

„Duchowość” cementuje ślepotę na dzieciństwo

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Część 1

Jak uczymy się osądzać i zabijać własne uczucia – najbardziej witalnych posłańców duszy, iacy mają nas chronić.

Uczucia są dla ludzi życiodajnymi posłańcami, mającymi pełnić funkcje ochronne. Niosą ważne informacje o tym, jak nasze ciała i dusze reagują na otaczający świat, wydarzenia, zachowania i postawy innych oraz na doświadczenia jakie stają się naszym udziałem – szczególnie na doświadczenia traumatyczne. Większość ludzi jednak nie próbuje kontaktować się ze swoimi uczuciami ani rozumieć ich przesłania; zamiast tego osądza je jako „negatywne” lub „złe”. Nauka manipulacji i wypaczanie niemiłych bądź „niepożądanych” uczuć zaczyna się już we wczesnym dzieciństwie. Rodzice, opiekunowie, niańki, nauczyciele, wychowawcy i różne autorytety religijne dążą do uformowania „dobrych” dzieci – posłusznych, grzecznych i miłych, które będą miały jedynie „dobre” uczucia, i nie będą przejawiać krytycyzmu, własnej woli, buntu czy protestu – reakcji emocjonalnych pochodzących ze zranienia, gniewu, wątpliwości i niezgody na ból. Dzieci, które „pyskują” i wyrażają swoje prawdziwe uczucia, są najczęściej ignorowane, potępiane, szantażowane i karane (także fizycznie) a jeśli dalej skarżą się i buntują, spotykają się z brakiem poszanowania, zrozumienia i współczucia.

U dorosłych ta wpojona kiedyś postawa żywi się koncepcjami i doktrynami duchowymi (tzw. duchowość autorytarna). Nauczycielski w dzieciństwie i wzmacniając tę naukę „duchowymi” czy moralnymi nakazami, dorośli w dalszym ciągu piętują, dyskredytują i próbują eliminować nie tylko swoje „złe” uczucia i „negatywne” emocje ale i spontaniczną radość, energetyczne podniecenie, niecierpliwość itp., – wszystko, co grozi zachwianiem „spokojnej, pogodnej równowagi”. Starają się zaprezentować światu jako mili, spokojni i dający się lubić, kryjąc się za tą fasadą sztuczności wymuszoną przez najwcześniejsze doświadczenia. Jeszcze zanim dorośnie, większość ludzi ma już utrwalony lęk przed swoimi prawdziwymi uczuciami – zwłaszcza, gdy jest to gniew i nienawiść – a następnie lęk ten zaczynają zasilać i kontrolować przyjmowane filozoficzne, religijne lub etyczne wierzenia.

Ale uczucia, które były uciszane i tłumione w dzieciństwie nie znikają: zmagazynowane w ciele, w każdej jego komórce, trwają dalej. Gniew i wściekłość, które nigdy nie miały szansy zwrócić się przeciw krzywdzącym, okrutnym rodzicom, wypływają po latach, gdy mogą zostać skierowane – z aprobatą systemów religijnych i filozoficznych – na kolejne pokolenie dzieci oraz na „złych innych”, jak grupy etniczne czy narodowościowe. Z jakichkolwiek arbitralnych powodów, bez świadomości i poczucia winy, osoby te, grupy i nawet całe narody stają się odbiorcami nagromadzonego gniewu na oprawczych rodziców i zostają uznane za winne, gorsze, knujące, oprawcze i godne wykluczenia z „naszego” grona, przewidzianego do „błogosławieństw” „zbawienia”, oświecenia” czy karmicznego wynagrodzenia w przyszłych żywotach. Niewierzących i tych którzy wierzą w inny sposób, w co innego lub idą do zbawienia „złą drogą” chcemy skazać na piekło – tak samo jak my byliśmy w dzieciństwie skazani na piekło przemocy, wykorzystywania i odtrącenia i piętowani za nieposłuszeństwo, inność, bunt, własną wolę, indywidualność, głupotę, prawdziwe uczucia, gdy tylko ośmielaliśmy się wątpić w kłamstwa i „racje” rodziców i autorytetów.

