

## Chapter 16

# The Melting of Personality and the Molten Flow of Spirit

Is there a phase three in the journey of Spirit? Is there another turning point comparable to the teeter-totter tip that characterizes the turn from phase one to phase two? I believe, based on my own experience, that we can describe another major phase of the Spirit journey.

As we increase our awareness of Spirit and strengthen our intentional participation in living our Spirit being, we come into a clearer vision of the wholeness of our Spirit Being. All nine sides of the jewel of our Spirit Being are visible to us. All nine facets of this Spirit diamond are shining. All three aspects of Trust, all three aspects of Love, all three aspects of Freedom are vivid to us.

When Spirit becomes this present to us, we may notice that something is happening in our relation to our Spirit teachers. They cannot help us very much anymore. It is not that they have ceased being people who are treasured by us. And we may not have outgrown them, though we do experience outgrowing some of our teachers. But something deeper is happening than outgrowing teachers; we are moving into arenas where guides cannot help us. We must now lean almost entirely upon guidance from within our own being. That inner guidance has always been there; but until this third stage of the Spirit journey we have not been clear enough to fully trust our inner guidance. We have needed our teachers to assist us in being clear about which inner actualities are Spirit guidance and which inner actualities are our personality reasserting itself – tempting us to another retreat. If our human guides have been good Spirit guides, they have always referred us to our inner guidance. Nevertheless, we needed and treasured their assistance in discovering our inner guidance.

Now, in this third phase of the Spirit journey our next steps have become so inward and so subtle and so unique to our own particular journey, that we are in large measure on our own. We may even be exploring territory into which no known human companion has ever ventured. We may read about a few others who have experienced what we are experiencing, but perhaps they lived in another era, or in another culture, or in another overall situation, or in another personality type, or as another sex, or in some other situation. Perhaps they used another mode of expression that has to be extensively translated to fit into alignment with our culture and our unique Spirit challenges. We still treasure all our Spirit companions. We still revere and use our Spirit teachers. But we are more and more aware that we are on our own.

Also, we are more aware that we are Spirit teachers to others. We may have been a Spirit teacher or a Spirit guide to others for decades, but now it seems that we are some sort of Spirit guide most of the time. We may not be playing formal teaching roles, but Spirit guiding characterizes more of our ordinary relationships. Our focus has shifted from the need to access Spirit to the need to share Spirit. Even though we have been sharing Spirit in the two earlier phases, the sharing aspect has now blossomed into a prominent flowering within our daily living and within our vocational planning.

And perhaps the most amazing characteristic of this third phase of the Spirit journey is that something remarkable is happening to our personality. It may seem to be melting. In fact, it may in large measure have already melted. Instead of being a rigid frozen cube of ice that does not move well through many of the narrow places of living, our personality is becoming integrated into the overall flow of the Spirit filled

soul. The flow of Spirit so fully dominates the soul's experience that the habits of personality are gathered into the flow.

Or we might speak of our personality becoming transparent. Rather than being an opaque coating that dims out the light of Spirit, Spirit shines through our increasingly glassy personality patterns. It is not as if the personality has disappeared. It is not that the personality has lost its power to tempt us into reduced living. What has happened is that our consciousness has more extensively identified the cross elements of our personality and distinguished them from the golden potentialities that our personality has accumulated. Our personality's rigidities and unrealisms are more marginalized in our living. The more functional parts of our personality are now shining with light that the Spirit presence is providing. We might say that our personality has been recruited and trained to be a servant of Spirit.

However deeply we experience these qualities, the journey of Spirit has not ended. Whatever glories we might be able to experience and describe, each of them is only a stepping stone for the next. Each experience is only a launching pad for the next flight into ever more intense Spirit realization. The Spirit journey does not become a possession we can put in our pocket. And it never becomes a plateau upon which we can forever vegetate. We may be able to discern that we have come a long way; but a still longer way stretches out before us. On this infinite path of Spirit, the way yet to go is always longer than the distance we have come. Spirit is an Infinite relatedness, but our consciousness of Spirit and our manifestation of Spirit are a finite journey through finite temporal happenings. The finite when compared to the Infinite is always zero. Though the Spirit adept may be far ahead of the Spirit novice, the adept is no closer to final realization. The Spirit journey is an endless journey. Humility deepens as we go. Any assumption that we have finally arrived is an arrogance. Indeed it is a detour away from the ongoing, every-continuing Spirit journey.

Nevertheless, arriving is a real experience and one of the qualities of arriving is our awareness that we do experience with some fullness all nine aspects of Spirit depicted as the nine points of the enneagram design. That means all three aspects of Spirit Trust (See chapter 7 for a full description.), all three aspects of Spirit Love (See Chapter 8.), and all three aspects of Spirit Freedom (See Chapter 9.). The third journey of Spirit not only renders our particular personality transparent to its associated point on the circle of Spirit, but we also find ourselves accessing the other eight points of Spirit as well.

