

**GABRIEL GHERASIM  
THEODOR AND US**



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**REFLECTIONS  
ON THE GIFTS  
WITHIN US**

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**I'm sorry!**  
**Forgive me!**  
**Thank you!**  
**I love you!**

*The Book of The Hawaiian Practice of  
Forgiveness And Healing*



This book is dedicated to my father  
Theodor Gherasim,

A farmer's son who graduated from two universities (Economics and Engineering), a survivor of many Communist prisons, who became a political refugee in America and who spoke out for the freedom of those who were still being persecuted.

A loving son, who became a loving husband and parent.

A man who had dealt with the ordeals and the vicissitudes of life through the prism of gratitude, focusing on the candle breaking the darkness, rather than the other way around.

He was and will always be to me the personification of the consciousness and of the realization that most people are in perpetual longing to *have* something that they already *are*: Love.



## **Author's Foreword**

In March 2016, I was immobilized in the hospital for a few weeks. Between CT scans and MRI scans, intravenous treatments, and Physical therapy sessions, I surrounded myself with the love of my loved ones, reading the books I had planned to read for some time, prayer, meditation and positive thoughts.

One day, I took one of the hospital menus and I started sketching on it some ideas for a self-help book, which eventually developed into the present book.

With diligence and time, I expanded those ideas to contain what I consider to be useful concepts coming from established authors, from my colleagues, my family and friends, from former clients and those which came by inspiration.

The hope I have is that these ideas may help the readers as they have helped me.

I am grateful to all who contributed to this collection of knowledge.

I want to thank particularly Mrs. Louise Gherasim for her repeated reviews and corrections of the manuscript and the publishing house which transformed it into this book.

## Foreword

Gabriel Gherasim is an excellent writer. He is known to have written many books in various subjects, ranging from literary works, e.g. *Happiness In Our Daily Lives*, *Lands Beyond the Forest*, *The Story Of the Queen Bee and the Children's Corner*, to academic treatises e.g. *Victims Of Communism and Their Persecutors*.

He is also an acclaimed journalist, with articles and interviews, which have been published in Romanian and English language newspapers and magazines from Romania, Moldova, Israel, Italy, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the USA, Australia and Canada.

He also worked as a correspondent for *Radio Free Europe* and hosted a weekly radio show called *Vocea Mioritei* (The Voice of the Heart).

Gabriel Gherasim has a Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences from Portland State University and a Master's Degree in Negotiation, Meditation and Conflict Resolution from California State University.

He has been working alternatively for over thirteen years as a group and individual counselor, case manager, supervisor and faculty.

He is a careful observer of human behavior and a skilled analyst of life's daily events, which makes him an authority in these fields and a credible source of good, professional advice.

This book is an ABC guide for a beneficial attitude towards life and people as well as towards oneself. It studies and explains in a language that everybody can understand, patterns and habits of thinking from such points of view as neuro-psychological, philosophical and moral; it teaches the reader how to think about thinking, as thinking is the most important aspect of one's life with its good and bad implications.

According to an old Patristic saying, "sin is an error of thinking": consequently, to learn how to think is the key to a fulfilled life that brings about happiness here and salvation in the realm to come.

Gabriel Gherasim makes his points by referring to such great authorities as Erich Fromm, Victor Frankl, Abraham Maslow and other psychologists and philosophers who

excelled in serious explorations of the complex phenomenon of Being. The author's own theological, ethical and philosophical reflections with immediate applicability to specific types of crises or problems one might have in life, represent a useful and helpful guide for anyone who tries to navigate the high seas of this existence.

A beautiful section of Gabriel Gherasim's present work is where he interprets Erich Fromm's distinction between having and being. He offers new and practical insights that relate to major, fundamental values such as belief in God and spirituality, positive thinking and consideration of life as a gift and all the implications that follow such a sound *weltanschauung* (worldview in German)

With an admirable sense of detail, the author discusses significant aspects of human life: emotions, beauty, knowledge, wisdom, love, happiness, meditation, decision making, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, authenticity, to name a few.

Using etymological explanations of main terms, he sheds light on specific roles and meanings of these crucial components of existence, treating the topics at hand in a

coherent and comprehensive manner in order for these explanations to be clear, meaningful and convincing.

A strong characteristic of Gabriel Gherasim's argument at every stage and point of his exposition here is the logic on which it is grounded, followed by significant and convincing illustrations. These illustrations include sapiential literature from the world's old and new reflections on how to live wisely.

The book is a valid and powerful lecture in favor of life, more precisely, of a life of sense and quality. In other words, it offers good and valuable advice for a meaningful life lived in harmony with self and others and with God.

**Theodor Damian Ph. D**

*Professor of Philosophy and Ethics*

*Metropolitan College of New York*

*President of The Romanian Institute of  
Orthodox Theology and Spirituality*



## Chapter 1

### Body and Soul

The name *Theodor* in Greek, means “Gift of God.” More ancient than the Greek language is its meaning in the original Thracian language, presently called Daco-Romanian, where it appears as *Zeul Dor*, meaning “Longing for God,” as well as *Zeul Odor*, meaning “Gift of God.” This ‘longing for God, or gift of God,’ is the human consciousness, spirit, life.

It took the advent of Quantum Physics to demonstrate that it is our intentions, thoughts and feelings, which influence matter, rather than the other way around.

This book will concentrate on the interconnectedness of these factors, which make us perceive our lives one way or another.

To be clear, the very term “human being” has shown that to us all along: namely, that we are made of a perishable part, finite, the “human” in us; and of an eternal, infinite energy part, the “being” in us.

While the “dust to dust,” flesh and bones part of us, has been praised, derided, obsessed

over, or denied, including in our present century, sometimes ad nauseam, the electromagnetic field and our thoughts processes, known alternatively as ‘aura,’ ‘intelligence,’ ‘cognition,’ or ‘soul’ have constituted a mystery over the centuries, culminating with the Communist denial of its very existence altogether.

So, the question raises therefore, are we beings having a human experience, or are we humans having a being experience? Much too often the being part known as ‘cognition,’ ‘gnosis,’ ‘soul,’ ‘intelligence,’ or ‘mind,’ is deferred to carnal experience or senses, equated to matter instead of energy.

In fact, very often we tend to trade the ‘know’ for the ‘now,’ without wondering about the interconnectedness of the two.

It is based on this materialistic view that we choose possession of things and people, as opposed to being with things or people. Eric Fromm, in his *To Have or To Be* (Continuum International Publishing Group, London, UK, 2005), gives an example on how these two mentalities may affect us and the world: one poet sees a beautiful rose in the forest, he cuts it off, brings it home and puts it in a vase, after which he writes a poem on how beautiful this

rose is; another poet, sees a beautiful rose in the forest, uproots it and transplants it in his garden, after which he writes a poem on how beautiful this rose is; a third poet, sees another beautiful rose in the forest, he approaches it gingerly and smells it, after which he writes a poem on how beautiful this rose is.

All three poets appreciated and wrote poems on how beautiful the roses in the forest are but at what cost for the roses in the first two cases?

## **Chapter 2**

### **Time out**

Each day we are given to live is an opportunity for us to make a choice: do we want to progress, stagnate, or regress? Based on our choices, we proceed to think, feel, talk and act in kind.

As we set the intent to progress, for example, we also have to make a decision about what it is that we want to achieve? What's important for me to progress to, can be related to self-esteem or self-worth values.

If it is self-esteem values I'm seeking, I will need to focus on my inner values: my character, my wisdom, my intelligence, essentially at values which I carry with me at all times, because they are inherent and an intrinsic part of me. These internal values are in my control.

On the other hand, if it is self-worth values that I'm seeking, they are dealing with materialistic things, such as cars, properties, money and social recognition. These external values are in somebody else's control.

When we lose control of our values, we become scared. When we become scared we

become angry. When we become angry, we become emotional. When we become emotional, we fail to be logical. When we are not logical we react based on triggers which more likely will get us in trouble as opposed to responding based on lucid thinking.

The trick is to have practiced during the calm and trouble-free times, conflict resolution skills, so often, that feeling calm in the midst of conflict (and therefore, being logical), is second nature. This defies the natural order of cause-effect and yet, it can be possible, because it comes from a carefully and repetitively created habit of being.

Having ‘unnatural’ reflexes is not impossible, just difficult to achieve. A ballet dancer’s erect posture and proud walking is one such example. However, for most of us, between being emotional and being calm, we need to acknowledge the importance of taking time-out. It is only after taking time-out that we can sensibly calm-down and use logic in addressing our concerns. This can be achieved by taking into consideration the respective consequences they would bring to our lives.

One example of repercussions coming from *not* taking time-out, before making a decision, came from a client doing private

counseling sessions. He stated that it had taken him 12 years to go from Manhattan to the Bronx. Normally it takes 2 hours by subway, or 5 hours by walking, from Manhattan to the Bronx.

In his case, he recounted how one evening, while being penniless and drunk in Manhattan, he had decided to rob a person and get enough money for the subway fare, since he didn't want to walk all the way to the Bronx.

He eventually attacked his victim, who happened to be a defenseless young lady. Besides robbing her, he also raped her. He was quickly arrested in Manhattan, shortly after his crimes and was sentenced to 12 years in prison, which he served in full. Only after that, could he return to his native neighborhood. It had taken him 12 years to go from Manhattan to the Bronx.

The stories of re-entry clients, trying to resume their lives as free people, after serving lengthy sentences in prison, abound with such tales. Impulsive actions, without the benefit of time-out periods and logical decisions being made before an action, triggered these individuals to victimize others and marked them for a life of decades of imprisonment,

many other years of parole, or post-prison supervision, a permanent criminal record and many obstacles derived from the above. They say invariably, that had they only taken time-out before going ahead with impulsive actions, they could have averted for their victims, for themselves and for their loved ones the ordeals of lives destroyed.

## Chapter 3

### Emotions

Emotions can be purveyors of beautiful experiences in life as much as they can be a source of endless pain. They come from our perceptions of our sensory world where we interpret ourselves and the world as being in harmony or in conflict.

Dr. Masaru Emoto, renowned Naturopathic doctor and pious Buddhist from Japan, married his religious convictions with his scientific skepticism by showing that water exposed to negative thoughts formed ugly and deformed crystals, while water exposed to positive thoughts formed symmetric and sublime crystals (*The Hidden Messages of Water*, Beyond Words Publishing, Hillsboro, Oregon, 2006).