Dlaczego mamy uczucia? I dlaczego mamy takie uczucia? Czy jesteśmy autentyczni i rzeczywiści kiedy je tłumimy? Czy jesteśmy integralni, gdy dzielimy je na „dobre” i „złe”, odrzucając te ostatnie? Czy możemy pozostać w zgodzie z sobą samym i własnym sumieniem jeśli kierujemy się wierzeniami lub nakazami innych, które powstały nieraz przed wieloma stuleciami i

których nie można podważyć bo „pochodzą od Najwyższego” więc muszą być słuszne? Wielu z nas było w takiej sytuacji w dzieciństwie, nie mając innej opcji niż wierzyć, stosować się, rezygnować z siebie i być posłusznym nakazom oprawczych rodziców i innych dorosłych. Ale wnoszenie tej uległości i cudzych przekonań w nasze życie dorosłe nie pozwala nam dowiedzieć się, kim i jacy naprawdę jesteśmy. Czyni nas to zwykłymi narzędziami w rękach innych, często niebezpiecznych i niezyczliwych nam ludzi, którzy tak samo nie wiedzą kim są, ale swoje destrukcyjne wzorce, za które nie biorą odpowiedzialności, odreagowują na zewnątrz, na innych, czego ich wyznawcy lub słudzy nie ośmielają się widzieć ani kwestionować.

Czy jakikolwiek przyjęty system przekonań lub wiara może wyrwać nas z zasięgu prawd i sił, jakie odżywają z chwilą kontaktu z naszym, prawdziwym JA, ukształtowanym z własnych autentycznych uczuć, przeczuc, intuicji i przemyśleń wyrosłych z gleby naszych potrzeb, pragnień wartości i celów? Systemy przekonań oferują takie same odpowiedzi dla wszystkiego i wszystkich; odwołują się bądź bezpośrednio się opierają na starożytnych księgach, przywódcach duchowych, naukach mędrców, guru i lamów. Wymuszają na wyznawcach określone, jednakowe zasady postępowania, obiecując „zbawienie” przestrzegającym i „potępienie” odstępcom. Nie proponują: „Sam to odkryj; tylko ty jesteś ekspertem od swojego wewnętrznego świata”. Nie mówią: „Ufaj sobie”.

Część 2

Wątpliwe korzenie medytacji oraz negacja ludzkich potrzeb emocjonalnych w buddyzmie tybetańskim

When Tibetan Buddhism is celebrated today as the peaceful and calming practice of meditation, people overlook the reality of a brutal religion with bizarre traditions that has used meditation as a tyrannizing tool to quash the power of feelings and free, critical thinking. Not only one hell as in Christianity, but sixteen hells doom the believer in Tibetan Buddhism with terrifying horror scenarios. It is a tradition of this controlling religion to force children into becoming monks, remove them from their families, cut them off from contact with women and brainwash them with religious studies that must be learned and recited by heart. In the context of this inhuman religion, the word “compassion,” no matter how often it is conjured, has no real meaning because compassion is not extended to these abused and neglected children. In order to become “spiritually enlightened,” they are betrayed of their human right to a healthy, dignified development, their freedom and their lives.

Colin Goldner writes in “[The Myth of Tibet](#).”

“Tibetan Buddhism systematically raises people with crippled minds and souls.”

”Who will not obey the divine laws of the Lamas will find himself inevitably in one of the sixteen hells. One of these consists of a being immersed to the neck in a ‘stinking swamp of excrements,’ while, at the same time, being ‘picked at and gnawed to the bone by the razor sharp beaks of the huge insects that live there.’ In other hells one is burnt, smashed, squashed, and crushed by boulders or cut into a thousand pieces by huge razor knives. And that is constantly repeated over eons. What this kind of pathological Karma craze causes in the heads of simple structured, uneducated people – not to speak of the heads of three or four year old children who are saturated with this – one can only guess with a shudder.”

http://www.eunacom.net/DalaiLama_E.htm

Why are fear and control of our feelings so popular and widely spread? Why are we not encouraged to welcome all our feelings, to communicate with them with an open mind in order to find out why we feel what we feel? Is the old childhood fear of threatening parental rebukes, retributions and attacks so strong and prevalent?

When we look at why we feel angry, our anger might be justified in the presence and lead us to empowering and important actions that protect our lives, health and interests and our loved ones too. Maybe our anger leads us to actions where we become activists engaged to work for social changes, for the benefit of other people, for the environment. Why should we want to meditate this strengthening anger away, turn it into fussy confusion, thus deny it and take away its power?

