her the freedom to be supported and cared for without creating any confusion as to who is experiencing the feelings. This is the real practice of empathy.

Being judgmental is the opposite of being empathetic. The word “judgmental” comes from the Latin *judico*, which means to judge and condemn with criticism and censure in a manner lacking in tolerance, compassion and objectivity (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 731). Often, people confuse this negative use of the term “judgmental” with making an informed judgment about an issue or an object such as, “I like this lamp. I don’t like this one.” “...mindfulness...means...cultivating nonjudgmental awareness” (Ellison, 2006, p. 75). The negativistic use of judgment – criticizing and censoring ourselves, others, situations and the environment in a manner lacking in tolerance, compassion and objectivity – is simply a form of abuse. Once again, Jesus spoke directly to this issue in his teachings: “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matthew 7:1 in Scofield, 1909, p. 1002). Negativistic judgment stems from the insecurity created by our own criticism and censure of ourselves. It is an introjection incorporated from parents who relate to children or demonstrate relating to others in front of children in this manner. This abusive behavior is projected onto other persons, situations and the environment. Another reference from the teachings of Christianity that points out the incorrectness of being judgmental can be

found in the famous story of the adulteress who is brought before Jesus to be condemned.

Instead of condemning her, Jesus points out to the people who are claiming that the Law of Moses would have them stone her to death: “He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone” (John 8:7 in Scofield, 1909, p. 1136). The crowd, recognizing their collective error, disperses, leaving the woman unharmed. “Develop acceptance of all situations, all people, without judgment, experience them free from limiting thoughts” (Gyalsay Rinpoche in Pachen, 2000, p. 135).

Understanding as opposed to Blaming

“Understanding is all.” One can only wait for the understanding to blossom forth from the Intellectual to the Experiential.
- Nisargadata Maharaj (Ramesh Balsekar, 2006, p. 40)

The word “understanding” comes from the Old English word *understandan*, “to stand among and hence to observe,” and from this observation to comprehend that which is observed (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 1455). Understanding means to actively perceive the meaning, character and function of something with sympathetic awareness. The self-liberation brought forth when we can truly understand ourselves, others, situations and the environment with a sympathetic awareness is profound and is a direct result of the correct practice of compassion and empathy. “Wisdom [understanding] has three stages. The first one is knowledge acquired by hearing, reading or through direct experience. We reach the second stage when we make this knowledge our own by taking its guidelines to heart and...actualize them through thoughts, words and actions. As we do more and more, our thoughts, words and deeds are purified and the third and highest stage of wisdom [understanding] arises...To change our understanding of ourselves, we need a calm and trained mind that can pull itself out of its old habitual patterns of viewing self, [others and the world]” (Khema, 1999, p. 6 , 17).

“Blaming” the opposite of understanding, is from the Old French word *blasmer*, “to speak evil of” (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 146). Blaming is the act of accusing ourselves, another person, a situation or an environment of being at fault for some mistake or unfortunate event. Blaming ourselves for a problem locks us into the problem and we will discount the significance, the solvability and the application of ourselves to the solvability of the problem (Schiff and Schiff, 1971; Mellor and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975a; Sigmund, 1998). This simply places us in the introjective life position: “I’m not O.K.; you’re O.K.” (Berne, 1964). When we blame someone or something outside of ourselves, we completely divorce ourselves from recognizing personal responsibility; this creates the projective life position: “I’m O.K.; you’re not O.K.” (Berne, 1964). “Another unskillful act is blaming ourselves for our mistakes, which makes matters twice as bad. With that comes fear and often aggression...Blaming others does not work either...the world of...blame is particularly unreal because it considers everything perfectly wonderful or absolutely terrible” (Khema, 1999, p. 52-53).

