

“Ruskan has achieved a challenging and difficult task, clarifying the interface between Eastern spiritual tradition and Western psychology.”

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Emotional CLEARING



An East/West Guide to
Releasing Negative Feelings
and Awakening
Unconditional Happiness

JOHN RUSKAN

Emotional CLEARING

In this ground-breaking work, John Ruskan focuses on the vital but often misunderstood issue of emotional healing and growth on the path to higher consciousness. He presents a revolutionary synthesis of Eastern and Western psychological principles, resulting in a profound system of spiritual self-therapy called *Integrative Processing* that can touch and transform all levels of your being.

“John Ruskan has accomplished a great work. He has written a book that integrates the wisdom of ancient spiritual practices with our modern psychological understanding, and he has done it skillfully. Step by step, he has clarified a method of self-work that can truly open the way to well-being, Wisdom, and the recovery of love for oneself and the world.”

Robert K. Hall, M.D., Psychiatrist
co-founder, Lomi School of Psychotherapy

“John Ruskan's *Emotional Clearing* is a fresh, original work that makes an important contribution to contemporary consciousness research. His integration of Eastern meditative practice with the Western concern for emotional healing is a union that can yield great benefit to aspirants of both East and West. Ruskan's work offers valuable insights to persons seeking tools for self-therapy as well as to professional therapists. I hope this cutting-edge work will find a wide audience.”

Martha Crampton, Ph.D., Psychotherapist
Director, *New York Open Center's Program in Integrative Therapy*

“I appreciate what John Ruskan has undertaken in *Emotional Clearing* and wholeheartedly support him and it. There is no doubt that the tools and insights presented in this book are vital to anyone who is on a journey of self-actualization.”

Richard Moss, M.D., Transformational Psychologist
author of *The Black Butterfly* and *The I That Is We*

“Ruskan's book is full of useful insights into emotional healing, and deserves a wide audience among both psychotherapists and yogis alike.”

Yoga Journal

*An East/West Guide to
Releasing Negative Feelings
and Awakening
Unconditional Happiness*

Emotional Clearing

John Ruskan

R. WYLER & CO. NEW YORK

EMOTIONAL CLEARING by John Ruskan

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*dedicated to
spiritual seekers
everywhere*

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Readers from all over the world who, during the past years, have found this book to be of value as they have traveled the often difficult spiritual path.

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Disclaimer

The author of this book does not presume to offer psychological therapy or advocate the use of any technique for the treatment of any specific or traumatic psychological condition without the approval and guidance of a qualified psychologist. The intent of the author is only to relate his personal experience in the hope that it may help you in your quest for emotional and spiritual health. If you use any of the information as a form of self-therapy, the author and publisher assume no responsibility for your actions.

Preface

Throughout my years of involvement in the spiritual and healing communities, I have noticed something that has prompted the writing of this book: Many people who are earnest seekers after spiritual growth tend to be unfamiliar with the methods or the importance of working with the emotional component of the psyche. They – as well as myself for a long while in the past – approach inner growth by concentrating only on the “higher” idealistic aspects that they hope to develop, such as love, and ignore the more unpleasant emotional aspects of the self. Often there is a tremendous gap in awareness about the emotional self and even the assumption that the emotions are not really important. At the same time, those involved in psychological therapy, where emotional healing is the main concern, often cannot see how to combine spiritual arts with inner work.

The premise of this book is that no real growth into higher consciousness can occur unless working with the emotions becomes a central part of inner work. Moreover, I hope to show that working with emotion as well as feeling in general can become a most vital and even primary path to self-realization, enabling us to release the inner forces that keep us blocked and from our full potential.

This book is the product of the merging of two cultural, intellectual, and spiritual traditions. As I have worked, I have felt these two lines of tradition meeting in my thoughts and then converging into the writing, like a prism in reverse. Like female and male, mother and father, yin and yang, each element has been necessary to fully actualize the other. In the broadest terms, the East has represented the mother – the mystical, nurturing connection to the inner source of spiritual replenishment, healing, and growth. The West has represented the father – the rational intellect, the organizing, pragmatic principle that gives form and structure to the healing force.

What has resulted is not a comparison or analysis of these two ways but a synthesis. It has been my intention to show how both paths may be unified into a single approach that will provide a system of self-work that can be followed intellectually and will lead to an opening of the Heart. I feel that this approach can be vital for us of the West in our quest for spiritual wholeness and resolution of the ever-present pain of existence.

If this book, my gift to you, can be of any value to you, you have in turn helped me as well as all of us, because the pain you feel is not only your pain but the pain of the world. Separateness is an illusion. When you heal yourself, you heal the world.