Since 80%-50% of our bodies are made of water (depending on our age), it only follows, that negativity generating emotions and positivity generating emotions modify not just our cognitive and sentimental essences but also the very physiology of our bodies. We can only extrapolate how our states of being affect our interactions with others, if not our very actions in the world.

Perception is the key to interpreting our environment. John Milton, (British author of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Found*), states this as follows: “The mind is its own place and in itself can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven.”

Dr. Constantin Dulcan, a famous neurologist from Romania described this connection between the kind of thoughts we entertain and how it affects us, by stating:

Let us be aware of our **THOUGHTS**,  
for they will become our **EMOTIONS**.

Let us be aware of our **EMOTIONS**,  
for they will become our **WORDS**.

Let us be aware of our **WORDS**,  
for they will become our **ACTIONS**.

Let us be aware of our **ACTIONS**,  
for they will become our **HABITS**.

Let us be aware of our **HABITS**,  
for they will become  
our **PERSONALITY**.

Let us be aware of our **PERSONALITY**,  
for it will become our **DESTINY**.

(Dr. Constantin Dulcan, *Reteta Fericii*,  
Gandul, Bucharest, Romania, 2016).

One example of perceiving our worlds, as Dan Puric, an internationally acclaimed Romanian actor, dancer and commentator

discussed, is our paradigm on our connection to the society in which we live (Puric, Dan, *Omul Frumos*, Editura Libris, Bucharest, Romania, 2009).

He postulates that if a person sees herself as part of a population, her interest is very minimal in regards to society. Her approach to the rest of the people is very individualistic, a 'winner takes it all,' 'me, myself and I' attitude. However, if the same person sees herself as being part of a people, then her sense of identity is fused with the society in which she lives (in terms of preset, past and future values of that culture). A sense of quasi automatic empathy is generated and the person thinks, feels and acts in terms of 'we.' A sense of community brings an implicit and explicit responsibility and expectation that one's actions benefited both her interests AND the interests of her 'people.'

We can surmise that man versus population will think, feel and act only for his benefit, regardless of the cost to others, whereas man and his people, will permeate his existence, in some cases leading to his supreme sacrifice for his community. People, ideologies, politics and religions, have thus acquired supporters who will transcend

individuals, places, things and time, in order to experience that addictive feeling of ‘belonging’ so dear to human beings, since the beginning of time. They would thus become true believers (Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer*, Barnes & Noble, New York, 1951).

In order for people to feel that they have fully meaningful lives, they seek and try to find validation on four dimensions: intra-personal; inter-personal; intra-group; inter-group.

The intra-personal dimension is introversive in nature and covers areas of our identity which we find within; essentially, our thoughts (beliefs, perceptions), feelings and physiology.

The inter-personal dimension is extroversive and it involves our one-on-one communication with other individuals.

The intra-group communication is extroversive and it involves our functioning within our communities.

The inter-group communication, also extroversive, deals with our functioning in new or otherwise unfamiliar groups.

An American expression often equaled to defeatism states: “it is what it is.” While the journalists will be quick to list this as a circular

argument logical fallacy, the truth of the matter is that even if this statement is taken at face value, it is not true. In fact, what's more realistic is to state: it is how we PERCEIVE it to be. Therefore, particularly in a circumstance where we cannot change a fact, we can change the perception of it from negative into a positive one and therefore, we can think, feel, talk and act differently in regard to that situation.

Let's take a pen and poke our finger with it. Let's call that a sensation. How we think, feel and act about it depends entirely on whether we *perceive* that sensation as ticklish, painful, annoying, amusing, or pleasant. Even in an extreme case such as having one's body being whipped with vengeance, the sensations from it usually perceived as being painful are sometimes perceived by some people as a pleasurable experience. A flourishing industry of dominatrix people, getting paid a good penny by such individuals to hurt them, stands testimony to this fact.

We can visualize a fact/sensation as the content in a bottle and the perception, as the bottle itself (context, container). The saying cautioning us: "not to judge a book by its cover," is telling on how manipulation of the

context by the advertisement industries can induce us to buy inferior products (content), often at an inflated price, based on their glorious, external presentation (context/container). Similarly, we can try to ‘manipulate’ the context/perception of our paradigms, related to this or that situation, which we may be facing mandatorily, by reframing how we look at them, that is to say, from a negative into a positive perspective. Our context/perception is in our control, provided that we are reasonably sane in mind and calm.

In today’s Western societies we are often encouraged, if not tempted to seek and find instant gratification for our desires. In counseling terms, this is called the P.I.G. (the Problem of Instant Gratification). This is a problem because instant gratification can and does address the symptoms of our desires but hardly ever the core or the cause of them.

Let’s take the example of a head-ache. If I want instant relief, I go to a doctor who gives me medication. I take the pill which numbs my head-ache. Problem solved. But is it solved? Not really. For as soon as the effects of the medications go away, the head-ache reappears. This means that I have to take

another pill to numb the symptom (the head-ache). The headache is there and I simply manage it by taking pills in perpetuity.

However, if I want to come to a resolution rather than management of the head-ache, I seek the cause of the head-ache and I try to eliminate it. Without a cause for the head-ache, there is no head-ache. For example, if I eat salty foods which give me high blood-pressure, which in turn constrict the blood vessels in the head and which give me head-aches, I go on a low-salt diet. Following the diet, the blood pressure normalizes, the blood vessels don't get constricted anymore, which means that there is no more head-ache. By eliminating the cause of the head-ache there is no more head-ache.

Whether this approach is taken to address physiological problems or in regards to psychological problems, it is just as successful and permanent in its results. It should be said that a resolution approach takes usually longer than the management approach in showing results. Sometimes, both techniques are being used in addressing a problem but very often, today's society and individuals opt for the immediate gratification/relief approach only,

with its hopelessly temporary and insufficient effects and results.

With this distinction in mind, we can reframe our approach to our problems from management to resolution, in a wide array of areas, from stress and pain management, to their respective resolutions, which lead to long-term if not permanent beneficial effects.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Love**

Returning to the theme of using the having mentality, instead of using the being mentality, we can address one aspect where this paradigm is ruinous for human relationships: love.

Love is energy and as such, it's an emotion (as in e-nergy in motion). Energy has no beginning and no end. Energy is endless. Therefore, one cannot 'have' love but only 'be' in love.

The business model of "give and take," which deals with material values (you can have my presence and expertise and I can take a check for giving you my time), never works, no matter how persistently the modern man is trying to apply it, in love. The definition of insanity, in fact, is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome.

One can always give love and receive (be given) love but never 'take' it. The effects of love are phenomenal for one's life; love gives life a superlative meaning. The famous

Biblical quote of Corinthians 13, 4-8 describe its effects and eternity:

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes and always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.” (The Holy Bible, New International Version, Biblica Inc, 2011).

Incidentally, the reason why Paul wrote that letter to the Corinthians was to emphasize to them the etheric aspect of love which was much confused by the Corinthians with the carnal aspects of lust. Paul wanted to create a clear distinction between the finite physical attraction of the human in us and the infinite energetic interaction of the being in us. When we confuse the two or deny the being-ness in us, we set ourselves out for superficiality and somehow expect that infinity will come about out of it.

Energy is forever, which explains its eternity. The beauty of this energy which we call love is given by the beautiful thoughts we entertain for somebody, a people, a religion, a cause or certain ideas.

The romantic relationship model we can follow can be summarized as: give and be given.

The modern definition of 'love' is having a man or a woman as a partner. The functional definition of love, however, is being with a man, or a woman. Based on these definitions, we can deduce that too often we seek instant gratification, having-based relationships (having sex, having a spouse, etc.) and expect being-based results (being in love, being with a spouse, etc.). What makes love eternal is being with a partner intimately, being married and so on; in other words, we seek long-term effects by using instant gratification mentalities and actions. Not even the "internet" of our mind, the so-called rationalizations, can create the wishful alchemy of transforming one into another, no matter how much we insist that this can be done. It's like planting an apple tree and expecting that we can harvest oranges.

For example, the up and coming athlete who buys the trophy house, the trophy car and the trophy wife, ends up often being divorced by the latter because unlike the car and house (things), she is a human (being). Treating human beings as 'have' values will lead to such failures, because the materialistic paradigms are not suitable and therefore are not attracting being values.

The original writing of love (*amore*) in Latin was *ad-mortem*. Loving somebody often implied to death (*ad-mortem*). Some individuals throughout history decided to kidnap rape and/or kill their partners rather than lose them ("If I cannot have you nobody will"). Some parents may use the same skewed understanding of 'love' by telling their children, "I brought you into this world, I'll take you out of this world." These people are using having values for a being value. They are not taking into consideration the facts which are that love is energy, conscious energy at that and that as such, it can be freely given or received but never be taken as possession.

In fact, love (*ad-mortem*) has more accurately been interpreted as being selfless *to* death in regards to

somebody/something else which we love; therefore, it was meant the other way around, where the loving person would sacrifice *himself* in large and small and large feats (economically, mentally, physically, emotionally, by giving up his life if need be) in order to safeguard the loved person or cause.

Because our thoughts (beliefs and perceptions) and feelings are entirely in our control (short of mental retardation, indoctrination, psychological, emotional, or physical trauma), they are in nobody else's control, which is why not even God or Satan, or companies, or governments, not to mention other individuals, can control them. These entities may try to influence us, by seduction or terrorization and we may even display a semblance of submissiveness towards them, yet love is only freely given. When this happens, love survives people, places, events and times. In fact, the one who freely sacrifices himself/herself for another, or for a higher cause, survives through the ones (people/ideas) for whom he had sacrificed himself/herself much like the seed which sacrificed itself in order to give life to a new plant.

We can only control our thoughts, emotions, words and actions, which explain the ‘give’ part. We can only hope that somebody will choose his or her thoughts, emotions, words and actions to love us. When this happens, we experience the ‘being given’ part. If we are not happy with what is ‘being given’ to us we can walk away.

Some people try to influence others’ feelings by providing them with ‘having’ values, in the hope that in exchange for their material gifts the intended person will return ‘being’ values (such as loyalty, attraction, dedication, love). This exchange has as much chance of success as the reverse of it has. Yet, humanity has been following this fallacy of thinking and acting for centuries.

It’s a little bit like using the AM frequency wave band to receive FM radio stations; it’s not going to happen, because the frequencies do not meet. By not meeting they cannot be responsive towards each other until syntony is achieved and one source adapts to the other source’s frequency. When the two sources resonate with each other on the same frequency they can then, experience synergy. The definition of synergy is: the interaction and cooperation of two or more organizations,

substances or other agents, to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects (Wikipedia, San Francisco, 2016).