Forgiving as opposed to Shaming

The word “forgiving” is from the Old English *forgiefan*, which meant to give up a resentment against, to stop being angry with and to cease the desire to punish or to exact a penalty for an offense done to us (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 529). Forgiveness is a basic tenet of Christian teachings: “Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you. Bless them that curse you and pray for them that despitefully use you” (Luke 6:27-28 in Scofield, 1909, p. 1086-1087). “...forgive and ye shall be forgiven” (Luke 6:37 in Scofield, 1909, p. 1087). The Buddha also stated these injunctions when he taught: “Hatreds do not ever cease in this world by hating, but by love; this is an eternal truth...Overcome anger by love, overcome evil by good” (Cleary, 1994, p. 19). To be able to forgive, one must consciously integrate all of the injustices and dangers he or she has organized as survival mechanisms. Whatever is fearful – such as wrongful speech or actions from others – we are biologically driven to organize, recognize and remember. This is so that we can defend ourselves from the predicted consequences of a repeat of the perceived offense, to prevent the “bad” thing from happening again. But this holding on to the harm and generating negativistic defenses against the other person’s wrongful speech or actions simply continues the harm and leads to the potential for escalations through our resentment, anger and desire to punish. Forgiveness is the outcome of facing wrongs with compassion, empathy and understanding, and it frees us from the continued harm.

“Shaming,” from the Old English word *scamu* (Neufeldt, 1986, p. 1232), means the act of causing oneself or someone else emotional pain when his or her improper speech or behavior has cost the perpetrator the respect of themselves or other persons. Like blaming, shaming creates positions and movement on the Drama Triangle (Karpman, 1968, p. 39) that are reflective of both the introjective and projective life positions (Berne, 1964) – and it does so every time we engage in this behavior. As with blame, shame is actually a set up to keep oneself in a negative frame of reference (Schiff, Schiff and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975) that will lead to a replication of the same mistakes over and over again, not to their correction.

Loving as opposed to Guilt Provoking

“Loving” has its roots in the Old High German word *luba*, which meant a deep and tender feeling of affection for, an attachment and devotion to a person, place, thing or idea (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 801). Love means that you care about the quality of your own and another person’s experience of life in an aware and thoughtful manner. “Love and respect go hand in hand with the spiritual path...Heart and mind must both be engaged. The mind understands and the heart loves...The integration of intellect and emotion ...needs to be...wholehearted involved in all our actions” (Khema, 1999, pp. 4-5). Love begins in loving and caring for ourselves even when we make mistakes. “Love is an expression of the willingness to create space in which something is allowed to change” (Palmer, 2004, p. 15). If we can continue to care deeply and think clearly about our own

thoughts, speech and actions, then we will be able to extend that deep caring about ourselves to anyone we choose to extend them to. If we are compassionate, empathetic, understanding and forgiving, then love follows naturally in all our interactions.

The word “guilt” is from the Old English *gylt*, which meant a sin. Guilt is a painful

feeling of self-reproach resulting from a belief that one has done something wrong or immoral (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 600). Inherent in the meaning of guilt is the assumption that, because the person has done something wrong, he or she is therefore not O.K. It follows then that “If I feel bad enough, I will be forgiven, and can use the bad feelings as a reminder/threat to prevent myself from engaging in the unacceptable behavior in the future.” This assumption is incorrect on both counts. Focusing on guilt is again a setup for a replication of the undesired speech and behavior, because, just as with shame and blame, it creates a frame of reference (Schiff, Schiff and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975) that merely sets the stage for a repetition of the mistake. We are what we practice. Focusing our attention engages our creative-intuitive intelligence. If we focus on an incorrect thought, speech or action we reinforce it as surely as we reinforce correct thought, speech and action by focusing on them. This is why the sixth step in the system for de-escalating fear, hurt and anger is: “When I make a mistake, in the next instant I bring myself back to my own ideal.” Doing so allows us to resolve the harm done by the incorrect speech or action and focuses on how we can avoid replicating what we have decided is incorrect.

