

# Session 6: The Sloth of Inaction

This deadly estrangement is characterized by the delusion of the mind that **there is such a thing as final escape** from a world conflicts and crushing demands. When trapped in this estrangement, I seek states of consciousness that are peaceful, affectionate, without arguments, without strong feelings, without having to make hard choices. Some call this “spacing out,” but I call it finding “peace of mind.”

This deadly estrangement is characterized by the addiction of the heart that cries out **I want peace of mind and body**. I am deeply angry that a world of conflict challenges me to participate. I want people to get along. I want people to empathize with each other’s views and respect them. I don’t want to have to decide whether to join this side or the other side. I want out of these arguments. I want a world, or at least a community of humans, who don’t fight one another.

This deadly estrangement is characterized by this trap of the will: **I avoid conflict**. Without even thinking about it, my will backs me away from talking sides in the conflicts of my family, city, nation, religion. I automatically build smart ways of keeping my distance from the quarrels going on around me. I try to understand everyone, appreciate where they are coming from, and encourage everyone to get along. I sometimes succeed in making peace. And I am also pissed, I mean really angry, that this world is so filled with tensions. I have even found a few ways to be thoroughly aloof.

## **This deadly estrangement is the typical mode of Escape from Reality by Enneagram Personality Type 9**

As a mode of escape, personality type 9 is an escape from the *Enchantment with Being* aspect of authenticity.. Everyone can manifest this mode of escape to some extent, but certain people have a propensity for it – a profound acquiescence to it. Personality type 9 persons are the most other-directed of all persons, not out of fear, but out of an anger toward conflict, toward being challenged to manifest the inner energy to participate in the conflicts and struggles of real life. So they make peace with everyone, and they try to enable peace between other persons and among the persons in their groups. They promote peace at the cost of their own integrity or at the cost of not getting done what needs doing. Personality type 9 can be capable and effective in their living and appear to be the most agreeable of all persons. But underneath this outward mask is a rage toward the demanding nature of life. When peace cannot be made in a given circumstance, the 9 personality tends to go to sleep or space out into a trance of inattention.

Having a personality that overemphasizes peacemaking need not mean that such persons cannot access their profound life and use their interpersonal gifts with compassion. Perhaps Abraham Lincoln and Ingrid Bergman show us the compassionate 9. The escape in this instance is about identifying with a conflict-free existence that does not and cannot exist. The escape is from that seemingly uncomfortable energy that it takes to deal with the full realities that humans face. What is missing is the realization of a profound love for that fullness of Being that includes one's own anger, intensity, and passion for truth, as well as the huge challenges and conflicts that characterize real world living.

*Sloth* is a quality that describes this estrangement, for the type 9 personality tends to "cop out" rather than endure and/or enjoy the full intensity of living.

## **The Authenticity of Enchantment with Being**

*Enchantment with Being* is the core aspect of the "No Self"; it is an intensification or enrichment for all the other aspects of our "True Being." To grasp the poetry in the term "*Enchantment*," we might recall our relation with our first love partner, a person who captivated our enduring attention day and night. Perhaps we have been enchanted with a community we belonged to, with some work we did, with some place we lived, or with some specific time in our lives. With the word "*Enchantment*" we mean an unusually intense attention and intention toward a consuming focus. Our *Enchantment with Being* is the very fullest intensification we can give the word "enchantment." Being is the quintessence of intensity, so *Enchantment with Being* is the quintessence of intensity. It is not quite accurate to call this intensification "ecstasy" if "ecstasy" means strong emotional qualities. Experiences of ecstasy may attend our *Enchantment with Being*, but *Enchantment with Being* is more subtle than ecstasy; it is a more enduring experience than moments of intense feeling. I am proposing the poetic phrase "*Joyous Stillness*." *Enchantment with Being* is also a sort of *Rest*. "Our hearts are restless until we rest in this Rest" (Augustine). It is the "promised land" where all is at rest, where abundance flows with milk and honey (or whatever else symbolizes the good fortune of experiencing such a radical completion). Though we may experience *Enchantment with Being* as *Still* and *Restful*, it is at the same time the presence of the full intensity of our experience of the "No Self."

It might seem that this intensity or completion is very rare, but this need not be true. *Enchantment with Being* most frequently manifests as a glow within one of the other aspects of the "No Self." Perhaps it is transparent attention with a glow, forgiveness with a glow, detachment with a glow, initiative with a glow, boldness with a glow, implementation with a glow, courageous heart with a glow, out-flowing compassion with a glow. And by "glow" I mean nothing more than some sort of Awe being occasioned by the enduring Awesomeness of the Wholeness of Reality.

*Enchantment with Being* may be experienced as a breaking out of our personality habits into a *state of being* that happens to us from time to time. And we can also come to recognize this as a permanent *quality* of the "No Self" that we 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 repeates 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 more peace?**

Repeat the process with this question:

**When do you tend to avoid conflict?**

4. Share or write your reflections on this session.