



the Ray of Connection

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The New Paradigm of ASOS

Jason Shulman

For a while I've been playing with the idea of making Impersonal Movement a prerequisite for attending the graduate seminar. When I looked more closely at this idea, I saw that it was impractical: Many of the people attending would be new graduates and therefore would not have encountered Impersonal Movement before the seminar.

But this only caused me to look deeper into why I wanted to make IM a prerequisite, and, in doing so, I began to understand the real paradigm shift emerging from the self-organizing behavior of the school, which is another way of saying that it emerged from the interface of the personal and impersonal worlds.

This new paradigm really began to take shape more than a year ago and, if I look at it even more deeply, this paradigm shift

really resolved a question that has plagued me for perhaps twenty years. This question—*which was about seeing awakening or enlightenment as the highest paradigm—really was the neurotic expression of my longing to heal.*

My answer to this koan was that awakening/enlightenment was not the highest paradigm: healing was.

This put many of the activities of the school in a new perspective for me and in fact, led to my developing a new program, which I call "Teaching From Wholeness," which will allow the insights of Integrated Kabbalistic Healing to be transferred to many other disciplines. But more about that another time.

I see now that my desire to make Impersonal Movement mandatory for students was based on my understanding

that unless we have insight into the nature of our reality, our healing is not complete and, as healers, we can never completely meet another person. I might liken Impersonal Movement to color: When you add it to a painting, the level of information and life increases dramatically.

In the same way, all of the healings of IKH take on dramatic new depth once the healer beings to practice IM, and although we all struggle with it sometimes, I think we can all see the profound difference this work has made to the way we approach and heal others.

But along with this level of work comes a new level of responsibility. Impersonal Movement—in no uncertain terms—always shows us that it is only we who resists Reality. Reality is always presenting

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Ethics in Briah

Alix Young Briggs

Hassidic Masters teach us that the merest word or action can create a change of such immense proportions in the Higher Worlds. Thus each of us has a real responsibility to think, speak and behave in an ethical manner.

—Rabbi Liabl Wolf, Practical Kabbalah

For a long time I have been curious about what this means, to live an ethical life. And I am particularly interested in what it means for us as healers to live an ethical life. For centuries, human beings have been writing about this and developing codes of behavior to guide us. As healers, I believe our struggle with this is particularly poignant because we are engaged in human contact at such an intimate and vul-

nerable level. We are touching our clients with our hearts, our minds, our eyes, as well as our hands. We are touching our clients in altered states of consciousness where we are affecting parts of the body/mind/spirit that hold buried feelings and memories that have been locked away because the psyche/soma has not been able to handle the overwhelm of past pain and trauma. And our clients are delivering this overwhelm and brokenness into our hands.

We are touching back into the wounded soul where our responsibility to bring a new, more supportive healing response to this wound is critical to the healing process. If we are not able to offer a new response, we run the risk of re-wounding.

But if we are able to offer a new response, we can hold a framework in which this trauma can come back into wholeness. We are also offering the lost pieces—the frozen feelings—a place to enter a new, rectified environment. This rectified environment is the healer-client relationship if the relationship is based on an ethical foundation.

As Kabbalistic healers, we are acutely aware that healing happens in and through relationship. This is our vehicle. We are also aware that, although we are concerned with the healer-client relationship, we need to be first and foremost concerned with the relationship that starts with the deeper self. This relationship involves our values

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itself to our Self, which pretends to be deaf and dumb, asking, sometimes politely and sometimes roughly, to be paid attention to.

Once we begin IM practice, the unitive state, that mystery of mysteries is no longer mysterious. We see that it is we who walk away from the hard work of Infinity; it is we who abandon ourselves at every opportunity, our entire lives left to the command of that small part of ourselves we call fear, or separateness, or ego.

So practicing IM from this point of view really means practicing diligence. Don Juan calls this "sobriety," and I agree: It is the state of not being drunk any more, but of being willing to show up. It is also an ongoing process rather than simply a state of being. A state of being implies—to our unhealed ego, which loves to be capily lazy—that something will have occurred to an extent that choice will be taken from us: We will just always make the enlightened choice without forethought or even self-knowledge. But this is not so. In the nondual condition, effort rides easily with non-effort; being, with doing.

This has many implications for how we approach healing and indeed, it has implications even for how the school is set up.

The subtlest of these is a basic change in attitude on the part of the students and in the words the school uses to communicate.

