

Session 7: The Shells of Status

This deadly estrangement is characterized by the delusion of the mind that **there is such a thing as final success and beauty**. When trapped in this estrangement I tend to become a workaholic. I make almost uncanny efforts to place myself in positions of success and/or popular acclaim. Nothing else seems more important than making it, being it, doing it. I manifest as a beaver of work or a peacock of presentation, probably both.

This deadly estrangement is characterized by the addiction of the heart that cries out **I want to make a good appearance**. I hate failure in myself. I even hate failure in others, or at least I sympathy with their state and feel frustration with how they shoot themselves in the foot. I don't mind helping others succeed. I want everyone to be successful and/or beautiful. I am not out to win over others or oppress others. I do realize that competition is real, and I don't mind rising to the top of any group. But I am basically in competition with myself.

This deadly estrangement is characterized by this trap of the will: **I do exaggerated and overreaching behaviors**. Without even thinking about it, my will carries me beyond good strategies into displays of expression or action that does not fit the situation. I hate to admit it, but my status-loving will promotes "me," my status, my looks, as if doing that is always just normal and even appropriate.

This deadly estrangement is the typical mode of Escape from Reality by Enneagram Personality Type 3

As a mode of escape, personality type 3 is an escape from the *Out-flowing Compassion* aspect of authenticity.. Everyone can manifest this mode of escape to some extent, but certain people have a strong pull toward it – even an obsession with it. Personality type 3 persons tend to be (or are at least are committed to be) accomplished persons. They see their outward roles in society as having great importance. They strongly seek the good opinion of others and of themselves in relation to others. This can take many forms, as many forms as there are roles in society. But the roles that most capture the dreams of type-3 persons are the roles that have minor or major celebrity. "Beautiful movie star" is definitely a role that attracts some type-3 personalities. If such extreme celebrity is not feasible, then some form of beautiful, successful, admired, or accomplished style becomes type 3's self-required program for living. A type-3 personality wants to be a star in their own perception of themselves. And they do tend to shine. They make waves in a group. They typically make fabulous first impressions, but as we get to know them they may be found to be without inner substance or at least hiding troubling features that have yet to be addressed.

Having a personality that overemphasizes outward roles need not mean that such persons cannot access their profound life and use their gifts for an outgoing presence with remarkable compassion for others. Perhaps Bill Clinton and Barbara Streisand show us some of the gifts of a compassionate 3. The escape is identifying with their outward roles at the expense of an inward integrity and full development of their profound humanness. The escape is from a full inwardness into the shell of some outward role. This escape is a form of self-forgetfulness, but it is the forgetfulness of failing to nurture the self in its deep inward aspects and thereby not accessing fully one's authentic out-flowing compassion. When that essential compassion is realized, then their outgoingness can be a self-forgetful flow into the tasks of being "with" others in all their sorrow, happiness, despair, and joy.

Vanity is a quality that describes this estrangement, for persons of personality type 3 tend to be vain in the sense of adoring their own outward appearance and the effects they make on others. They do this at the expense of their own inner life and a genuine love for others.

Out-flowing Compassion

Out-flowing Compassion is Spirit Love in relation to the outward world of others, the Earth, and the cosmos. "*Out-flowing*" means attention and movement away from our preoccupation with inwardness toward whatever is occurring in our actual encounters with the surrounding processes of Reality. The Strength described as *Autonomous Strength* is now experienced as a power moving toward a boundless affirmation of others. "*Compassion*" means the power to be *with* others in all their joy, fun, pleasure, pain, horror, and despair.

Out-flowing Compassion is the opposite of drawing back into our safe and familiar places of inner experience. *Out-flowing Compassion* means the capacity to be fully present with whomever enters our scope of engagement. This includes both our friends and those who are the enemies of our deepest values and causes. It is as if our only true enemies are the temptations to withdraw into our own greed, contentment, and distractions and defensive bigotries. *Out-flowing Compassion* does not mean serving our own personality or someone else's personality. It means serving in ourselves and in others the realization of the "No Self" essence of being our True Being. The state of compassion can include feelings of anger and sadness toward the corruption, depravity, and meanness of humanity as well as feelings of hope and joy over the restoration of the "No Self" qualities in others and toward the social manifestations of justice and well being. This state of compassion extends to all the living forms of our planet and to all the cosmic forces that support these alive ones. Compassion includes action to change the social structures that care for all humans, all life forms, all processes of the planet.

Out-flowing Compassion is expressed in action, but can also be expressed in inaction, in the mere presence of being compassionate. *Out-flowing Compassion* is a *singular devotion* rooted in our *Enchantment with Being*. It is not a scattered activism or a series of distractions: it is the unifying of our many tasks into one devotion. It is not other-

directedness: it flows from our own being, not from the whims of others. But it flows toward others; it does not focus on our own inward qualities. In that sense it is self-forgetful. And this compassion is also an out-flowing attitude toward our own being as part of the whole of Being toward which we are flowing. *Out-flowing Compassion* is the fulfillment of the familiar commandment to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

Out-flowing Compassion 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 realize this flow 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 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 are ways you want to make a good appearnce?

Repeat the process with this question:

When do you tend to do exaggerated behaviors?

4. Share or write your reflections on this session.