

Sophia

Creating
a Soul

Wise
Woman's
JOURNAL



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Why "Sophia"?

Thank you all for your delightful response to Sophia, Wise Woman's Journal. Although a few friends didn't care for it (and I'm glad they felt free to say so), most who are reading this second issue do like her.

Many asked the meaning of "Sophia" (pronounced so-FEE-uh)... I don't know why I thought it was commonly known to be the Greek word for Wisdom—apparently this isn't so common, and that's nice, who wants to be common?! The only reason for choosing the Greek word for wisdom was that it was, to me, the prettiest. I looked up the word wisdom in several languages and nothing had the tone I wished to convey, a mature feminine quality (maybe I had Sophia Loren in mind—?).

The night after I took the first issue to the printer, a friend called to tell me to quickly turn on the TV... women were talking about "Sophia the goddess of Wisdom," and something that sounded vaguely cultish, and they were outraged. This particular group (speaking on television) was Protestant, but complaining that at a conference of Christian women's issues, apparently entitled "Sophia Conference," Pagans, Jungians, and various other unsavory (to them, certainly not to me) groups had infiltrated, all claiming Sophia as a sort of mascot.

What to do! I considered awhile and decided not to "stop the presses" and to continue with what I had quite independently chosen just because I like the distinctly feminine way the word sounds, and because of its quite direct meaning: wisdom. I felt that even a cursory reading of this publication would disassociate it with any cult or any other group with a political or institutional agenda, and so I feel quite free to continue to use "Sophia, Wise Woman's Journal."

I was warned, as well as amused, by the response I received from men. Several made wise-cracks to the tune of "Oh, now I know what femininity is!" Oh, boys, if only you did know... Other darling men wanted to know if they could be sort of "closet subscribers." I will repeat something I have said over and over... to receive and contain and mold Life is a "feminine" activity but not a "female" one only. Any man who desires to create a soul is welcome here (and even you wise-crackers are, too; I love you all). The word "soul" is used in Sophia to mean the container of Life, uncontaminated Awareness, a wise and beloved servant, loving partner to the Creative Impulse.

Our society is in sore need of this necessary aspect... people want power, they want to be Masters and Magicians. No one ever evolved into Master or Magician who did not first surrender... abandon, renounce, discard all that was unholy within, all the lies, illusions, ideals, beliefs and opinions that do nothing but maintain sleep, fully develop his or her feminine aspect. All are welcome here, male and female, who wish to consider the Work to become a worthy Bride of Spirit, eventually to give birth to a New Man.

Your kind notes and calls are much appreciated. *Sophia* is the most personal work I have published to date, and I am well aware that it does not have broad general appeal... anymore than I do. Readers are getting an intimate glimpse into something I might prefer to keep a little more private, my deep inclination to see the Dance of Life as a sexual, sensual, passionate event, full of vibrant tension. But I think that the metaphor of romance is a perfect vehicle for the Teaching... I know that I am married to the Work, and I am deeply in love with The Invisible, Who manifests continually in my life, in each of you, and everyone.

And I suppose it helps if one is in love, this flowery approach may be more appealing then. One friend called to say upon first reading *Sophia*, "I'm not into poetry and I can't stand this Bible stuff," and put it aside; she fell in love the next week, picked up *Sophia* and saw her in a whole new light, much easier to relate to, in fact she likes it now. I enjoyed hearing that very much. You know, we can act and thus feel the bliss of being in love, whether or not there is a warm, sexy, adoring human beloved in our arms. And isn't that a wonderful feeling to walk around with? I think so...

It is my hope that we all can take on the role of *Sophia*, and if we can do this together, so much the better. Thank you. Please continue to participate... I am told continually how valuable other's comments are to readers. When you take the time to write, your contribution has more influence than you know. ☉

The creatures are set in motion by Love, Love by Eternity-without-beginning: the wind dances because of the spheres, the trees because of the wind.

God said to Love, "If not for thy beauty, how should I pay attention to the mirror of existence?"

The world is like a mirror displaying Love's perfection. Oh friends! Who has ever seen a part greater than its whole?

Love is the kernel, the world the shell; Love is the sweetmeat, the world the cauldron.

