

The Two Faces Of Healing In Relationships

Can you see the two faces in this picture?



If you are young or happy in a new relationship, you will probably see first or easily the profile of a young, attractive woman in this picture. If you study the image longer, the sunken face and profile of an old and somewhat ugly woman will eventually appear. For various reasons, the viewing order may be reversed for you. This is symbolic of what to expect in any close and long-term relationship we form. The initial acceptance and security we find in any new relationship, especially a romantic one, leads us to give up some of our fear and defensiveness. With this surrender, our heart will open and the face of our relationship and partner will **mirror** and **activate** our love and more attractive qualities. Over time, however, as our relationship settles down, some of our fear will return. Then, the face of our partner and relationship will change to mirror and activate some of our more fearful, defensive and less attractive side as well. In this article, I hope to explore the dynamics behind these two relationship faces and demonstrate the value of each in a healing process that

will eventually lead to the experience of more lasting peace, love and joy within our relationships and us. If you have difficulty seeing the two faces in this image, the sunken mouth of the old woman is the black necklace of the young one. The chin of the young woman is the nose of the old one.

Part One:

Healing Through The Beautiful Face

Introduction:

As a child, most of our security and happiness depends on the care, love and approval we receive from parents and guardians. When they are happy with us we feel safe and content. When they aren't, our security feels threatened and we become anxious. The safety, love and security we experience in these relationships can vary greatly and probably contributes to the level of fear and defensiveness within us that will affect our ability to give and receive love in our adult relationships. As young children, we know intuitively we cannot survive without the support of our parents and carry some of these same feelings and dynamics into the new relationships we form with friends, relatives, teachers and eventually, lovers. With the loss or change of any close, supportive or intimate relationship, even as adults, we still feel frightened and, in some ways, like we will die without it. Surviving this kind of fearful and painful loss experience has come to be known as, "Suffering Your Death." In addition to this, as our horizons continue to expand in this fast-changing world, we begin to experience more and more situations where we feel unsafe, unappreciated, inadequate, anxious, separate and alone. To survive, we develop strong defensive strategies, some reflex survival ones and some learned through role modeling and conditioning from parents, family and society. They have also taught us we can find happiness and freedom from these fears, through the security, love and success we obtain in relationships, education, career, money, control and power in the world. For most of us, finding this happiness, security and success in the world and relationships we experience becomes our life-goal and usually begins with the search for friends and relationships to love support and help free us from the fear and insecurity we experience here. In this kind of situation, our early close relationships are often "extended-parental" in nature.

Romantic Love

If we look at romantic love closely, we find we are most passionately drawn to those who provide us with feelings that are **familiar**, even if unpleasant. For this reason, our first romantic relationships are often very similar to our parental ones. What we know and understand feels safe. That is why, unconsciously, we are romantically attracted to people with qualities and values like our own, our parents or people we knew that gave us support and love as a child. Falling in love feels like **“coming home,”** with the **“family-familiar”** feelings we often felt or wanted as a child from our caregivers or in previous relationships. Keep in mind, however, that this romantic chemistry is brewed out of what we find safe, comfortable, familiar and what seems to offer the opportunity to satisfy important needs left unfulfilled in past relationships. It often feels like, “This person can love and accept me like my parents or past lover never could.” This permits us to relax our defenses and allow the love within our heart to flow freely to our lover. What we give we will receive and thus begins a beautiful, joyful and loving dance together, free from fear and defenses, supported and powered by the love flowing from **WITHIN US**. Free from the defenses of our mind, body, emotion (ego) self, we gain, I think, a **“TASTE OF HEAVEN,”** the eternal, creative, healing and life-source energy of the **LOVE WITHIN**. Ideally, and in many cases, the sexual act of physical creation itself is initiated, powered and infused to varying degrees with this same **Creative Energy**. Medical research confirms the benefits and healing qualities of chemicals like serotonin, dopamine and oxytocin released during love-filled exchanges. In addition, we bring our own subjective evidence, the feelings



of well-being, energy and joy we experience whenever we have been able to surrender our fear-based defenses and express love to others. Those in our lives who are more harmless like children or pets activate less defensiveness within us and seem to be the easiest for us to love. Keep in mind, the creative and healing energy of Love is always **within us**. The difficulty in both life and relationships is, however, gaining the readiness, courage and desire to surrender the cloud of fear and defensiveness that hides its healing light from our experience. Please refer to the illustration to the left of this paragraph. **Romantic Love** has the ability to dissolve or part these clouds of our fear and defenses

long enough for us to experience and radiate some of this love and joy we carry within us, along with its healing potential. Whenever this happens, we are both humbled and frightened by the power of this gift that we give and then receive.

