

Contemplative Outreach

Spiritual Journey with Thomas Keating

Part 2 Tape 6(a)



UROBORIC (Reptilian – 5 to 6 million years ago)

Most primitive consciousness. Immersed in the cycle of nature. Primary concerns are food, shelter and prompt fulfillment of needs. Survival a day at a time. No self-consciousness.

TYPHONIC (Half animal - Half human – 200,000 BC)

Emergence of body self from nature. First sense of self-identity. Inability to distinguish imagination from reality. No stratification of society. Difficulty to distinguish part from whole. Beginning of tribal and clan culture. The hunt.

MYTHIC MEMBERSHIP (12,000 – 10,000 BC)

City State and socialization. Farming. Food surplus. Stratification of society with nobles and kings. Possessions, trade and military history. More efficient ways of taking care of instinctual needs. Ritual human sacrifice – the part represents the whole. First dawn of reason but not abstract thinking.

One draws one's identity from the group.

Language is invented about 50,000 BC and the evolutionary process accelerates.

MENTAL EGOIC (2,000 – 3,000 BC)

Mind separate from the body. Transcendence of reason over emotion.

Work at this point of evolution is to become full human.

A full personal self. A fully reflective self-consciousness.

INTUITIVE

Begins to access spiritual levels of being. Possible psychic gifts.

Sense of belonging and unity with God and the universe.

Possibility of further development of consciousness.

UNITIVE (Holiness)

UNTIY (Wisdom)



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Not Free to Move into Full Personal Responsibility

Few people have really accessed the Mental Egoic Level.

It means becoming fully human with full personal self, full reflective self-consciousness and a strong ego with its personal identity.

This is the present stage of the evolutionary process.

In the movie, “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner” the parents had consciously moved out of the Mythic Membership level but unconsciously they had not.

Who am I? Where am I? What is my real motivation are the real questions.

Motivation is Absolutely Everything

The parable of the Good Samaritan challenged Jesus’ hearers on ethnicity.

The divine action invites us to recognize how tenuous is our access to some of the stages or full human consciousness.

Inner freedom is the name of the game in the Gospel.

Age 4: the socialization process begins.

Age 8: logical thinking begins to activate.

Age 12: abstract thinking begins to develop.

Age 16: the right side of the brain with intuition and insight begins to develop.

Growth is the name of the game in Christianity.

Sarx and Soma

Sarx means the whole human condition – flesh and emotions and body.

Sarx is the body self which is closed to growth in Paul’s letters.

Sarx on a societal level is political and national self-interest and obsession with security and “the national interest.”

It is solidarity with other people, the opposite of such obsession, which is the beginning of the movement into the Intuitive Level.

One’s Fear of Death Increases

With each new level of self-differentiation as a stable kind of consciousness, one’s fear of death increases, one’s sense of responsibility increases hence one’s anxiety and guilt feelings increase.

The development of the individual self is fixated on the emotional levels of consciousness.

The false self is the syndrome of undigested emotional experience from childhood.

Centering Prayer helps you to address the false self and to begin to develop on the Intuitive Level of Consciousness.

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The First Glimmer of Rational Consciousness

Differentiation of the self is limited at the **Uroboric Stage** (Reptilian Stage).
At the **Typhonic Stage** (Half animal – Half human) the process begins.
With language development (**Mythic Membership**) it really gets under way.

Uroboric Stage – images not differentiated from reality.

Typhonic Stage – mid-brain development with emotional likes and dislikes.

Mythic Membership - new brain or human brain development furthers differentiation but is sadly used to re-enforce lower brain functions

The Self-Centered Motivation

So, instead of developing our unlimited potential for personhood, relatedness and service, the energy of the new brain is turned to destruction, control and pleasure.

Integration of the lower into the higher value system is the work of the self-centered intelligence (**Mental Egoic Stage**)

The Infant in Its First Year

Uroboric Stage – the baby is immersed in matter and pleasurable experience.
The heartbeat of the mother as the child is nursed reminds it of the womb.