Cooperative as opposed to Competitive

“Cooperative” is from the Latin *cooperatus*, which means the act of working together, to co-create (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 306). Cooperative persons work together in speech and action for a common purpose that benefits all those who are participating. Being cooperative involves negotiation and compromise, and cooperation reflects the healthy life position: “I’m O.K.; you’re O.K.” (Berne, 1964). Cooperation allows for the best of ourselves and others to be present, even if there are difficulties to be resolved. The practice of cooperative consciousness is a prerequisite to the ability to develop reciprocal intimacy in our relationships.

The word “competitive” is from the combination of two Latin words *com*, “together,” and *petere*, “to rush at.” Its meaning is to contend with or be in rivalry with one another (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 284). Appropriate competition belongs in a place where there is a contract to compete such as games and contests where all the participants convene with an agreement to “rush at” something “together” with “contention and rivalry” and observe who wins the contest. Competition does not belong in human relationships outside of these social pastimes (Berne, 1964). Competition in human relationships is the opposite of cooperation or co-creativity. The outcome of competition in relationships is the production of and escalation of drama, conflict and interpersonal distance. Negativistic competitions occur in eight ways, and they always contain an underlying element of “one up, one down;” “one loser, one winner;” and/or “one correct, one incorrect.” These eight ways these negativistic competitions are acted-out are:

1. Competition based on the introjective life position (Berne, 1964) – “I’m the bad one; he/she/they is/are the good one(s).”
2. Competitions based on the projective life position (Berne, 1964) – “I’m the good one; he/she/they is/are the bad one(s).”
3. Competitions based on the perception of or the experience of an event – “I liked/did not like the movie; he/she/they liked/did not like the movie.”
4. Competitions about a frame of reference (Schiff, Schiff and Schiff [Sigmund],

1975) – “I believe this; he/she/they believes/believe that.”

5. Competitions about who is selected to do something – “The children wanted him/her/them to cook; they never want me to cook.”

6. Competitions for control of predicted outcomes to hypothetical situations that are often defined as optimism versus pessimism; and are rarely, if ever, founded in reality experience – “If we do this, that will happen.” “No, if we do that, this will happen.”

7. Competition about how something should be done – “I do it this way; he/she/they does/do it that way.”

8. Competition about the time in which something is done – “I wanted it done now; he/she they wanted to do it then.”

Truthful as opposed to Deceitful

When something is in accordance with fact, when it adheres to reality, when it is the opposite of false, we say that this thing is truthful. The word “truthful” is from the Old English word *treawa*, which meant faith in the sense of as firm as the trunk of a tree (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 1436). In order to experience security and O.K.ness in my sense of self, I must be willing to be truthful to myself. In order to create security in my relationships with others, I must be truthful to those persons with whom I am relating. As Saint Augustine instructed us: The truth only ceases to be the truth when it is used to harm.

The opposite of truth is deceit. The word “deceitful” comes from the Latin *decipere*, which means “to ensnare in falseness” (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 357). Being deceitful means that we are attempting to make someone believe something that is not so. We mean to fool that person so completely that the falsehood appears true. When we break faith and fail to keep our commitments, when we employ our wiles to entice others to follow the wrong course or to err in speech or action – all the while presenting an appearance of loyalty – we betray our relationships. And it’s not only our relationships we harm. We can deceive ourselves as easily as we can be false and misleading to others. “With pure speech...may blessings radiate. Right speech is one of the most important precepts. Speaking with anger and lies...fill[s] the mind with negativity. Speaking with compassion and truth brings blessings” (Pachen, 200, p. 37).