But our anger can also stem from the pain and powerlessness that we suffered as children when we had to bear the unjust attacks of angry, cruel parents and could not defend ourselves and when any protest would only have meant more, even life-threatening danger. When this dormant anger emerges years later, it is directed against weaker, less powerful and innocent people, above all children. As powerful authorities, adults can now vent their old, unconscious anger on those where they don't feel afraid anymore but in control, where they experience themselves as powerful and can induce fear. How infinitely more difficult and frightening is it to speak up to power, to question and see through one's parents, to acknowledge the consequences of their hurtful actions and attitudes and to realize how they programmed us emotionally. Because in order to do so, we must confront the terror of the attacked, blamed, condemned and punished child.

When anger becomes a problem in adulthood where it appears clearly out of context and is taken out on innocent others – then we must question it and work in therapy to understand its roots and resolve its destructiveness. Daily hours and years of meditation can never resolve this kind of anger and hatred but only reinforce the tradition of suppressing undesired feelings, which pursues the interests of the powerful – that we remain unconscious, controllable, devoted children/followers.

The practice of meditation, which e.g. the Tibetan Buddhist monks propagate, starts early in their lives. It consists mainly of reciting mantras, religious demands and dogmas, over and over again, 100 000 times on certain steps of ritualistic scales, which are part of their meditation practice. Above all, they are meant to lead to complete submission and guru-devotion. Even if people in the west meditate in less brainwashing ways, the origins of this practice show that the purpose of meditation in the Tibetan context was and is not to get in touch with oneself but to suppress one's self-awareness, feelings, critical thinking, justified needs and human rights in order to become a loyal subject of the elite monks.

So many in the Western World choose not to recognize this misogynist, authoritarian, brainwashing religion for what it is. They allow its unexamined defraud to extend their childhood blindness. But a good look at history would awaken us to the danger of raising and wanting people who blindly follow their adored leaders.

Children who were forced into a specific way of life that controls them for the rest of their lives do not know choice, themselves, and what freedom and authenticity are all about. Michael Parenti, the historian and author of the essay "[Friendly Feudalism--The Tibet Myth](#)" makes the following statement in a radio interview:

"One of the things that the theocratic class did was go around and pick up 9-year-old boys from the peasant families and bring them into the monasteries to be used as sexual objects and recruited into the monk hood, or used as soldiers or domestic servants or whatever else. And a lot of those monks left, when the Chinese gave the option to the monasteries and said: Anybody who wants to leave can leave." And thousands of them left; never wanted to be there. The older monks stayed and continued on a modest government stipend plus whatever money they could make by presiding over weddings and funerals and the likes. So I think there is freedom for Buddhism in Tibet under the Chinese communists but very little encouragement of it, and of course a lot of the monasteries and monastery lands were taken away."

Radio Talk with Michael Parenti - Tibet: Friendly Feudalism?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWGGjpJJCKE>

We live authentic lives if we engage in a life-long process of being in touch with ourselves, our questions and exploration of reality. Based on our experiences and observations, we react with

feelings, passions, changing needs and goals to our environment, to life's problems and an ever-changing world. That makes us who we are – not complying with the beliefs and practices of others that stem from centuries of denial, blind adoration, manipulation, repression and hunger for power. During childhood, we have no choice but to accept the beliefs of others, above all those of our parents. No matter what they believe and even if the child at times may notice discrepancies, contradictions and even lies – children need their parents to survive and will internalize many of those parental beliefs. Later, they will follow authorities that either remind them of their parents' beliefs or seem to promise more humane views. To this day, neither the Ten Commandments nor other religious or spiritual practices have created non-violent humans or societies that have stopped to hate and to kill. The Old Tibet – contrary to wide-spread myths – was a place full of violence and cruelty.

“The ruling elite of monks exploited land and people without pity with the help of a wide spread network of monasteries and strongholds. Bitter poverty and hunger dominated everyday life in Tibet; there were no educational or health facilities. Similar to the Hindu society of India, Tibet maintained a strict caste hierarchy, including a caste of "untouchables." Privileged and, respectively, underprivileged living conditions were pronounced and justified via the Buddhist Karma dogma which postulates that the present life is always a result of accumulated merits, and, respectively, faults in an earlier life.