What We Like And Want

We are also naturally attracted to relationships that reflect conscious and unconscious ideas and qualities **within us** we admire or wish we had. At the time we may feel the other person has what we do not. In truth, we are always attracted to ideas, qualities and vibrations that are housed within us. Eventually, through role modeling and the confidence they build, these relationships will inspire, strengthen and bring these ideas and qualities within us, some hidden, into our awareness and more full expression. This can be seen most clearly in the classic teacher-student relationship. All our relationships, however, mirror and bring to our awareness who we really are, the parts we want to see and strengthen and the parts we don't that threaten us. This teaching, inspirational and confidence building aspect of relationships, when healthy, offer great learning and healing opportunities.

Part Two:

Healing Through The Ugly Face

Introduction:

We stumble unconsciously into the healing associated with romantic love and meet relatively easily our beautiful and loving face (side) reflected and activated by our partner. No matter how powerful and perfect the initial romantic and beautiful face of our relationship is, eventually the pain and fear hidden within our unconscious mind will begin to surface and be projected onto our relationship partner. Then, he or she will begin to mirror or activate this inner pain and fear into our **conscious awareness**. At the time, it will look like our partner's behaviour has **CAUSED** the pain and fear we experience. For most of us, especially when we are young, when this happens we become threatened and respond with fear-based defenses that block the love flowing within us. This causes us to suffer great pain and fear as the love we block is withheld from us. "All that I **withhold**, I **withhold** from myself." (ACIM) Most of us suffer greatly before we gain the readiness and will to "**stand and face our pain and fear without defense**." Remember, this is the **projected** pain and fear **within us** activated and reflected in all long term and close relationships after the "honeymoon" phase is over.

Before we can begin the difficult process of facing, feeling and releasing this pain and fear within us, we must first accept the idea that every person we meet reflects or activates a part of our own conscious or unconscious mind. In other words, our relationships are mirrors that reveal the conscious and unconscious parts **OF US**. Although this idea is radical, it is not a new one. It has been expressed in parts of Buddhism, the Hindu Vedanta, "A Course In Miracles," Early Christianity, the Joel Goldsmith "Infinite Way" teachings, Gestalt Therapy and by early philosophers like Plato. More recently, Quantum Physics research has produced evidence that demonstrates the world we experience is projected like a dream from within our own consciousness and held in place by our selective attention and beliefs. "A Course In Miracles" states simply: "We are not the victim of the world I see. We are its creator." This is not an easy concept to accept in this dualistic world where it looks and feels to us like the people and situations we face are separate from us and cause the pain and fear we experience. The only way I know that will change these hardened beliefs is to experiment with different and "**better ways**" to deal with the pain and fear we meet in our relationship dramas when they arise. If you are ready and willing to practice more consistently the approach presented in the following section, you will discover, as I have, an ever-increasing freedom from fear leading to ever-increasing inner peace and joy. These **new and positive experiences** will then change your beliefs about your **CREATIVE** relationship with the world you see before you. "Seek not to change the world but change your mind about the world and the world will change accordingly." (ACIM)

The Most Difficult Relationship Challenge

Since we first became aware of the powerful feelings of Love within us through our parental, family and romantic relationships, we mistakenly project and think that our parents or partners are responsible for giving and taking away the love we feel. Under these circumstances, it is unfortunate, yet inevitable, that when these relationships change or end, even as adults, these experiences will reactivate the pain and fear we felt intuitively as a child with our parents, that without them we will die. Try to keep in mind that our lover does not take away the Love we feel. He or she only frightens us with behaviour and painful feelings we do not expect. Then, **unconsciously, WE** initiate defenses to