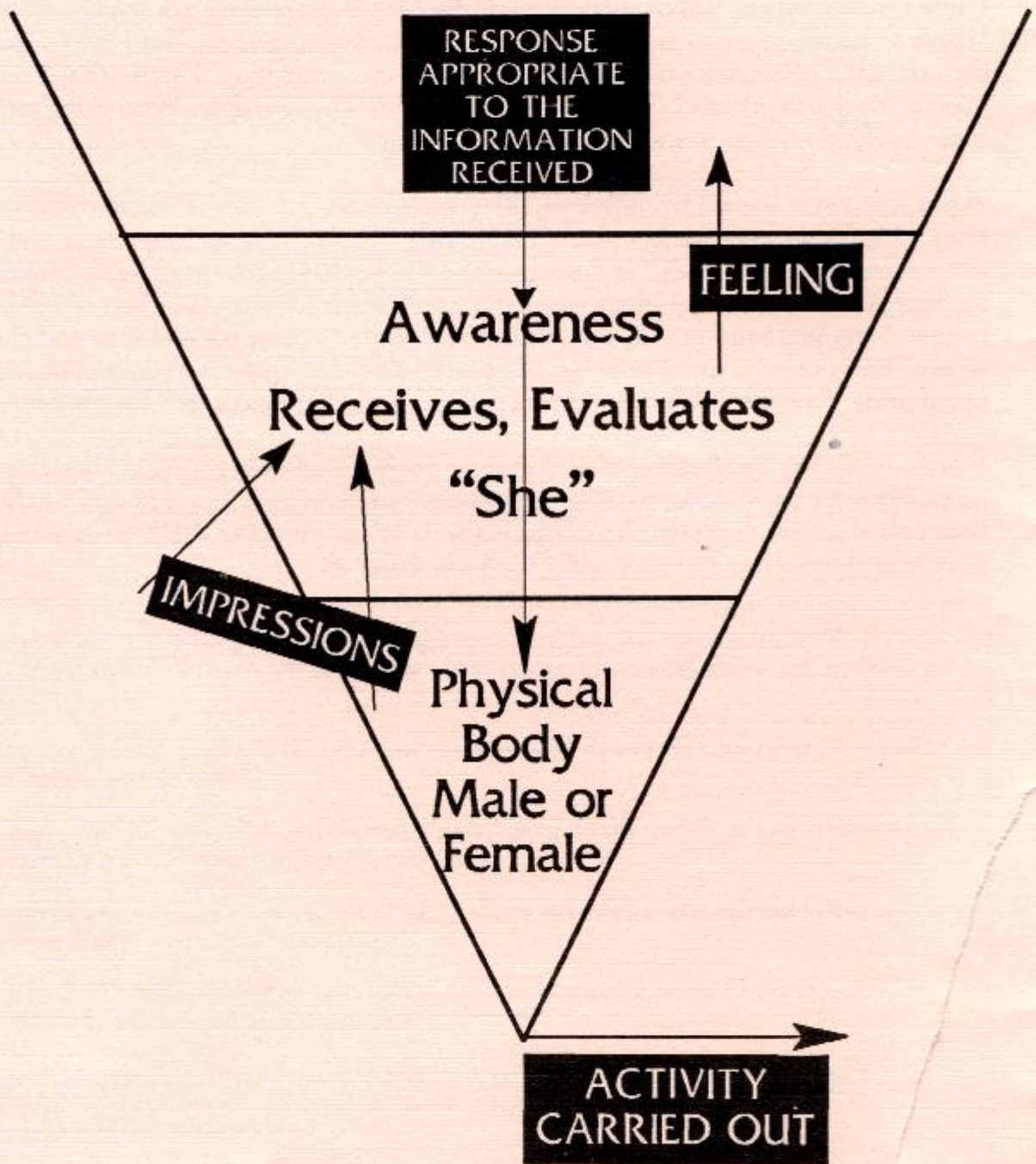
Oh Love who hast a thousand names and a cup of sweet wine! Oh Thou who bestowest a thousand skills!

God's wisdom and His destiny and decree has made us lovers of one another. That foreordainment has paired all parts of the world and set them in love with their mates.

The female desires the male so that they may perfect each other's work. God placed desire within man and woman so that the world might find subsistence through their union.

Rumi

X—Spirit, Intelligence, Potency “He”



Cover Story

Life is the Lover, Its Awareness function is Beloved. He will do for his bride whatever she requests, whatever. When their union is undefiled, their marriage is sanctified, the two become one.

Awareness receives impressions from both her inner and outer worlds, from people, things, places, events. She evaluates these impressions based on her Purpose of Living. If her Purpose has no inherent conflict—for instance, to be all she can be for Life, to serve, to develop, to co-create—her sound evaluations are transmitted to Spirit via the medium of feeling.

The great Intelligence responds appropriately to the information received, always, and through the Physical Body carries out the wishes of Awareness. It is simple, direct, unflinching, a perfect union, producing fulfillment.



Everything you ever do is carried out in this way—quenching thirst, reading a book, baking pies, writing, gardening, making love, everything. It is not hard to see, if we look. And it is vital that we see it for ourselves, not just read and memorize these words.

The sensation of thirst has a feeling value attached to it... this is "reported" to Spirit, Spirit moves the body to get a drink. Someone recommends a book, we have a feeling of interest, Spirit moves the body to the book store, sits us down, picks up the book, reads. A creative impulse arises, or the family makes a request, if we are so talented, we feel that we would like to bake a pie, and the body moves through the motions.

Take five things you did today and work them through this... you will see that these actions were the result of a value that you felt. It was "reported" to Spirit within by the feeling/value you placed on it, the activity followed. Anyone who does this exercise—take just five little actions and work them through the Picture of Man—will cease in that moment to be atheist or agnostic. Spirit is right here, right now, moving us through all the big and little actions that constitute our Life. Isn't it magnificent?⊗

←Picture of Man with Properly Functioning Awareness or "Soul"

Awareness receives impressions from both inner and outer worlds, evaluates them based on the Purpose of Living, communicates or "reports" their value to Spirit via the medium of feeling. Spirit always responds appropriately to the information received; this response is carried out through the physical body. (Rhondell's Science of Man uses the term "X" to represent the Life Force; just as for instance in algebra, it designates that something exists in an equation that cannot be precisely defined—yet. Sophia uses "X" interchangeably with terms such as: Life, Spirit, Intelligence, Potency, Lover, Initiator; and sometimes refers to It as masculine because It initiates, goes forth, penetrates, impregnates).