I wish you continual fulfillment in every aspect of your life. I wish you the wisdom to make the most of the limitless possibilities that life offers. Most important, I wish you the power to activate the love and healing that lie so close within.

Emotional Clearing first appeared in consciousness bookstores in 1993 as a self-published book. It was one of the first books of the decade to identify the vital importance of releasing negative feelings as a key part of spiritual growth. I am pleased that the audience it has found has been steadily growing. In this latest edition I have extended the sections on meditation, practice, depression, the correlation between chakras and feelings, and have updated and clarified the writing wherever I felt it was needed.

John Ruskan

New York, 2003

I understand that my love for myself is the greatest possession I will ever have. Love for myself comes into being only when I accept and experience my feelings as they are, at this very moment, both pleasant and unpleasant. As I welcome my painful self, it heals. Loving myself provides the power for transformation.

INTRODUCTION

The Art of Loving Yourself

People sometimes envy the artist's life. They feel the artist's life is an exciting one, expressing the instinct to break free. The artist is seen as struggling with the essential problems of human existence, facing those issues within, and bringing them into concrete expression. The courage to engage in the inner confrontation is admired. I know I felt like this before deciding to devote much of my time to the understanding and practice of art. It is one reason I became an artist.

The real artist – one who is truly exploring issues of the self and not just exploiting a technique – is operating on a high level of consciousness. Artistic expression comes from the Creative center of consciousness, which, in Eastern psychology, is even higher than the Heart, accounting for the unusually intense experience of the artist.

Artists can run into problems with their work, however. Often problems begin when the artist tries to establish a sense of social

identity and acceptance through the art. The motivation shifts from pure self-expression to concern with whatever is being gained from the work. The shift of motivation can be subtle but still can result in hampered creativity and eventual self-defeat.

Even though I was strongly drawn to art and the quest for inner growth at about the same time in my life, the spiritual principles that I was learning did not prevent me from falling into the destructive cycle I am about to describe. I had been taught that happiness did not come from the results of one's work, or from the approval of others, but from the joy of the doing. I agreed, and in my own work as an artist, I felt that I was coming from the heart, not looking for approval. Art for me meant going inside and bringing forth. Creative expression was exhilarating and ecstatic. I felt I was developing the capacity to mobilize the incredible energies I perceived.

Because for me, the essence of the creative act was *perception*. I could find ecstasy in just looking at painting, dance, architecture, or listening to music. I later realized that the power is in the perceiver. The work of art is simply the framework onto which we project our artistic experience, much like life in general.

From the act of perception it was natural for me to go to actual creation. Yet it wasn't really me who created. I just watched while some other creative power came forth. My role as the artist was to perceive, to be moved by what manifested. My skill as the artist was in getting my conscious mind out of the way so the process could occur. If something happened in this process that moved me, then I had produced a piece of "art," something interesting enough to share with others. And sharing was something I wanted to do.

For while I was aware of the pitfalls of using art as a means of bringing attention to myself, it seemed natural to want to share what I had created with others. I allowed that I was not perfect and that there was bound to be a certain amount of ego attachment to my work. If I needed to have a minimum of recognition, I felt I should accept the need, along with whatever limitations it might bring.

The incident that helped me become aware of the destructive cycle in which I was enmeshed occurred during a weeklong workshop on Body Wisdom I was attending. By the third day, there had not yet been much catharsis in the group. Our leader guided us into

an extended holding of a yoga posture, the Mountain. Holding this posture puts a great strain on the body, and many people started trembling and shaking. Energy was starting to move in our bodies. We finally released the pose and were instructed to move around the room in any manner we chose.

As I moved, I suddenly began to sense the energy in my body. The energy was taking the form of classical ballet positions I could not name. Although I have not had any ballet training, and I am not at all what might be called a “ballet” type of person, I have always had a natural aptitude for dancing, and many of my friends have been dancers. I always had assumed that somewhere in the past, if there really were past lives, I had been a dancer. Still, I had never gone beyond the intellectual assumption.

This experience was not intellectual. The energy in my body was assuming perfect classical positions, drawing my imperfect physical pose into as close a correspondence as possible. The inner seeing and feeling of the energy taking the archetypal ballet positions, the realization that the positions were indeed archetypal, and the ecstasy from the inner perception were all overwhelming. I was taken through a beautiful and moving artistic experience.

Nevertheless, linked with the beauty that I was witnessing inside myself was the sense of pain – the pain of isolation. I realized that I was reliving my pain from the past life as a dancer. I went into a major catharsis of emotion. I knew that whenever catharsis is linked to what might be past life recall, there is a good possibility that the recall is real and not imagined. I knew I was tying into my suppressed pain from the previous life and that it was being released.