Let's assume now that both the AM and the FM frequencies are a necessary part of our auditory experience, just as our selfish (reptilian) and selfless (mammalian) parts of our brain are both part of our identity. We need to balance these two complementing and/or opposing aspects of us (depending on the case) in a way that creates a harmonious experience and quality of life for us.

To use the analogy of the AM/FM wavelengths, what ties or “entraps” both is the internet (or the inter-network), which is able to provide both the FM/AM emissions and/or receptions of their respective frequencies. Inter in Latin means “between” and Network was defined as early as 1550's in English as “net-like arrangements of threads” (<http://www.dictionary.com>). With regard to the reptilian/mammalian parts of our brain, this interconnectedness and balancing is done in an attempt to achieve daily homeostasis, mentally, emotionally, physically and subsequently, in terms of our actions.

The reptilian part addresses our ‘having’ values, i.e. material needs (food, shelter, water, sex, safety, comfort), whereas, the mammalian part addresses the ‘being’ values (love, empathy, charity, sacrifice –even in terms of menial tasks and actions, done to assist others out of love and love alone).

In today’s world, where we are reputedly pestered by commercial and political advertisement indoctrinating us in the opposite idea, that is, that we can get ‘being’ values by using ‘having’ values, making a daily commitment to deflect that perspective and in fact keeping the two values distinct in our heads, can be taxing to our energies. The good news is that we can reframe our thinking into this healthy differentiation of values and by sheer practice, it can become a habit of thinking. Once this mind-frame becomes automatic, it creates a sort of inoculation against treating the two values as one and therefore, it allows us to use healthy thinking, triggering healthy emotions, words and actions, leading to a holistic (or whole-istic) course of actions and experiences.

In conflict resolution, reframing our thinking is paramount to changing the foundation of our existence from thoughts to

emotions and to actions. The foundations of our beliefs are based on the first seven years from home of our existence (as they say in Romanian, *cei sapte ani de acasa*). That “de acasa,” (from home) is very important, because those beliefs will lay out our perceptions, used to see the world and what it is acceptable to do, to function in it. If what we think is ‘right’ contravenes to social, moral and legal norms, it’s just a matter of time until we install ourselves on a road ranging from dysfunctional relationships, to criminal activities (leading to unhappiness and/or legal problems).

Fortunately, our brain listens to our mind and even modifies its connective neuronets in accordance to the kinds of thoughts we entertain, by a process called neuroplasticity. Rather than likening our brain to the unchangeable cement, forming the foundation of an edifice, we can liken it to clay.

Clay is defined by Wikipedia as: “a stiff, sticky fine-grained earth, typically yellow, red or bluish-gray in color and often forming an impermeable layer in the soil. It can be molded when wet and is dried and baked to make bricks, pottery, and ceramics.” Therefore, there are two kinds of clay: the modifiable,

molded when wet; and the immutable, baked clay. We can say that with regard to our brains, unless due to physical injury and/or organic diseases such as Alzheimer's (which will "bake" our brains), the human brain remains malleable and open to reframing, like the wet clay, until the last day of our existence on earth.

How one gets to his destination is also very important. She can follow her journey with enthusiasm and excitement or with resistance, fear and anger. I can do a task out of fear and anger (avoidance) or I can do the same task out of enthusiasm, trust and joy (or by embracing it). How I do it therefore, is as important as the doing of it.

In counseling, during self-reflection, the individual is asked before addressing any issues, to choose the rationale behind his actions: does he want to act out of the selfish part of his brain, or out of the selfless part of his brain? It is based on these perspectives, which will make the individual choose one path or another in addressing his issues.

The selfish part of my brain (reptilian) caters to my survival; it also caters to my pride. If the survival part of this brain insures that I nourish and seek comfort, the prideful

aspect of me, seeks simply the validation of my pride. If I choose to serve my pride, I can take actions and order others to act in a way that can actually jeopardize my own survival, which defeats the very original purpose of the reptilian brain.

It is at this point that the mammalian brain can come into action, because its job is to find solutions to my problems, including when it means disregarding the needs of internal and external validations for my pride. This doesn't mean that the evolved or mammalian brain has as main function one's survival; in fact, often it's quite the opposite. It is self-less, because it can chose one's own sacrifice as a conscious decision, if that may be a condition to perpetuating the beloved ones' existence.

Can I have a better understanding of my thoughts, emotions and actions by having an 'outside in,' or an 'inside out' perspective? Perhaps both perspectives are complementary, provided that I am aware which ones of one's mind one is using.

In many psychiatric wards, patients are counseled in therapy, to distinguish and use carefully the three parts of their mind: the emotional; the rational; and the wise one (from

the Dialectical Behavioral Therapy DBT, School of Thought).

The emotional mind is the reactive thinking, coming up during highly emotionally charged circumstances. Logic has no say in it and it's all about passion. The rational mind is all about calculating the pros and the cons of a situation and selecting the most reasonable outcome. It usually comes during still emotional waters and it's all about logic. It is similar to the 'mind' of a computer, or of a sociopath's. The wise mind employs both, usually upon reflection and trying to combine harmoniously as much as possible the needs of our enthusiasm with the needs of practical approaches. This is called the wise mind, because, while it reflects logical components in its thinking, it also empathizes with the human heart and as such it's basically compassionate logic.

Based on the wise mind then, we make decisions which may include at some point the need to refrain from exploding and to redirect that energy into a positive avenue, based on changing one's perceptions from negative to positive ones.

Refraining is a little bit like a cliff hanger holding on an edge of a cliff, for dear life, as

he is suspended in the air. If he refrains from letting go, he'll survive; if he'll let go, he'll fall into the abyss and die.

The concept of forgiveness is the prime (if not the primal) example of the wise mind.

If changing one's belief, from dysfunctional to functional is the foundation of the edifice we call our character, forgiveness is the solid ground we build that foundation on. For without forgiveness there is hurt and resentment. And no amount of healthy thinking, as strong as a foundation that would be to our character, can be and remain stable if it is built on the sand of negativity and conflict. Therefore, before any re-thinking can be done, the very ground of our foundation needs to be solidly positioned on love and serenity. These only come after abandoning and bringing to closure the conflict within (of ideas and/or between our ideas and the facts that create the paradigms of our lives).

Generally, when we choose "me, myself and I" only thoughts, feelings and actions, we are well served in covering our physiological, survival and self-protection needs. When we choose "me and the group," or "me and a cause," sometimes "me less than the people,

groups, causes” I love, we are well served in our seeing ourselves as protectors of others.

Iconically speaking, the devil’s horns being portrayed in the back, or on the side-ways of his head, represent ego-based decisions. Conversely, the dot on the center of the forehead for Indians, The Ash Wednesday cross on the Catholic and Orthodox Christians’ forehead, the Tefilin box on the forehead of Orthodox Jews and the prostration marks on the forehead of pious Muslims, represent altruistic needs-based decisions (even when they are in direct contradiction of the comfort, or even of the survival of their religious followers).

Being aware of these perspectives is very important in our healing, because, in order to heal from hurt, we need to let go of our resentment. Resentment emanates from the reptilian brain and is the survival, or proud ego, asking judgmentally, “how could they do this to me?” Letting go of resentment is about living in serenity, in a harmonious state, which can only come by if we forgive the sources of the offenses inflicted upon us over time (including on ourselves by ourselves), not because it’s right, but because it’s healing.

Resenting is a little bit like drinking poison and expecting that somebody else will die; the only ones who are going to be poisoned are ourselves. Forgiveness looks not at “what’s right or wrong” but at what is needed for someone to live burden free, including being free from the burden of hatred.

Originally, the word ‘forgiveness’ was written ‘give before,’ as in “Give before the LORD your cares and he will sustain you” (Psalm 55:22). Once one’s “cares” (including resentment) were dropped, there was no more burden on reliving them (re-living, or living them again). If we liberated ourselves from hatred we could love (ourselves and others). Over the centuries, ‘give before’ became ‘before give,’ ‘fore give’ and this in turn became the word ‘forgive’ of our contemporary acceptance of the term.

In the precursor of Latin, the Thracian based Daco-Romanian language (Ledwith, Miceal *Limba Romana* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjlPGmWallw>), the term *pai da-i* (“donate to,” or “give away”) was coined and subsequently, various romance languages reflected this as *perdono*, *pardonnez* and *pardon* (as in the English word for a governor’s pardon). They

all mean the same thing as the Anglo-Saxon word forgiveness.

In conflict resolution texts there are various perspectives on why and how to best approach forgiveness in victim/perpetrator dynamics. Among other things, they present the act of forgiveness as:

1. Forgiving, looked upon as strength, rather than a weak act.

2. Use forgiveness as a practical or psychological tool rather than just as an abstract or spiritual dogma.

3. Understanding the value of forgiveness in reshaping the perception of past, present and future experiences.

4. Understanding the benefits of forgiveness both internally and externally.

5. Concentrating on the good side rather than on the evil side of human beings.

6. Understanding that survivors are outsiders no more, being active participants in restorative justice measures.

7. Have a desire to heal broken relationships.

8. Use past suffering memories as cathartic rather than an immutable reliving of painful experiences.

9. Understanding the scapegoating mechanism and that the victim was not at fault for going through such suffering.

10. Offering self-acceptance and praise for enduring unwarranted suffering.

11. Separate actions from the perpetrators (forgive the perpetrator but not the crime).

12. Use personal ordeals to work for justice.

13. Create justice first and then expect reconciliation.

14. Be an active participant in restorative justice measures.

15. Receive reparations commensurate with the crimes and seek conviviality but not necessarily communion between victims/perpetrators.

Forgiveness doesn't come automatically for the former perpetrators from their victims. In addition to addressing the above appropriate steps for themselves, they'll also have to: confess fully their crimes, take responsibility for the criminality of these actions, listen to the victims' harrowing accounts of their suffering, be willing to relinquish their inordinate power in society (if still in power), be received back as an equal (rather than privileged) member of the society

and pay reparations commensurate with crimes.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Knowledge and Wisdom**

We can look at how much knowledge and wisdom are part of our lives. Knowledge can be imparted at will. Wisdom however, is a personal experience and in some cases, is non-communicable. Dr. Martin Luther King defined education as knowledge, plus character. Perhaps wisdom is just that: knowledge and character lived in an authentic fashion by the individual.

Part of wisdom is making a clear distinction between our desires/wants, abilities and needs. It is based on evaluating properly these three values so that we can then make decisions which are both realistic and meaningful to us.