“The Tibetan penal code was marked by extreme cruelty. Some of the usual punitive measures that lasted far into the 20th century consisted of public floggings, amputation of limbs, gouging of eyes, pulling skin off the flesh of living convicts, and the like. Because Buddhist principles prohibits the killing of living beings, delinquents were often tortured close to death and then left to their own fate. If they died as a result of the tortures, it was considered to have been caused by their own Karma.”

Colin Goldner, The Myth of Tibet:

http://www.eunacom.net/DalaiLama_E.htm

And now in our time, in the 90ties, a violent fight erupted within the exile Tibetan Buddhist monk community when the Dalai Lama publicly declared one of their many gods, revered since ancient times, as dangerous and no longer worthy of adoration and prayer. To study how he made this decision (as well as countless others) by means of asking an “oracle;” in what a crazy, repugnant and inhuman way that process transpires; and to watch with how much irritation, visible in a video, he harshly denies the violence, which his intolerant decision has created among his loyal and faithful monks, provides an intriguing and enlightening awakening from the idealization that this man is met with.

[Swiss TV on the Dalai Lama and Dorje Shugden; watch video at youtube: Part 1; Part 2; Part 3](#)

Salman Rushdie has said:

“The word spiritual should be banned from the English language for at least 50 years... Talk about a word that has lost its meaning! You can't walk your dog without doing it in a 'spiritual 'manner, you can't cook without talking about spirituality!”

Spiegel Interview with Salman Rushdie

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/0,1518,433969,00.html>

Traditional and untrue beliefs, developed by ancient religions to gain and retain power, inspire and influence spiritual movements. What “spirituality” actually means is unclear because these movements are fed by nebulous notions of various invisible and unproven higher powers. The idea of "spirituality" unites movements that do not feel bound to a religion but certainly to a "God," a "higher being" or "higher entity" whom they trust in a childlike manner to know what's best for them and to mean well. They have in common that one has to bow to the will of God or a higher purpose or meaning; that all actions should be done "out of love" – without that one may clearly

recognize reality for what it is – that above all anger and rage, protest and hatred are worthless feelings that must be condemned; and that one may not judge others. People with spiritual beliefs see themselves as free from dogmatic religious beliefs, but upon closer examination, it is obvious that their spiritual concepts are also formed by rigid, dogmatic belief-systems that do not encourage their followers to get in touch with who they really are. Fed by vague ideas about “higher powers,” “the universe,” “karma,” “rebirth and reincarnation,” among others, they teach that meditation and forgiveness bring us “serenity” and “inner peace” – and turn useless psychological labels into pop psychology delusions that allege e.g. that the “ego” hosts “bad things” – like being “judgmental” and “opinionated” – which must be overcome.

A closer look at such beliefs, like the concept of karma, and how they were used in the past by the religious and often also political systems that they kept in place, reveals how they served to force their subjects under their control. In Old Tibet, the karma belief kept the serfs and slaves gratefully, subserviently and willingly in check because their miserable lives were cynically blamed on them. The tyrannical and cruel theocracy of Old Tibet was ruled with an iron fist by the elite, upper class of monks who had no empathy and took no responsibility for the plight of their subjects. Neither respect and compassion, nor societal changes for the bitterly poor, oppressed and exploited masses ever came about through all their hours and years of meditation.

Christopher Hitchens describes in his book "god is not Great" how "Japanese Buddhism became a loyal servant -- even an advocate -- of imperialism and mass murder." "By the end of the dreadful conflict that Japan had started, it was Buddhist and Shinto priests who were recruiting and training the suicide bombers, or *Kamikaze* ("Divine Wind"), fanatics, assuring them the emperor was a "Golden Wheel-Turning Sacred King," one indeed of the four manifestations of the ideal Buddhist monarch and a *Tathagata*, or "fully enlightened being," of the material world."

Hitchens sums up the workings of Buddhist thinking: "A faith that despises the mind and the free individual, that preaches submission and resignation, and that regards life as a poor and transient thing, is ill-equipped for self-criticism. Those who become bored by conventional "Bible" religions, and seek "enlightenment" by way of the dissolution of their own critical faculties into nirvana in any form, had better take a warning. They may think they are leaving the realm of despised materialism, but they are still being asked to put their reason to sleep, and to discard their minds along with their sandals." ([read more here](#))