I saw that a large part of my present life had been the same as the previous life, except now I was involved mostly with music. I was again consumed with the ecstasy of creation and the pain of isolation, without understanding that the two – at least for me – are inseparable, that they are dualistic complements. The suppressed pain from the previous life was the source of the present pattern.

The incredible experience of creation on which artists are focused does not come without its complement. The act of creation brings with it the sense of isolation and inner emptiness from having exhausted energies. The ecstasy is balanced by the pain.

After understanding the dualistic nature of my creative experience, my life came into focus. I had spent much of my life taking in the ecstasy and then not understanding what the pain was all about. The pain of isolation, from both the present and the previous life, was the motive behind sharing my work and the strong, partly unconscious motivation for establishing a social identity as an artist. I felt if I could reach out with my work, the terrible pain of isolation would be relieved. That it never was relieved added to my confusion because even when my work received acceptance – when I got recognition – the pain was still there. I became confused and hurt. Recognition became pointless. I questioned the value of what I was doing and became self-destructive, probably in more ways than I realize even now.

The problem came into being when I allowed myself to be motivated by the pain of isolation; when I tried to seek its relief through recognition – what I thought was my desire to share. In similar ways, we all try to avoid our pain, without understanding that when we are motivated by the desire to avoid negativity, there is no escape from it.

I had spent much of my life unconsciously locked into a cycle of addiction to creative work. From the ecstasy of the creation, I would fall into its complement, the isolation of the creator. Seeking to avoid the negative aspect, either I would turn to sharing my work as the antidote for the isolation or, not finding relief there, I would again go back to the creative experience to escape the pain. I became compulsive about creating as a means to escape the isolation that came with creating. Not being released, the isolation was only suppressed. It built to the point where I became compulsive in other areas of my life as well, such as relationships. Eventually, the suppressed pain became so great that I had to stop work, reaching the point of burnout. The catharsis I had in the workshop helped me understand that it was the buildup of suppressed pain, from both the present and previous life, that had contributed to blocking me and holding me back.

How do we get rid of the isolation that may come with the act of creating as well as other emotional problems we may have? That is what this book is about. The first step is to *integrate*, to reclaim and accept, the feelings we are concerned with. When something has been integrated, it has not gone away but is no longer perceived as

disturbing. Most of the pain is there because the feelings are unintegrated. Integration starts the process of healing and clearing. All aspects of life, not just the creative, have both positive and negative complements. We must learn how to integrate, not avoid, the negative. In so doing, something may be learned from the artist.

Artists are concerned with the unwholesome side of life as well as the beautiful. Often artists portray ugliness, disharmony, strife; indeed, many artists today live in the ghettos of our cities. They appear to have some connection to the sordid side of life that goes beyond the low rent. This is because the artist accepts, celebrates, and expresses the negative aspect of existence, both in the outer world and the inner feelings. The artist does this primarily to achieve his or her integration of it but also to show us that we cannot escape the responsibility of integrating our own personal experience. When we try to escape, we only suppress, and whatever we try to escape from or fight keeps building.

The inclination to escape is a problem inherent to the New Age. When first attracted to New Age activity, we may approach it with the intent of enjoying peace and harmony. This may be an important first step, especially if we are stressed out, but we miss the point if we continually try to avoid the negative in favor of the positive. We must learn how to integrate what we seek to avoid, with the courage of the artist.

We can all become artists, for art does not depend on technique but on the sensitivity of the perceiver. You can change your mode of perceiving so that life is not seen as something outside yourself that you must battle and control. Life becomes a reflection of yourself, which you may either accept or reject, in turn accepting or rejecting yourself.

When you perceive with acceptance, you allow the creative process to begin. Just as when an artist produces a painting by stepping aside and letting another power come through in the creation, you can use the same approach in ordinary life. You become the artist, with life as your canvas. You become the witness to creative transformation. You experience the exhilaration of the creative act and find beauty in the most miserable parts of existence.

EMOTIONAL CLEARING

When you perceive with acceptance, something else is accomplished. You learn that acceptance is love and that, in accepting yourself and your feelings as they are, you build the experience of love for yourself in a way that could never be done through any other means. Loving yourself becomes the healing power that transforms your inner world. Loving yourself is the highest art.

part

Emotional Clearing

1

When I accept myself and my feelings as they are, I become whole. I am no longer split – fighting or condemning part of myself. The power of self-acceptance and self-love builds within me. I acquire the ability to heal myself and the conditions of my life. I awaken the power for transformation.