You Must Not Pick This Child Up

If the child is neglected though it cannot think at this stage it does intuit a dull, pervasive rage. Child can even detect if it was not wanted before birth.

The damage done at this very early stage may be nobody's fault.

If the security system is established at the **Uroboric Stage** we can move forward.

Typhonic Stage follows with emotions and with emotional likes and dislikes.
Moods change very rapidly.

There's No Problem About Elephants Flying

This stage has a magical quality – elephants can fly, a block is a car.

The dream and fantasy world of the child is not distinguished from reality.

Child (2) is said to dream about animals.

Child begins to talk and socialization begins.

Child (4) new brain begins to function with operational logic.

Child (7) reason begins to develop and a capacity for abstract thinking.

Negative experiences also see the development of defense mechanisms.

Child (15) process completes with spiritual potentiality as the left hemisphere of the brain develops.



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EVOLUTIONARY MODEL Chain of Being Evolution of Human Family SOMA	EXISTENTIAL MODEL Energy Centres Individual Human Development SARX
<p>4. Mental Egoic Rational Person-hood Full Self – Reflective Self - Consciousness Industrial/ Technological Culture Nation – Co – Operation</p> <p>3. Mythic Membership Verbal Socialization Farming Culture City State/ Nation/ Race</p> <p>2. Typhon Magical Emotional exchange Hunting culture – clan Formation of Body Self</p> <p>1. Uroboric Immersed in nature, food, shelter, Matter Immediate fulfillment of needs.</p>	<p>4. Age of Reason <i>Co-opted by the energy centers. Hence their programs are:</i> a) <i>justified</i> b) <i>rationalized</i> c) <i>glorified</i></p> <p>3. Group Over-Identification Uncritical acceptance of: Parental, Education, Ethical, Training influences, Religious, Cultural conditioning.</p> <p><i>Hence, preconceived ideas & pre-packaged values.</i></p> <p>2a. Power Centre – power and control 2b. Sensation Centre – affection & esteem - sexual energy/ pleasure</p> <p>1. Security Centre – survival and security</p>

ENERGY CENTRES & individual development	FRUSTRATION OF ENERGY CENTRES & emotional reactions/
<p>INTUITIVE (Influenced by energy centres)</p> <p>REASON (Co-opted by energy centres) Rationalises, justifies, glorifies.</p> <p>OVER-IDENTIFICATION WITH THE GROUP (Conformity to group values)</p> <p>INSTINCTUAL NEEDS BECOME DEMANDS (Power/control centre, affection/ esteem centre.)</p> <p>SECURITY/ SURVIVAL (Security/ survival centre)</p>	<p>ANGER – hostility and desire for revenge APATHY – (withdrawal from life) boredom, bitterness, aversion or despair. ENVY/ JEALOUSY- competitiveness GRIEF – (refusal to let go) self-pity or discouragement. LUST – (greed) demand for excessive bodily, mental, or spiritual satisfactions. PRIDE – demand for fame, wealth or power; vindictive triumph; ambition/ vanity; self-hatred in the face of failure.</p>

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The Pre-Rational Energy Centres

The Story in Genesis of Adam and Eve

We have a sense of being incomplete.

We cannot regain our innocence and we cannot go forward to divine union.

Eden symbolizes intimacy with God – a state of soul, of mind, of consciousness.

Our predicament - we are an individual psyche in a potentially hostile universe.

A Need for Security that has No Bounds

Emotion life does not develop in line with our biological life.

So repressed, undigested emotions breed defense mechanisms.

Our emotional need for security becomes a fixation.

Energy Centres (attitudes, motivations, responses, commentaries) give rise to programmes for happiness that are absolute.

Even small threats can be reacted to disproportionately.

How Can They Do This to Me

An internal “commentary” accompanies every emotion.

Once the interlocking wheels turn the whole emotional mechanism is alive.

Our “hurt” illustrates our enormous emotional investment.

Peer Group Pressure

We can over-identify with our membership groups and deny responsibility.

Conformity and entrenched attitudes become barriers to honest appraisal.

Authoritarian styles displace genuine authority.

Even with growth in reason our ability to re-evaluate is remains weak.