Część 3

Pułapka emocjonalna 12 kroków i zdrada zaufania tego programu

W świecie Zachodu oparte na 12 krokach grupy samopomocowe stały się dominującym drogą do tego, co propagowane jest jako „uleczenie” lub „uzdrowienie”. Przeczoła się jakoś fakt, że te pojęcia związane są z pracą nad wzorcami autodestrukcyjnych i destrukcyjnych zachowań, jakie wiele osób wynosi ze swojego traumatycznego dzieciństwa i pokonaniem ich. Alcoholics Anonymous claim that their 12 steps are useful tools for life and grant their followers “spiritual guidance.” Two alcoholic and extremely religious men, who claimed that the bible had all the answers, founded AA in 1935. They used the bible and religious fervor to invent their 12 steps to sobriety. These steps have not been questioned or changed since then, regardless of what we are learning about the human psyche and mind, the roots of self-destructive behavior and the personality changes through harmful childhoods. The traumatic experiences of abused and neglected children have devastating repercussions for the crucial brain development during early childhood.

See the work of [Bruce D. Perry](http://www.childtrauma.org/) at the Child Trauma Academy: <http://www.childtrauma.org/> and Martin Teicher at McLean Hospital, Harvard Medical School: "[Wounds that Time Won't Heal](http://www.dana.org/news/cerebrum/detail.aspx?id=3378)" <http://www.dana.org/news/cerebrum/detail.aspx?id=3378>

Also read the excellent article "[Fertile Minds](#)" about early brain development here:

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,137214,00.html>

As these 12 steps have become the dogma for all sorts of self-help groups, it raises the question what implications this has for society and if it lurks behind the resurgence of religious fervor and blindness that can be observed in the USA.

Just using the word "spirituality" seems to give the authors of these 12 steps a God-like authority to know and speak the truth. But rarely are these two men, their motives, claims and histories questioned. The basic tenet of spiritual beliefs is the connection to a "higher power," which also rules the belief system of AA. The 12 steps do not deal with getting to know oneself, understanding one's feelings and history or developing compassion for oneself and the outcome of a traumatic past. The Third Step states, "We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God." So it is not only the belief in a higher power that is demanded, but one must even submit one's LIFE AND WILL to this unknown entity.

But what does "higher power" or "higher being" actually mean? Does it have more knowledge, more power, talents, resources and better qualities than we do? Where do such idealized images of a higher, all-knowing power have their origins? What people project onto such a higher being will stem in the end from their childhood experiences – the only real experience they have had with endlessly more powerful beings – their own parents and other caretakers – to whom they did have to submit their will unconditionally. The more authoritarian and violent the family, the more the child's will and personality were crushed. Whose perverted needs does the call for a belief in a higher power serve – if not the denial and fear of people who devised these 12 steps over 70 years ago, without any research, without psychological experience and knowledge, but full of dogmatic religious beliefs?

Upon careful reading, the 12 steps are exposed as the continuation of black pedagogy in the form of constricting religious dogmas sold as spiritual progress. Ken Ragge writes about the real inner workings of AA in his book "More Revealed." (It can be read online at this link: <http://www.morerevealed.com>)

"AA, like all mind-controlled cults, seeks to control the inner world of intellectual experience. This control isn't limited to loaded language. One is taught that he doesn't have a right to think his own thoughts. His thinking should be 'on a higher plane.'"

"Not only does the AA member not have a right to his own thoughts, this restriction extends to emotional life as will be detailed by step four. AA members are taught to disrupt their own thinking with thought-stopping techniques. The most popular way in AA is *ostensibly* through prayer, 'Thy will, not mine, be done.' This phrase or an entire prayer is to be said 'In all times of emotional disturbance.'"

"AA claims that... affirmative action is necessary to 'cut away the self-will which has always blocked the entry of God ... or Higher Power.'"

The elaborate claims of spiritual wisdom mask a trap where we find nothing but the prolongation of damaging childhood mechanisms which made the defenseless, vulnerable, helpless child bow to all-powerful parents. The 12 steps push people deeper into absurd beliefs that strengthen the childhood anguish of fear, self-hatred and overstrain. They turn the alcohol addict into a belief addict and subservient follower. The self-loathing begins with the introduction at AA meetings: "I am an alcoholic," as if this were the main part of one's identity. It is a depriving way to introduce oneself to others that teaches self-contempt, not self-love. To be defined in such a derogatory, limiting way in the realm of self-help groups is cruel. It reminds me of children who have to "confess" to reproachful, angered parents or other authorities that they are "bad." Such verbal and emotional mistreatment is by now recognized as dangerous, destructive and mind-altering child abuse, alongside neglect and physical and sexual abuse, with life-long devastating, detrimental

consequences. AA's use of such a "confession" continues the tradition of black pedagogy to induce self-hatred. What is amazing and shocking is that its followers do not question it.