1

The Acceptance of Feeling

We all want to be whole. We would like to have an approach that can help us in the quest to wholeness. We are all too familiar with the sensation of being split, of working against ourselves in spite of our best intentions. A path to inner growth that invites us to accept all aspects of ourselves as a means to becoming whole would appear to be reasonable. Yet when we learn exactly what is to be accepted, confusion and doubt may arise.

The acceptance of joy seems natural, but it may not be clear why we should accept heartbreak or fear. Negative feelings like these are exactly what we want to avoid. Normally we think of negative feelings as preventing or interfering with happiness. We all have some concept of ourselves as we would like to be – without certain faults, limitations, or emotional “problems.” We fight these conditions, expecting to be happier if only we could get rid of the negative aspects of ourselves, if we could only improve ourselves. We fight unhappiness itself.

Nevertheless, contemporary psychology teaches that there is a place for acceptance of negative feelings and conditions. In fact, by not accepting, we perpetuate negativity instead of releasing it. Acceptance is a difficult concept to grasp, because we have been trained to resist and fight what we don't like. Indeed, the understanding of acceptance is subtle, and the basic questions remain: How? How do I accept my anger? What does it mean to accept my helplessness? How can I resolve my problem if I am to accept it?

Feelings are painful and become problems only because they are not accepted, or *integrated*. We create pain through resistance and nonacceptance. To go beyond pain and to enjoy wholeness, we must learn to integrate those parts of life we find painful and would like to avoid. Once integrated, they are no longer painful. Instead, they add new dimensions to our existence. These new dimensions cannot be foreseen. Life becomes richer, resulting in real, not pseudo, spiritual and material prosperity consciousness. The creative is allowed to manifest. Happiness becomes unconditional. We become artists of life and realize that what we were resisting was really inside ourselves, not in the outside world.

The Emotional Clearing Process is a method of inner work that will enable you to transform your emotions and your life simply and effectively. You will learn exactly *why* acceptance is important and *how* to accept in a way that does not mean you must try to like something you don't. The essence of processing is to accept your feelings, whatever they are, even your feelings of dislike. The problem is that you usually resist and reject the feelings, thus creating the pain.

We will explore concepts that may be new and challenging but are of immense value. You will learn a definite and clear method of resolving any psychological or material problem. Moreover, you will learn a highly practical approach to life that enables you to use all your experiences, both negative and positive, in the most productive way possible. You will awaken your latent potential for love and creativity, and initiate personal growth.

THE THERAPEUTIC ENCOUNTER

For the past fifty years or so, psychological therapy has been the most common means for people in the West to receive help in dealing with stressful emotional conditions or simply to become more sensitive to themselves. Before therapy became available, such help was provided by the church. Today the psychological has largely become separated from the spiritual. Spirituality is often overlooked, or not desired, by persons who turn to psychology for assistance.

The therapeutic effort is devoted, first, to uncovering or making conscious the feelings and patterns that are unconsciously influencing the client in undesirable ways. Second, therapy is directed toward releasing stored negativity through various approaches, depending on the school.

The therapist accepts the client

Regardless of the approach, therapists who are effective share a common quality: They accept the client without conditions. Unconditional acceptance can be startling and transformative, because the problem is not what the client usually thinks it is. The real problem is that the client is not self-accepting, often not even having any concept of self-acceptance. Through the therapist, the client learns how to accept him- or herself, outgrowing negative patterns.

During therapy, blocks are uncovered and loosened up, and the client becomes aware of self-limiting tendencies. This happens primarily because of the therapist's attitude of acceptance, not because of incredible insights or wonderfully effective techniques. The therapeutic use of acceptance can be understood and applied only by one who has mastered self-acceptance on a deep level; it is fallacious to assume that one who is not whole within could ever provide this kind of healing for another. A successful outcome to therapy is achieved when the client no longer needs the supportive energy of the therapist but can provide support through self-acceptance. The client has not become a perfect human being but is now self-sustaining, able to provide nurturing and healing from within.

The role of therapist in the West closely corresponds to the traditional role of guru in the East. The guru provides the same kind of nurturing relationship that the therapist does, for the same reasons. The guru accepts the disciple unconditionally, knowing that acceptance from another is what the disciple needs to learn self-acceptance and to grow as a human being. In the East, however, the role of guru is more comprehensive, including not only psychology but philosophy, religion, and physical culture, all addressing the question of spiritual growth.

This broadness of perspective does not in the least render the psychological aspect shallow or unstudied. The Eastern understanding of the mind has a history and tradition thousands of years old. The ancients of the East were, indeed, master psychologists. Western psychological thought is, for the most part, a few hundred years old and is still being formulated; Eastern thought has been formulated and offers much to be learned.