Self-Directed as opposed to Controlling

The word “self-directed” comes from the combination of two Latin words, *se*, meaning separate or apart, and, *lo*, a being’s awareness of its own existence. Thus, “self,” refers to an awareness of one’s own identity, character and essential qualities as distinct from all others (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 1217). “Directed” is from the Latin *dirigere*, which means to lay straight (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 389). In the sense of these behavioral attributes, it means to be honest and to the point, to have firsthand and personal knowledge of oneself, and to govern and guide one’s actions – to govern oneself – with conscious authority. “Self-directed,” in this context, is the opposite of being determined (“made”) by the thoughts, feelings or actions of other persons; by circumstances; or by the perceived environment or objects within that environment. Being self-directed means that we govern ourselves

rather than seek to dictate and control the thoughts, feelings and actions of others. Conscious self-direction is a manifestation of the internally realized security that is created by the successful practice of compassion, empathy, understanding, forgiveness, truthfulness and cooperation.

“Controlling” is from the Middle Latin *contraro-tulus*, which meant to check or verify payments by comparison with a duplicate set of records (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 303). As used here, “controlling” refers to one person’s effort to manipulate and maneuver him-or herself or another person to conform to another set of expectations (the duplicate set of records) that are demanded but may or may not be specifically expressed. As with deceit, we can as easily manipulate or maneuver ourselves to conform as we can others. The relationship is determined by the amount of conformity engaged in by the persons being controlled. In this context, controlling means to exercise undue or inappropriate authority over oneself or the others with whom one is in relationship by restraining spontaneous self-direction and self-expression.

Trust as opposed to Mistrust

The word “trust” is from the Old Norse *traust*, which – like truth - refers to the firmness of the base of a standing tree (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 1436). The meaning of trust in this model is a firm belief and confidence in an individual’s honesty, integrity and reliability. Operating from self-trust allows me to be the best of myself in all my interactions. Trust between persons is the foundation of the care and bonding that form reciprocity in intimacy. Trust of self and others allows for the creation of environments that are safe and available to spontaneous and autonomous life.

When we add the prefix “dis“ - from the Goth *dis*, meaning to separate a base into two (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 390) – to the word “trust,” we get its opposite meaning. Distrust is a firm belief and confidence in an individual’s dishonesty, lack of integrity and unreliability. Distrust brings us immediately into the opposite of the above mentioned positive qualities and reflects the frame of reference (Schiff, Schiff and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975) that is the source of unnecessary suffering in the world: “I’m not O.K.; other persons are not O.K.; and the world is a scary place” (Schiff, *et. al.*, 1975).

Safety as opposed to Fear, Hurt and Anger

The origin of the word “safety” is found in the Sanskrit *sarva*, which means whole and unharmed (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 1181). Safety is the condition of being secure: free from damage, danger or injury; free from fear, doubt and worry. Directing one’s internal awareness in a positive manner creates personal safety. Communicating and interacting with others in a positive manner that is oriented toward problem resolution, creates safety in one’s relationships and makes it possible to create safe environments for oneself and others.

The Old English word *faer*, which means a sudden attack, when combined with the Old High German word *fara*, a trap consisting of a noose that jerks tight upon the release of a spring trigger, is the origin of our modern word “fear” (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 495). Fear is a feeling of anxiety and physical agitation caused by the perceived presence of danger,

evil or pain. Fear causes us to be insecure, tormented by misgivings and suspicions, consumed by doubts and worry. Fear based thoughts, speech and actions lead to reactivity as opposed to responsiveness. Psychological fear in this context is distinguished from truly fearful stimuli and situations where there is an actual threat that we need to identify and from which we need to be protected. For example, being afraid that a sixty-five year old mother will be angry about an adult child's decision is a psychological fear, and swimming in the ocean near where Tiger sharks are feeding is a reality based fearful stimulus.

The word "hurt" comes from the Old French *hurter*, which meant to hit with a ram (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 659). In the context of this model, "hurt" means to cause harm or damage, such as mental stress or pain, in reaction to a perceived wounding of our own or another person's feelings through an offense or the creation of troubles or difficulties in situations or in the environment. As stated earlier in this article, the author does not believe that as adults we are "made" to feel hurt or any other emotion by the speech or actions of other persons, but that we can react to certain speech and actions by creating feeling states specifically associated with a perceived offense in the speech or actions of other persons.