Is it not the aim and nature of all beliefs systems to desire followers that may not question "the know-it-all" authorities – but must ignore and deny instead what they feel, observe, experience and see? And are thus belief systems not a definite tool to exercise power over others and to keep their minds and souls in the dark – unfree, stuck in the old childhood anxieties, obedience and blindness?

Ken Ragge explains that in Step Four, the AA member

"also learns that he must suppress awareness of the 'evil and corroding threat of fear.' Although, beginning with Step One, his primary motivation in life is fear, the grouper doesn't maintain awareness of it. Being aware of what is going on within himself would be 'dangerous,' 'evil,' 'unspiritual,' and 'useless.' The areas of emotional life which are to be disowned, for one to become aware of, also includes a broad range of emotions termed 'self-pity' including sadness, loneliness and feelings of hopelessness and helplessness." (Ken Ragge, *More Revealed*)

We know today how neglect and mistreatment suffered in childhood result in destructive and/or self-destructive behaviors. The addict attempts to alleviate this suffering, engraved into every cell of his body, when he uses a substance to control his unbearable feelings, and he needs compassion, understanding and support to face them. But neither the 12 steps, nor prayer, nor meditation can bring about an honest, free, meaningful form of inner communication when it was never experienced and learned in childhood.

Ken Ragge recognizes that:

"There are many direct correlations between AA scorn for normal human emotion and thought and the attitudes expressed in the addictive family system. In the addictive family system, the child's awareness and perception are discounted. In AA, the member's awareness is called 'alcoholic thinking.' The child is taught that the experience of various emotions is wrong. AA teaches the same. The child in the addictive family is caught in the bind of figuring out how he is wrong. In AA, the grouper is in the same bind. The doctrine and the elders are never wrong; something is wrong with the grouper. AA extends this 'wrongness' and 'badness' of the alcoholic. *Any time the alcoholic is upset about something it is a sure sign that something is wrong with him.*"

(Ken Ragge, *More Revealed*)

AA sets the addict all over again on a course of self-betrayal. Robbed already in childhood of truthful access to independent feeling and thinking, the AA member succumbs to the 12 steps, which work to reinforce this destructive denial. Only when feelings can emerge, be explored and understood – then alcohol or other means are no longer necessary to numb and suppress them in order to deny the old agonies. But it is not part of the AA strategy to gain access to one's feelings, to understand them and their origins – and so the 12 steps turn out to be an outdated, dangerous device to keep the old childhood blindness and servility intact.

"Every incident which provoked fear, anger, sadness, hurt or loneliness is looked at from the perspective that, in some way or another, he alone was wrong. He is a sinner. He is guilty." (Ken Ragge, *More Revealed*)

"If one of his major events in his childhood was the death of his parents, he certainly sinned and sinned greatly. Since the normal response of children who loose parents is to feel sad, lonely, hurt, helpless, angry and afraid, it is obvious to the grouper that he was guilty of self-pity, resentment, fear and 'alcoholic sensitivity.' The grouper is to understand that allowing these emotions to exist is the 'real' problem. This points to one of the main purposes of Step Four, the institution of emotional control. The indoctrinee is to work to understand that allowing the existence of 'self' was the cause of all ill effects." (Ken Ragge, *More Revealed*)

Why are such dogmatic, manipulative beliefs – steeped in the tradition of black pedagogy – allowed to control and brainwash countless self-help groups in the 21st century – at a time, when we are

learning more and more about the causes of addiction and the emotional and behavioral consequences of child abuse and neglect?

In the 12 rules of AA, there is no room for compassion for oneself and for the child who once greatly suffered at the hands of repressive, cruel, authoritarian and merciless parents. These rules demand that in order to feel good, we must deny our anger, protest and hatred and close even firmer the door to confronting the suppressed responses to hurtful and traumatic attacks on the child. The illusion of forgiveness does not embrace and liberate this child. Addicts can find a way out of their suffering and dependence if they develop compassion for this once hurt and damaged child and thus for themselves; if they understand the reasons for all their feelings, especially those of pain and rage; can revolt against what hurt and damaged them and against those who caused it – and through this process gain access to their true, authentic needs.