BALLAD OF A RUNAWAY HORSE

Say a prayer for the cowgirl, her horse ran away
 She'll walk 'till she finds him, her darlin', her stray
 But the river's in flood and the roads are awash
 And the bridges break up in the panic of loss

And there's nothing to follow, nowhere to go
 He's gone like the summer, gone like the snow
 And the crickets are breaking her heart with their song
 As the day caves in and the night is all wrong

Did she dream it was he who went galloping past
 And beat down the fern, broke open the grass
 And printed the mud with the well-hammer shoe
 That she nailed to his speed in the dreams of her youth

And although he goes grazing a minute away
 She tracks him all night, she tracks him all day
 And she's blind to his presence except to compare
 Her injury here with his punishment there

Then at home on a branch, on a high stream
 A songbird sings out so suddenly
 And the sun is warm and the soft winds ride
 On a willow tree by the riverside

Ah the world is sweet and the world is wide
 And he's there where the light and the darkness divide
 And the steam's coming off him, he's huge and he's shy
 And he steps on the moon when he paws at the sky

And he comes to her hand but he's not really tame
 He longs to be lost, she longs for the same
 And he'll bolt and he'll plunge thru the first open pass
 To roll and to feed in the sweet mountain grass

Or he'll make a break for the high plateau
 Where there's nothing above and nothing below
 It's time for their burden, the whip and the spur
 Will she ride with him or will he ride with her

So she binds herself to her galloping steed
 And he binds himself to the woman in need
 And there is no space, just left and right
 And there is no time but there is day and night

Then she leans on his neck and whispers low
 Whither thou goest, I will go
 And they turn as one and they head for the plain
 No need for the whip, oh no need for the rein

Now the clasp of this union, who fastens it tight?
 Who snaps it asunder the very next night
 Some say it's him, some say it's her
 Some say love's like smoke, beyond all repair

So my darlin' my darlin' just let it go by
 That old silhouette on the great western sky
 And I'll pick out a tune and they'll move right along
 And they're gone like smoke and they're gone like this song



"She'll Walk Till She Finds Him"

When I first heard this song sung by Emmylou Harris, I was so taken with the way she sang the line, "Whither thou goest I will go," which I mentioned last time. As I replayed the song again and again and learned the words, I was struck by their several levels of meaning, if one chooses to see it that way. And I was amazed at the songwriter's craft... I kept thinking of the Sufi poet and teacher Rumi and his way of conveying the spiritually human and the humanly spiritual, his way with words about passionate Love. I think this songwriter may be a modern-day Rumi...

One one level, of course, is a description of the feelings of a girl or woman toward her beloved horse. Maybe you have a horse, or know someone completely infatuated with hers. I have seen this kind of obsession of a friend of mine and her horse, and the unique bond between women and horses is well known.

Then there is the next level of "love" in general, or deep love, anyway, between a man and a woman. The friction, anxiety, anticipation, tension, union, absorption, retreat, reunion, they're all here. The man is there... and then he pulls away. It is inevitable, it is his nature. And, we hope, he is there again. The ocean is seen as feminine, our great Mother, and so is the moon, and thus tides, governed by the moon. But I think how the tides symbolize men... rushing up and then pulling away... to return again, always.

But what I saw most in these lyrics were lines that so aptly described the relationship we have with our Internal Lover, with Spirit. Women who read such things as Sophia may have experienced internal union, even if fleetingly, or long to, we know what we are, and that we are loved, and are love, and that we are complete. And then it is gone, and we are forlorn and alone... and yet, we remember, we will never forget, and thus we Know. And we long for the return of Union.

And when we are One, it is no effort at all. And when "He" has ebbed away, it takes great effort not to succumb to loneliness and unhappiness, maybe even depression... and alas, occasionally, despondency. Will He ever return? (Yes. And He stays longer and longer each time... eventually He is home here.)

"And the bridges break up in the panic of loss."

Indeed, we need those bridges—our Work... and panic IS loss, always. A Truth: that bridges break up in the panic of loss and then "the day caves in and the night is all wrong."

"And although he goes grazing a minute away, She tracks him all night, she tracks him all day, And she's blind to his presence..." Sad as these lines are, I almost laughed, it is so true. He is right there, a minute away... and yet we are despondent, or scurry around, frantic—blind to His presence. Sometimes.

"He's there where the light and the darkness divide."

Oh, yes... the HUMAN spiritual experience! It is right there between the light and the darkness... We forget this, we go flying through the air of our soul and seek upward, upward toward the light, and he is over there... on the very edge where the darkness and the light divide—and meet.

"And he steps on the moon..." If our feminine is symbolized by the moon, yes, He steps on the moon, she is His foundation, and reflects Him.

"And he comes to her hand but he's not really tame, He longs to be lost, she longs for the same..." And that is our job, to tame Spirit, Who wants to fly, who is not accustomed to density and darkness and dampness, who wants His way right now... who is not interested in limitations. And while certainly we don't want to impose limitations, we need to tame the Wind, and channel It, into creativity.