try and protect ourselves from the pain and fear we experience. The pain, depression and suffering we experience during this kind of **“Change”** or **“Loss”** is caused by our own defenses that **HIDE** the awareness and **DAM** the flow of Love within us, not because Love has been withdrawn. Learning to accept this, keep our hearts open and continue to love in situations where we feel unsupported or threatened is a very difficult and necessary hurdle to overcome for the success of all our relationships and our own healing process. It is the fear-based blocking of this **LOVE** or **CREATIVE, HEALING ENERGY WITHIN US** that underlies much of our disease, depression and despair, in addition to most of our relationship issues and failures. Learning how to maintain connection with and express the Love within us begins with our willingness to **“Suffer Our Death,”** in other words, to face, feel and release the defenses pain and fear we experience when confronted with the loss or change of any relationship, especially ones we have come to rely on heavily for support, or any other threatening experience we face. The pain and fear we house within our unconscious mind may be activated or reflected to us in any number of ways at any time within our relationships. It is most painfully and dramatically experienced, however, when we lose a close and supportive relationship through death, divorce or separation. This kind of **“Loss”** is one of the most difficult, upsetting and frightening experiences we will ever encounter. It is usually the one experience that will most consistently connect us with the unconscious body of pain and fear we carry within us. When we are ready to feel and release (heal) it, we then awaken to the peace, joy and love within. In this life, there is rarely gain without pain.

The Clues:

You will know you are meeting or experiencing an unconscious, frightening and painful part of yourself whenever you feel uneasy, upset, angry, and critical or like leaving a relationship. These are the normal, defensive responses to pain and fear. Prefacing these responses, your relationship partner or friend will probably appear to criticize, disappoint, hurt, withdraw or threaten you in any number of ways. Often their behaviour will reflect what **we** unconsciously think, want, feel or need. When children begin to act out, in many cases they are reflecting the upset and anxiety of their parents. If your partner or friend appears to be withdrawing from you, you might search for the pain or fear **within you** that may have caused you to withdraw first, perhaps emotionally. If this is the case, sharing your fears and owning your unconscious pulling away with your friend will often reopen the door between you. The awareness, acceptance and expression of inner fear will often dissolve it and allow heart-felt feelings to flow again. The defenses we use to protect ourselves from pain and fear are destructive, unattractive and many. When activated within any relationship, they become our best clues that a fearful or painful part of our unconscious mind is being activated or reflected by the person or situation we are facing at the time. This will apply to the defensive behaviour of your partner as well. If we were not frightened, we would not be defensive and love would be naturally expressed. Within the context of “A Course In Miracles,” in relationships, we express only two emotions, either love, or a cry for it (fear). Defensive responses of any kind are therefore cries for love in the only way we can feel safe at the time. The next time you experience or express defenses like criticism, blame, anger, tension, depression or the desire to retreat, try to see these behaviors as cries for love. Instead, ask for love or respond with love if you can. “I’m upset! Can you help me?” or “You look upset. Can I help you?”

Healing Advantages Here

Lets assume we want to release the pain and fear in our unconscious mind and the defenses that keep it hidden within us so we can experience the joy and love beneath. There are huge advantages in this universe for accomplishing this goal. In the first place, because this universe is a projection of our own consciousness, it acts, through the relationships and situations we experience within it, like a mirror to show us the conscious and unconscious part of our mind, its thoughts, wishes, feelings and

fears. Without this mirror, we would not be able to see or experience these hidden wounds, fears and defenses within us. In addition, since it appears to us as a physical universe, one of duality that we experience with our five senses, we **physically experience** the pain, fear, sadness, happiness and love within us. With this awareness and physical experience of our inner pain and fear, we then gain an opportunity to release it. We cannot heal what we cannot see or feel. Further, when our choices are not helpful or constructive, the ever-increasing physical and emotional suffering we experience will eventually force us to make different and eventually better choices that guide us towards healing and peace. When the student is ready to choose “**A Better Way**,” the right teacher will appear. Within this projected dream of a physical, dualistic universe operate the Universal Laws of Karma and Attraction to further assist us. We begin by attracting to us relationships of like vibration, often with similar fear-based issues that can act as good projection screens for us. Then, when we are ready, we will begin to see the projected parts of **our own** unconscious pain and fear reflected or activated by them. Now that we can see and experience these hidden parts of ourselves, we have the opportunity, **if we choose**, to feel and release the pain, fear and defenses within us that block our peace, love and joy. Whenever we get angry or resist this process, through the Law of Karma, we hurt ourselves (“All that I give, I give to myself.” ACIM) and through the Law of Attraction strengthen the pain and suffering we experience. (“Whatever we resist will persist and strengthen.”) Once again, through physical and emotional suffering, we will eventually learn to **FORGIVE** instead, which means to accept without judgment and overlook with compassion these parts of ourselves, not of love, (fear), heal and find Inner Peace. According to “A Course In Miracles,” this kind of “Forgiveness is our only function here” and “The healing of God’s son (us) is all this world is for.”