In her essay “What is Hatred?” Alice Miller writes:

“I too believe that hatred can poison the organism, but only as long as it is unconscious and directed vicariously at substitute figures or scapegoats. When that happens, hatred cannot be resolved. Suppose, for example, that I hate a specific ethnic group but have never allowed myself to realize how my parents treated me when I was a child, how they left me crying for hours in my cot when I was a baby, how they never gave me so much as a loving glance. If that is the case, then I will suffer from a latent form of hatred that can pursue me throughout my whole life and cause all kinds of physical symptoms. But if I know what my parents did to me in their ignorance and have a conscious awareness of my indignation at their behavior, then I have no need to re-direct my hatred at other persons.” (see: http://www.alice-miller.com/articles_en.php?lang=en&nid=53&grp=11)

In AA philosophy, not a single word can be found about the wrongs that have been done to the alcoholic human being that would cause terrifying feelings. Instead, AA discards the feelings that would enable us to gain access to our history and truth, stored in the cells of our bodies, and help us to get to know ourselves because – supposedly the “self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us.” (AA, Big Book, Chapter 5) A lie, preached and impressed in childhood, returns as a powerful weapon for silencing the self.

In other steps, the AA member must admit to himself, to God and other people the exact nature of his “wrongs.” Forced deeper into guilt feelings and self-accusations, the member may not find out why he has hurt others and how he learned destructive behaviors and attitudes. He may not know why he feels what he feels. How can he love himself if he may not be in touch with himself and his experiences? The 12 steps demand that the alcoholic asks God “to remove his shortcomings;” seeks, through prayer and meditation, to improve his “conscious contact with God,” as “he understands him;” prays for “knowledge of God’s will” for him and “the power to carry that out;” and, because of the “spiritual awakening” as a result of these steps, he is asked to try “to carry this message to other addicts and practice these principles in all his affairs.” The pretext of “spirituality” is obviously used to conceal a religious program and crusade.

Why would we have “wrong, worthless” feelings? Why are feelings like hatred and anger feared and fought as “negative” or “bad” and why should they be forced out of our minds and bodies? Why is the question – where do anger and hatred come from – not asked? Why were we born with such problematic deficits? It reminds me of circumcision where religious, family and medical authorities pretend that certain parts of a boy’s or girl’s sexual organs are unwanted, worthless and wrong, so they must be cut away like a sacrifice to satisfy some “higher purpose” and “higher power.

Part 4

Through effective therapy, we respect human nature, reclaim our feelings and true identity and learn to protect our integrity

Like a dependent child in childhood, the spiritual believer remains stuck in the attitude of following “higher authorities,” for whom he must deny and suppress his feelings and his truth to burden himself instead with more guilt-feelings – under which his true self with its genuine feelings and needs lies buried. Too many children must suffer as the powerless, helpless recipients and victims of their parents' blame and anger. To be burdened with guilt feelings is their daily bread. They have been through hell because their souls and bodies have been tortured by violence, be it physical, verbal, emotional and/or sexual, which resulted in fear, submission and the loss of self-confidence. This hell they can only recognize and leave as adults if they are empowered to experience their feelings and to protest in therapy against what was done to them as children. When they finally can put the blame where it belongs – onto the perpetrator – and understand their long suppressed, most justified feelings of anger and hatred for the perpetrators, they extend compassion towards themselves and begin to love themselves. Then the old feelings cease to torment and drive them and are not used anymore to hurt and damage others.

This empowering process creates a new, adult consciousness that recognizes reality instead of obscuring it and empowers us to respect and protect ourselves. By realizing how she was made a powerless victim, by feeling and expressing her long withheld pain and rage, the adult leaves victimhood and her parents' programming behind and claims her life. As the fear of feeling ends and the capacity to feel returns, the true self can come out, speak up for the victimized child and the now conscious adult and act on her behalf. She can protect her integrity and boundaries and enjoys taking care of her well-being. She can leave harmful relationships, including those with hurtful parents, behind and consciously choose new values. She can use her feelings and insights to become a humane parent, a supportive friend and partner, find fulfilling work and build a liberated, meaningful life.