"He'll make a break for the high plateau, Where there's nothing above and nothing below." When we try to impose opposites, good and evil, off and on, black and white, yes and no, rather than see relativity, shades of gray, either and or, allow modulation, paradox... He'll make a break, for sure.

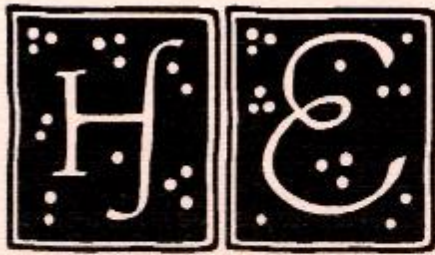
"Will she ride with him, or will he ride with her?" What is the difference? It is the same, they are One.

"So she binds herself to her galloping steed, And he binds himself to the woman in need, And there is no space, just left and right, And there is no time but there is day and night." Is this not a picture of Union? There's no space and there's no time, but there is direction, and there is contrast, and I am and I am not, and I am nothing and I am all...

"Then she leans on his neck and whispers low, Whither thou goest, I will go, And they turn as one..." And this is her Purpose intact, whither thou goest I will go... And we are one.

And in between all these are lines describing Beauty and Nature and Life, and the great romp through it all...

And this is where we are. In a place where we know Union and we know the loss of it, where we long for His return, and where, if we are Wise Women, we will allow the longing, for the longing is the Way... And He will return, because indeed, He goes grazing but a minute away. ⊗



praises me and I praise Him,

He worships me and I worship Him.

In my state of existence I confirm Him,

As unmanifest essence I deny Him.

He knows me, while I know naught of Him,

I also know Him and perceive Him.

Where then is His Self-sufficiency,

Since I help Him and grant Him Bliss?

It is for this that the Reality created me,

For I give content to His Knowledge and
manifest Him.

We are His as has been shown,

As also we belong to ourselves.

He has no other becoming except mine,

We are His and we are through ourselves.

I have two aspects, He and I,

But He is not I in my I.

In me is His theater of manifestation,

And we are for Him as vessels.

Ibn al 'Arabi



The Motherless Child

Question: You mentioned something about "nurturing ourselves." What does this mean?

Psychology makes quite an issue about the fact that most of our mothers were not consciously feminine (let alone integrated) and deprived their daughters, especially, of both unconditional love (they bought into the suggestions that their children be measured against standards, set both by themselves and by others), and the lessons by demonstration of listening, receiving, being comfortable with the physical body, and other "feminine" attributes.

Much blame is place on Mom for the daughter's lack of these things, as though she had been taught them and purposely withheld this wisdom from her children. In truth, Mother was most likely in the same relationship with her mother that the daughter who has not been nurtured is with her. If there is "blame" it cannot be placed in Mom's lap... it is, sadly, the human inheritance, or, if you will, blame Eve (who blamed the snake).



When I first heard this counsel to "nurture yourself" it confused me a little, too. But it did have that ring of truth, understood or not, so I asked Life to explain it to me. A short while later the following event happened, maybe you can relate to it. I was late for an appointment (as usual) and after a frazzled hunt for a certain pair of earrings, which I found, I had great difficulty getting the wire of one into my earlobe. It was a hot day, I was late, I was aggravated that I am such a slob that I never put anything away and thus spend inordinate amounts of time searching for stuff, and all that. Now the earring won't go in. I yanked on my earlobe with one hand and virtually stabbed it with the post in the other, searching for the little hole, not being able to penetrate it and get the heck out of the house, and the clock ticking away. I will admit it was brutal, my poking and tearing. It hurt and I didn't care, just be done with it, let's go.

Suddenly my prayer to understand was answered. I stood there in front of the mirror astounded at myself. Would I have ever under any conditions have treated my little girl or any little girl in such a rough and thoughtless and painful way? Of course not. If I happened across such a scene, I'd have intervened ("Here... please let me see if I can do this for you..."). There is no way I would have tolerated such an ugly thing directed at anyone... but myself.

And so, of course, I understood what it means to nurture yourself. It means treat your "self"—your body, your soul, all of you—with lovingkindness, just as you would any precious girl. I am no less precious to Life than anyone anywhere, young or old, lovely or not. So let's treat her that way.



Now the earring event isn't something that happens every day, at least not that dramatically, or that overtly brutal. But people do commit "child abuse" on themselves all the time. Every time we compare ourselves to some dumb manmade standard that no one could ever live up to, standards which assume we are all cookie-cutter identical, or rather should be. Every time we listen to chatter within (or without) that calls us stupid, ugly, bad, poor, incompetent, and especially unable. We would not say these things to a little child, why say them to ourselves?

Nurturing ourselves means that I will allow her to be as she is, maybe too fat or too skinny, or awkward, or maybe she binges occasionally, or she is lazy. Maybe her social graces aren't up to par, or she is scared to death in a group. Nurturing ourselves means we may notice these things but won't find fault with them, we will understand that that is where she is at the moment.

It also means taking a firm but loving hand toward a little strengthening... it means I won't allow her to wallow in self-pity; if self-pity comes up, I will not agree with her that she is a victim, in fact, I will point out to her that she is not. It means that when she throws a tantrum, I will ignore her justification for it, I will see her as an infant at that moment, and renew with vigor my intention to nurture her, to help her grow and develop—to mature. True nurturing is not indulgence, and we all know that, because we recognize the real thing when we see it, and we all know what's really going on when parents let their children run wild and or constantly feed their little insatiable appetites for the 4DBUs. They are doing these brats no favor, and that is not nurturing. Nurturing is doing all the things that are to the little one's advantage, because she is God's child and thus lovable. (She is not ours at this stage... the nurturer is the caretaker, the loving servant of the Creator.)