*Psychology's connection
to spirituality is critical*

Psychology in the East has a built-in connection to spirituality. In contrast, Western psychology is limited exactly because it usually has no such link. Many psychologists are now coming to this realization and are trying to establish a spiritual connection. For some, this may mean turning to organized Western religion, which to me is like going one step forward and two steps back. Certain religious institutions of the East also may be considered dogmatic and outdated but, when we come to yoga or Buddhism, we find a flexible and intelligent approach to both psychology and spirituality.

We are not going to discuss spirituality directly in this book. The principles of psychology that we will discuss, however, are related to developing the capacity for spiritual experience. The overwhelming contribution of Eastern thought is that as we go within, we discover the Infinite. Nothing more needs to be said about spirituality. Some Western thinkers have come to a similar conclusion, notably Jung, but he was deeply influenced by Eastern thought. Please note, then, that when I refer to "spirituality," I am referring to the inner meeting with the self, not to the trappings of any organized religion, East or West.

We have touched on the function of the therapist or guru in awakening the power of self-acceptance in the client or disciple. It is noteworthy that in the East, this guidance traditionally is considered to be a normal requirement of education; in the West, it usually is reserved for those in a stressful or unstable condition. Lest we romanticize the East, it should be recognized that in modern times only a small percentage of people there are exposed to traditional teachings, just as in the West, only a small percentage are exposed to psychotherapy. Still, we should reconsider the conservative view that therapy is primarily for the mentally ill. Therapy of some sort is the choice of the sensitive and intelligent individual concerned with personal growth.

The student of the East learns, in this basic training for life, a vast and refined system of knowledge, including disciplines for strengthening and purifying mind and body. "Purifying" has exactly the same purpose as in Western psychology, that of bringing to the surface suppressed material and dissolving unconscious blocks that interfere with the productive enjoyment of life. Nevertheless, in the East it is understood that techniques for personal growth are most effective when the disciple has direct contact with a guru. This is not because only the guru can give correct instructions in technique but because the disciple learns self-acceptance through personal interaction. The concept of acceptance is at the core of both Eastern and Western psychology.

ACCEPTANCE

Why is acceptance so powerful and transformative? We will explore this question at length throughout the book. No short explanation can hope to convey a real understanding. Still, I will say a few things here to introduce you to the topic.

*Acceptance means
opening to your feelings*

Acceptance does *not* mean automatic approval of any event, whether an inner feeling or the interaction with another person or

happening in the outside world. Acceptance means rather that we are open to the experience of the event. We may retain our intellectual discrimination, preferring that something be different from the way it is manifesting; however, we do not allow our preference to interfere with the experience. This is possible because experience takes place on a *feeling* level, not an intellectual level. As we open ourselves fully to experience on the feeling level, we accept it.

The capacity for feeling is of utmost importance. Feelings are our connection to life; without them we are stale, hollow, and cut off from true fulfillment. Self-blocking occurs on the feeling level, not the mental or intellectual level. The feeling level is where we are most unconscious. People who have achieved self-acceptance have developed the capacity for feeling deeply, without resistance, whatever is happening in their inner life. Most of us do not do this but block feelings from entering consciousness, resulting in emotional imbalance and confusion.

*Unconditional love is
unconditional acceptance*

When we interact with a person who is self-accepting, we sense that this relationship differs from most. A self-accepting person has the ability to accept others, to be open to others, and to receive their energy without resistance. A person who is not self-accepting cannot accept or be open to others. Because we seldom encounter self-accepting people, we have no real sense of what a relationship based on acceptance is like. When we meet a self-accepting person who accepts us, who does not unconsciously resist us, we experience a revelation. We can *feel* that we are being accepted on a deep energy level. We are disarmed. There is no reason to resist back. We sense love. Unconditional love is nothing more than unconditional acceptance, whether of yourself or another person.

When unconditional acceptance is part of the therapeutic encounter, it supplies the power for transformation. Healing occurs because of the power of love. Psychological blocks dissolve; there is no need to fight them. The relationship with the therapist intensifies, and the potential problem of dependency arises.

AWAKENING SELF-ACCEPTANCE

The real purpose of the therapeutic relationship is the ultimate awakening of self-acceptance in the client. This happens magically in the interaction, through a kind of resonance. The result is what has been called self-actualization in the West and self-realization in the East. In either case, what has been awakened is the ability to love oneself. One gains the ability to evoke healing power from within, through self-love.

