

Advanced Seminar Letter #5

Dear Gang,

I want to write a bit more about guided imagery and the soul and also lay the groundwork for the next seminar.

You could see in David's session the power of the flow of images and how they had a life of their own, which included the resistance at the beginning and the pacing throughout. Again, I want to say that the resistance is not something to get through, to get rid of, whatever, it is the friction that is enabling the process to stay true and grounded, it is the form that holds the flow and sets the pace. If the soul is going to open, it needs to know that this resistance is respected by the guide, and worked with. Otherwise, it is not safe for the soul to give its full, as there might be a premature closure on, or personality reaction to, the experience, or a facile manipulation of the experience that amounted to an abortion of the real intent of the soul in the process. The key is to not try to get anywhere, and at the same time to stay very close to what is happening, as you saw me do with David. Then the process can find its own timing and path, and the soul can speak fully through the piece of work.

The smaller the steps the better, or another way to say this is, the stronger the continuum the better. Trauma is actually a loss of continuum of consciousness, a break, an interruption, and healing comes through the restoration of the continuum of experience and bearing every bit of it. All the bits together constitute the truth of the experience, which though sometimes very painful, is liberating and integrating. An example in David's session was seeing his relationship to his father clearly and painfully and from there seeing his relationship to his son and granddaughter clearly and joyously. Pain and joy were both aspects of the truth of the experience, of his soul. All the bits are stored in the psyche in the form of patterns/energy, and the images make them available to us under the guidance of the soul as is best for us in process and pace. The Jungians feel very strongly that dreams should not be induced, and it is for just this reason. If, however, we are going to induce them, as with guided imagery, then as guides we need to pay very close attention to this principle of continuum, so that the continuum of images/energy coming out of the unconscious is not interrupted again by us.

Remember also that David's session was done in a group context, with much available energy for support, and do not expect that your work with individuals will necessarily be like that. But the principles remain the same. I look forward to hearing how this has gone this month.

This coming seminar we look again at the life cycle and the series of crises that attend the gradual embodiment/incarnation of the soul on earth over a lifetime. What is quite wonderful here is that the principle of continuum bears at this level also. One way to conceive of the soul is as containing a pattern/energy of human spiritual maturity which is the destiny of each person, or the purpose, or place of deepest meaning, or greatest aliveness, however you want to say it. This pattern is seeking expression over the course of a lifetime-- a very long session-- and it encounters resistance in body, feelings, and mind, which are shaped in patterns arising from the breaking of continuum through wounding at many levels-- from pre-incarnational, karmic, and spiritual to psychological and physical. The soul pattern needs all the experience in this lifetime in order to incarnate, and so the resistance here becomes, as above, very important not to jump over, or manipulate. It bears paying very close attention, because stored in it is something the soul pattern needs in order to express the full maturity at the right pace.

We are seeking to express this pattern in our lives, and we wander far and wide trying to realize what it is and to make it real in the world. We also make "mis-takes" and seem to get lost in detours, or in our resistance to our calling to realize this pattern of spiritual maturity. It is a very complex pattern, and because we can only realize it in time and space, often there seems to be discontinuity between the different pieces, or we seem stuck, and want to break out. But, in fact, nothing is wasted and everything is needed, even the hardest experiences. So again the work is to stay close to what the emerging experience is in yourself, or a client, and trust that this will lead in time to the realization that you are seeking. We can't jump over anything, and if we do, we risk losing a piece of our soul. Disconnection is just as important an experience as connection, darkness is as important an experience as light. The continuum is what is crucial. The soul will test you on this, and see if you are willing to stay with the hard times and live them fully. This commitment makes it safe for the soul to release eventually the full force of its pattern/energy, for it knows that you can bear it and that you have learned from your suffering as well as from those moments of knowing who you most are. The container is built well through the continuum of all experiences and will not shatter. Each piece has its place and the life is whole. The continuum contains all polarities that make up the pattern and in soul time they are integrated. It is only in time/space that we experience fragmentation and conflict, but, luckily, this is just what we need to touch

the wholeness that we sense from the beginning, is never not there, and which, as we ripen, emerges and is sustained.

Another way to say this is that the pattern of spiritual maturity holds all the energies/images in the psyche, and its realization is the expression of these energies/images through the vehicle of our life in time and space. This includes very centrally images of birth and death, and this polarity is always key to working with crisis. Something is always dying for something else to be born, and the soul knows when to focus on the dying and when on the birthing. We tend, as personalities, to focus on the birthing, and our potential, but suffering and dying are also an aspect of our potential, and we need both to ripen as souls on earth. I enclose here a poem by Mary Oliver which speaks to this, and for the time being, let this all rest.
More on Saturday. love now. Tom

WAGE PEACE

by Mary Oliver

"Wage peace with your breath.

Breathe in firemen and rubble, breathe out whole buildings and flocks
of redwing blackbirds.

Breathe in terrorists and breathe out sleeping
children and freshly mown fields.

Breathe in confusion and breathe out maple trees.

Breathe in the fallen and breathe out lifelong friendships intact.

Wage peace with your listening: hearing sirens, pray loud.

Remember your tools: flower seeds, clothes pins, clean rivers.

Make soup.

Play music, learn the word for thank you in three languages.

Learn to knit, and make a hat.

Think of chaos as dancing raspberries,

imagine grief as the outbreath of beauty or the gesture of fish.

Swim for the other side.

Wage peace.

Never has the world seemed so fresh and precious.

Have a cup of tea and rejoice.

Act as if armistice has already arrived.

Don't wait another minute."