

Presencing Issue 39: Asking for Help - Part II

Laying the ground: Asking for help inside is enabled by developing a feeling awareness in our minds. Inner communication alas takes many forms, rarely verbal. We shift from the ramblings and rants of our egos into an increasing awareness of feeling states that accompany us moment to moment. Feeling states produce their own vocabulary and shifting forms. With curiosity and presence we start to explore the sensations that accompany our feeling states inside. It is through such inner searching that we become aware of different parts of our body minds. Witness is always recording now, no matter what is occurring. We can slide sideways from ego randomness and self-preservation into just observing. By so doing we realize that the witness or observer function is a different but constant form of functioning in life, always recording, never commanding or even suggesting, ever reflecting. No fear there. How about our inner self, always questioning, always evaluating life's experiences, always looking for deeper understanding of life's mysteries. As we move more and more into curiosity we find that our inner self approaches everything, every aspect of life with wonderment and anticipation, even those so called unpleasant aspects, even suffering and loss. Again, no fear there.

Establishing the inner link: Asking for help inside is quite different from those times when we seek advice or support for something we are trying to accomplish. Asking for help inside is an act of humility and commission. We are acknowledging that our usual ways of moving forward are insufficient to our understanding. We are seeking deeper experience, deeper understanding, and deeper ways of leading our lives. For instance we are committed to leading our lives in ways that lead to the betterment of life and to the growth of healing abilities. We wish to open our lives to our unique destinies so that we can make contributions from a place of meaningful work. We wish to align ourselves with our own inner guidance. We wish to relieve the suffering of humanity and alleviate the suffering of other species that are inflicted by humanity. We wish to become living expressions of love and peacefulness. We wish to find the true essence of our own being. We wish to become living expressions of communion with nature, and with life itself. We wish to transform our minds from self-centered survivalism into



expressions of gratefulness for every moment of aliveness in a body. We wish to develop ourselves, and our abilities so that we are living our lives as companions in co-creation so that we are living in harmony with the rest of life. All of these examples of inner seeking emerge out of our willingness to link ourselves with our inner helpers.



Doorways of perception: What do we mean by "doorways" of perception? In short, anything that we experience when we attend with curiosity and presence becomes an entrance into a deeper part of ourselves, into self-discovery. If that doorway includes sensations of fear or pain, we start to uncover the projective imaginings of the ego which sees itself as separate and suffering

from an ultimate threat of loss of all vestiges of life. In spite of the suffering, the ego is always struggling to "hold on" to everything of value that life seems to offer. Whereas if we pursue a loving impulse with curiosity and presence, we soon find that the feelings of love are satisfying in themselves. We become effulgent with inner light and self-awareness. We start to realize that all of life is coming to meet us appropriately through the Oneness. Also our touch centered profession allows us more and more opportunities to experience and explore these doorways in ourselves and with our clients.

Inner touch: One of the amazing effects of developing somatic awareness is that we can use our proprioceptive senses in order to "touch" into any part of the body from inside. Not only that but the practitioner can feel the client's inner touch into that part of the body through changes that happen in the client's tissue. And the client can vary the type of inner touch she uses: soft touch, light touch, expansive touch, assertive touch, loving touch, contractive touch, empty touch. Milton Trager started asking those kinds of proprioceptive questions of his students: "Can you