The Word Became Flesh

Sarx: Means the human condition, solidarity in selfishness.

Jesus in the desert struggles with the false-self system and the emotional programmes for happiness.



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Phony or False Happiness

The Beatitudes challenge our usual attitudes and call us to freedom.
The whole Gospel calls us to freedom from our emotional selfish programmes.
The sin against the Spirit is the refusal to grow.

Am I my Brother's Keeper?

The Gospel answer is "yes".
All forms of violence are an attack on God Himself.
War, the ultimate violence is a defense of Mythical Membership.
Jesus says that our attachment to Mythical Membership has to be "cut off" even if we are as attached to it as we are to our eye, hand or foot.
He wants us to dismantle our programmes for happiness.

If You Want to Save Your Life, You Will Lose It

Selfishness and Self-Centredness are central to our need for security etc.
This is the false self that we need to let die.
This is the father, mother, brother, sister that Jesus says we must "hate".
Dis-identify with the false self is the message of Jesus.
As we grow allow our relationships to change appropriately.
The super-ego, for example, is an emotional value judgment not a judgment of true conscience.

A Kind of Straightjacket

Any guilt that lasts more than half a minute is neurotic.
Paralyzing and prolonged guilt comes from the super-ego not from conscience.
At the Typhonic Level God is polytheistic.
At the Mythic Membership Level God is monotheistic.

What Do You Think of This God?

The greatest theologian can have all the complicated theory about God but be wounded still by emotional baggage from childhood – "God is always watching you!" – for example.
If you do Centering Prayer you must learn to trust God.

Sonny, Why Don't You Take Another One

This is what God would say if He "caught" us putting our hand into the cookie jar.
God is actually used by adults to threaten children and other adults at times!
Children are best taught about God through story.
You cannot overdo trust in God however.



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The Mythical Membership Stage

A child receives early religious instruction uncritically.

One mortal sin meant damnation – such teaching was just terrorism.

In His Spirit

Jansenism (the view that humanity is hopelessly corrupt) is a residual heresy.

Its negative view of the body demanded extreme penance and asceticism.

It placed God outside of the developing self and turned Him into a distant object.

Scripture emphatically says the self is in God and God is in the self.

We do not have to make ourselves, therefore, worthy of God.

Clean the Inside of the Cup First

1. The Cartesian, Newtonian, Western Philosophical Model made external acts more important than internal acts. Yet Jesus told us to clean the inside of the cup first. Tradition is the living experience of the Gospel, the result of having demolished the false self system and the transforming process of grace. You live tradition.

2. God initiates all good deeds and we co-operate; it is not a matter of us doing good things in the hope and expectation of reward.

3. The emphasis is not on future reward or punishment but on love and service of God here and now.

This Attitude is Typhonic

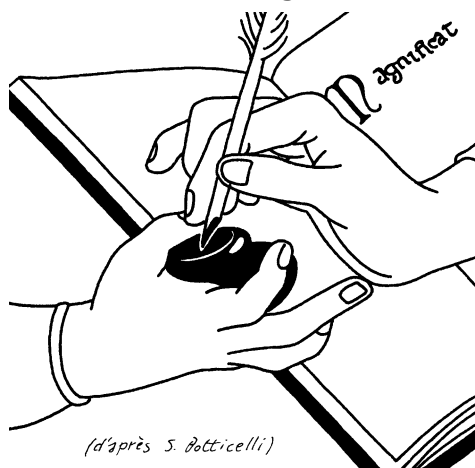
There is something deep in human nature of wanting to offer a substitute sacrifice to placate God.

Behind this is a deep fear of God and a magical quality that is bestowed on eucharist and sacrament – a fake Catholicism.

Our rootedness in the self-centered and selfish programmes for happiness is what we have to change.

If you really love God and neighbour and give, give, give, the future will take care of itself.

This is our invitation to freedom, liberation and growth.



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You Are Killing Yourself

Honesty towards all reality is the foundation of the Christian journey.
 So, whatever makes you humble buy into it and whatever inflates avoid.
 And if you do not want to change, forget about Christianity.

