

Session 3: The Lust for Power

This deadly estrangement is characterized by the delusion of the mind that **there is such a thing as final control**. When trapped in this estrangement we don't talk about control, we just control, and we tend to control absolutely or as absolutely as we can. When our control is countered, we tend to find immediately some other way to control. Being out of control is unthinkable, so we don't think about it. We may even deny that we want control, but we seek knowledge, success, position, status, friends, cohorts, whatever, in order to be in control, or at least feel in control.

This deadly estrangement is characterized by the addiction of the heart that cries out that **I want to win** and this estranged person often does win at whatever he or she does, because winning is important to this person, and because this person chooses to engage in tasks and games where winning is most likely.

This deadly estrangement is characterized by this trap of the will: **I bully people and situations**. Without even thinking about it, my will acts to push the river, to correct the wrong, to make thing different, to win the argument, to position my self for victory on whatever has captivated my deep attention. I push to have what I want to have, and do what I want to do. Obviously, this aggressiveness can be a gift for myself and others, but because it is a trap of the will, it can also be an inappropriate bullying of other people, as well as entire situations. To be emotionally sensitive and thoughtfully strategic will require that this lust-for-power person find a deeper consciousness of this pattern and thereby a detachment from its automatic enactments.

This deadly estrangement is the typical mode of Escape from Reality by Enneagram Personality Type 8

As a mode of escape, personality type 8 is an escape from the *Universal Forgiveness* aspect of authenticity.. Everyone can manifest this mode of escape to some extent, but certain people have a propensity for it – even an obsession with it. These are the outgoing, often warlike individuals who seem to live a life in constant conflict with other people's wrong-headedness, deemed so from the perspective of "their truth." The type 8's truth may not include the openness to new truth that a complete lover of truth might manifest. These persons are in an estranged state because they insist on being leaders in terms of their all-too-confident conclusions. They get things done, but on their own terms. It is difficult to oppose them without engaging in some stubborn argumentation. And however great the wreckage they may cause, they tend to have little remorse, for they see themselves as the truthful ones, however deep their lies may be. They can drop one lie and go on to a next lie without ever admitting fully that the

abandoned position was tragic. They don't stop to learn fully from their mistakes or to probe to a depth of truth that would make a significant difference in their living.

Having a personality that overemphasizes strong leadership need not mean that such persons cannot access their profound life and use their leadership gifts with compassion. Martin Luther King Jr. is an example of an 8 who used his leadership gifts compassionately. Susan Sarandon and Franklin D. Roosevelt may be other examples of the compassionate 8. The escape means identifying with this personality pattern in order to avoid the Truth of Universal Forgiveness. Personality type 8 tends to avoid experiencing their own flaws seriously enough to need forgiveness. And the notion of a universal forgiveness for all persons, including the enemies that the 8 is fighting, can be felt by type 8 as a deep offense.

Lust is a quality of this estrangement in the sense that these persons tend to insist upon their success, their pleasure, their way, their goals, their perfection, their leadership, their needs, and so forth.

The Authenticity of Universal Welcome

Universal Welcome means in Christian language forgiveness for all – enemy and friend as well as self. This does not mean something sentimental or codependent. It means that built into Reality itself there is the possibility of a perpetual *fresh start* in which there is no guilt, no shame, no *despair* over the past, no *closedness* toward the future, no *malice* toward the here and now. Our despair, closedness, and malice is the result of our unwillingness to be who we are in the now of our limitations and possibilities. Despair most often results from clinging to or obsessing about some aspect of the past, whether pleasant or horrific. Despair also results from clinging to future expectations that whitewash the real and that presume no consequences from our unrealism. Universal Welcome cuts through all that self-created trash with the Good News of a fresh start in sheer honesty.

When our despair is consciously experienced, we need not flee: despair is a *doorway*. It is through the specific doorways of our own despair that we find the *Incomprehensible Peace of Universal Forgiveness*. We can allow ourselves to pass through our doorways of despair into a fresh start of living the "No Self" in the Eternal Now. Or we can go on resisting this dawning in our lives of the abiding Truth of *Universal Forgiveness*. The dawning of *Forgiveness* is not merely an idea in our heads. It is not just a belief that we have chosen to bet our lives on. It is an experience of Truth. It is the experience that we are being posited in being by an Eternal Power that holds no grudges for our many failures to be our true selves.

We typically power our actions with some supposed truth with which we seek to control the world. Reality defeats us, shows us the limitations of our truth and thereby returns us to a place of needing forgiveness and some potential openness to new truth. Forgiveness means a return to innocence, a return to a fresh start at being ourselves. This innocence is not achieved by us, but it is imparted to us in spite of our guilt and shame. The consequences of our wayward living may continue on in history, but our

inner being is purified. As the father in Jesus' parable of the prodigal son symbolizes, we, the offspring of Being, are always welcome home to authentic communion within the "No Self" family. Our being away was the only penalty, the only hell, the only despair. Having come home, new clothing is issued, a hug and a kiss is given, a ring is placed on our finger, and a feast is prepared to celebrate our return. This is *Universal Forgiveness*.

Universal Forgiveness is a deep challenge to each of us, for to embrace it means embracing it for everyone else as well as ourselves. Yes, this means everyone – our worse enemies, our unfaithful friends, our stupid advisors, EVERYONE. To accept our forgiveness mean giving up all blaming and judging of others as a means of rendering ourselves innocent. Innocence ceases to be an accomplishment of our behavior or of our thinking. By every criteria we have, we may be guilty, but in the Eternal Now of fresh starts, we are innocent as a complete gift from the Way-It-Is. This means that forgiveness creates a Void in our self-promotion lust – indeed, this Void is an experience of "No Self," to use the Buddhist insight.

The experience of *Universal Forgiveness* can break through our self images and personality habits as a *state of being* that happens to us from time to time. At such moments, *Universal Forgiveness* has an "event" quality that includes these three aspects: (1) realizing how forgiveness is needed, (2) seeing the presence of forgiveness, and (3) accepting forgiveness for our particular lives. We can also come to recognize *Universal Forgiveness* as a permanent *gift* of our True Being that we never need to leave. To live in the continuing *quality* of *Universal Forgiveness* means resting in the realization that the quality of the ongoing Now is a continuing fresh start. Such a realization means being open to the future with the certainty that my next deeds, even before they are enacted, are forgiven, however tragically these deeds may work out.

Exercises:

1. With what descriptions of estangment do you identify in these readings?
2. What descriptions of authenticity most caught your attention.
3. Do with a partner (or by yourself) the following repeating-question exercise: (One partner asks the question, listens to an answer, says thank you, and repeats the question. The exploring partner keeps answering this same question over and over. Do this for five minutes. Then switch questioner and answerer and repeat the process.)

What do you want to win?

Repeat the process with this question:

When do you tend to bully other people or your situation?

4. Share or write your reflections on this session.