

Session 9: The Rage of Righteousness

This deadly estrangement is characterized by the delusion of the mind that **there is such a thing as final righteousness**. When trapped in this delusion we tend to be rather picky about everything that we do or don't do as well as what other people do and don't do. We can be very motivated toward dealing with oppression and injustice. We can be quite aggressive with regard to how life needs to be organized better. We notice these things about ourselves and we think seriously about what is good and what is evil. We think that to be without a clear view of what is good and what is evil is a sore state of affairs. We may admit that our views on good and evil have changed, and that we may need further changes. But we feel a strong need for movement toward some (we don't often admit this) final righteousness in order to better know what to do with our lives.

This deadly estrangement is characterized by the addiction of the heart that cries out **I want to be right**. I may be embarrassing to notice how I sometimes value being "right" over being useful in a given situation. I may even be surprised at myself for how vigorously I know (or think I know) what is right.

This deadly estrangement is characterized by this trap of the will: **I criticize people and situations unduly**. Without even thinking about it, my will comes up with stern critiques. I can look into someone's closet and say to myself, or even to them, "You have too many pairs of shoes." On the more substantial matters of working out things with those I love, I have a hard time accommodating my views on the right way to do things with those of persons who operate a lot differently from me. It is easy for me to conclude without thinking carefully about it, that I live in a world of thoughtless slobs. And there seems to be plenty of evidence for this conclusion. Even thinking about these conditions brings up deep resentments.

This deadly estrangement is the typical mode of Escape from Reality by Enneagram Personality Type 1

As a mode of escape, personality type 1 is an escape from the *Inherent Purity* aspect of authenticity.. Everyone can manifest this mode of escape to some extent, but certain people have a propensity toward it – even an obsession with it. Personality type 1 individuals are principled persons. They may be social reformers. They may stick up for the little guy. Even when they are fairly traditional, they tend to be picky persons who know what is right and do what is right, as they understand it. We often count on them; for they tend to be persons who get things done, and get them done right. Flexibility may not be one of their virtues, or it may be. They are not likely to lie for us, cheat for us, or compromise their core values. They tend to be markedly assertive

persons who can seem quite sure about what they are doing. They have no fear about carrying out stern critiques of others. They may be smooth and skilled at promoting what they think is right and true. They may be boring bigots.

Having a personality that overemphasizes moral rightness need not mean that such persons cannot access their profound life and use their tough-mindedness with compassion. Perhaps Ralph Nader and Jane Fonda are type 1 examples of tough-minded compassion. The type 1 mode of escape is identifying with a taken-for-granted rightness resident in their superego, their upbringing, or their ethical thoughtfulness. The escape is seeing such rightness as the “real me,” a rightness that is substituted for *the inherent purity* of that essential freedom that knows that all choices must be carried out in a world of ambiguities in which good and evil are always relative to chosen contexts.

Wrath is a quality that describes this estrangement, for the type-1 personality tends to be resentful of violations of their principles and they tend to put the energy of anger into their careful or reckless campaigns of living.

Inherent Purity

Inherent Purity means the actions of the “No Self” that originates in the clear space of *Freedom*. This aspect of the “No Self” entails living *beyond good and evil* – beyond the stories of the superego that holds our oughts, duties, customs, and morals; beyond the approval of our parents, offspring, friends and other social peers; beyond all the libraries of ethical thought; beyond all the preferences of our own bodies, minds, and habits. *Inherent Purity* is the pure freedom to act out of the spacious emptiness of the “No Self” with uncaused, unauthorized, unprecedented options of creative response.

This confident purity of action is an *audacious boldness*, a *Freedom* so primordially rooted in our deep being that it shocks our personality habits into a sideline share of our living. This *audacious boldness* uses our personality gifts when appropriate, but will also contradict all personality habits and values without qualms. All impulses to be righteous in terms of superego conditioning are bypassed; a new form of righteousness reigns: *Freedom* itself. That we spend most of our lives squeezing our inherent *Freedom* into some narrow box of morality or social acceptability does not contradict the fact that this deep *audacious boldness* is our true being. That we insist upon being guilty before our social norms rather than alive in an innocent liberty does not contradict the fact that living “*beyond good and evil*” characterizes the real “me.” In spite of the fact that our parents, our community, our friends, our enemies teach us good and evil, we are each an *audacious boldness* that uses these teachings or leaps beyond these teaching as we deem appropriate to the situation. Within this understanding of our true being, we can recognize that eating with Adam and Eve from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is a fall from authenticity, not a step upward.

Engaging our essential *Freedom* in temporal action is engaging our *Inherent Purity*. Engaging this *Freedom* is the liberation of the “True Me.” But because we cling so tightly to our moral certainties and ethical principles, *Freedom* may seem dreadful. Indeed, this

dread of *Freedom* recurs whenever we wish to feel certain about a particular decision. In the real world all our choices are ambiguous. There are many ways to view each choice. There are many values to consider, and some of them will have to be negated in each specific choice. The boldness of such living is truly audacious. Nevertheless, fear of this *Freedom* can turn to glory as we realize that *Freedom* is our *Inherent Purity*, our Righteousness, our Authenticity, our true “me,” our “No Self” of profound humanness.

This awesome initiative of *Inherent Purity* can break through our personality habits as a *state of being* that happens to us from time to time. And we can also come to recognize that *Inherent Purity* is 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.)

How do you want to be right?

Repeat the process with this question:

When do you criticize unduly?

4. Share or write your reflections on this session.