Healing Method Preface

If you have stayed with me this far with interest and understanding concerning the idea that friends and relationship partners reflect aspects of our own consciousness that can then be used for the purpose of healing, you are in a small minority. The majority of individuals involved in relationships think their partners are separate and responsible for causing the pain, fear and love they experience. Nor do they accept their partners reflect or activate parts of their own consciousness. I first met the concept of “**projection**” during my Gestalt Therapy training at the Gestalt Institute of Toronto. Gaining the courage and willingness to re-own “**projections**” was an important tool in the Gestalt approach to emotional healing. I next met this concept in my “Course In Miracles” study. It is also important and helpful for us to realize that projections, in almost all cases, meet their mark **to a degree**. It has taken me the better part of four decades to gain the readiness to understand, integrate and use these concepts more fully within my own relationships. I’m in my late sixties but have met people in their twenties already able to understand, integrate and use these concepts to end the suffering in their relationships.

It can be very frightening when we first begin to see and accept the people and world appearing solid and separate from us are instead, dream-like projections of our own consciousness, able to change as we change our feelings and thoughts. Even though we may suffer greatly, it feels in many ways easier and safer to believe we are victims in a universe totally beyond our control. In this way, much like the purpose of “**projection**” itself, we place responsibility for the frightening and painful situations we face outside us, which then justifies our blame, attack and unwillingness to change. For these reasons, many strongly resist exploring or accepting these ideas. If, however, we can accept we are the creators of the world we experience, not the victims, we gain the ability **to change** the hidden fears and thoughts we have projected to cause our suffering and **end it**. “I have done this thing and this I would undo,” and “Whatever is given (surrendered) for healing that is of fear is gone. Yet you must look at it yourself in perfect **willingness**, for otherwise this knowledge remains useless to you.” (ACIM) Those who are not ready to accept this responsibility will not understand or accept these ideas and philosophy. If you are a person willing to entertain them, I urge you to explore the following

methods within your relationships to release your pain and fear and find the Peace and Love within to then express in all your relationships.

Preparation

As long as we participate, believe and react to the various dramas we experience in this physical universe, we strengthen their seeming reality and **power** to create our moods, experiences and suffering. Albert Einstein noted, "We can't solve problems with the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." From the perspective of our five senses and thinking mind, it appears that we live as human beings separate from each other and from a physical environment that can frighten and brings us pain and suffering. With these perceptions, experiences and beliefs, it becomes impossible for us to see or believe our own fear-based thoughts, emotions, actions and defenses are the cause of the pain and suffering we experience in our lives and relationships here.

In every age there have been those who have been able to move beyond these **faulty perceptions**, where the human problems of pain, fear and suffering are created, to end them and find peace. Mystics like the Buddha(s), Jesus, Joel Goldsmith and others were able to awakened from the human "Dream Of Suffering" and teach the path of enlightenment and peace to those who were ready to learn. Recent Quantum Physics research now supports many of these mystical teachings concerning the creative nature of thoughts, feelings, fears, attention and beliefs. It is from these ancient and modern teachings that the following methods for healing pain, fear and suffering have been taken.

Because these healing methods use a totally different kind of thinking and perception from the kind we normally use, ones that have caused our suffering in the first place, it will probably be difficult for you to understand or use the directions I suggest without some skepticism. They may not make sense to you at first. I urge you, however, to practice them on faith for at least a month, six if possible, and make your final judgment on the increased freedom from fear and from the peace you begin to **experience**. Remember, you cannot solve the problem of your suffering using the same kind of thinking that created it. I will do my best to explain the underlying reasons for the various steps I ask you to follow.