Our accommodating of, or sometimes our pitting against each other, the reptilian part of our brain with the evolved part of our brain, in terms of desires, abilities and needs, is an arduous and often daily process, from which we try to choose what's most important to us. In an ideal world, we would find a win-win compromise, between our ego (reptilian) and our solution-based (evolved) brain's desires, abilities and needs. Sometimes, however, it's

a choice between the two opposites, in the clearest win-lose fashion.

Within the native tribes of the United States circulates a Cherokee anecdote in this regard. A grandpa tells his grandson the following story: “In each of us there is a vicious battle between a predatory wolf which wants our demise and a protective wolf which wants us to be protected. The battle goes on day and night.” The grandson asks his grandpa: “Which one of the two wolves wins the battle, grandpa?” To which, the elder responds: “The one we feed the most” ([http://www.firstpeople.us/FP-HTML\\_Legends/TwoWolves-Cherokee.html](http://www.firstpeople.us/FP-HTML_Legends/TwoWolves-Cherokee.html))

Abraham Maslow came with the Pyramid of Needs Model, stating that the primal needs (reptilian) would have to be met before acceding to more elevated motivations (Abraham Maslow, “A Theory of Human Motivation” in *Psychological Review*, 1943). Maslow proposed five different kinds of human needs, beginning with the most basic ones: survival. Physiological and physical needs such as food and shelter are followed by the needs related to safety. Next, there are needs of love and belonging. Forth, are the needs related to self-esteem, such as being

respected. The final need in the hierarchy is the need for self-actualization (fulfilling one's potential).

The problem with this hierarchy is that in actuality, different needs have different *meanings* (and therefore, different levels of importance) in people. Not surprisingly, the history books and contemporary times are full with cases of idealists who willingly bypassed and/or ignored all their needs for survival, safety and material wealth, in order to sacrifice their freedom, status, wealth and lives, for the sake of their nation, religion, their own families, or for various social ideologies.

Maslow's and in general, the behaviorists' insistence on individuals having to fulfill their safety and survival needs prior to moving on to higher causes has been used for many years for commercial and political purposes, via the A.B.C. Model or Antecedent, Behavior, Consequence.

According to this model, all human beings, when confronted with a certain antecedent, will react with the same kind of behavior, which in turn, will lead to the same consequence.

For example, if I get bumped in the subway, I shall definitely start a fight, which in turn will lead to bodily injury and Police contact. Yet, for some people, being bumped in the subway can be a minor aggravation, leading to no aggressive behavior at all. Therefore, without a violent behavior, there are no consequences of bodily injury and/or Police contact.

Even in the case of people who had the tendency of having acted out violently in such circumstances, a change in perceptions and priorities, may lead them to shrug the bump off and move on without retaliation, or even paying it any mind.

Every day, we are given the possibility to progress, stagnate, or regress, at the thinking, feeling, talking/acting levels. Which ones of these roads we'll take, depends on our own perception of what is important in our lives.

We find what's important logically, based on the focusing on the consequences of our behaviors. In conflict resolution counseling, there is a distinction being made between the positions and the needs of a conflict.

For example, if two boys are fighting over the same orange, each asking for the whole piece of fruit, this is considered being their

position. The average adult will try to resolve the matter by addressing this position and will slice the orange in half and give one half to each of them. Yet, this will make them equally miserable and thus, it will be a lose-lose outcome.

However, if we take the time to ask them *why* do they want the whole orange, one might say that he wants the peel to take to grandma so that she can make orange peel cookies; the other one might state that he wants the fruit, so that he can eat it. Now we realize that the peel and respectively the fruit of the orange are the needs of the boys. By then giving one boy the whole peel and to the other one the whole fruit, we address the boys' needs fully and therefore, we'll make them equally happy in a win-win outcome.

Sometimes, the position may be the same as the need. For example, if the wife asks the doting husband, in which pair of shoes does she look better, when she wears a certain dress, she may actually be interested in his feed-back on color coordination, which makes her position the same as her need. However, if she asks the husband the same question because she needs affection, the husband

better say that she looks splendid regardless of which shoes she would be wearing.

When we talk about peace of mind or good health or a good relationship, we talk about a steady balance in our lives or homeostasis. Homeostasis (*homio-stasis* in Greek), means of “the same state.” We can talk about a ‘dead’ balance such as a straight horizontal line, which designates material steadiness. This is what is called in medical terms a “flat line”. However, homeostasis for living beings is about fluctuation.

Fluctuation means energy, passion and life, while the flat line means indifference and death. What gives homeostasis one meaning over the other is our connection to the source of our lives, the energy which is part of our human being-ness. The closer we can be to our cognitive energy, which we call thoughts and feelings, the more our homeostasis will show a balanced and smooth fluctuation. In the old times, an individual well versed with his and others’ sources of energy was in fact a ‘man of source’ or sorcerer.

It might help us to discuss and understand the interconnectedness between our own source of energy and the universe’s. When it comes to our electro-magnetic field, we use

words like inspiration, aspiration and expiration. These terms talk about the same form of energy, i.e. the spire, or the life-giving spiral shape. In the material form, we see the same spiral in the shapes of the DNA helix, the fingerprints and the tap water going into the sink, hurricanes, tornadoes, all the way to the Milky Way galaxy. In the symbolic form, we can see it in the shape of the musical key for the arts and for the exact sciences, we can see it spiraling in the form of the Caduceus (the traditional symbol of Hermes featuring two snakes winding around an often winged staff, used as a symbol of medicine, or to designate pharmacies). So our spire, spiral, spirit is about life, the shape of life, healing and the power of creation.

The ‘spiraling up or down’ of an individual is based on four levels: pre-contemplation (when I’m not considering any action); contemplation (when I’m visualizing it); preparation (when I’m taking the preliminary steps to reach a goal); and action (the behavior materializing the change). Depending on the frequency of this action a fifth level may occur, called maintenance (continuing the new path of thinking, feeling and acting a certain way).

There has been an ongoing debate between behaviorist therapists and cognitive therapists as to what is the best course of action for people who are seeking a change for what is better in their lives. Is it to modify their behavior and expect that the thought patterns will follow suit? Or is it that by changing their thought patterns (beliefs and/or perceptions) a changed behavior will follow suit?

Austrian-born Victor Frankl, a Nazi prisons' survivor and the founder of Logotherapy, or therapy based on meaningful words, believes that what's important to us will dictate in the end our perceptions, emotions, words and actions. Whether that 'meaningfulness' is derived from the reptilian or the evolved parts of the brain and involves a conflictual and vengeful existence or a peaceful and grateful one, depends entirely on our paradigms, as being acceptable by us and/or by the people, the places, the activities and the time in which we live (Frankl, Viktor E.: *Man's Search for Meaning*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1963-2007).

## **Chapter 6**

### **Awareness and Accountability**

The Twelve Steps used by the recovering alcoholics appeared originally in 1939 and were amended in 1953. They are:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.

10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs (<http://ww38.alcoholicsanonymous.org/>).

What may not be known very well is that Alcoholics Anonymous founder, Bill Wilson, had them classified in the following subcategories: establish relationship with God (steps 1-3); clean house (steps 4-9); spread the word (steps 10-12). Seven of the twelve steps deal with issues of accountability.

Accountability, or more correctly stated, self-accountability is an aspect of therapy, which could be considered the foundation of healing and which allows us to look at life with a sense of joy.

In a 2011 documentary called *Happy* (Wady Rum Films, San Francisco, 2011), the components of one's happiness are listed as: 50% genetic; 10% external events; and 40% perception. Out of these three, it is the perception aspect on which we have 100% control and therefore for which we are accountable 100%.

When we talk about accountability, we want to establish to which part of our brain do we hold ourselves accountable: the selfish, primitive, reptilian, ego and pride fueled one; or the selfless, evolved, mammalian, idealist and compassionate one?

This is particularly important to address after a one time traumatic event or after intermittent traumatic events, which demolish our normal homeostasis (balance) and demand healing, before our resumption of a harmonious life.

Expanding on the Kubler - Ross 5 stages of Grief Model ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%BCbler-Ross\\_model](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%BCbler-Ross_model)),

I propose the following 8 Stages of Healing Model: Shock-Denial-Pain-Fear-Sadness – Anger - Bargaining - Closure Acceptance//Forgiveness.

An individual may go through this cycle of healing sequentially or by jumping between stages, in no particular order. She may linger briefly or for years in one stage or another, until full closure is achieved. While each stage has its own difficulties and impact on people, it seems that the facing and moving away from anger is perhaps the hardest stage to pass.

Rich Pfeiffer, in his *Anger Management Curriculum* (Pfeiffer, R. Growth Publishing, Tucson, 2012, pp. 4-5), lists some characteristics of people with anger problems: low frustration tolerance; judgmental and critical reactions; perfectionism; all or nothing thinking; possessiveness; poor communication; punitive behavior; addictive personality; and use anger to demonstrate power.

He distinguishes between healthy anger (as a motivation for change) and unhealthy anger (as a pretext for [self] abuse).

We have to establish the fact that anger is a secondary emotion to fear and therefore, if we want to comprehensively resolve our anger, we have to first address and resolve the fears which are triggering the anger.

One way of doing this lies in knowing our brain's functions better. We already addressed

the front/back functions of the brain. How about the lateral functions of the brain?

Rich Pfeiffer describes them as follows: the left hemisphere is in charge of verbal communication; logical and organizing abilities; ability to focus on reality; details and micromanagement. The right hemisphere is in charge of: visual communication; imagination; spatial abilities; creative abilities; feelings exploration; and macro-management (Pfeiffer, R. *The Anger Management Curriculum* Growth Publishing, Tucson, 2012, pg. 21).

Also, in learning to use our consciousness for the betterment of our ideas and lives, we may focus on our interactions with ourselves and/or the world, at the conscious, subconscious, unconscious and supra-conscious levels.

The capacity to make conscious decisions is one of the things that are human. We make choices and decisions all the time. Some are logical, some are emotional. Some decisions we make instantly, some take us extensive planning.

1. Conscious decisions are fully aware decisions. We use the information which is available to us, evaluate the pros and the cons

calmly, look at them from the short-term, medium-term and long-term perspective and we use consequential thinking in order to come to a decision. We take full responsibility for each decision, knowing and feeling that it was the right thing to do under the circumstances. *We are aware* we take decisions *and why* we take them.