There is no longer any craving or searching for love outside oneself; one is complete as one is, feeling love from within. Relationships are approached as a vehicle through which the love within is expressed rather than as a context in which one seeks to be loved. Life has become essentially, miraculously changed.

Must you find a therapist or guru before you can learn to love yourself effectively? This is a controversial question; authorities advocate both sides. There is no doubt that the kind of relationship I have described can be instrumental in awakening self-love. Yet finding such a relationship can be difficult and is customarily thought of as “happening” rather than being found through active search.

I have seen through my own experience and that of others that it is possible to make substantial, if not completely adequate, progress on our own. For that reason, I have formalized the *Emotional Clearing* system, a self-therapy devoted to awakening the power of self-acceptance and self-love as well as the higher centers of consciousness and realization. You will learn how to activate yourself through the intellectual approach rather than through the personal influence of a teacher.

If you have a personal healer, therapist, or guru with whom you are working, however, feel free to stay with them if you so desire. Processing is nondogmatic and compatible with any humanistic psychology with which you may be involved. As you learn processing, you will gain a technical knowledge, both theoretical and practical, of powerful psychological principles. If you have no personal teacher, assume that you don't need one at this point. You will surely draw someone into your life at the right time, if you need such a relationship.

WORKING ON YOURSELF

Many people have never been exposed to either a therapist or a guru. Yet virtually all of us need to learn how to awaken the qualities of self-acceptance and self-love. I feel this is the tremendous spiritual challenge of our time.

Life is evolutionary, and we are all “works in progress.” The purpose of life is to awaken and expand our dormant capacities for love, creativity, and intelligence, but a program is needed to support us in the awakening. When you get in sync with this natural evolutionary urge, you will immediately feel more at peace with yourself – you are no longer purposeless. The joy that comes from growth itself is enough to keep you interested in life.

To seek personal evolution means you must work on yourself. Most people understand that effort is required and apply themselves with enthusiasm. No one, not even your therapist, can do the work for you. You must be at the point where you understand that working on yourself is a priority – that you are tired of functioning (or not functioning) as you are. Even so, many people tend to make a significant mistake when beginning to work on themselves. It is normal to question one’s life and perhaps decide that changes are required, but questioning can carry over into a nonproductive habit – the habit of excessive thinking.

*Working on yourself is not
constantly thinking about yourself*

The issue of excessive thinking is crucial. Working on yourself is not primarily analyzing yourself and your motives, or being thoughtfully introspective, or trying to control yourself and do better, or trying to be something you are not. Using the mind in this manner is self-defeating. *You must learn to substitute feeling for thinking. You must learn to sense what is through the feeling center rather than evaluate experience through the thinking center.*

Many people who think they are working on themselves are deceiving themselves, because they do not have an accurate understanding of how to proceed. They spend their time in constant self-evaluation, which merely makes them absorbed in themselves. After

you have read this book, you will have a definite understanding of how to work on yourself.

EMOTIONAL CLEARING

Emotional Clearing is the name I have given to the system of self-therapy that has evolved from my own work on myself. It is derived from the traditional wisdom of the East as well as the contemporary psychological knowledge of the West. I have tried to combine the strongest and most compatible elements from each tradition.

*Integration means accepting yourself
and your feelings as you are*

Integration is the condition of accepting and including, of not resisting, parts of yourself or your experience. When something is not integrated, it forms the basis of conflict. We resist something – a feeling, for example – because we believe the feeling is bad for us. It makes us uncomfortable. In fighting the feeling, we further the split between ourselves and the feeling, and thus we increase the sense of conflict.

Resistance creates pain

The conflict that is created through resistance causes pain. This is a key concept. What causes most of our pain is our resistance to a feeling, not the actual feeling itself, even a “negative” feeling. A certain amount of pain may be inherent in negative feelings, but we amplify, exaggerate, and prolong that pain through resistance. Learning how to accept experience is the means to minimizing pain.

*Experiencing takes
place in the moment*

After we have learned to accept, however, experience is not yet completely integrated. It must be digested in a certain way, called *direct experience*, in which it is absorbed or dissolved completely. The ability for direct experience is gained through the cultivation of

“being in the moment.” Being in the moment is a mystical perspective. *Witness consciousness* is activated, and we function on a new and higher plane that results in a sense of well-being and euphoria as well as calling into play transpersonal powers that have been blocked by the personal ego. These powers operate on a very practical level, effecting *transformation* in situations that we previously resisted. By accepting, we go beyond. We reach the spiritual through the mundane. We discover the spiritual *in* the mundane.