Background

Our senses or perceptions are very limited and do not always provide us with the truth or reality of a situation. For instance, objects appear to diminish in size at a distance and they don't. The rails of a railway track appear to meet in the distance and they don't. Dogs can hear sounds we are not aware of. The earth appears flat and to end in the distance. It is in fact a sphere that does not end. It is only by experimenting and **life experience** that we come to learn the truth about these faulty perceptions and adjust our decisions and actions accordingly. Unless we do, our ignorance of these facts can lead us to make many mistakes and into much suffering. Keep these examples in mind when I ask you to experiment with ideas and actions that seem to contradict what your well-learned perceptions and beliefs have taught you to be true. These same perceptions and beliefs have taught you that the people and situations you face are separate from you and cause your pain, pleasure, fear and love, in addition, that you are largely at their mercy. Neither are these perceptions and beliefs true, as you will eventually come to understand. However, as long as you continue to react to the situations and relationships you face according these beliefs, you strengthen their truth and power over you, within the limits of this dream-matrix you have accepted. Then you will suffer the consequences that continue to justify your beliefs. Before Columbus, sailors remained largely confined and limited by the belief that the world was flat. As a result they, failed to discover the treasures offered by the **new world** awaiting them beyond what they could see or believe in at the time. I intend to offer you new methods for dealing with relationship pain and fear that will lead to

more positive experiences and a new belief system regarding your **creative relationship** with the individuals and the world you now experience. These new methods, after leading to more positive relationship experiences, will then change your beliefs and expand your horizons in a similar way to offer you great treasures of healing and inner peace.

Underlying Philosophy

1. The world and relationships we experience are projections that mirror our own consciousness or inward state of mind. Properly used, this outer world can therefore help us to see, feel and heal the hidden body of pain and fear within us that blocks access to inner joy, peace & love.

“Projection makes perception. The world you see is what you gave it, nothing more than that. But though it is no more than that, it is not less. Therefore, to you it is important. It is the witness to your state of mind, the outside picture of an inward condition. As a man thinks, so does he perceive. Therefore, seek not to change the world, but choose to change your mind about the world. Perception is a result and not a cause.” (A Course In Miracles, Ch.21, Reason & Perception, Intro.)

“I Loose The World From What I Thought It Was. The world is nothing in itself. Your mind must give it meaning. And what you behold upon it are your wishes, acted out so you can look on them and think them real. Perhaps you think you did not make the world, but came unwillingly to what was made already, hardly waiting for your thoughts to give it meaning. Yet in truth you found exactly what you looked for when you came. There is no world apart from what you wish, and herein lies your ultimate release. Change but your mind on what you want to see, and all the world must change accordingly. Ideas leave not their source. .” (A Course In Miracles, Workbook Lesson 132)

2. In addition, because our own thoughts and emotions (consciousness) “**caused**” the “**effects**” we experience here with our five senses, these perceptions **cannot be causal** as well and create any real consequence, unless we believe they can, in other words, react or attend to them in some way which will then, “**give them power over us.**” This is an essential idea expressed in the “Infinite Way,” mystical, healing philosophy of Joel Goldsmith.

3. “Non Dualism” is an important spiritual philosophy found in early Christianity, parts of Buddhism, the Hindu Vedanta, “A Course In Miracles,” and the “Infinite Way” material of Joel Goldsmith. It is simply stated in the quotation below. Here is another way to express this same idea. There is only one power in the universe and beyond, a creative and healing energy of “Good” or “Love (God).” Nothing outside this power exists in reality or at the level of Eternal Truth. In this sense, the discomfort, pain and fear we experience in our lives and relationships in this world are not real at the level of Truth. Instead, they are part of a fear-based dream, individually and collectively projected or miscreated when we, as humans, forgot our Spiritual Identity and began to feel lost, separate, alone and frightened. Unfortunately, nothing in this dream of separation we have tried to make has been able to compensate for, heal or remove the pain, fear and guilt we experience here. When we do awaken from this dream or nightmare, the pain and fear we experience will then disappear in the same way it does when we awaken from any fearful nightmare or dream.

“Nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God.” (A Course In Miracles T. Intro.)

4. From the Laws of Attraction and Quantum Physics, “We give power and strength to anything we believe in, resist or attend to.” A great example of this is the war on drugs and terrorism launched by George Bush, which resulted in a large increase in both.

5. Here are other expressions of the Law of Karma, that what we give, we will receive.

“All that I give, I give to myself” (A Course In Miracles, Workbook Lesson 126)

“It can be but myself I crucify (hurt)”. (A Course In Miracles, Workbook Lesson 216)

“All that I do I do unto myself. If I attack, I suffer. 4 But if I forgive, salvation will be given me.” (A.C.I.M. W.L.216)

Summary

The world and relationships we perceive are **effects** that have been projected from or **caused** by the thoughts, wishes, feelings and fears housed within our own conscious and unconscious mind. As **effects**, they cannot have real power or truth until we resist, react or attend to them in some way. As soon as we do, we give them power and then they become real and threatening for us. This can, however, only occur within the learning dream or drama we have projected for ourselves here, not at the level of **Truth** or **Reality**. **If we do not attend to, react or resist these ego effects, they disappear**. This fact becomes an important tool in undoing the pain and fear-based ego with all its sensory perceptions, defenses and effects that hide our true identity as unified spirit in the Mind or Energy of Love (God). It is therefore an essential step in the process of **“Waking Up From Our Ego’s Dream”** of separation and fear. This is the process of “Forgiveness” outlined in “A Course In Miracles” that leads us eventually to **“Awaken”** from the ego’s dream. Simply stated “Forgiveness” means to accept without judgment and overlook with compassion the parts of ourselves, not of love, (fear) first projected by us and then reflected to us or activated within us in our dream of separation here. This is a process of **“denying,”** not reacting or attending to fear-based ego’s perceptions or effects that are **appearances** only, not the truth, and without real power in themselves.

“Its (the fear-based ego) effects can be dispelled merely by denying their reality. The next step is obviously to recognize that what has no effects does not exist. Laws do not operate in a vacuum, and what leads to nothing has not happened. If reality is recognized by its extension, what leads to nothing could not be real.” (ACIM, T-11.V.2)

Constructive and Sure Methods To Heal And Release Inner Pain And Fear

“When we gain the readiness, through suffering, to stand and face our pain and fear without defense, we find our peace and freedom from fear.” (D.Ott)

WARNING ALERTS

1. Even though the appearance of pain and fear within us may not be real at the level of Unified Spirit or Eternal Truth, in order to be healed and released, it still must be **FACED** and **EXPERIENCED WITHOUT DEFENSE** within this material dream. **“Leap Froging”** is a term used for trying to avoid experiencing this inner pain and fear by intellectualizing and moving immediately to denial. It is the ongoing willingness to **FACE** and **FEEL** these appearances of pain and fear within us, **WITHOUT DEFENSE** that is instrumental in dissolving their power over us. It is **THIS EXPERIENCE** that helps to change our beliefs and gives us the confidence, strength and willingness to **DENY THEIR EFFECTS**. Then, with the help of the “Healing Spirit” within us, we eventually gain the ability to **OVERLOOK** all pain and fear with **COMPASSION**, the true meaning of “Authentic Forgiveness.” With this ability, we finally gain the readiness to “Awaken From Our Dream.” One cannot skip this step in the AWAKENING process with the intellectual understanding alone that this material world is not real. As long as we are here, it is real to us and we must be prepared heal and awaken using the tools of pain and fear provided by it. We chose to come here with the knowledge and understanding we needed the physical pain and suffering of this universe to motivate and direct our “Awakening Process” at this time and in this specific way. Without the **SUFFERING** these tools or experiences provide us, we would never be pressed to **GIVE UP CONTROL** or willing to ask for a **“BETTER WAY,”** the **ESSENTIAL KEYS** that unlock the gate and door of our **SPIRITUAL HOME**.