If our mothers were not able to do these things, or were not able to do them consistently, or with the "best" intentions, that may be of some misfortune. But it is also ancient history. And even a little thought will show that they didn't have it any better than we did. So while we can't rewrite history, we certainly can take charge here and now. If nurturing is in order, and we are lacking it, we can provide it for ourselves.

The person who sent in this question, I know, is a loving, nurturing mom to two little ones. Whether or not you have little ones, you can treat yourself just like she or you would treat a little being entrusted to you for safekeeping. Please do... now. ☉

For in-depth discussion of this idea of nurturing oneself as a step toward creating a soul, I strongly recommend the work of my own "surrogate mother," Marion Woodman (though we've only met—in the flesh—once). Write to Inner City Books, Box 1271, Station Q, Toronto, Canada M4T 2P4 and request a catalog.

Erroneous Decisions

The brambles that choke the little Soul Seed are made early in life, and will remain operative until they are discovered. The first occurs at birth or shortly thereafter, upon the sensation of discomfort. It is the decision that the whole purpose of living is to regain the non-disturbed state. Very soon after, more weeds grow. The infant complains by crying. Alas, it is the only way to tell us what she needs. But a decision has been made, cry to get my way, and even though she will soon have the gift of language, the decision to complain is firmly established. Some infants are all grown up, still crying with their words, complaining about every disturbance. Plain old crying wears thin on Mama, eventually, who ignores it, and little one hollers, sticking up for her rights to be comfortable now. We can all recognize the stick-up-for-rights bellow.

One day the baby realizes smiling pays off. She tries this method of getting her way and finds it works, sometimes. But this is a crucial time in the soul's development—or lack of. Because this method conflicts with her previously rather reliable methods of complaining and demanding. What to do to get my way? Cry or coo? I feel like crying but they like cooing...

Soon she is disciplined. Don't go into the street, don't play with matches, don't do this, do that now, stop crying, go to bed, on and on it goes. The people bossing her around are much bigger than she is... and they decide when and what she eats, and wears, and does... she'd better obey them or else. And does sometimes, even though she wants to cry.

It's not easy, all this confusion and conflict, and she is still upset about being disturbed now and then. She's a clever girl and thinks maybe it is something she can fix by changing herself. She tries to hide her true feelings and she tries to improve herself, to be like her cousin who everyone says is such a good girl, or to somehow find a way to quit displeasing everyone.

Finally this woebegone pose is just too much to bear. In a fit of rage one day she lashes out at them—everyone else is making her unhappy and if they would just change she would be comfortable once again.

The conflict becomes intolerable for some... and those are they who find themselves one day, after seemingly interminable misery, in the midst of the Work. None of her previously chosen methods made her happy, but finally she has been given a gift that will, with some effort on her part, banish conflict, enable her to scrutinize her decisions about the purpose of living and the ways to achieve it, and to make new ones.

She will find that she was not abandoned, after all, left to her own unworkable devices to get along here. She has a Friend. And that is the Teaching. ⊗

Creating a Soul

Question: What do you mean by the term "creating" a soul? I thought all humans were born with a soul? I'm a bit confused and would appreciate it if you would elaborate.

All human life has Spirit—IS Spirit, having a human experience. But it arrives here asleep, or falls asleep shortly thereafter... like all tiny babies, sleeping most of the time. It is obvious that the newborn is aware of very little, except, probably, its sudden change of "lifestyle." Its soul—its Awareness function—is still merely a seed.

We know that a seed is potential. It may or may not develop into its destiny. We know that most seeds do not... In order for a seed to evolve into something worthwhile, to fulfill its purpose, it must have proper nutrition, including water, and warmth and light, proper resistance, the removal of pests and brambles. Occasionally a seed will sprout a bit with one or more of these essentials missing, but nothing much comes of it. Weak little roots, tiny flimsy leaves, maybe, nothing more, certainly it will not bear fruit.

"Creating a Soul" is shorthand for a process. It is Work done, deliberately, with the intention of developing one's full potential. As the process unfolds, development occurs.