It is essential to learn how to open up on the feeling level. You may think you are feeling your pain right now. The problem, however, is that you continue to resist the pain with unconscious self-rejection, which prevents the pain from being resolved and intensifies it. Developing the capacity to accept leads to unobstructed feeling, catharsis, and the release of pain.

Processing consists of four steps, each step corresponding to a plane of consciousness. The steps are taken to achieve integration of any event. The event can be an inner feeling or emotion or a happening in the external world. We can use processing especially in stressful circumstances but also as an approach to all life’s happenings, “positive” as well as “negative.” Once integrated, we no longer fail to experience the event completely. The energy of the event is dissolved, having run its natural course, instead of being trapped and continuing to affect us. We become “clear.” In Part 2, we will go through these steps in detail.

THE STEPS OF EMOTIONAL CLEARING

Step	Plane	Function
1. AWARENESS	Intellectual	Knowing
2. ACCEPTANCE	Mental	Thinking
3. DIRECT EXPERIENCE	Body	Feeling
4. TRANSFORMATION	Spiritual	Transcending

1. **AWARENESS.** Intellectual plane: Basic awareness of the event, whether a feeling or an external happening. Awareness includes “owning” of the event; the recognition that the event corresponds to a projection of suppressed energy held in the subconscious. Awareness also includes understanding the basic principles of how to work on yourself and consciously deciding to apply them.
2. **ACCEPTANCE.** Mental plane: Ceasing resistance to the event. Normally, experience is blocked unconsciously through various self-rejecting maneuvers of the mind. In accepting ourselves, these mechanisms become conscious and are dropped. In so doing, self-love is awakened, and the gate to direct experience of feeling is opened.
3. **DIRECT EXPERIENCE.** Body plane: Being in the feeling center, or “in the moment” with the event. Feelings are entered completely, without resistance, analysis, or blame. The event is experienced on a body level until the energy is dissolved.
4. **TRANSFORMATION.** Spiritual plane: Witness consciousness is activated, and the higher transpersonal intelligence guides the energies, leading to internal catharsis and unexpected creative external change. The flow of life is not obstructed. Adjustment occurs spontaneously and without conscious control.

Thus, we sequence through the various levels of experience in logical order, culminating in the spiritual. What may be surprising to many is that the spiritual is reached through the body, or the feeling center, not through the mind or intellect. Of course, I am not referring to the sensual nature of the body but to the higher centers of consciousness that are approached only through feeling.

Our common misconception is that fulfillment, peace, and happiness can be reached through knowing, accomplishment, or possessions. As we survey the twentieth century, the fallacy of this position should be most evident. True happiness is unconditional; it is achieved when we use the intellect to understand that knowledge is important but ultimately not fulfilling; when we go beyond the self-orientation and possessiveness of the mind; when we enter the direct experience of ourselves and the universe; when we have the perception that we *are* the universe.

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*I understand that when I don't
accept myself or my feelings, I
create a debt to myself. The
feelings don't go away, but
become hidden in my
subconscious, only to come out
later. When I accept my feelings
as they are, I no longer create a
debt. I experience life fully and
allow growth to occur.*

2

Creating the Subconscious

RESISTING OUR EXPERIENCE

It is human nature to strive for a sense of well-being. We have basic, legitimate needs for sustenance, shelter, companionship, love, self-expression. We work to satisfy these needs. In acting with goals in mind, we become concerned about how we expend our energy and about the results of our work. We find it natural to accept certain circumstances and to resist others.

Our selective orientation toward experience becomes associated with pleasure or pain. We develop a natural predisposition to choose conditions that are either pleasurable in themselves or lead to pleasurable outcomes and to resist conditions that are painful or lead to painful outcomes. What could be wrong with this? It seems to be a basic description of what life is all about.

Philosophers through the centuries, however, have addressed the implications of a life based on seeking pleasure and avoiding pain, because experience has demonstrated that such a life does not lead to happiness. These philosophers then conceived of other systems of values that might be more helpful in fostering the sense of fulfillment we seek. Of course, our level of maturity has much to do with what we consider to be worth pursuing. As we grow, we outgrow certain needs and adopt – it is hoped – broader, less self-centered ones. Still, the basic needs of security, power, sensation, and relationship are what most of us revolve around.

Many of our “needs” are the result of social conditioning. They are artificial – programmed into us by society. We assign the same urgency and feel the same anxiety about the attainment of artificial needs as we do with more genuine needs. This mistake is the result of our level of consciousness, our lack of vision, our susceptibility to be programmed. However, there is no point in my trying to describe what I think these false needs might be. My opinions would not do the slightest to change anyone else’s perception of their needs, nor should they. We are all at our own individual and proper level of growth.