When we walk into a workshop, we expect to get something from the teacher. We arrive filled with expectations, hope, perhaps some fear and, and here is the important point, some passivity. We want the teacher to give it to us.

Now here I am not talking about knowledge: The teacher is required to transmit knowledge. The teacher is required to make him or herself available to questioning, to modeling the mastery of the subject at hand. Rather, I am talking about the students' attitude, and what they expect of themselves and what the school expects of them.

Impersonal Movement is a completely self-motivated study. Either you do it or you do not. If you do it, you do it because you sense that it is tied directly into something you feel deeply passionate about finding. You sense that IM—or whatever

discipline interests you—will bring you to your goal.

This is a powerful aphrodisiac for self-responsibility and is really a state of development more than anything else. It is a state of maturity.

Prior to achieving this state, you still are interested, albeit unconsciously, in the transferential drama between you and the teacher, you and the organization, etc.

It's not that transferential problems disappear, but once you have achieved the level of insight that makes you want to study something because you must, this drama of passivity to Reality is to a large extent over. It happens, but it's a pain in the ass. It stands in the way of your personal enlightenment, your personal ability to heal yourself—and by implication others—completely.

Once you arrive at a certain level of understanding, you know that you walk into the classroom or healing room to take every ounce of learning you can, to use every instructor and guide in the healthiest possible way: To heal, to heal, to heal, and through that healing, to arrive at the human place of being a human being in the midst of like-minded friends, ready to go out and do the work of healing in the world with Certainty.

So my desire to have IM a functional part of the school was really based on this, and seeing this, the question is, "How do we take more responsibility for ourselves, much more responsibility, so that we arrive at every event, every class, with the freshly sprung idea new in our brains that says, in effect, "I want to be completely seated on my base. To the extent that I am not seated completely on my base, I am still in baby-hood, still in illusion, still futzing around instead of getting down to it."

That is the student's motto.

The school on the other hand, must begin to put this paradigm in its literature, so that unwary travelers know what they are getting into. We need to have warning signs posted that say in effect, "Watch out! Pay attention! The form of healing taught here may cure you of excessive self-reflection and self-delusion! Proceed no further unless you are willing to work

very hard and take a heck of a lot of responsibility! If you still have 'important' things to do, turn back!"

We need to say in our brochures: "This is a school where we place ourselves on the altar of the Real so that we may we travel along this path of healing with our friends and compatriots."

This is a place where anything we learn, from the Healing of Immanence to the Healing of Certainty, from Threads to Dropping Eights, to the sephirotic Healings and the Partzufic healings, we learn because we are passionately interested in God by every Name: the Child, the Adult, the man and woman of knowledge, the Beloved, Ultimate Reality and so on. We study here because we take full responsibility for our lives and want to impart the joy of this to others, so that they may heal their separateness one step at a time, until they in turn can teach Wholeness to others. We are here because we want to be here.

Fantasy of any sort is fear in another guise. When we cannot accept reality as it is, we fantasize it being some other way, some way that is more acceptable to us, that fits us more closely. Every moment we come out of fantasy, we land here, in Reality, close to God.

Our willingness to struggle means to take full responsibility for our own learning. This means to be willing to understand... and wait. To not understand... and wait. To move into the Mystery willingly because we are ready to learn. This is the diagnostic process within our own lives. Only in such a manner can we bring it to others.

Then we are seated on our base in a different way. The quality of our communication becomes different. We lose the whine of avoiding suffering and enter into the Speaking Silence that has authority because it comes from the truth.

Then we are ready to learn.

I send all my love to all of you for the coming year. May the world be a safer place for every person, which is to say, every facet of the one God. ○

Jason Shulman

Ethics in Briah *Cont. from page 1*

and beliefs and how they translate into action in the outer world.

This means that we need to live in all the universes and that our own healing needs to address any universe we are trying to escape from. This also means that it is important that we do not emphasize reflection, intellectualizing or spiritualizing at the expense of action. For that would be to deny the world of Assiyah and enter Briah as a defense. But reflection with action is a measure of who we are. This is because our ethical values and how we act on them are measures of our connectedness to the deep self—which in turn is a measure of our connectedness to our larger self—or to the Greater Wholeness.

In other words, our relationship with our clients will reflect the depth and wholeness of the relationship we have with our own self. The more we are able to touch into wholeness as healers, the more the healer-client relationship can become a vehicle for Wholeness.

As Kabbalistic healers we are aware of the different universes—and ethics or codes of conduct are seen through a different lens, depending which universe we are looking from.

