

Session 4: The Arrogance of Helpfulness

This deadly estrangement is characterized by the delusion of the mind that **there is such a thing as final help for others**. When trapped in this estrangement I view myself as capable of helping in the ways that help is needed as I see it. I do not notice my naiveté relative to what help is actually needed. And I do not notice my arrogance in assuming that I am the answer to helpfulness in this situation. I just want to be helpful where I see help is needed, and do not doubt that help is possible, or that I know what that help is, or that I am to one called provide it.

This deadly estrangement is characterized by the addiction of the heart that cries out **I want to to be appreciated**. My helpfulness and outgoing warmth do yield appreciation from many people. Living otherwise may not. My deep secret is that I expect my helpfulness to be reciprocated with at least appreciation and perhaps help in return. People who want my help, appreciate my help, and follow my example in being helpful are the people to whom I am drawn.

This deadly estrangement is characterized by this trap of the will: **I do what others want of me**. Without even thinking about it, my will leaps into opportunities to be helpful. I volunteer sometimes before I even weight the cost of my helping. I get myself in relationships with lovers, children, or friends who count on me over much, yes use me in ways I really don't want to be used. I can't seem to help myself get out of these traps. I neglect myself and my own best contribution in order to be helpful to the seemingly helpless, and my helpfulness does not always help, but I do it anyway.

This deadly estrangement is the typical mode of Escape from Reality by Enneagram Personality Type 2

As a mode of escape, personality type 2 is an escape from the *Effortless Letting Be* aspect of authenticity. Everyone can manifest this mode of escape to some extent, but certain people have a propensity to it – even an obsession with it. Personality type 2 persons are emotionally sensitive, outgoing persons who typically meddle in other people's business. In a Jane Austin novel one meets these characters who count themselves matchmakers and fixers for other people's lives, but are somewhat blind to their own lives, especially their own needs relative to accessing their more profound potentials. As emotionally powerful and influential persons, 2s make themselves available as helpers of who seems to them to need help. They often become trapped in codependent relations in which needy people lean on the 2, and enslave the 2 with an ongoing neediness and refusal to care for their own selves.

Having a personality that overemphasizes helpfulness need not mean that such persons cannot access their profound life and use their interpersonal gifts with a tough-

love type of compassion. Florence Nightingale and Desmond Tutu may be examples of the effectively compassionate 2. The escape is in identifying with the limited role of being emotionally intense and helpful and thereby avoiding the strength and realism of "Letting Be" the inevitable processes of Reality.

Arrogance is a quality that describes this estrangement, for the type 2 personality tends toward a delusory arrogation of their "celebrated" powers – attributing to themselves an illusory capacity to fix what it is not within their ability to fix or their business to fix.

The Authenticity of Effortless Letting-Be

Our homecoming to Reality requires nothing of us. It is an *Effortless Letting-Be* – a surrender to our forgiveness and a fresh start in the living Now. Accepting such forgiveness entails accepting this same *Universal Forgiveness* for all other humans, however flawed they have become. These companion humans may or may not accept *Universal Forgiveness* for themselves. But if we accept *Universal Forgiveness* for ourselves, we accept it for all other humans. So *Effortless Letting-Be* entails surrender to the complex human situation in which we live. It entails surrender to being our true being within what is going on in the whole round of our lives. It means a radical honesty in all our relationships with others and with Reality as a whole.

This surrender is a solitary action, and yet this action includes joining the community of those who are in tune with Reality and are detached from the estranged world. Most of humanity are clinging to the world of temporal things. Those who *Effortlessly Let-Be* are without effort embracing detachment from the temporal world. They need not be ascetics; they may be in love with the birds and the rabbits and the wolves and the tigers and the grasses and the trees and sex and children and the blue sky and even the hurricanes and volcanoes. Death and destruction are part of THAT to which *Effortless Letting-Be* is surrendering. Most of humanity are not "letting be" both the coming to be and the coming not to be. Most of humanity are clinging to something that is being taken away from them, or insisting on something that is not being given to them. Most of humanity are consumed with becoming more secure in wealth, possessions, knowledge, doctrine, love, friends, children, anything that can seem to promote security. Such absolute security does not exist. *Effortless Letting-Be* lets insecurity be.

As all our securities are shaken, we tend to ask, "Who am I?" We can learn that I am not my body, my reputation in society, my parent's child, my accomplishments, my place of residence, my culture, my race, my gender. And I am not my personality, my set of well-established and well-rehearsed pattern of habits. I am not my ego, my self-constructed image of who I think I am. I am a mystery even to myself. I may experience this mysterious "No Self" as a dreadful challenge or as a fascinating release or as both. If I have been a person habituated to being helpful to others, I may sense some dread in having to give that up. I might be able to assist others to see their choices to be or not to be themselves, but I cannot make those choices for them. In that sense, I

am not actually needed by others. I cannot help them be themselves. I am not in *control* in that regard. They are on their own where life matters most. And they cannot help me. I am on my own where life matters most. This may be scary. This may be releasing. It may be both. When I enter into the quality of surrender I am calling "*Effortless Letting-Be*," I am surrendering to being my "No Self" (my True Self). And I am accepting forgiveness for having not been my True Self. And since accepting forgiveness for myself means accepting forgiveness for everyone, accepting forgiveness means choosing to live among people many of whom are choosing to continue their despairing attempts to be other than they are. Passionately obsessing in my judging of others has to go, even though judging remains a useful tool for living my life.

From time to time "*Effortless Letting-Be*" may break through my busy, striving, helpful, judging, overactive, over-controlling self images and personality and be present as a *state of being* that I enjoy for a while. And I can also come to recognize "*Effortless Letting-Be*" as a permanent *quality* of the "No Self" that I never need to leave.

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.)

How do you want to be appreciated?

Repeat the process with this question:

When do you tend to do what others want of you?

4. Share or write your reflections on this session.