2. For most of us, gaining the readiness and courage “to stand and face our inner pain and fear without defense” usually follows a great amount of suffering within our relationships. Even with this readiness, the process itself is very difficult to master because it requires us to **IGNORE** well learned perceptions and beliefs that the people and situations, which appear separate from us, cause the pain and fear we experience. For example, when a person criticizes us and we feel hurt and put down,

we must be ready and prepared to NOT REACT, OVERLOOK and DENY this event, together with our painful, ego perceptions. In other words, be willing to see it as an “APPEARANCE ONLY” and NOT TRUE. To accomplish or Master this kind of “FORGIVENESS,” takes a great deal of practice and perseverance. In addition, you will find little support for learning this process outside spiritual environments. After years of avoidance and painful suffering within relationships, I have been drawn to this path, a path that for the first time has led me to experience more peace in my life and relationships. For **this** reason, I encourage you to consider it seriously for your own relationships and healing.

3. In the beginning, whenever we experience pain and fear within our relationships, we react and defend so immediately that we become lost in the drama before we have time to think or use a more constructive approach. This **REFLEX REACTION** gives the situation the POWER to CAUSE the suffering we then experience. This suffering will continue to occur in our relationships until we become aware of the symptoms of pain and fear within us BEFORE we react. Only then will we gain the opportunity to choose different and more constructive methods to heal through the relationship dramas we face. To succeed with this process will initially involve many painful failures and take much practice and perseverance. Practice will make perfect, however. I urge you to press forward during this, the most difficult part of the process.

Symptoms Of Pain And Fear

1. Muscle tightness.
2. Tension or a knot in your stomach and abdomen.
3. Holding your breath.
4. Feeling critical, judgmental or angry.
5. Depression.
6. Need to withdraw or run away.
7. Fast heart rate.
8. Tears.
9. Chronic head aches.

Healing Methods

1. When you begin to experience any of these symptoms of inner **pain** and **fear** associated with relationship interaction, change, loss, or any painful experience you encounter, take the time to breathe and let go more fully with every out breath **into** the painful and fearful symptoms you experience, usually located somewhere in your abdomen and heart area. This is an essential first step. **Do not rush it.** You may need to look beneath defensive blame, anger and depression, etc., to find and **FEEL** emotions like sadness, emptiness, lostness, abandonment and separation, the real cause of your pain and fear. Remember what was true for you as a child concerning the loss of your parents, that you will die, is no longer true for you now, even though it may still feel like it is. You can survive well without their approval or support.
2. Only **after** you have been able to lessen the pain and fear and calm somewhat through this breath exercise, confront the pain and fear of your experience with this statement **of truth** from the Joel Goldsmith, “Infinite Way” material: **“You are an appearance only and not the truth, an effect caused by my own fearful thoughts. Therefore, I give you no power over me.”**
3. From “A Course In Miracles,” acknowledge and end with this declaration to the **Healing Energy** within you: **“I willingly give the appearance of this pain and fear to You to dissolve into the nothingness from which it was born.”** Then **Be Present, Be Still** and **Let Go.** You have done all you can. When we break a bone, apart from setting and placing it to rest in a cast, a doctor does not mend it. The **Healing Energy** within does. This applies to a broken heart as well.

Steps To Further Assist This Healing Process

1. To assist this healing process, **BE PRESENT** by staying more conscious of your breath in an ongoing way. **SURRENDER** by taking the time to breathe and **LET GO** more fully on every out breath, whenever you feel the symptoms of pain and fear within you.
2. After each out breath, to further help you let go and **STILL** your fear-based thoughts, address the **Healing Energy** within you with, “**I give this pain and fear to You to heal.**” This surrender approach will help to significantly diminish the pain and fear you experience. Your healing will be accomplished in direct proportion to your willingness to step back and **give up control** of the process.
3. End this healing process with “**Authentic Forgiveness.**” To do this, address, **within your mind**, the person or situation you encountered in your healing drama with this declaration, “**I accept without resistance or judgment and overlook with compassion this fear-based part of my consciousness reflected and activated here. You are an appearance only. I have nothing to fear or forgive. Thank you!**” To more fully accomplish this “**Forgiveness Process,**” always ask for help from the **Healing Spirit** within you, **before** you begin.