In Assiyah, as we know, God feels very far away—if we are good we are rewarded, and if we are bad we are punished. Reality is seen only in parts, and we become fixated at the poles of right and wrong. We see a static piece of reality instead of the flowing dynamic whole. The ego is the ruler here and has a mission—and the mission is to be right. However, the gift of action in Assiyah is found in mitzvot, and it is mitzvot, or right actions, that begin to connect this universe to the higher ones

In Yitzerah our view of reality widens as we begin to question our lives, our choices and our suffering. And this takes us into the psychological realm. This view of reality keeps pushing us to ask why, and because of our questioning we begin to feel deeper levels of our pain as we begin to untangle our history. We explore the motivations for our actions, which bring us out of Assiyatic consciousness. A more truthful view of reality brings us into a closer relationship with ourselves and with the divine. We begin to

cling less dogmatically to one side or the other as we become more curious about why and less invested in being right. We become less separate and therefore closer to wholeness.

However, even if we have spent years in therapy and know how our historical material is still active in the present, we still bring all our own unresolved issues into our life and into our sessions. Even if we have a clear set of rules formulated from our Assiyatic and Yitzeratic consciousness, we can still know what the right thing to do is, and not do it. We are, after all, human.

“As much as humanity is our dilemma, it is also our solution.”

So how do we resolve this dilemma? How can we reach Briatic consciousness? What exactly is it and how do we get there? How do we trust ourselves when we think we are there? How do we trust our ability to know the truth knowing that we are part of the human condition?

The answer is found deep within the question. As much as our humanity is our dilemma, it is also our solution. For as human beings we are part of the dualistic condition. And duality means that we are part of both physical and nonphysical reality. Therefore, by definition, being human means we are part of something larger. In other words, we have our own unique spirit with our own individual purpose and at the same time we are part of something far larger than we can possibly imagine.

Being part of something larger does not mean that there is some external power that will sort life out for us. Being part of something larger means that we affect one another—because we are part of the Whole—and that being aware of our effect on others is the only moral compass we can aim for. Knowing this moves us toward Briatic consciousness.

When we begin to enter Briah we experience a new relationship with the self, a relationship that connects us to our larger Self or the Greater Wholeness that we are a part of. I had a Briatic experience recent-

ly while standing at my kitchen sink. I found myself in my usual pattern throwing a glass bottle in the garbage can while I was cleaning the dishes. I continued my cleaning and felt the familiar feeling of guilt descend as I became aware that I had not taken the care to put the bottle in the recycle bin. It felt like being in Assiyatic hell as I entered into familiar feelings associated with unholy actions. In keeping with my pattern, I stopped, retrieved the bottle and put it in the recycle bin.

But I also did something different this time. Tired of the pattern and tired of this cycle of guilt I sat down and asked myself what was going on—why, if I know better and I feel so guilty, do I keep doing this? What I realized as I connected to my unconscious was that I wasn't really feeling guilty—I was actually feeling a lot of pain. I realized on reflection that by asking why, I had moved into Yitzerah.

As I connected to the pain I gradually began to feel the Tree growing within me. It became more vivid and as I connected to it. I also began to feel where on the Tree I was feeling this pain. It was Tiferet, and I felt this pain not only in myself but also as the pain of our damaged Earth. My suffering did not feel separate at that moment. My action and the result of my action were the same thing and I was feeling the suffering of nega-Tiferet—I was experiencing the pain of wrongful action.

What had started as guilt—as a separate feeling state—had moved to a profoundly different feeling in my body/mind/spirit when I experienced it from Briatic consciousness. I saw clearly in that moment how Wholeness touches matter and connects us with the Great At-Onement and I felt the origins of the Path of Right Action.

Ethics in Briah is about human evolution toward a transcendent vision where the bonds of relationship connect us with each other, in harmony with all natural systems. It involves having our behavior reflect our greater wholeness. And it is about seeing how our evolving values manifest in the world of Yitzerah and Assiyah. Values in this vision mean that injury caused to another is a breach against all life. This nurturing value, that injury to one is injury to all, has been reflected in the law for

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centuries. A criminal act is seen as an assault against the whole community and is taken out of the hands of an injured party. The community supports the injured person in the most genuine way possible by recognizing the affront to the entire system.

Similarly we need to evolve into a consciousness and an ethic where we begin to feel the bigger picture of how our intentions and actions affect the other, and how that in turn affects all beings and all systems in a rippling affect outward. Briah offers us this view of reality.