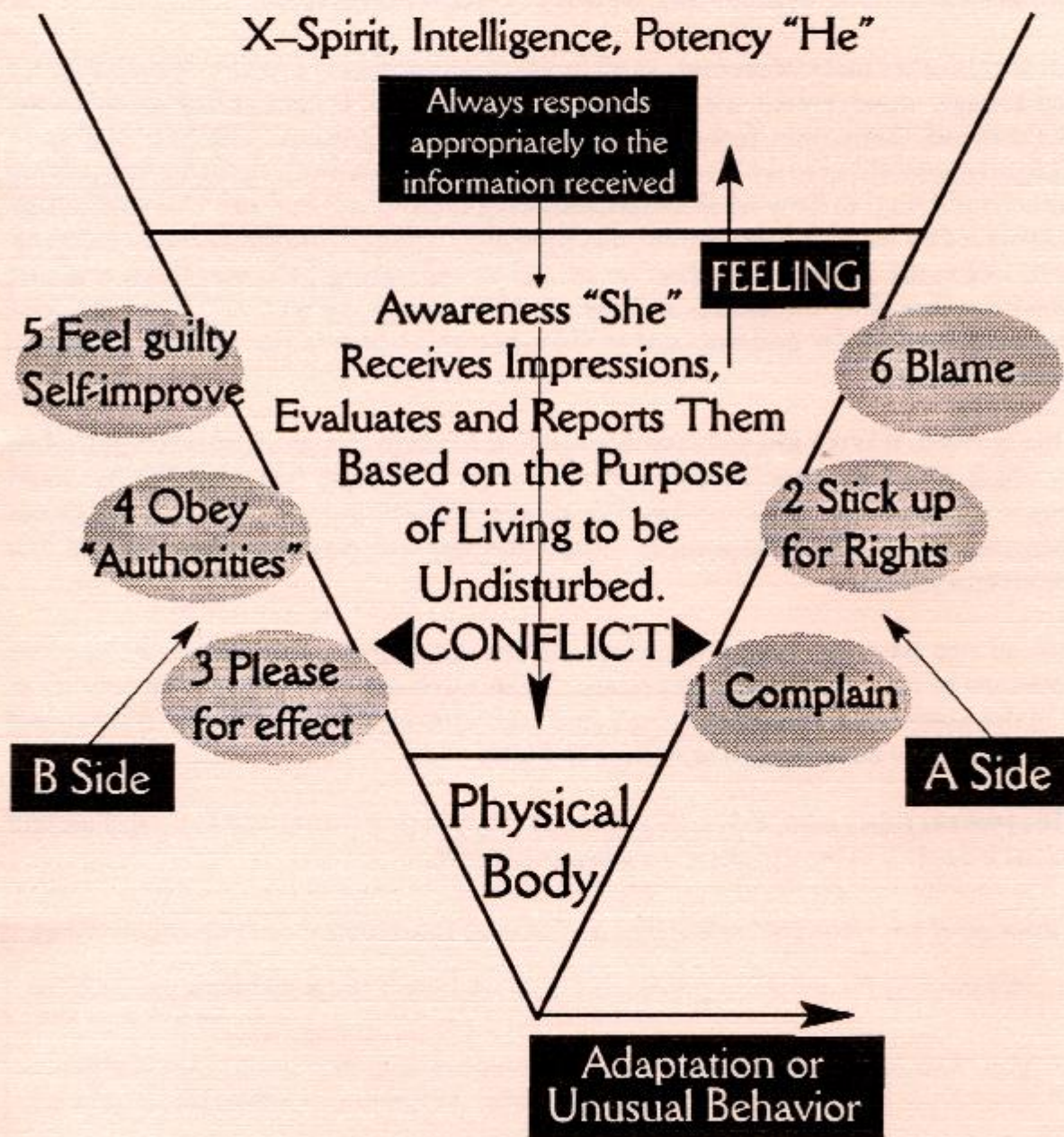
When Life arrives here in an infant body, its tiny seed of an awareness function is contaminated almost immediately. It does not like the sudden contrast between the goings on in the delivery room and the recent Paradise of the womb it just left. It's little senses tell it there are challenges here, discomfort, maybe even pain, hunger, glare, noises, chilly atmosphere, and all the other pangs of birth. The tiny seed or point of Awareness rejects all this... "I must return to non-disturbance... that is the purpose of living."

This is an error. Avoiding challenges is not the purpose of living, it even sounds silly when put so directly into words. But the little one doesn't know words yet, only feeling, and relies on sensation to make decisions with feeling. These decisions constitute brambles and weeds, they keep out the light, they choke out the nutrition that is here for it, they are poison, they weaken both Awareness and Spirit.

If these decisions are not discovered, eventually, and unmade, they will prevent the seed from developing. Awareness will remain a seed, or embryo at best, and wither and fade away.

The process is to undo the damage. It is to discover self, both the false self that lives life in our name, and the Real Self within, asleep, hidden, longing to emerge, and merge, Spirit and Awareness, to grow and develop and create.

Picture of Conditioned Man



As the seed gains years, it gains a history. It thinks this history is itself. It is not, it is a catalog of events, and it is conditioning. It is perceiving askew, as through a glass darkly, and thus "reporting" inaccurately. The process is to first discover the errors of perception, and to let go of them. Letting go is a form of emptying. When empty a cup can be filled. A soul is Life's Chalice, clean and pure and strong, a vessel to contain Spirit, to turn water into wine (knowledge into wisdom), eventually to turn wisdom into flesh and blood, regeneration. This is accomplished by action.

All of this takes place in process, as all living things unfold in process. Would that we had a magic wand, presto, we are whole, fully integrated. It doesn't happen this way. We proceed, sometimes feel that we plod, through a process. The first step is to recognize something to which we possibly had never given much thought: What is my purpose of living? Is it my whole purpose of living to be non-disturbed? This recognition is achieved by watching our actions and thoughts, without condemnation or justification. We make an impartial observer by sort of separating from ourselves, and just watching thoughts and deeds, and asking, "What was my motive?" This objective observer watches for purpose, and it identifies and watches the decisions made to achieve purpose.