"Anger" comes from the German word *anchone*, which means a strangling; and *angst*, which means fear (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 520). So, anger is one of those words in our language that indicates an emotional state that is unhealthy and dangerous to engage in. As previously pointed out, "strangling" is the aggressive cutting off a living creature's breath to cause unconsciousness or death. Not a great coping method, once you think about it! "Anger" means to be strangled by fear. Anger is that feeling of intense displeasure and agitation, resulting from a perceived injury or mistreatment that reveals itself as a desire to fight with or to run away from the perceived cause of the feeling. What is popularly called the "fight-or-flight reaction" is the result of negativistic internal dialogues that discount or deny the ability to resolve the perceived fearful stimulus that underlies the defensive anger, and that is escalated by the hormonal stimulation of the limbic system's reaction to the perceived threat.

Integrity as opposed to Insecurity and Lack of Self-Esteem

The term "integrity" comes from the Latin *tangere*, meaning untouched, whole or entire (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 702). Integrity in this model is the quality of being of sound moral principles, a person who is honest and sincere. Integrity is the inner wholeness that gives us direction in governing our lives; and when we make mistakes, integrity is the foundation from which we can recognize our mistakes, correct them without harm to anyone and move back to the practice of the "best" of ourselves in the next moment. It is worth mentioning here that the word "wholeness" was derived from the Old English *hal*, meaning complete and happy. The interesting part is that *hal* also means "holy" – complete in a spiritual and reverent manner (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 1525). Integrity is the reflection of the ethical and moral guidelines that give rise to the ideal self. This ideal self is sustained through correct thoughts, speech and actions. To paraphrase the Dalai Lama: If I think the thought, I will speak the word. If I speak the word, I will take the action. If I take the action, I will become the character. If I become the character, I will live the consequences of that character's thoughts, speech and actions (Dalai Lama, 1998).

When individuals engage in behaviors that they know are not O.K., they operate from a frame of reference (Schiff, Schiff and Schiff [Sigmund], 1975) that creates insecurity and undermines their self-image. The word “secure” derives from two Old English words *swaes*, meaning “special and dear”; and *cura*, meaning “care” (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 1214). So security in the context of personality would mean “a special and dear care” for ourselves, others, situations and the environment. Its opposite, insecurity, would therefore refer to a condition in which we are not ever safe from danger – neither internally or externally. To be insecure means we are filled with fears that destroy our confidence; and as a consequence, we become unreliable and unable to employ the “best” of ourselves as we move through our lives.

If we do not practice “a special and dear care” for the experience of our lives, we will lack self-esteem. “Lack” comes from the Middle Low German and Middle Dutch word *lac*, which meant a deficiency (Neufeld, 1988, 753-754). Self-esteem, which means to have respect for and a healthy belief in oneself, comes from the Latin words *se*, and, *lo*, meaning an awareness of oneself (as in “self-directed”), and the Latin *aestimare*, which meant to value (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 1218). Therefore, a lack of self-esteem would indicate that we are practicing behaviors that diminish both our self-respect and the healthy belief that we are O.K.

The author believes that the phrase “lack of self-esteem” can be misleading. So often, the author has observed “lack of self-esteem” to correlate with a belief in the innate not O.K.ness of the individual – a conviction that is created by thinking, speaking and acting without integrity, and which therefore takes away from a natural, positive self-regard. It is impossible to have healthy self-esteem if I am operating outside of my own definition of integrity. Being outside of my own integrity has its origin in negativistic internal dialogues. When we are not speaking to ourselves negativistically, self-esteem, as well as appropriate esteem for others, becomes a natural expression of a positive internal

dialogue that is oriented toward problem resolution. The Hawaiian term *ho’o*, as previously mentioned means I take responsibility for that into which I breathe the breath of life. When combined with the word *pono*, it means: I take responsibility for breathing the breath of life into probity or correct speech and behavior in my society. Adding a second *pono* to this phrase means that I take responsibility for correct speech and behavior in my relationships (Sigmund, 1999). Every culture the author has studied has an eloquent way to express this relationship between correctness of thoughts, speech and actions with the security of positive self-esteem.