We feel the impact of all suffering not because we know about this intellectually but because our own hearts have been opened to it. What used to be nagging guilt at wrongful action now becomes a deeper level of pain in inflicting harm—whether on another or to the Earth. The suffering is no longer separate because we feel how intricately we are all connected.

Several days after I had my epiphany at the sink I read a page from Andrew Harvey's book *The Direct Path* in which he talks about how his love for his cat made this knowledge inescapably clear. He wrote:

"Every time I saw an abused animal, I saw the face of my cat in pain; every time I read of the disappearance of a species of fish or insect or bird, I saw her face being wiped out by darkness. I realized that the divine had given me my cat to open my heart finally to the living horror of what we are doing to animals and the natural world."

As healers then, our ethical task must go much deeper than developing safe codes and rules and must reach wider than any prescription for truth. Our task is to see into the heart of another's interior and be aware of any impingement on our part that might be taking place. As we know through our work with the diagnostic process, our values must respect this private sphere and hold an awareness of what is at risk if we allow absolutes, solutions or preferences to narrow our clients' relationship to their own interior world. Our values must embrace the sanctity of this inner precinct by allowing enough spaciousness for the next level of shared awareness to come forth without intru-

sion. We all have a right to our own life and we all have a right to be surprised by our own uniqueness.

Sir Thomas Pope Blount, a great scholar and naturalist, wrote in the 1600's:

Every flower of the field
Every fiber of a plant
Every particle of an insect
Carries with it the impress of its Maker
And can—if duly considered—read us
lectures of ethics or divinity.

Briah is the 'impress of the Maker,' and we all have a longing to connect to our own imprint and, through this imprint, be informed about ethics and divinity.

This 'impress' is our spirit that has been longing to express itself deep within the wound, and I believe our ethical challenge is not to disturb its entrance or its unique expression. This means we need to have profound respect for its timing, its language and its own wave. If we rush to expose our clients' feelings or internal knowing, we erase any opportunity available to them to connect to the next wave of their greater wholeness. If we take away their chance to touch Wholeness we take away their chance to feel the Face of God.

We are talking about Briah offering us the opportunity of staying in the truthfulness of the moment, rather than the truth as we see it from our limited ego or from only our Assiyatic and Yitzeratic consciousness. The truthfulness of the moment allows unfolding rather than directing. This allows the healer-client relationship to automatically carry us into the larger picture and return us to the source of our imprint.

Jason encourages us to start each healing session with a beginner's mind. He invites us back to ignorance, back to not knowing. This requires a new set of ethics—one in which we need to be very awake and one in which we need to approach each session with a fresh mind—a mind devoted to embracing the unknown. In embracing the wisdom of 'ignorance' we are able to trust that the truthfulness of the moment will always carry us back to wholeness and therefore back to healing

Truth on its own suggests that there is a right or a wrong way or a definitive answer. This can cause irreversible harm if it is

used to have power over another. As we know from recent events, humans have killed thousands of people under the guise of spirituality and religion—under the guise of external truth. But by engaging in a process of ongoing Truthfulness, we are moved into greater wholeness through a process of self-honesty as we ride our own wave of transference and as we attune to the waves of our clients. This is much less static and suggests a process where something essential can unfold, and where the Master of Hiddenness can come forward.

Staying with the truthfulness of the moment involves struggle, and it is the struggle that makes us strong. If you help a butterfly out of its cocoon by unsticking its wings during its final struggle, the wings will have no color. If we are unable to tolerate the pain of the struggle and if we interfere—the butterfly's beauty is lost.

Briatic consciousness sees this and transcends the world of black and white, right or wrong. It is not about evolving into a place where we know what 'right' is. Instead, our need to be right is replaced by a path of right action. Right action as it is used in the Buddhist teachings does not mean correct or perfect action. It means truthful action. And truthful action always involves Kindness.

Kindness becomes our vehicle, but it is an impersonal kindness. This does not mean it is cold or lacking in warmth. It simply means that our identity is no longer hooked to what kindness should look like. Sometimes it will be gentle and nurturing and at other times it will look somewhat rough. Sometimes we will need to watch the butterfly struggle and not help.

In Briah roughness can be chosen without anything being limited or destroyed. This is because the ego—once released from its need to control—is free to serve through the intelligence of the heart.

Rumi invites us into his Briatic vision of where the path of right action leads:

Out beyond the ideas of wrongdoing and right-doing there is a field. I'll meet you there. ○

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Working with the Bahir

Sarah Schoenbaum

When I began learning the sephirothic healings, I put aside many of the riches from the first part of our training. Fortunately, I am beginning to retrieve them and would like to share one in particular.