This is Work. It is not always easy (but not that hard), and is sometimes painful, when we observe self in some humiliating recognition of childish behavior. But we must accept ourselves for what we are. We do not have to love or even approve of our erroneous ways, but we do want to respect the Self who may have been deluded into committing them.

We do not have to change ourselves. When we change error, when we re-make decisions to our advantage, appropriate changes will naturally occur. The only effort is in the watching and re-evaluating—and especially in the remembering to do so, and the sincerity to be willing to be honest and look.

This process takes a little time, but some Work, a little time, a little love, and we will create a Soul. It is inevitable, if we allow it to be. ⊗

Your grief for what you've lost lifts a mirror up to where you're bravely working.

Expecting the worst, you look and instead, here's the joyful face you've been waiting to see.

Your hand opens and closes and opens and closes. If it were always a fist or always stretched open, you would be paralyzed.

Your deepest presence is in every small contracting and expanding, the two as beautifully balanced and coordinated as birdwings.

Rumi (Mathnawi, iii, 3769-3766)

The Four Dual Basic Urges

Certain side-effects or by-products of living are considered by most everyone the world over to be the very purpose of living. While these things may, indeed, comprise much of the spice of life, they are in no way the very purpose of our existence. They are: to gain pleasure and comfort and escape pain and discomfort; to gain attention, escape being ignored or rejected; to gain approval, escape disapproval; to feel needed, important and/or appreciated; to escape feeling inferior, useless, unappreciated.

I think of these as Earthly Pleasure and Mortal Pain, although it is all earthly and all mortal, in the end (can you take a bit of it with you when you leave here?)

But although we are not OF it, we are certainly on the earth, in the manmade world. It is unlikely the Four Dual Basic Urges go by unnoticed for very long, no matter how evolved or immune to them we may be.



My friend Sheila met a fabulous man on a cross-country plane trip this weekend. This may, indeed, be the man of her dreams. The very least is obvious, that he will have occupied five blissful hours of her life, giving her comfort, pleasure, attention, approval, the feelings of value, worthiness, appreciation. She had a ball. On the return flight, no such luck. Two people, "from God knows what country" plopped themselves down. They smelled so bad that my friend actually had to stifle a gag. The tattooed biker-type in front of her got up and demanded loudly that the attendant find him another seat away from the stench. Ordinarily Sheila would have been quite disturbed about the prospect of spending five hours shoulder-to-shoulder with these unsavory people. But what happened instead is that she laughed. She realized that her first trip had been absolute bliss; if this one were less than ideal, so what? It seemed to her a small price to pay, and indeed, a kind of balancing. (And by the way, after all this internal consideration and freedom to experience it, the people decided they wanted to sit somewhere else, anyway, and moved.)

A similar concept engulfs me whenever I admire my kitties. I adore them, especially little Bob, who is cuddles personified. Every time I gaze into their ancient feline eyes, and especially Leah's magnificently beautiful face, I am overwhelmed not only with their beauty and their perfection, they are perfect examples of the Life idea of feline grace, but also with the knowledge that it is unlikely we will all three perish on the same day, and so one or another of all of us are destined to some degree of grief one day. (When I lost little Della I sobbed for three straight days, I was inconsolable. Don't ask me... I'm rolling my eyes myself as I admit this... but that pia is extraordinarily forceful. I can only begin to imagine what people with actual real children must go through.)

But as little Bob-O snuggled up purring on my breast this morning as Sheila was telling me on the phone about her new man and the return plane trip, I was struck yet again with the truth of it. The Four Dual Basic Urges are all over the place, and we are certainly free to indulge in the ones we like. But we are foolish to think we can do that and escape the unpleasant ones, the painful ones, the ones that are the catalyst to mourning. It is impossible. The Pleasure and the Pain are inseparable in the end, and if we pretend otherwise, we are destined to live in conflict.

Someday when we are masters we will be completely immune to the 4DBUs (presumably... I don't know anyone who is 100% immune, though close...) We will recognize them and let them pass on by, knowing they are of the mortal world and not of the real world. That the real world holds greater pleasures and joys, and as for the sorrows... I don't know. But in the meantime we are subject to craving certain things, people, events (and pets), and that's okay. What students want to do, though, is acknowledge that accepting and enjoying the good stuff means that we must be equally free to accept, and if not enjoy, certainly, at least allow, the rest of it. That's the way it is. ⊗



THE FOUR DUAL BASIC URGES (The 4DBUs)

LEVEL	GAIN	ESCAPE
PHYSICAL	Comfort, Pleasure	Pain, Discomfort
MENTAL	Attention	Being ignored, rejected
EMOTIONAL	Approval	Disapproval
TRANSCENDENTAL	Feeling needed, important, appreciated	Feeling inferior, useless, unappreciated

Second Force

There are Four Forces in all phenomena:

1. Initiative: Spirit; the idea, intelligence, will, potency, creative impulse;
2. Resistance: Opposing force to initiative, which always arises to meet it; forms, shapes, molds, challenges.

An encounter between approximately equal first and second forces will produce

3. Form: An object or an event born of the union of first and second forces, leading to
4. Result: The response to the above.