Jesus is the divine way of being human and the human way of being divine.
 He tries to free us from oppressing and repressing our inner world.
 He pursues us to nourish, invite, love, laugh and pick us up.

Study the Brain

The brain is probably the greatest of all of God's creations.
 When Jesus calls us to repent/change direction, he echoes the wisdom of all great religions. But we invest in our false programmes for happiness and project instead of looking inward and asking questions of our value systems.

Until We are Touched Inwardly

Hope frees us and encourages us to face the possibility of change.
 Part of that change is facing what Jung called the shadow self.
 When we love God what happens us becomes less significant because our focus is on what God might want or is interested in.
 The worst aspect of the self-outside-of-God is the belief that we can do it all.
 St. John's "Night of Sense" is God's way of dismantling the false self system.

Let US Begin to Look at this Diagram

Existential Model of Original Sin		
Security (Security/Survival) Sensation (Affection/Esteem) Power (Power/Control)		
Emotional Reactions When energy centres are Frustrated		Reaction According to Temperament when energy centres are Frustrated
Apathy (sloth)	Anger/Revenge	AGGRESSION
Envy (jealousy)	Grief	DEPENDENCY
Lust (greed-gluttony)	Pride/Ambition	WITHDRAWAL

The wholesome grief that Jesus talks about is the willingness to let go.

Nobody has to Change except Ourselves

Upsetting emotions tells us that we have a problem and virtue, in the Christian tradition is the effort to change.
 Apathy/withdrawal from life is a most difficult disposition to fix.
 Lust is the overweening desire for pleasure of any kind.

I Can't Bear to See Myself Failing

Pride is experienced as self-rejection and as guilt (not doing enough).
 Anger is part of the Emergency Passions (hope, fear, anger, courage, despair) which concern goods difficult to obtain or evils hard to avoid.

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Power, Sensation, Security

Emotions faithfully record your real value system even if you think you have changed it. Ministry will always be hindered without work on the unconscious.

Oh, I am Not Addicted: I am Free

Asceticism helps change addiction into a preference.
Even purely psychological addictions remain in place and crave satisfaction.
So, "Blessed are those who mourn" such addictions.

Energy centres are destructive when they hinder the free flow of grace.
Loving your enemy, for example, is true freedom.
Turning the other cheek is more invitation to be free than recommendation.

The Beginning of Freedom

Changing the programmes for happiness helps go from addiction to preference.
One element is unconditional acceptance of everyone we meet – Jesus.

Pin-Point the Emotion to Move Towards Mind Freedom

- >Name the emotion without analysis.
- >Pinpoint the trigger event.
- >Chose deliberately to give up the desire to control the person/situation etc.
- >Habits are repeated acts and good habits can replace bad habits.
- >Say it aloud: "I give up my desire to **earn or demand or fear for** my programme for **power and control or love and affection or safety and security.**"
- >Let go and demolish the value system.
- >Centering Prayer helps us to do all of this.
- >Remember the emotions are not repressed or suppressed, just named and subjected to free choice.



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A Way of Catching Monkeys

African monkeys and the sweetmeat in the coconut – refusal to let go!
Similarly, the afflictive emotions always catch us if we refuse to let go!
What we have to remember is that our human existence is of itself spectacular proof that God loves us. That love is all we need.

Weeds in A Desert

Centering Prayer reinforces our capacity to let go of the false self system.
Story of the rude newspaper seller – we only get upset if our programme says we must get upset if someone does not like us and is downright rude.
Antidote is to show love whatever happens as love always triumphs.
Even the new physics is saying that love is the ultimate consciousness out of which the universe exists.