During my first supervision class I asked Jason how to approach the material in the Bahir. He pointed out that in the version edited by Aryeh Kaplan there are two parts. The first is the original text, attributed to Rabbi Nehuniah ben HaKana, a Talmudic sage from the first century. The second part is an interpretation of that text by Rabbi Kaplan. He then suggested that I open the book and point to a place at random as he had done with the Torah. He then suggested that I take the words into my body and explore them through movement.

What a gift this suggestion has been. In class I pointed to the phrase, "Where is the Garden of Eden? It is here." I took this phrase home and began to work with it. I would repeat the phrase and allow the words to inspire authentic movement. My work progressed from feeling a beautiful garden inside my belly to feeling intense fears of being seen. I found myself huddled on the ground in a fetal position, shivering and cowering from G-d. No way was I going to be seen in my nakedness.

This is good, I thought as I emerged from the session. Fear of being naked felt like an appropriate place to begin. I continued to explore this phrase through Continuum-type movement as well as through the klipot meditation when it felt appropriate. For instance, embracing "the fear of being naked" as a klipah, I moved through layers of intense love of G-d and intense pain at feeling my separateness.

I consulted the Bahir another time when I was struggling with how I use knowledge. I had recently begun to appreciate what I know and had simultaneously seen how I use it as a defense. I consulted the Bahir to find out how to keep my knowledge alive and not use it to separate myself from others.

I pointed to, "Sanctify unto me your first

born." I laughed initially, knowing that being smart was probably an attempt by this first born to keep my parents' love. First born, according to one interpretation, however, refers to the second level of holiness, which is understanding, or Binah. Unsanctified, "understanding" felt very tight in my body. It was enfolded upon itself and had no room to grow. "Sanctified understanding" became like water and felt connected to everything. "I sanctify unto you my first-born" continues to be a mantra. When I say this I feel my chin lift slightly so that my heart and my throat are exposed more.

During the period when I was exploring this quote, I had a beautiful image appear to me. A goddess figure sat cross-legged in a shallow pool of water. From the heavens a single row of water drops landed on her head and washed over her on the way to the pool of water. I subsequently used this image as a visual cue to remind me of the flowing nature of wisdom.

Another Bahir guidance came in connection with my fear of standing up to authority. I recently challenged that fear at work. And the next day my life was filled with anxiety. Upon consulting the Bahir it said, "with a strong arm G-d brought you out of Egypt." I had previously interpreted Egypt in the Passover story as the place of illusion. Paranoia was certainly a result of my illusions regarding authorities. Each time the paranoia would raise its head at work I would immediately feel my left arm become strong. The strength of these emotions grounded me on a kinesthetic level in the truth. I still feel that this illusion needs to be challenged more and yet I feel that the illusion is losing its power with the help of my guidance.

These experiences have inspired me. I offer this process as a reminder of all the riches we received during class. I hope this will encourage people to use this practice in their own life and during sessions. ○

Sarah Schoenbaum is a 1998 ASOS graduate with a healing practice in Katonah, NY.

The One in the Middle

Cheryl Jacobs

I experience Impersonal Movement as a practice that enables the interior of things to become transparent. I am going to describe an experience in which my urgency became transparent to me.

In response to several questions I asked myself regarding my IM practice came this sentence: "Don't be so urgent." I immediately resonated with the word "urgent." In staying with this, the urgency contained in each of my cells was uncovered. It filled my awareness, and I understood that this was an old presence in my body.

I decided to make a practice of holding the awareness of "my urgency" to see where it would lead. I initially learned that it had movement and at times it would feel excruciating to the point of nausea. Other times it would just be a low background hum that offered no interference with my conscious mind.

About a month into this practice I was in a supervision group. As I sat in the circle I noticed that my urgency was beginning to feel like the edges of a nauseous state. I looked around the room. Before I describe what I saw I would like you to imagine putting on a pair of glasses so we can look together.

I notice the room out of the left lens first. This is a 3-D lens. It takes a one-dimensional picture and gives it a three-dimensional appearance. It makes illusion appear real. This is my transferential lens. The first thing that happens through this lens is that I split off from my urgency and rename it "anxiety." From this place of being anxious, I look out into the room to determine cause. My eye falls upon the group supervisor. I notice that I can track every nuance of her behavior: her facial expressions, her body movements. I notice that when she lifts her head to speak she initially makes eye contact with the person directly across from her before moving around the rest of the circle.