2. Subconscious decisions are based on our past experiences, and on our personal beliefs, as to what it is acceptable in our eyes and in the eyes of the society we live in. Our subconscious plays a major role in our decision making process. Often we think that we have a choice but the way our conditioning is, determines the outcome of the decisions. *We are aware* we take decisions *but not why* we take them.

3. Unconscious decisions are the decisions we make while we are not really aware of making them and therefore, we cannot explain why we make them. These can be decisions made out of habit or generally, doing something without thinking about the consequences for ourselves and of others. Crimes of passion are often committed at this level of thinking. This is the autopilot mode where we give control of our lives and often

blame others for the consequences. We are *neither aware* we take decisions *nor why* we take them.

4. Supra-conscious decisions are “made” for us in the form of inspiration. Inspiration or being in the Spirit, implies that we are in contact with a higher power (or the Creator power) whose counsel we have opened up to and who is communicating with us. There are many reported ways to achieve that connection with the universal wisdom which may range from prayer, meditation, psychedelic drugs, music, dance, poetry, writing, to painting. We can focus and attract creative energy as much as we can focus and attract destructive energy. For the other side of the sun is the black sun just as the other side of creation and love, is destruction and hatred. We are *not aware* we take decisions *but we are aware why* we take them.

We can think of meditation as focused awareness of our minds’ and our bodies’ interactions with ourselves and with the world. An adage states that if prayer is us speaking with God, meditation is God speaking with us. Meditation is helped by the time, space, duration, posture (position) and the kind of breathing we chose.

One pivotal role of meditation is breathing. In regard to this, from professional dancers, actors, singers, orators, to professional athletes, they are trained very early in their curriculum about the importance of the diaphragmatic breathing. This kind of ‘gut breathing’ much like laughter, manages to send copious amounts of oxygen up and down the body without relegating it to the upper body area only, which is the case with regard to the breathing from the lungs. While the lungs do the mechanics of breathing, the diaphragm does the intensity of breathing.

Laughter also known as “the best medicine,” is a form of the deep inhalation used from yogis to babies which is related to the diaphragmatic breathing’s benefits to oxygenate the whole body, with its integrative and complete breathing system.

Meditation in itself, from its deep breathing to its dual focusing on intentions and/or to solutions, has helped its practitioners to reduce pain in their bodies, to reverse non-curable diseases (through a process called Imagineering), to find clarity in their thinking, to become humble (in the selfless meaning of the word), to become grateful, to invent various schools of thoughts and material

creations, as well as, to connect themselves with the entity we call God.

There is functional thinking (thinking that helps us progress in life) and dysfunctional thinking (thinking that makes us stagnate, or regress in life). Some of the dysfunctional thinking types are all or nothing thinking, should, catastrophizing, overgeneralizing, minimizing/maximizing, personalizing, jumping to conclusions, labeling, defeatism (also called learned helplessness) and denial. In terms of denial we have denial of facts, intentions, damage and responsibility.

All these dysfunctional thinking types are set aside from our thinking, by using the method of suspended judgment. When one suspends her judgment, she opens the door to know and understand her interlocutor from the interlocutor's perspective. One's personal judgment can resume at any point in time, yet suspending it, even for brief amounts of time, allows for an impartial look at how the person to whom one speaks, sees herself.

Suspended judgment allows us to use empathy and compassion as a means to reframe our world views by understanding the plight of others. It also is conducive to try and find a mutually accepted compromise, from

the win-win perspective, regarding my interests and others’.

There are six basic steps to resolve conflicts:

1. Evaluate your understanding of the situation, your feelings regarding the situation, your needs regarding the situation and what realistic incentives can you have, to encourage others to cooperate. Understand that forcing, or coercing compliance from the other stakeholders, may only give short-term results, whereas seduction/inspiration of others, may lead to more long-term changes, fitting our goals, in regards to them.

2. Find peace within yourself regardless of external pressure. If one has integrity, she is fine with her decisions, regardless of the external feed-back. In fact, the very definition of integrity is “doing the right thing even when nobody is watching.” We have the innate ability to mentally overcome everything except death. This should give us the certainty of peace, even under the most drastic circumstances. Whether we choose to use this ability (resilience) or not, is up to us.

3. Listening carefully. This is the first step to dialogue and involves open ended questions (what, where, when, why, who and how),

instead of close-ended questions (requiring the more limiting yes/no answers). These 6 w questions are important because they allow for our interlocutors to describe their feelings, thoughts, positions and needs without them having to use reductionist and simplistic monosyllabic answers.

4. Recognize conflict issues. Very often we confuse position issues with needs issues. Because of that we try to solve conflicts between positions, which would be like treating the symptoms of a disease instead of its causes. For example, if I go on a low-salt diet, instead of taking a medication to numb the head-ache generating from the high-salt related high blood pressure, I solve the need to fix the cause of the problem instead of just addressing the effect of it.

5. Select an appropriate time and place to discuss issues. The rule of thumb is if all parties (or just one) are emotional, they are not open or capable to use logic. Therefore, calmness is needed to be achieved, in order to be able to think and act logically rather than reacting based on anger. In addition to a calm attitude, making sure that the stake-holders are well-fed, well rested and hydrated before engaging in conflict solving discussions is

essential, in order to avoid distractions from logical dialogue due to physiological needs.

6. Treat each other with respect. Respect involves a certain team-work paradigm as opposed to the selfish, individualistic mindset. Selfishness is instant gratification based and dictatorial, as opposed to selflessness which is more prone to compromising and defers to long-term solutions its needs for the sake of win-win goals.

Rich Pfeiffer, in his *Anger Management Curriculum* (Pfeiffer, R. Growth Publishing, Tucson, 2012, p. 4) gives a list of five repercussions, which are triggered by an angry person:

1. Cognitive: memory problems; inability to concentrate, poor judgments; seeing and seeking the negative of a situation; constant worrying.

2. Emotional: moodiness; irritability; and short-temper; agitation; inability to relax; feeling overwhelmed; a sense of loneliness and isolation; depression, or general unhappiness.

3. Physical: breathing problems; aches and pains; diarrhea, or constipation; nausea; dizziness; chest pain and rapid heartbeat; loss of sex drive; ulcers; frequent colds.

4. Behavioral: eating insufficiently, or in excess; sleeping too much, or too little; isolating yourself from others; procrastinating, or neglecting responsibilities; using alcohol, cigarettes and/or illicit drugs to relax; nervous habits (nail biting, pinching of the lips, pacing).

5. Social: bring resentment into a loving relationship; bring suspicion into a trusting relationship; bring destruction into a creative relationship; being involved in the legal system, due to criminal actions.

With mindful attention, and correction of our beliefs, perceptions, intentions, words and actions, we may redress our focus from negativity to positivity, from reacting to responding and from focusing at what we cannot do anymore, to concentrating at what we can still do, that is, from a spirit of love, joy, laughter and gratitude.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Remedies to Learned Helplessness**

Here are some important concepts, guiding our interactions within and with others:

-Low self-esteem (also known as passive): allowing demeaning by others and by ourselves, which may lead to a fearful and destructive life.

-High self-esteem (also known as aggressive): selfish behavior, including demeaning others.

-Self-esteem (also known as assertive): advocating for self and others in an ethical fashion.

We should clarify that mental illnesses may also be mind-related and not just brain related. If they are mind-related they are caused by an electro-magnetic field imbalance of our thinking rather than by the more organically related brain damage. In that case, mental diseases are different from physical diseases. Talking about them in organic terms would be like talking about a “diseased emotion” or a “diseased behavior.”

Various explanations, often contradictory, if not at the antipodes of mental illness diagnoses, led William Law, a 1700's English priest, mystic and writer to state: "Man needs to be saved from his own wisdom, as much as from his own righteousness, for they produce one and the same corruption."

Psychology is as much science as it is speculative and subjective interpretation of thoughts, emotions, words and actions.

The definition of Psychology in Greek means *Logia*-the study of and *Psyche*- breath, spirit, soul, mind. The definition of psychiatry in Greek means *Iatrea*-the healing of and *Psyche*- breath, spirit, soul; mind (<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=psychology>).

None of the original topics of study in relation to psychology were tangible elements. Instead, they were describing a conscious electro-magnetic field, which is part of us as long as we are alive (in other words, the 'being' in the human being).

The opposite of studying and/or healing of the mind is hypnosis. Hypnosis in Greek, means *Hypnos* - sleep and *Osis* - condition. Political slogans and Commercial

advertisement are often used as forms of hypnosis because they strive to dull the individuals' alertness, calmness and logic in an effort to influence the consumer to act based on emotional and immediate gratification reactions.

These entities have often used the behaviorist ABC Model of Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence, broken down etymologically as follows:

Antecedent: something that happens to us before, Latin-*Ante* we act (little or no control)

Behavior: Old English-*Be*; Old French-*Aveir* (to have) control

Consequence: Latin-*Con*-with; and *Sequi*-to follow (little or no control).

Unless we take ownership of our intentions and use our interpretations of these triggers from a position of calmness and logic, we are going to fall into some sort of programmed compulsion, leading to very negative alterations of our interests and quality of life. The following model should, in fact, replace the behaviorist ABC model, with regard to our thinking and actions: The A- (I) - (I) -B- (I)- (I)- C Model Antecedent-Intention- Interpretation-Behavior-Intention-

Interpretation-Consequences, where intention and interpretation follow our conscious decisions and interests, instead of following the stimuli fielded towards us by outside factors, in the form of triggers.

This “taking of ownership of one’s life” was beautifully stated by a client during one of the group counseling sessions, which I have facilitated, as follows:

On Love

In the entire world, there is no one else like me.

There are some persons who have some parts like me but no one adds up exactly like me.

Therefore, everything that comes out of me is authentically mine because I alone chose it.

I own everything about me:

My body, including everything it does; my mind, including all thoughts and ideas; my eyes, including the images of all they behold; my feelings, whatever they might be: Anger, Joy, Frustration, Love, Disappointment, Excitement.

My mouth and all the words that come out of it, polite, sweet, or rough, correct or

incorrect; my voice, loud and soft; and all my actions, whether they be to others or to myself.

I own my fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, my fears. I own all my triumphs and successes, all my failures and mistakes.

Because I own all of me, I can become intimately acquainted with me.

By so doing, I can love me and be friendly with me in all my parts.

I can then make it possible for all of me to work in my best interest.

I know that there are aspects about myself that puzzle me and other aspects that I do not know.

But as long as I am friendly and loving to myself, I can courageously and hopefully look for ways to find out more about me.