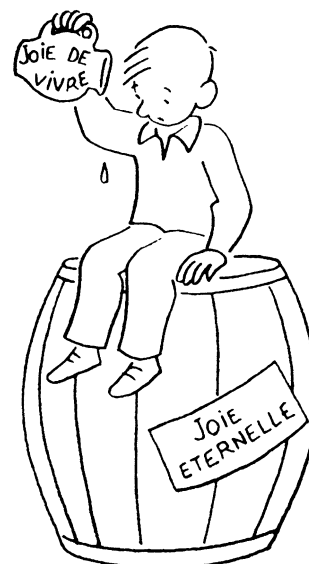
A Programme for Personal Glory

Withdrawal (Enneagram 9, 5, 4) *aggression* (Enneagram 3, 7, 8) and *dependency* (Enneagram 1, 2, 6) are three ways to frustration (Karen Horney). Story of the “Teddy Bear” children.

Fifty Years Have Passed

The Teddy Bear children have grown up but they still react to life emotionally in the same manner. Their emotional immaturity is tragic but it is the false self system not the emotions themselves that are the problem.

Every step into God is a step away from the false self and a freeing of energy for service.



Capitulation

Is somewhat like dependency but is really a pretence of involvement.

Emotional Programmes have layered expressions:

Materialistic/ Emotional/ Intellectual/ Social/ Religious/ Spiritual.

Materialistic Values: Instinctive need met by wealth, prestige, property etc.

Emotional Exchange: Having everyone approve of me and love me etc.

Intellectual Levels: Being an “A” student or being seen as shrewd etc.

Social Level: Making a good marriage, having nice children and a big house etc.

Emphatically Yes

Religious Level: Religious contexts not immune – the monk who went from drinking everyone under the table to fasting everyone under the table!

Spiritual Level: Deserves deeper consideration all on its own.

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Don't Ask it to Drop Dead

The false self system adapts and adjusts. It will not just drop dead on request. Unconscious motivation does not collapse after a decision of the intellect. Impatience with Centering Prayer, for example, is an attempt to manipulate the relationship with God.

It Was a Tough Life

Thomas was determined to make himself into a model monk. He spent hours on his knees in prayer. Monastic training can turn you back into an obedient child and so defeat its purpose of bringing you to a full, free and conscious response to God.

Sat Down During His Prayers

Thomas' seated companion during prayer seemed more blessed than himself. Eventually Thomas admitted his spiritual envy to himself. He was so shocked that he was tempted to give up completely.

You Still have to Deal with the Root

The great challenge he found was not to get discouraged and give up the journey. After befriending his prayer companion, Thomas' envy disappeared. He realized that the problem lay only with himself and that his reaction to his companion was a big gift from God and an invitation to grow.

God is Totally On Your Side

Everything works for good on the spiritual journey as a result of this fact. Emotional damage caused by the programmes for happiness needs healing. The deeper our experience of God's mercy, the greater our compassion.



A Sort of Monastic or Religious Superego

Interiorised, unquestioned religious values form a type of religious super ego. It translates into a Mythical Membership style of functioning. God is an incredible therapist and knows exactly what needs attention in us. We have to learn to trust his love like an eaglet learning to fly.

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Get Out of My Sandbox

Many of us are getting used to the Mental Egoic Period but we still fall into the Mythical Membership way of doing things.

An example of this is the children's "sandbox" mentality we bring to international relations - preoccupied only with our own national interest. Given we have weapons that can destroy the world this could be disastrous.

Religion too suffers from this mentality – mine is better than yours!

Becoming one human family is a concern of Mental Egoic consciousness. Mythic Membership can be positive but loyalty is not an absolute.

A Heavy Authoritarian Form of Government

Mythic Membership Style of Government – monarchy and dictatorship.

Mental Egoic Style of Government – participation and democracy.

Fear destroys relationship and makes us defensive.

Fear of God is awe at God's transcendence and trust in God's immanence.

Fear of God is the fascination of mystery.

Is There Anything We Can Do?

Can we hasten the unloading of the unconscious?

Choosing an ***active prayer sentence*** and using it when the emotional programmes are aroused helps erase the old tapes in the subconscious.

The active prayer sentence quietens the commentary so the emotion can be handled with reason and some judgment.

He's Never Going to Get Angry at this Person Again!

We may resolve and even succeed for a while but it will take a long time and there will be slips along the way.

True freedom is being able to forgive from the heart almost instantaneously when we meet rudeness, abuse and ignorance.