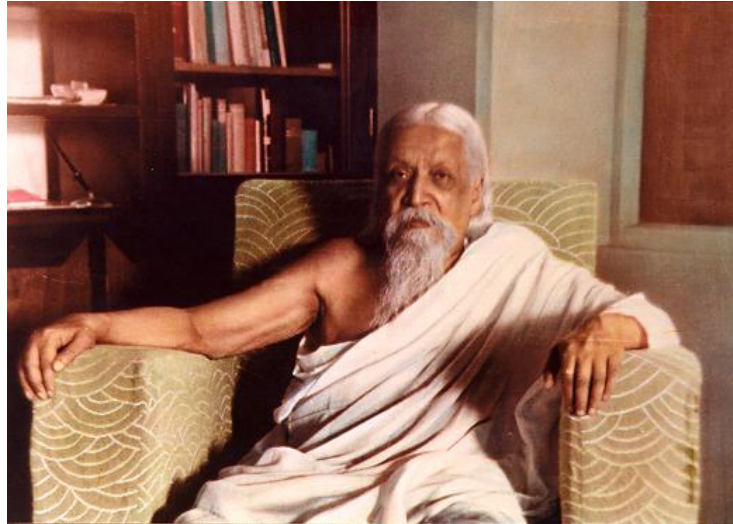


make that same movement with less effort... less effort than that... and now even less?" What he was creating in his students was less and less efforting and more and more somatic awareness. In the same manner we can ask our clients to breathe into, feel into, touch into, expand into a body part. "Meet my hands right here; that's right; now gently push against my hands with your breath. Now feel what is happening in your tissue." By challenging the mind of the client to change its conditioned response to that part of the body, we can feel the tissue change. The proprioceptive questioning is provoking a feeling response rather than a thinking response. Indeed our thought dominated minds are baffled by such directions. In the same way, when we use inner touch to connect with different parts of our own bodies, we are releasing our minds from the past and opening to new patterns of movement and sensitivity.

Awareness of interoception: The perception of sensations that originate inside the body is usually only a half-conscious experience. For instance someone may say: "I'm feeling more and more hungry." The other person says: "What would you like to eat?" The first person says: "What is available?" The other person then provides a list of different foods, and the first person says: "Please give me some time to consider these possibilities." We may well ask how does the hungry person decide what she wants to eat? Many factors enter in, but the main determinant is what the hungry person is feeling inside. This would be an example of the use of interoception. Or a person states: "I'm feeling really lonely today." Instead of saying: "Why are you feeling lonely?" The second person says: "Where are the sensations of loneliness in your body, and what do those sensations feel like?" In order to answer this body-centered question, the lonely person has to feel into her whole body. As we become more present we are training our minds to examine the feeling responses in our bodies. Instead of using our minds to search the past to discover the origins of the feelings, we can use our minds to search out what is occurring in the present moment. This is exactly how we learn to discern choices and deeper awareness, and our own inner guidance. Every emotion, every felt sense, can be explored in this way; building more and more of a connection between our feeling awareness and what is occurring now.

Awareness of

exteroception: Things are occurring around us all of the time. We often interact with these external events based upon the perceptions of our five physical senses. However there are other factors involved, and other senses. For instance as we enter a large space like an auditorium, how do we decide where we are going to sit? Once again there are



many common sense factors involved. But we mostly use our feeling awareness of unseen, unsensed factors like ambience, space comfort requirements, peripheral vision, perceptions of other persons or objects in the space, esthetics, colors, exposure, concealment, exit requirements. All of these factors and others play mostly unconscious roles in our exteroceptive decisions. We may sense that something pleasant or unpleasant is immanent, a kind of sixth sense; or we may receive inner portent informing us of what is coming next, like animals sensing earthquakes and tsunamis, and what role we are to play. These sensory experiences are not generally regarded as determined by our five physical senses.

Awareness of proprioception: Proprioception is generally regarded as datum that includes awareness of our bodily positioning in space: What way is up? What way is down?, Where is the center of gravity? What limb is in a position to move next? Where is equilibrium? Where is balance? How do I free myself from an awkward position? How can I fit myself in this space? How can I remove these garments? How can I change direction without losing momentum? All of these considerations require feeling awareness and corresponding thought. One can make the argument that we have barely scratched the surface in terms of feeling awareness and our ability to discern what is happening inside and outside our bodies, inside and outside our lives. As we use different sensory awarenesses in and around our bodies we move our actions and our choices more and more into alignment with presence. And we start to realize that we are never as isolated as our ego minds inform us, that we can involve other parts of ourselves in order to discern our destiny and guidance. Our proprioceptive awareness becomes more and more useful for guidance.



Shifting our awareness:

We start to realize that we cannot function in the same way as before. More and more of our choices and decisions are made with the help of feeling awareness, using the body sensations to bring us into alignment with our inner guidance. We start to feel more guidance and discernment accompanying our lives. When we pause to listen for guidance, and we act upon that guidance, we start to realize that the more we pause, the more our lives unfold according

to destiny. In the beginning asking for help seems like an appeal of neediness. After we get used to the asking, we realize that we are being pulled towards our own destiny by our acts of commission. Certain signs of presence start to show up more in our daily lives: silence, stillness, no time, no space, and mu or emptiness. When these signs show up, we become aware that these signs of presence are the exact same things that our ego minds were most afraid of... and by building our own feeling awareness into them, we have drawn ourselves into the most precious gifts of life in a body. Now when we are asking for help we are asking for companionship in our own co-creativity.

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