However I look and sound, whatever I say and do and whatever I think and feel at any given moment, it is I.

This is authentic and represents where I am that given moment and time.

When I review later how I thought and felt, some parts may turn out to be unfitting.

I can then discard that which is unfitting and keep that which proved fitting and invent something new, for that which I discarded.

I can see, hear, feel, think, say and do.

I have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive and to make sense and order out of the world of people and things outside of me.

I own me and therefore I can engineer me.

## Chapter 8

### Compromise

The art of compromise may be manifested in different ways. Starting from the premise that we aim for a win-win outcome, regarding the stake-holders' needs, rather than a win-lose one.

We can compromise as follows:

-If you'll do one thing for me, I'll do another one for you.

The French called that *Noblesse Oblige*. However, another understanding of this is that if one is in a superior dynamics than the other stake-holders, he should actually do more than his equal share, since he can do more than others.

One such example was the case of pilots during WWI, who would shoot each other with the intent to kill their opponents. However, if they would notice that the opponent would run out of bullets, they would often salute their enemies and fly away sparing the opponents' lives, expecting a similar treatment if the situation were reversed.

It should be said that the pilots at that time, had come from cavalry and that cavalry

was the military domain of the aristocratic stock. Therefore, the pilots would use the same “*noblesse oblige*” ground rules in the air, which they were accustomed to use in duels, or during cavalry charges. Following WWI, all these mannerisms gave way to sheer destruction of the opponents, regardless of the circumstances.

The Romans’ understanding on this theme is called *Quid Pro Quo*. It had the same meaning in Latin, as it has in today’s English language.

In the vindictive sense the expression “an eye for an eye,” is the principle that a person who has injured another person, is to be penalized to a similar degree. In the reparatory sense, the expression “pay it forward,” advocates acting preemptively by doing a good deed, so that it will come back to the originator, in one form or another, at a later time.

The Christian “turn the other cheek,” dictum, is actually a paradoxical approach to conflicts, where by virtue of forgiveness and love, the individual is invited to follow the Messiah’s example of personal sacrifice, as opposed to demanding that others (people, animals) be sacrificed to Him (as Deity).

The other forms of compromise are:

-We'll combine some of what I need, with some of what you need.

-My way when I do it, your way when you do it.

-My way this time, your way next time.

We should clarify here that these are possible win-win compromise solutions, when the “business model” is used, i.e. the “give and take paradigm.”

In relationships however, such as spousal, parental and generally speaking, where the reptilian-selfish brain gives way to the mammalian-selfless one, of the “give and be given paradigm,” compromise is not quite as mercantilist and in fact, what we work on is the antipode of balancing needs; it's all about submitting one's selfish needs, as secondary to the needs of the loved one.

In that case, what insures that one's needs are met is not the actual individual, but the person who loves him. And when there is a fair amount of unrequited reciprocity, due simply to the mutual submission of personal needs for the loved ones, then the ‘balancing’ happens *from* the other, not *despite* the other.

The art of compromise between human rights and human responsibilities has been

addressed also, in how we see justice. Raymond G. Helmick and Rodney Petersen, have summarized in their book, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation* (Templeton Foundation Press, Radnor, Pennsylvania, 2001), some of these attempts as follows: distributive (fair outcome), procedural (fair treatment), a sense of justice (experienced), moral justice (universal), and restorative justice (integrative).â

### **Distributive Justice**

Equity (economy): production equals consumption. Equality (social harmony): same rights for all members. Need (special groups focus): needs-based. Team spirit: player helps team and is rewarded.

### **Procedural Justice**

Fair treatment and procedures, “innocent until proven guilty”.

## **A Sense of Justice**

Victims and victimizers have been living in the same reality, but have also been experiencing it differently. Very often the victimizers will justify their oligarchy by using logical fallacies such as: either/or; ad hominem attacks; all/none, band wagon, other generalizations, stereotypes and absolutisms.

## **Moral Justice**

Why fight atrocious conditions and power imbalances, and maintain an integral self, including when it leads to one's ultimate sacrifice?

Lynne Mc Taggart considers the existence of a strong, unbreakable life and energy-giving spirit and explained it as: "an energetically fundamentally living and intelligent field, and that this is a scientifically proven phenomenon" (*The Field* Harper, New-York, 2002 p. 15).

Her book, *The Field*, tells the story of a group of ingenious scientists who discovered that the Zero Point Field connects everything in the universe, much like "the Force" in the movie Star Wars. The Field offers an avant-

garde view of the way our living world and our bodies work and gives both meaning to suffering and motivation to the oppressors to transform themselves into nobler beings.

The human mind and body: “are not distinct and separate from their environment, but a continuum of pulsating energy, constantly interacting within this vast energy sea” (Mc Taggart, L. p. 19).

*The Field* illustrates an interconnected universe and a new scientific theory which makes sense of supernatural phenomena. It talks about the juxtaposition of the Newtonian views on the world based on materially separated and distinctive particles, with the quantum physics paradigms, based on the Zero Point (e.g. the ocean of microscopic vibrations which is between and within beings). In other words, at our most basic essence, we are not a chemical reaction, but an (intelligent) electric charge (Mc Taggart, 2002).

These paradigm distinctions are important for psycho-political purposes, because according to the Zero Point perspective, there is a living conscience which observes, modifies and is modified, based on the intentions and actions being present. While

many basic processes-such as feeding, digestion, sleeping, sexuality-, remain regulated by physical laws, it is the quantum physics perspective of the interrelationship between living beings, that offers a more integrative view on consciousness (e.g. that each living being has a field of influence over the world and vice-versa).

### **Restorative Justice**

According to Communist prisons' survivor and researcher, Romanian-born, Richard Wurmbrand, in his book *Marx & Satan*(Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois, 1990), Karl Marx justified violent overthrow of societies (e.g. revolution) by blaming specific ethnic groups (false biology) and specific economic groups (false sociology) for the misery of another specific group of people, the working-class (Wurmbrand, 1991). This in turn allowed for the Communists and the Nazis to create aggressive blanked demonization of various nations' civilians, based on social class and ethnicity respectively, which afterwards were subjugated, exploited, tortured and decimated in the name of "justice".

Whether it is a pick-pocket thief, a gang of Nazi and/or Communist revolutionaries, or a country taking over other countries (Germany, Russia), the first step in conflict resolution is to make the culprits accountable for their actions and return the stolen property (lands). Therefore, both the Marxist theories that justified aggression, and their subsequent resulting criminal actions, need universal condemnation, in order to create a basis of discussion for aggression, its elimination, reparations and the peacebuilding achievement and maintenance.

With Nazism already being deemed as a criminal and illegal system, should the much awaited condemnation of Communism not happen prior to mediating between former victims and their persecutors, the mediator herself may look favorably to Communism, as a legitimate governing force and therefore, may interpret the Communist crimes as negligible, or as a necessary evil. Instead, one should strive to create reconciliation between the abuser and the abused, from the solid foundation of the condemnation of Communism, a priori of these discussions.

The three subclasses of societal reduction of unforgiveness from the victims are:

punitive justice; economic justice; and restorative justice (Hemlick, and Petersen, 2001). Recommended is the restorative approach, due to the fact that punitive justice only continues to present a history of tit for tat crimes (such as in post-Communist societies), and because economic justice alone, would bring no attempts of the parties to re-create a relationship of mutual accord and respect between these parties.

Restorative justice however, in addition to addressing the material needs of victims and/or of their families, also creates an environment for both of the stake-holders' unanimity of sincere condemnation of the injustices, from victims and perpetrators (or their representatives), without turning a past abuser into a future victim.

The goal of restorative justice is to establish a relationship of mutual dialogue and societal partnership in a more equitable society for all involved.

While the South African Mandellian views of restorative justice involved bringing in some black figure heads into politics and eliminating all apartheid laws, the actual victims nevertheless, didn't receive appropriate restorative compensations and the

white corporations and the status-quo injustices remained in the reality of South Africa, from the diamond and gold industries to the gated white communities (Hemlick, and Petersen, 2001). There was, in other words, a moral sentiment of justice achieved for those victimized by whites, but this was mostly symbolic in nature and the commission was arbitrarily conducted (and terminated) by Bishop Tutu's overseers (Hemlick, and Petersen, 2001).

The rule of thumb here is that if an individual is happy with his station in life, because of the gratitude based paradigm on his perspective about himself, he will want to 'contaminate' others as well, with these feelings. Similarly, if an individual is miserable and acts miserably, because his feelings are miserable, due to his perspectives about himself, he will try his best to influence the world towards destruction. Regardless of the narrative presenting often praise-worthy goals, behind the need for that destruction, destruction remains just that: destructive.

One case in point is Karl Marx, who describes quite honestly, in his satanic play *Oulanem*, such deteriorating connection of corruption, mind, feelings, words, actions,

which he expanded on, in a poem called *The Player*.

Characteristically for Satanists, *Oulanem* is an inversion of a holy name. In this case, it is the desecration of the name Emmanuel, a Biblical name of Jesus, which means in Hebrew "God with us." Such inversions of names are considered effective in black magic.

We will be able to fully understand the drama *Oulanem* only in the light of a confession that Marx made in a poem called *The Player*, later downplayed by both himself and his followers. In it, he stated:

“The hellish vapors rise and fill the brain,  
/ Till I go mad and my heart is utterly  
changed./ See this sword? /The prince of  
darkness sold it to me. /For me, he beats the  
time and gives the signs. /Ever more boldly I  
play the dance of death.” (Wurmbrand, 1991,  
p. 8).

From within such an unhappy heart, misery and destruction is wished upon the others. Karl Marx voices this in *Oulanem*:

“Yet, I have power within my youthful  
arms, / to clench and crush you [i.e.,  
personified humanity] with tempestuous  
force, / While for us both, the abyss yawns in

darkness. /You will sink down and I shall follow laughing, / Whispering in your ears, ‘Descend, come with me, friend’” (Wurmbrand, 1991, p. 9).

How much more telling is then the statement of a little boy named Takashi Tanemori, who, at the age of 9, had witnessed in Hiroshima the obliteration of his city, family and friends, essentially of his whole world, following the Atomic bomb attack and who engaged for the rest of his life in the peacebuilding process of world healing movements, starting with his own forgiveness of the American attackers of his city. He stated: “Without forgiveness, the heart will either wither, or it will destroy” (Halliman, Perry, Return to Hiroshima: Family Bonds and the Atomic Bomb, Documentary, 2014).

If Karl Marx had only heeded to this precept...