I see that I want to give meaning to these observations. I wonder if there is a special

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bond between the supervisor and this group member. I wonder if she likes her. Then I wonder if she likes her better than me, so now I feel myself questioning my place in the room and in the feelings of the supervisor. These questions feel connected to the source of my anxiety, and I want to attach the uncomfortable feelings inside of me to the behavior of the supervisor. I want to move my anxiety out of my body and into the room.

Now, go to the right lens. This is a flat lens. Though my right eye I see all of the pieces seen through my left eye but I do so dispassionately. There is no charge given to any of the parts. More important, the right eye sees that I have split off from my urgency and moves my awareness back inside. With this, a gateway opens behind my right eye and a tunnel-like place is revealed. Contained is the presence of my longing to know my place, to know that I am seen, to know I have value and that I matter in the world. This place of my longing feels as old as the place of my urgency.

Now go the bridge that connects both lenses to each other. This is where I am. I am the one in the middle. I am the seam against which each side presses simultaneously.

And everything that I have described happened all in one moment. ○

Cheryl Jacobs is a 2001 graduate of ASOS who lives in Chelsea, MI.

I Have Undone Myself

Frenzied urgency

enough energy to light up a city

Trying with all my might,

the despair that permeates and

oozes into the shattered one,

Lashing out in an attempt

not to be killed,

Retreating into the all too familiar

that no longer gives sanctuary.

Paralyzed. Caught between

trust, trying to trust and no trust.

Knowing I am triggered.

Breathing together is like a

cool washcloth on a fevered brow.

—Linda Homan

A Third Year Experience

Sharon Rosen

In the first weekend of the third year, we learned the Yesod-Tiferet healing. This is my attempt to mine the riches that I saw, felt and recognized during the weekend.

I felt a profound recognition and deep, resonant "Aha!" in every cell of my being as we learned more about the sephirot in the central column of the Tree. It was as if the Tree suddenly came to life for me, and my whole life came into focus in a way that all of the years of soul searching, personal growth work, psychological understanding and spiritual seeking had not fully been able to provide. It was as if I had been wandering aimlessly in the territory, often happening on a gorgeous vista or a nourishing water hole that would help me keep moving through my despair, until someone finally handed me a map and said, "Here is where you've been heading. Going from Yesod to Malchut only adds to your confusion; going from Yesod to Keter is so enormous and unfathomable that you will never be able to contain all of that longing safely within it. But here is the path to Tiferet, waiting patiently for Yesod to ask for its assistance and sweet containment, and now that you are aware of that bridge, your true path towards healing can begin."

I realize that this truly is only a beginning. I shared in class that the Tiferet and Yesod healings affected and healed me on such a level that I know I will never be quite the same as before. While that is a huge statement to make, it also feels small and quiet and humble. Something shifted deep within me that weekend, and I felt more happening in my bodymind during these healings than I had felt through all of the healings we had done until then. It was as if the matrix of my cells was being rewoven into a stronger, more whole cloth.

I felt and saw things in those healings, particularly the first Yesod healing, that have taken me from a bare-bones sense of understanding to a few baby steps closer to wisdom. The healing reverber-

ates within me still, though the images and sensations are more than I can put into words at this moment.

Through the lectures and healings I gained enormous insight into my own neurotic hungers and longings and those of friends and loved ones (among others). I know that I need to keep careful check on my ego lest I get caught up in believing, and trying to get others to believe, that I have found the "perfect, most true" healing path and methods—and, as might naturally follow in my excitement—the thought that I am The Healed One who can save them all.

At the moment, this is my most perfect and true path, but living my healing will say much more than my speaking could in most instances; I pray that it will help me to be more of a mensch and a healer and less of a neurotically self-referential bundle of longings in all of my relationships, large and small.

If in fact Kabbalah means "to receive," then this weekend enabled me to become a kabbalist in a way that I had only been able to hint at before, and in which there is no need to announce myself to others as such. It is simply there—helping me to now learn how to wrestle more evenly with my Maker, my psychology, my humanity, rather than finding myself pinned to the mat every time I attempt to gain the upper hand of self-understanding.

Now, two years later, I find that the journey is still one of working to remain conscious of my Yesodic longings and grasping, but that work is more smooth and integrated, rather than harsh and shattering. And the joy of being in a deepening intimate relationship adds yet another dimension to the healing and its reverberations. ○

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