Reciprocal Intimacy as opposed to Conflict Intimacy

The Latin *intimus*, meaning “within” is the root word of intimacy (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 707). Intimacy, in turn, means that I know myself within (I know my inner self); I practice “a special and dear care” in gaining insight into who I am. Intimacy also means that from this “special and dear care” for myself, I am able to share my inmost character, my personal self, with those persons with whom I am most closely associated and acquainted; and they can safely share themselves with me.

All our lives we crave intimacy. We seek it when we’re solitary, but even when we have a partner, we may tell ourselves that something is missing. If we could only find that

perfect person...then we'd be happy. No wonder real intimacy seems elusive. The secret lies not in that mythic "Miss or Mister Right," but in ourselves.

Intimacy is the art of practicing loving commitment in our relationships. Loving commitment means that I am as present with and as caring toward you when I believe that you are wrong as when I believe that you are right. Intimacy is a journey, not a destination. It is a creative process that is renewed each day. Of course, no relationship exists without intimacy, but here's the catch: Intimacy can be positive and reciprocal, or it can be negative and mired in conflict.

"Reciprocal" is from the Latin *reco prokkos*, meaning "backwards and forwards," and in this context means an equivalent and complementary exchange (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 1120) of thoughts, feelings, wants and needs that lead to a deepening intimacy and an affectionate bonding in a relationship. Every human existential wisdom system delineates an ethic of reciprocity. In Christianity we find: "Therefore, in all things whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them..." (Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31 in Scofield, 1909, p. 1002). This thought is expressed in the teachings of Mohammed in the *Fourth Hadith of an-Nawawi*: "Not one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself" (Religious Tolerance.org); and "He is not a true Muslim who eats his fill when his next door neighbor is hungry" (*Bukkkhari*, p. 52:112; 1999, University of Rhode Island.com/Islamic Perspective). Brahmanism, the religious doctrines of the priestly Hindu caste, states: "This is the sum of Dharma: Do naught unto others which would cause you pain if done to you" (*Mahabharata* 5:1517; Religious Tolerance.org). The Buddha taught: "...a state that is not pleasing or delightful to me, how could I inflict that on another?" (*Samyutta Nekaya* v.353; Religious

Tolerance.org). In the *Udana-Varga* 5:18, the Buddha is quoted as teaching: "Hurt not others in ways you yourself would find hurtful" (Religious Tolerance.org). The *Analects of Kung Fu Tzu* (Confucius) 15:23 state: "Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you" (Religious Tolerance). Confucius also instructed his followers to: "Try your best to treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself, and you will find that this is the shortest way to benevolence" (*Mencius* VII.A.4; Religious Tolerance.org). Jainism, a sixth-century Hindu religion that resembles Buddhism and centers on a reverence for all living things, teaches: "Therefore, neither does he [a sage] cause violence to others nor does he make others do so" *Acarangasutra* 5.101-102; Religious Tolerance.org); and "In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief, we should regard all creatures as our own self" (Lord Mahavira, *24Th Tirankara*; Religious Tolerance.org). Lao Tzu instructed that we should: "Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your loss" (*T'ai Shang Kan King P'ien*; Religious Tolerance.org); "...[the sage] is kind to the kind; he is also kind to the unkind...he is faithful to the faithful; he is faithful to the unfaithful..." (*Tao Te Ching*, Chapter 49; Religious Tolerance.org).