Instead, from Karl Marx’s vitriolic socialistic writings (*The Capital, The Communist Manifesto*), came the manifestation of the National-Socialism (Nazism) and Communist-Socialism (Bolshevism), two faces of the same coin, which killed tens of millions of innocent victims, in the first case, and over 250,000,000

(two hundred fifty million) innocent victims (and still counting) in the second case, all in less than 100 years from these political movements' inceptions (all these hate crimes being done of course, "in the name of social justice").

The definition alone of Socialism should send chills of concerns on the free persons' spines: "a way of organizing a society in which major industries are owned and controlled by the government, rather than by individuals" (*Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary*). In other words, socialism is about monopoly and therefore, dictatorship.

Karl Marx and his dictators, Hitler, Stalin, Horthy, Mao Tse-Tung, Mussolini, Pol Pot, Ho Chi Minh, Kim Ir Sen, Kim Il Sung, Fidel and Raul Castro, Nicolae Ceausescu and others, were in fact bullies. Bullies, in both dysfunctional thinking and aggressive actions, are essentially cowards who are bluffing with their aggression, an inner sense of fear and insecurity.

Whether they are dictators, abusive neighbors or school yard hoodlums, they bank on the fact that their aggressiveness will mask who they are, what they've been through, what they've done and their hope is that the bullied

person would back up rather than fight, because he/she may have more to lose from a confrontation, than the bully himself.

In reality, it is the bullies themselves who could lose just as much, or more than the attacked person; they just hope that nobody will call their bluff. We see how animal or human bullies also carefully tend to attack weaker individuals than themselves (the macho approach), in the hope of finding minimal resistance if challenged. Conversely, the strong individuals would make it a point to refrain from attacking the weaker individuals (the gentleman's approach). That's why the macho man is weaker than the gentleman, despite the apparent contradiction between the words and their actual meanings. So in the end bullies are very scared cowards and parasites who front as the alpha-males in the hope that simply by saber-rattling, their safety will be insured.

## Chapter 9

### Proverbs

So how do we go about being happy and therefore, influencing others too, with our happiness?

One recipe for this happiness formula, often resides in proverbs; in the original Latin a *pro-verb* literally means “in favor of a word.” Proverbs are the essential formulas of nations’ wisdom, which have survived time, genocide and destruction of their creators, into our times.

These proverbs often reflect in more or less flowery imagery the following psychological sequence to conflict resolution: outside factor; intention; interpretation; action; and consequences. As such, if we want to come to a logical decision, we need to first take time-out in response to the aggravating factor, calm down, think of consequences in a logical fashion and respond to the stressors in an informed and lucid way, within a harmonious, loving and grateful perspective.

Here are some examples of proverbs collected from all over the world:

1. Your anger is your enemy.

1. Anger deprives a sage of his wisdom and a prophet of his vision.
2. He who is slow to anger, is better than the mighty.
3. Do not let the sun go down on your anger.
4. An angry man opens his mouth and shuts his eyes.
5. No man can think clearly, when his fists are clenched.
6. The fly cannot be driven away by getting angry at it.
7. Anger can be an expensive luxury.
8. Anger is quieted by a gentle word, just as fire can be quieted by the gentle water.
9. People who fly into rage, always make a bad landing.
10. Holding to anger is like holding a hot coal, with the intent to throw it at somebody.
11. Hating somebody is like drinking poison and expect that somebody else will die.
12. To ask a question is embarrassing for 1 minute; to remain ignorant is embarrassing for a life time.
13. There where Might is right, the Right is powerless.
14. In the land of the blind, the one eyed man is king.

15. After thinking out things, make a decision; after making a decision don't think anymore.

16. One needs an umbrella, before rain can get him wet.

17. Confusing self-worth with self-esteem, is like buying sex and expecting love.

18. The horse is praised in the race; the man is praised in his deeds.

19. Loose lips sink ships.

20. When you draw a branch, you need the breeze of the wind.

21. When two people love each other, their imperfections become perfect.

22. He who loses, wins.

23. The cold food can be swallowed; the cold words cannot be swallowed.

24. Let the fool and the arrogant pass first.

25. Those who can do, act; those who cannot do, preach.

26. Liberty is being responsible; being a libertine is irresponsible.

27. Even if one needs a gun once in his life-time, he needs to carry it on him the whole life; even if one needs his wisdom once in a while, he needs to carry it with him at all time.

28. Even an idiot can be useful, at times.

29. He who begged three days in his lifetime, is tempted to be a beggar for the rest of his life.

30. He who has the sense of shame, has also the sense of duty.

31. He who drinks, doesn't know the damages wine causes; he who doesn't drink knows the benefits of sobriety.

32. He who wishes to climb, will invent the ladder.

33. He who can swim, can also drown.

34. He who can hate, can also love.

35. Compassion is the beginning of love.

36. He who was defeated, would be better served to listen, rather than giving advice on battle strategies.

37. The children of celebrities may rarely become celebrities themselves.

38. The salmon which swims upstream, may become a dragon.

39. With money, even an idiot is rich.

40. If a problem has a solution, don't worry about it; if a problem cannot be solved, don't worry about it.

41. If the fishes wish it, even the ocean gives way.

42. If you are following a path you want, even 1,000 years may seem like a minute.

43. If a woman wishes it, even a rock will give way to her.
44. If you want to kill a general, kill his horse first.
45. Check the measurements seven times and do the cut once.
46. One can be bald for three years and still think he has hair.
47. The devil lives across the street from the church.
48. Boredom is the devil's workshop.
49. One action is better than 10 excuses.
50. Those who justify themselves, they accuse themselves.
51. The small dogs and the old dogs, don't scare anyone with their barking.
52. God lives in an honest heart.
53. Without light, there is no shade.
54. After the sun sets, we forget about the shade.
55. It's hard to top the achievements of people who are dead.
56. It's easier to find 1,000 soldiers in a battle, than one general.
57. Actions talk louder than words.
58. Praise the Lord and bring the ammunition.
59. There are no atheists in the trenches.

60. Without regular people, there are no geniuses.

61. Be aware of the silent people; still waters run deep.

62. The beautiful flowers bring no good fruits.

63. In the household where there is laughter, there is also luck.

64. On a journey you need a fellow companion. In life you need a partner.

65. Listen to your friends about your qualities and to your enemies about your defects.

66. Any medication in excess becomes a poison.

67. Better one day above ground, than 1,000 days under it.

68. Better to have as a rival respectable people, than as a friend, a weak, or stupid man.

69. The ocean is big, because it ignores the small rivers.

70. Tomorrow it will be tomorrow's storm, not today's.

71. A miracle at age 10, a genius at age 20, a regular man at age 30.

72. Excessive modesty hides pride.

73. The flies gather where it stinks.

74. The good merchant doesn't bring all his products in sight at one time.

75. The good merchant doesn't hide the merchandise behind the counter.

76. Not even Jesus was lucky all the time.

77. No gossip survives more than the next gossip.

78. Nobody stumbles by lying in bed.

79. Nobody shoots arrows at a smiling face.

80. Nobody kills fire, by throwing more gas on it.

81. Don't postpone good deeds.

82. Don't detain the person who leaves, and don't send away the person who just arrived.

83. Don't be afraid to bend a little, if you want to be the bigger man.

84. A masterpiece is never created by an amateur.

85. A servant, just as a king, need to be fed.

86. The strong man is hard on himself and forgiving of others.

87. The hard-working man has no time to be sick or bored.

88. No matter how hard the wind blows over them, the mountains will be unmoved.

89. For every blossoming flower, there is a time to wither and die.

90. Every beginning is the start of an end.

91. The journey is just as important as the destination.

92. There are no such things as a square egg and a simple woman.

93. The bowed head is not chopped off.

94. The bird is flying as high as it can, and the fish is swimming as deep as it can.

95. Even a stone can talk once in a while.

96. There is no cure to ignorance.

97. To be quick, means going slowly, but without interruptions.

98. Looking for wisdom outside you is the perfect example of stupidity.

99. Planning for the future, makes the devils laugh.

100. Once the words leave one's lips, they'll never return back.

101. Sincerity without reflection is closely related to stupidity.

102. The sun doesn't know who the righteous are. The sun doesn't know who the vile people are. The sun doesn't shine, so that we can get warmed. He who finds himself is like the sun.

103. The loving husband and the loving wife are like one's eyes and hands: when one's hands hurt, his eyes are crying and when the eyes are tearing up, it is one's hands which wipe off his tears.

104. At the bottom of the Light House there is always darkness.

105. The soul is the same at age 3 as it is at age 100.

106. Even a highway begins with a trail.

107. Even regress has its progress.

108. The cat cushions its claws until the right time comes to attack.

109. Big results take long time to come to.

110. Sadness is a rag; throw it away.

111. I refuse to let people walk with their dirty feet on my mind.

112. When a dog starts barking, the other dogs start barking too because they assume the initial dog had a good reason to do so.

113. One answer to a question brings up more questions.

114. A colony of ants can kill any snake.

115. One single candle can light 100 candles. One kind word can bring forth 1000 kind words.

116. Sometimes fighting means running.

117. The wind and the flowers can never be your long-term friends.

118. The victory belongs to the contender who can resist longer than his opponents by one second.

## **Chapter 10**

### **Epilogue**

To summarize, when it comes to creating a good quality of life for ourselves, we must first evaluate what goals do we have, what abilities do we have leading in that direction, take ownership of these strengths, be grateful for them, exercise them and strive to progress in magnifying them, until we reach these goals.

Similarly, when it comes to the obstacles within (thoughts, feelings, health) and outside ourselves (words, actions, modifying, or maintaining our environment, interpreting other people's words and actions towards us) and without ourselves (things in control of others, which affect our lives, such as laws, or generally speaking, past events), we need to: observe them; change how we look at them if we cannot change them; accept them if it's beyond our control (as a fact, not as a willing participant in them); let go of them (forgive); and move on.

Our daily progress in life has to be done from the paradigm of good communication, trust and respect, with regards to ourselves and

others. If none of these are possible or deserved, in relations to self or to others, we have to employ compassion to understand an absurd situation, from a healing rather than a hurtful perspective.

This harmonious fluctuating of events/and the interpretation of events in our lives, comes down to breaking our wishes in what constitute desires, abilities and needs. With regard to the needs, we also want to be clear as to whether we consider them as such, based on objective (functional) meanings (such as oxygen, water, food, shelter for the sustenance of our lives) or subjective levels (specific kinds of the above).