Here is a poetic review of this wholeness of Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is like a wind that blows through our lives. At the same time Spirit is our lives, our very deepest lives. And the Holy Spirit is all one thing, one wind, one deep life.

At the same time, the Holy Spirit has aspects and the major aspects of Holy Spirit can be named Trust, Love, and Freedom.

Holy Spirit is TLF, and TLF is one thing, one un-thing, not three.

TLF is both gift and action. TLF is simply our essential being, we do not invent it or achieve it. We do not need to do anything to have it. It is a gift. As this gift blows through our lives, it seem to come from elsewhere because our lives are so caught up in all those many ideas, habits, and projects of our own invention. But TLF does not come from elsewhere; it is the true us. We invent our estrangement from TLF, but TLF is never invented. TLF is only accepted — indeed, it is “us” to start with.

Nevertheless, our acceptance of TLF is action, true action, passionate action, incredible passion, inventiveness and creativity so powerful that the notion of gift

seems to disappear.

This is the primary paradox of TLF: it is both 100% gift and 100% action. We are guided to TLF by the entire cosmos. And we do TLF alone, by ourselves, out of our own core. Our deeds of TLF are creations out of nothing.

Fatalism breaks down this paradox toward the gift pole.

Stoicism breaks down this paradox toward the action pole.

Fatalism denies Freedom almost entirely and turns Trust into passivity.

Stoicism denies Trust almost entirely and turns Freedom into willfulness.

Fatalism is a passive resignation, believing that nothing can be done to change the basic qualities of life.

Stoicism is an active resignation, believing that willing something will make life tolerable, perhaps creative and enjoyable.

Fatalism wallows in feelings and blames Reality for them.

Stoicism suppresses feelings and tries to live beyond them.

TLF is neither passive nor willful, neither wallows in feelings nor suppresses feelings.

TLF feels the feelings that are there to be felt, and yet knows that all feelings are like clouds that drift away.

TLF is not a passive resignation, it is a surrender that is also a creativity.

TLF is not an active resignation; it is a creativity that is also an obedience.

TLF can be described by identifying its aspects, but TLF is one reality, one wind blowing through our fatalism, stoicism, sentimentalism, intellectualism, moralism, and every other form of estrangement.

The Trust pole of Trust is openness to Reality, curiosity about Reality, confession of illusion about Reality.

The Love pole of Trust is noticing that Reality accepts us, forgives us, loves us, is benevolent to us.

The Freedom pole of Trust is actively accepting the acceptance of Reality, a surrender of all need to do anything to be loved.

The Trust pole of Love is glorying in being the solitary self, a deep un-self equipped with all the powers of TLF.

The Love pole of Love is enchantment with Reality in all its glorious, amazing, and horrific aspects.

The Freedom pole of Love is identification with others, listening to them, feeling with them, serving them toward their TLF.

The Trust pole of Freedom is the abandonment of the habitual self and its claims to be special, a leap into Infinite worthiness.

The Love pole of Freedom is the departure from moralism, from all right and wrong, a leap into boundless creativity.

The Freedom pole of Freedom is laughter at all fatalism and stoicism, a leap into creative realism that is also obedience.

All of these statements are attempts to be descriptive of our actual TLF lives. These statements are not meant to indicate goals to be achieved. They are meant to describe potentialities already present, waiting to be lived.

In our essential Being each of us are all nine faces of a bright diamond that has been hidden beneath the opaque coatings of our personality patterns. When our Spirit journey begins we are almost entirely identified with the escape pattern from one of these nine faces. As we turn transparent the opaque coating that hides that face of the diamond, the diamond begins to gleam from that face. This third phase of the Spirit journey involves exposing the whole diamond, turning transparent the opaque

coatings that cover all nine faces of the diamond. Our Spirit presence begins to gleam in every direction.

In our entire lifetime, this unfolding will never be complete, but the possibility of completion always stands before us. The unfolding is real, and what is being unfolded is the light that shown through Jesus who, as the Christ, became a symbol for Spirit completion. This light is the same light that shines through the Buddha, Mohammed, and others whom we have rightly designated as exemplars of Spirit. It is appropriate that we have created stories and myths and legends to memorialize these persons. Yet it does not actually matter if Sidhartha, the ancient Indian prince/monk, was or was not a perfect Buddha. The Buddha is now a symbol for the perfect life. Mohammed, for his followers, has also become a Symbol for more than the bare biography of this religious founder. And for we who claim a Christian heritage, we need to be clear that Jesus, the first century Jewish Nazarene carpenter/preacher, may never have fully realized all nine facets of Spirit Being. Jesus as the Christ has become a Symbol for the perfected life. The stories we tell about such exemplars are stories of possibility – the possibility of perfection for them and for ourselves, a perfection that none of us may ever reach, but a perfection that is, nevertheless, who we truly are in our essence. This perfection stands before us and calls us to the next step in our Spirit journey.