Reciprocal intimacy means that I am as thoughtful and caring about the quality of your experience of your life as I am of my own, and I receive the same thoughtfulness and caring back from you. We create reciprocal intimacy by practicing behaviors that guide us to positive thoughts, feelings, speech and actions; and by approaching problems in a non-threatening manner that seeks to resolve problems, rather than to assign blame and make the situation worse. The reciprocity in positive intimacy is created when both of us are practicing thoughtfulness and caring in the relationship, no matter who is supposed to

be “right” or “wrong.” Then interpersonal safety and the ability to quickly resolve problems exist for each person equally. In reciprocal intimacy, the drama, conflict and interpersonal distance that are the consequences of the Persecutor, Rescuer and Victim positions (Karpman, 1968, p. 39) and the blind creation of past pain are not acted-out. Positive, reciprocal intimacy directs us toward the creation of a positive environment that nurtures and supports each person’s full experience of his or her life.

The second type of intimacy is conflict intimacy. “Conflict” derives from the Latin word *confligere*, which meant “to strike together”; its modern context means “to fight with,” “to battle” and “to contend” (Neufeldt, 1988, p. 292). Conflict requires antagonism and a perception of incompatibility. It is a purely oppositional and contradictory behavior. Conflict intimacy means that I use beliefs about myself and my close personal knowledge of you to compete with you for a primary victim position (Karpman, 1968.p. 39). In conflict intimacy, you and I control an unconscious psychological homeostasis (Sigmund, 1998, p. 28) balancing childhood experiences of intimacy and interpersonal distance with that of our current experience. We create an intricate dance of approach and avoidance that is designed to control the relationship and to manipulate our partner, keeping each of us caught between distance and intimacy. This dance of control and manipulation will simply repeat patterns of relationship we learned as children before the age of six. In each instance during childhood where reciprocal intimacy was absent, we experienced, learned and incorporated some form of conflict. These incorporations are

homeostatic in nature, and like other homeostatic systems, seek balance by re-establishing the average amount of intimacy and interpersonal distance. If, as adults, we are unaware of this homeostatic system, we will find a partner whose incorporations mirror the mistakes of our childhood – even in the face of contrary evidence. We will both unconsciously believe that the fear, hurt and anger we are experiencing in the conflict intimacy are by definition a necessary part of intimacy. We will seek to control one another, rather than to be reciprocally cooperative; and strive to minimize our own responsibility and suffering (the introjections) and to maximize the other person’s responsibility and pain (the projections). This interaction always results in the futile life position and the escalation of unnecessary suffering (Berne, 1969).

The choice between conflict and reciprocal intimacy is always present in our lives. It is the consciousness of the choice that will determine the nature of our relationships.

Summary

The preceding article has presented an introduction to a practical method for developing and sustaining cognitive, emotive, behavioral and physical health. This model evolved from the author’s personal immersion in Transactional Analysis as a model for maximizing healthy life experience. He began this practice in the late 1960s and has continued it, uninterrupted, to the present. Concurrent with this practice has been the author’s immersion in the parallel study of the established human existential wisdom systems. This practical synthesis of Transactional Analysis and the best of human thought regarding an ethically and morally intact life has benefited the author personally and has been taught to a variety of persons in a wide range of settings.

The foundation of this method is a firm belief that the most significant issue in realized

cognitive, emotive, behavioral and physical health is the conscious governance of the internal dialogue. The study of the individual and social aspects of human psychology as elucidated in Transactional Analysis and reinforced by the teachings of our major existential wisdom systems, clearly points out that: Our interpretation of reality is not determined by the nature of externally perceived persons, situations, objects and environments; but by the manner in which we are speaking to ourselves about those persons, situations, objects and environments. In this model, negative ideation is the cause of all the unnecessary suffering experienced by human beings.

The structural interventions in this article included: 1. a five-point paradigm for the issues of paramount importance in embarking on, developing and sustaining a positive, ethical and moral life; 2. a six-point paradigm for de-escalating the cycles of fear, hurt and anger that are the direct result of negativistic internal dialogues; and 3. the Eternal Wisdom Outline, a step-by-step outline of the criteria reflected in ten of the major human existential wisdom systems for the practice of harmless, positive thoughts, speech and actions regardless of the tenor of externally perceived persons, situations, objects or environments.

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