The demand to get rid of “negative feelings” neither considers the adult's reality nor the child's predicament with his parents into which our feelings grant us important insights. It is a dangerous and misleading request. It does not ask for insight, understanding and honesty but obliterates the victim and her truth through denial. When our feelings are felt, expressed and understood in the traumatic context where they were silenced, we become real and find ourselves. As we no longer are hostage of the silenced emotions, the betrayal and violence that had repressed the truth and our identity, the trauma loses its power over us. When we listen to our feelings in our present lives and take them seriously, we find the strength and take initiative to make important changes. The denial of feelings leads a human being away from his truth, his authenticity – away from himself. We cannot be honest with ourselves if we must suppress “negative emotions.” When all our feelings can be felt, understood and resolved, we are delivered from the curse of denial, lies and subservience.

The idea of “spiritual healing” has also entered the field of psychotherapy, where therapists may enable us to feel and know terrible things about our childhood – but prevent us from being truly on the side of the abused, abandoned child if they don't dare to face their own childhood reality. Only therapists who are no longer afraid of their own feelings and histories and who fight for their own truth and freedom can be meaningful guides on the path to liberation. The process to claim one's life is thwarted if a therapist confuses his clients by obscuring their present and past reality with spiritual beliefs.

If we hold on to beliefs, we cannot be in touch with our reality and with who we really are. It is a constant process of listening to our feelings and thoughts; exploring and understanding our inner world; getting to know our history and how it has formed us during childhood; questioning our actions and beliefs, our relationships and our way of life – in order to become aware of our true needs and values. Childhood forms us in deep, inescapable, often very painful and injurious ways, above all emotionally. When sadness and anger were met in childhood with judgmental condemnation, punishment or ridicule – it has a grave and life-long impact on our ability to deal with those feelings that that we and others feel. Spiritual beliefs perpetuate in adulthood this self-deception and the fight against the truth and power of our explored feelings.

The avoidance and repression of certain feelings does not liberate us. The characteristic of control is visible not only in how the followers of spiritual beliefs are asked to treat their emotions and themselves, but also in the way that spiritual systems and their hierarchical nature function. But control is not the answer – we set ourselves free when we embrace and communicate in an alive, astute and constant exchange with our very own inner world.

The powerlessness of childhood is reflected in the images of spiritual creeds where the dependent believer is down on her knees praying and submitting to the all powerful “higher power” – but may not get up, may not resist abusive demands and actions, may not use her arm and mind and feelings to defend herself, to stop the violations, the emotional, verbal and physical blows, much less strike back. It is a dangerous, absurd and horrific conditioning that children are subjected to, which trains them not only to accept abuse, degrading attacks and mistreatment without any consciousness of what in reality is being done to them, what crimes and deception are committed against them – but also forces them not to recognize and instead idolize the perpetrator.

Powerless, defenseless children with no ally and advocate on their side must acquiesce and bow to the injustice, cruelty, violence of their parents and other authorities whom they are expected to adore, admire and submit to as loyal and faithful subjects. If adults choose to live as devoted followers who submit their will and truth to a “higher power,” virtually and figuratively on their knees, they are betrayed of their consciousness and lives because they remain stuck in childlike dependencies and chains. Only if we do what we could not do as children – speak truth to power, contradict and stand up to the powerful – do we claim our integrity, our independence, our will, our freedom and our lives.

Spiritual conceptions cement childhood blindness and illusions because people are prompted to continue living in unconscious ways – like children following the rules and beliefs of others. When our feelings come alive, we leave our childlike dependence behind and can do what was so forbidden in childhood – and what is so unwelcome in spiritual belief systems – to feel, to question, to criticize and to contradict. The goal of religious and spiritual movements is not to question one’s childhood, parents, the “authorities” and their deeds, their manipulations and true intentions, their control and rules. That is what they greatly dread and oppose. Instead of being encouraged to get to know and love oneself and to speak up, one is asked to kneel down and bow in obedience and devotion to a “higher being” and supposedly “higher life-concepts” – and thus a subservient, fearful, childish, brainwashed attitude is prolonged as the betrayal of “spirituality.”

When we get up from kneeling down to embrace our rights – also the right to feel – our self-worth and our strength, we break the vicious cycle of denial, devotion, adoration and servility. People who communicate honestly and compassionately with their inner world become real, alive and conscious human beings with self-confidence because they know themselves. They deal with life’s problems not by submitting to outdated, authoritarian rules established by others, but according to how they feel and what they have come to realize as humane and meaningful as different issues arise. They are not afraid to share their feelings and to stand up for their convictions.

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