"The Creator" has been referred to as "He" since antiquity, and I tend to see it that way, too... First Force initiates an idea, it goes forth, penetrates matter or time or space or whatever, penetrates Second Force, which resists it. Because this partnership is rather like a marriage, both paradoxically remain separate yet are united and changed by the union, and create something new. Seeing her as the bride of Initiative, I assign "She" to Second Force, Resistance, and since antiquity "She" has been hated, feared, violently controlled, and the recipient of much misunderstanding (not to mention abuse).

Spirit seems accustomed to having its way... and along comes the barrier: "Dance with ME, then we'll see..." Spirit, First Force, must capitulate to her presence (not necessarily her wishes) in this realm for its idea to manifest. In other words, it is a Law that our ideas, our will to do anything, must deal with Second Force, which will always arise. It's no use crying about it, hating it, wishing it would disappear... What we need to do is understand her, dance with her, freely allow her to perform her function.

Now this is a simplified version of what is going on here. Because in fact, Her Majesty Second Force has two sides to her nature. The first is benign, if a pain in the neck at times, the challenger to First Force, making for an interesting game of creativity. Examples of the benign side of Resistance are time (it takes time to create and patience is not natural to us); gravity, distance, the need for money to get certain things done; our inherent laziness and desire to sleep; weather; density, whether things like traffic, or dealing with people who don't listen, or a keen awareness of the weight of our bodies when we want to soar... None of this is personal, none of it is insurmountable, it is benign but does take work to deal with.

But Resistance has a dark side, too, and this is more subtle, sometimes, yet a far bigger challenge. It is all the "evil" ideas, such as that we are unworthy to create, not good



enough, not intelligent enough, not strong enough. It tells us we have rights and then laughs in our face when these "rights" are shown to be illusion. It tells us comfort is more important than anything. It tells us Life is dangerous, so don't participate any more than necessary. It suggests revenge, animosity, grudges and tries always to scare us to death. It promotes ideals constantly. It tells us it is more important to be loved than to love. This list could go on and on, as you well know.

Benign Second Force is the natural resistance needed to enjoy the dance of creativity. Whenever we play a game (and know we are playing a game) we actually invite Resistance to participate, and we enjoy her immensely... the game would be no fun without her. In fact, without her, there would be no games. We don't fear her, unless she is monumentally huge, a hurricane, for instance, and then we make sure we get out of her way.

Malevolent Second Force, or contrived resistance, on the other hand, is a different story. We hate it, we fear it, we would do anything to avoid it. But mostly we fight it... we resist Resistance, and to no avail. Two negatives, in this case, do not make a positive, they make a mess. The way to deal with the Dark Side of Resistance is so simple (although, granted, not always easy): ignore it. Recognize her when you see her, to be sure... but ignore her. That's all there is to it. A complaint comes up from within or from another... ignore it. Rights are demanded, laugh. Some "authority" is threatening you, ignore it. You find yourself cast in front of the manmade Official Human Standard, turn and walk away. The minute the brain goes frantically searching for whose fault some discomfort is, ignore it. Anything derogatory that you hear about yourself or another, from within or without, is malevolent, it is contrived, it is dangerous, and it is a lie.

Second Force is nothing to fear. It is mighty, indeed, and yet how long do you think you could possibly refrain from boredom if she were to disappear altogether? You can greet her benign side with open arms—dance with her and you will create something new. When she glances at you from the corner of her eye and starts to question you in any way... when that snake wrapped around her neck is about to bite your beautiful breast, ignore her. The treacherous aspect of her will go somewhere else to work her nonsense. ⊗

False words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil.

Plato, Phaedo

Bulletin Board

BOOK GROUPS—2:00p.m. Saturdays, August 13, 20, 27. The Garden of the Beloved by Robert Way. Out of print but may be available in used bookstores. If you can't find a copy, call me. We meet in the far lobby of the Red Lion Hotel in Glendale, on Glenoaks between Central and Brand. Take Central/Brand offramp from 134 Freeway, go north two blocks. You can see the hotel from the freeway. September groups tentatively set for the 3rd, 10th, and 17th. Call in early September for the title. There is no fee for book groups. If you can't attend but would like to participate to some degree, feel free to send your comments on the book and I will read them to the group, and let you know the feedback.

ROOMMATE WANTED—A good friend is looking for someone to share her large Westside apartment. She is a writer. Male or female okay, smoking okay. Call me if you know someone who might be interested.

RUMI POETRY—Page 3, from The Sufi Path of Love, The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi by William C. Chittick, State University of New York Press, State University Plaza, Albany NY 12246. Page 18, from Rumi: We Are Three, New Rumi Translations by Coleman Barks. Maypop Books. Order from Coleman Barks, 196 Westview Drive, Athens, GA 30606. \$8.50 incl. postage.

SLOW RESPONSE—I have been flooded with mail, including many, many very long letters discussing the Work. If you haven't heard from me yet, please know you will. Your input is very much appreciated, and please keep it up.

SEEKING FRIENDS—A lovely young woman is moving to Houston soon. She would like to make contact with women in the Work there. Please let me know if you might welcome her to chat, maybe get together.

FROM DEAR ABBY'S COLUMN—"It has been said that man is the only animal who laughs, and the only one who weeps; the only one who prays; the only one who walks fully erect; the only one who makes fires; the only one who guides his own destiny; the only one who is penitent; and the only one who needs to be." Elton Fineblood, *Philosophy of Religion*.

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