Personal reflection is like a mirror. As with any mirror, we have to double check its accuracy in the exterior (to make sure whether it is a carnival mirror which makes us look gigantic or like a dwarf), as we have to check the accuracy of our interior “mirror” (our beliefs about ourselves and the world). Based on these long-term into the making, often habitual internal beliefs, we perceive the world a certain way and with it, we generate certain positive or negative feelings which then make us talk and act in a certain way. These in turn will generate consequences for us, be they

positive or negative, internal or external, which then reinforce our beliefs to begin with (accurate or skewed from reality as they are).

When we cannot validate somebody's ideas, but we see her enthusiasm regarding them, we should credit her passion, while voicing our reservations for the thoughts generating them. For example, if somebody has passion in hating, we can validate his intensity of feelings, while suggesting that he use it for loving, instead of hating, creating, instead of destroying and so on.

Emotions are like little children and as such they need boundaries, with one exception: love. We have to make a great distinction between attachment and love. This is because attachment is about possession, while love is about letting go. When I love somebody, to use a drastic example, I would rather see her go and be with a person who makes her happy, rather than seducing or coercing that person to stay with me for my sake and seeing her being miserable.

Reinforcements, including from our loved ones, are more powerfully compulsive, when they happen intermittently, rather than if they happen consistently. This is because in the former case, they are triggered by fear and

uncertainty, while in the latter case they are triggered by dedication, security, trust and love.

Consistency, when appreciated, instead of being taken for granted, means stability, reliance and safety. It is at that point when people are most likely to become and remain authentic. Authenticity is defined as matching how we are on the inside, with how we are on the outside. When we integrate and reflect to each side the other one, as a genuine reflection, we integrate harmoniously ourselves to the world and the world to ourselves.

Ego and love are at odds and if juxtaposed in our goals, can create impossible wishful goals. This is because the first tenet of ego is ‘separation from others,’ while the first tenet of love is ‘being part of’ somebody/something else.

Feeling separated means ‘not belonging’ and not belonging equals with isolation and depression. It’s being lonely, not because one is alone, but because one is separated from others. The painful experience of not being accepted, because of not being ‘part of’ something greater than us, butts heads with the idea of wanting to be separated and special

from others. So one has to decide which ones of these goals are more important to him, for the time being and move in that respective direction with full passion and dedication.

Finding love is not about juxtaposing these two desires, but joining them ecumenically, from the perspective of seeking, finding and appreciating similarities, *while* preserving one's own identity. This is best described in the very self-definition of God.

When Moses asked God who He is, the answer was: "I Am That I Am" (Exodus 3:14). In this statement, in fact, we see all the developmental processes of the self, as being separate *and* of the self as being part of others: I (sensing the material self); I Am (sensing the conscious self); I Am That (sensing the material commonalities with others); I Am That I (sensing the conscious self's projection in others); I Am That I Am (sensing both the individuality and the commonalities of the self with others). This is a microscopic radiography of the human beings' psychological, emotional and physical developments, from infancy (if not from the fetal stages), to childhood, to adolescence and to adulthood.

There is a difference between healthy and unhealthy coping strategies. The unhealthy coping strategies are used to help us feeling better, by numbing mental, emotional, or physical pains. While they help in the short term, the numbing stops us from addressing what causes the pain and in the process, it stops us from actually becoming and being happy, by eliminating the very triggering source of our pains. It's this avoidance from solving the causes of our problems and seeking immediate pain-numbing devices, which, paradoxically keep causing the pain (via ignoring and addressing its causes) and which we are trying to numb again, as soon as the effect of our numbing evaporates from our system.

Our healing in treatment is a two-step process: learn to listen; and listen to learn. We can extend these principles to: learn to observe; and observe to learn. It is based on this knowledge and practices then, that we can take informed actions towards the betterment of our health.

As stated in the beginning of this book, it is our intentions, thoughts and feelings which influence matter, rather than the other way around. In the least, this can be manifested in

the meaning we give to matter in our lives and in the world. This is where we can choose to use our free choice for healing, joyful and constructive purposes, regardless of the cards we are dealt in life.

This concept was illustrated with the following poem, by an anonymous writer: “Your mind is a garden, your thoughts are the seeds; you can grow flowers, or you can grow weeds.”

This choice is our Theodor (Zeul Dor, or Zeul Odor), of the Daco-Romanian Thracians or the Longing for God or the Gift of God which is within us for as long as we are alive. Let us allow for this true essence of our beingness shine every day, through every fiber of our cells.

## **Chapter 11**

### **Addendum**

While the manuscript of this book was sent out to the publishing house for evaluation, editing and printing, certain useful ideas kept coming into discussion during the individual and group counseling sessions I was facilitating. They were collected in this addendum and added to the book.

-The 10% loving; the 10% hating; and the 80% undecided people of our lives.

This concept was initially discussed by a prison chaplain, Father Jacobsen. It states that on average an individual will meet about 10% people in his life who will love him regardless of his circumstances, 10% people in his life who will hate him regardless of his circumstances and 80% of people in his life who will be undecided in his regard. In other words, these 80% undecided will “love” him when they can draw some ulterior benefit from the individual, or be indifferent, -if not downright hateful-, if that individual’s situation may become a burden for the undecided person, rather than an asset.

This 10%; 10%; 80% people of our lives paradigm was later reviewed, adopted and implemented with great success by individuals such as basketball player Kobe Bryant, following his 2003 rape accusations and subsequent trial. As he had been focusing on wooing the 80% undecided folks in his life before and taking for granted the 10% loving people in his life, he realized during the trial the error in his focusing of appreciation on the wrong category of people. As the undecided switched from loving and supporting him, to hating and condemning him, while the loving 10% persisted in supporting him, through the thick and thin of his legal ordeals, Kobe Bryant understood the importance of gratitude for the consistent love of the loving ones.

Therefore, following his acquittal, he moved on to supporting exclusively the 10% loving people and to focus on his game, while ignoring both the 10% hateful and the 80% undecided people in his life (including when they were again conditionally loving of him, after the acquittal of the criminal charges). When he retired in 2016, he had become the best player in his league and there were no scandals of which he could be accused, since his trial.

As one of my colleagues exemplified the difference between the 10% loving versus the 80% undecided perspectives, if one wins a race and he receives the gold medal, the 80% undecided will “love” him because and only because of that. However, if one wins the bronze metal the 10% loving people in his life will love him and be proud of him *as if he had won the gold medal* and would support him *even if* he had lost the race.

Consistent and complete support and love (from the 10% loving people) lead to a sense of peace, security, harmony and self-esteem. Because of that, the individual has trust and encouragement to be authentic, as inside (thoughts, feelings), so on the outside (words, actions). It can be equated to the individual who has continuous access to water and because of that, he will drink only when he is thirsty and only as much as he needs to satisfy his thirst.

Conversely, if an individual gets conditional and therefore intermittent support and love (from the 80% undecided), he may behave psychologically like the nomad in the desert. Seeing water in an oasis, after a long time he will drink and drink beyond saturation,

in a compulsive way, until he may eventually get sick from it.

So compulsiveness of thoughts, emotions, words and action don't come from consistent positive validation, but from intermittent validation. This sense of furtive and conditionally limited availability to love, may lead to different kinds of compulsions, from binge drinking and over eating, to uncontrolled gambling, drug use, sexual behavior, shopaholic habits, violent acts and even death.

So keeping focused on the 10% constantly loving people, being appreciative of them, look at them as a privilege, rather than with a sense of entitlement, will insure that we reciprocate that unconditional love, rather than taking them for granted and pay attention primarily to the undecided or the hateful individuals, whom, in a futile attempt, we would thus like to change.

We think that if we offer constant love and caring to the 80% undecided people, they will cross-over into the 10% loving group. It's an attempt to change people's feelings and loyalty to love us with as many chances of success as winning the lottery. This is because while people have and reserve the right to

change their style of attachments to other people, in reality, the undecided folks are much like the parasites. Their job is to *be* undecided and opportunistic, while the loving folks' job and nature is to *be* loving and altruistic towards us. Therefore, while it does good to our ego to be loved by as many people as possible, we have to be cautious in terms of *why* would people love us. For seeking to be loved for the wrong reasons (conditional love) is as dangerous as taking for granted the constant and complete love of the inherently loving people towards us (unconditional love).

-Sometimes I wonder why I keep choosing to jump from one cliff to another, a very risky business, instead of simply coming down from the first cliff, walking safely to the bottom of the next cliff and calmly and safely climbing it, at my own pace.

-Every new day is like a new canvass. It is I who decide what to paint on it.

-The Parole Officers have nothing over the parolees' behaviors. This is because none of the parole violations happen without the parolees actively choosing to act in a way which will lead to those violations.

-Being sober is being free from being numbed. Being numb is getting high on

illusions. These may be manifested from drug addictions to being addicted to one's cell-phone.

-Any kind of judgment is an act of violence.

-Acceptance and approval are two different things. Acceptance is an objective observation, while approval is a subjective interpretation of it. Yet, very often, because we don't approve something, we also don't accept it. Therefore, in denying a fact, with the subsequent intention-interpretation-impact-responsibility-and/or need for intervention, we create a delusion of reality, which can set us on a path of (self) destruction. Rather, by accepting that there is a problem, we can start looking at its cause and in so doing, we may find a resolution to it.

- For one to get out of a box (mental, emotional, physical, behavioral, or social), s/he needs to imagine that s/he can do it first. Learned helplessness is not daring to imagine and without imagination there is no path or motivation to follow it.

-If our friend loans us his car, he expects that we take care of it, drive carefully, put gas in it, change the oil and keep it clean. When we are given our bodies, those from whose

sacrifice we came into existence, expect that we appreciate this body of ours, take care of its inner and outer needs, keep it clean and preserve it in good condition. Since we did nothing to come into being, we should respect our bodies as a privilege, much like the car given into our care by our friend.

-The night belongs to sleeping, much like the Sunday belongs to the Lord. Without resting at night or praying/ meditating/ reflecting on Sundays, we take away what is needed for a balanced inner and outer life.

-When we observe ourselves in a crowd we realize how insignificant we are. When we observe ourselves in isolation we realize how insignificant we are. Therefore, we should replace any sense of pride, entitlement and selfishness, with ongoing gratitude for simply being allowed to exist, in this sea of love we call life.

-A person in the blizzard is looking for the pathways that s/he can still access. A resilient person keeps looking on what s/he can still do. Instead of focusing on what we cannot do anymore, let us focus everyday on what we can still do to be happy and in harmony.



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