Relationship Healing Summary

In the beginning, you will need to apply this three-step process often, whenever the pain and fear within arises. In time, as you relax your defenses, your suffering will dissolve and you will awaken more and more fully to the peace, and joy within. “**Suffering Your Death,**” through any change, loss or painful experience, will be one of the most important, difficult, frightening and painful challenges you will experience in this world. In many ways this “**LOSS**” experience recreates and reactivates the same terror we felt when we first lost connection and forgot our real identity as Unified Spirit. If, however, you are able to face, feel and release the defenses, pain and fear it activates within you, you will awaken to the infinite well of peace, power, joy and love within and travel through this world much lighter and brighter, able to receive all the Peace, Joy and Love you give.

Concluding Summary

“Your task is not to seek for love, (that is your identity) but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it.” (“A Course In Miracles,” T.Ch.16, IV.6)

Relationships bring into our awareness “**these barriers,**” the unconscious pain and fear we have stored within our mind and body, along with all the destructive defenses and strategies we use to hide them. In all our relationships, especially in our intimate ones, when we are **ready** to heal, we will begin to project our stored pain and fear onto the mirror or screen of our partner. He or she will then begin, **unconsciously**, to activate or reflect this pain and fear we have stored within us and bring it, **painfully**, into our awareness. Without a relationship mirror or projection screen, these barriers of pain and fear we have stored within us for years and even lifetimes, would remain hidden and along with our ego defenses, block us from experiencing the light (energy), love and peace of our Real, Spiritual Identity. Bringing these barriers of pain and fear and our defenses into our awareness is, however, only the first step in the process. Learning how to let go our defenses and deal with our pain and fear constructively is much more difficult, a process outlined in the six steps above.

The path of healing and awakening through “**Forgiveness**” is a steep and slippery one. A partner who shares our goal can help us get back on the path when we falter, fall, or lose our way. As we grow closer to our Spiritual Identity, our ego’s greatest fear, its fear of death, becomes especially intense and defensive resistance ruthless. By sharing the final part of this “Awakening Journey” with

a partner, we are able to move more easily through the intense fear encountered, as well as the ruthless resistance of the ego and thus maintain the strength, focus and faith necessary to awaken more fully into our Spiritual Identity.

Our Healing Angels

There is this beautiful parable or story about two little angels talking in Heaven about how best to return fully to God's Kingdom, in other words, how best to awaken fully into Spirit. They were overheard by their Guardian Angel or Guide and he shared with them that to awaken fully into Spirit, they would need to learn forgiveness. As soon as this information was delivered, the one little angel turned to the other one and said, "How do you learn forgiveness?" The other replied, "I can teach it to you the next time we journey back for a lifetime on earth together. Just remember, when I hurt you deeply and you are feeling much pain and fear, you asked for this lesson from me. In the end, be very grateful to me and your lesson in forgiveness will be learned."

I will conclude with a short review of this important concept. The person we see in a relationship with us is one we project from **within our own mind**. We meet only **ourselves**, in various ways and in various forms, in all our relationships. This means that in every relationship we encounter, we gain another opportunity to meet and, if necessary, heal those parts of ourselves not of love (fear). However, in order to heal and release these parts whenever they arise, we must be prepared, ready, willing and courageous enough to meet these difficult healing challenges constructively, without resistance through awareness, acceptance, surrender and "Forgiveness."

Navigating The Hill Into Cedar Crest

When I was a child back in Ontario, we lived outside of town and needed to navigate a curve and steep hill in order to get to our home in Cedar Crest, on the shores of Lake Erie. Getting up this hill in the winter, when it was snowing and slippery, was a real challenge. I can remember very clearly my Father often taking two or three runs to get around the curve and up the hill. Each try he would back up a little further to gain more speed and finally, we would get to the top and make it home. So it is, I think, with healing through "**Authentic Forgiveness**," within our relationships. This hill too is very steep and slippery and we will probably need to take many runs at it, gaining more confidence and speed each time, before we get to the top and make it **Home**.



The Holy Encounter

"When you meet anyone, remember,
It is a Holy Encounter.
As you see him, you will see yourself.
As you treat him, you will treat yourself.
As you think of him, you will think of yourself.
Never forget this.
For in him,
You will find yourself or lose yourself."

ACIM.T.C.8.III.4

David Ott, M.Ed.
June 18, 2011, Victoria, BC.

<http://www.peakrecovery.com>