BELIEFS

Needs result from beliefs. Beliefs are the filters through which we perceive reality. Along with instinctual beliefs, such as the belief in basic survival, and beliefs that society has conditioned into us, we hold beliefs that have developed from personal experience in meeting life. Many beliefs are irrational, limiting, and destructive. Once we become aware of them and their counterproductive nature, we may want to change them – but deliberate change is difficult.

*Beliefs are maintained by
suppressed energy*

Beliefs are conditioned states of mind, occurring mostly on the unconscious level. What may be a limiting belief is difficult to repro-

gram directly, even with the use of techniques such as affirmations, because it is held in place by suppressed energy formations; the suppressed energy supports and maintains the belief. In our work, we do not attempt directly to uncover or change unconscious beliefs. I consider such action to be invasive and disvalidating. Instead, in accepting ourselves, we accept our beliefs as they are. Processing of feelings will release the energy that is behind the belief and maintains it. The limiting or destructive belief is outgrown naturally, instead of in a forced manner.

Much of what we consider important is important only because we consider it so. Our outlook will change as time goes by and as growth occurs, but for now we accept that we assign an emotional value to the attainment of circumstances that our beliefs call for and to the avoidance of whatever threatens the circumstances. Thus, the teenager buying his first car agonizes over what model to get; the scientist agonizes over the results of his work. They are at different levels of growth concerning their goals. Still, both may undergo unnecessary anxiety because of a misplaced, compulsive attachment to the outcome of their respective endeavors, unconsciously believing that their self-worth depends on the approval of their peers. In this respect, they are at psychologically similar levels of growth.

It may be assumed, therefore, that the individual has an extensive, intensive, self-projected belief system which is considered primary in attaining happiness. The belief system creates needs. Through subjective pain when these needs are not realized, the individual learns to strive for conditions to satisfy the needs. The habitual orientation of evaluating which elements of experience will be allowed or resisted to satisfy needs carries over into the inner life: feelings, emotions, and attitudes. A strong judgmentalism develops toward inner experience as well as toward outer experience.

We have fallen into a trap. We must resist certain conditions to survive, but unwittingly we extend this logic to areas where resistance is inappropriate, leading to unresolved energies, entanglement, and sickness. Resistance of experience occurs on a subtle yet powerful level and is the beginning of what is called *suppression*.

SUPPRESSION

Suppression is the primary psychological mechanism that leads to emotional and spiritual dysfunction. The central purpose of all psychotherapy is to clear suppressed material that is affecting us adversely. Suppression is something that we all do. Those who reach the point of severe distress have merely gone further in suppressing than the average person; those who are considered well balanced suppress less than normal. The standard of emotional health in our society, therefore, is far below the potential possible for humankind, but this just has to do with our current evolutionary level of growth.

*Suppression begins
with resistance*

It is important to understand how suppression works. When something is resisted, a condition is set up within us that affects us deeply. The electromagnetic field surrounding the individual, known as the aura, actually becomes steeled against letting in any outer experience that is resisted. In effect, resistance builds a shield to the exchange of energy on the psychic level, where experience primarily takes place. This shield is quite tangible on the psychic level, and may be felt and seen by a psychic. A person with ordinary but sensitive perceptions often can sense the shield, or “wall,” around people who are particularly suppressed.

With inner feelings, resistance has a similar effect. A kind of energy shield is built around the feeling centers, so feelings will not be allowed into consciousness. As experiences occur and are resisted, the energy of the feeling encounters the shield. The energy is unable to be released because it has been blocked rather than absorbed; it cannot complete its cycle; *it cannot discharge into consciousness*. What we don't realize is that when the energy of a feeling is not released, it does not go away but stays with us, in latent form, as part of the psychic energy body.

The motive behind resistance to an unpleasant experience is that we would rather not feel the pain involved. Avoidance of feelings is not always done out of deliberate choice but often because we lack

the knowledge to confront life directly. We don't know why or how to experience fully so that there are no loose ends, no lingering or unresolved energies. Over time, the habit of resistance results in chronic blocking of the centers and accumulation of the suppressed energy. Thus, we do not succeed in avoiding the feeling, as we intend, but merely prevent the energy from entering our field of awareness.

Suppression operates both inwardly and outwardly

Suppression is the act of rejecting experience from the field of awareness. Outwardly, we suppress awareness of aspects of other people, happenings, and conditions that are displeasing. We close ourselves off to vital parts of life, becoming judgmental and self-centered. We call something evil when it merely conflicts with our "need." Inwardly, we suppress awareness of painful feelings, including anything about ourselves that we dislike, such as perceived faults or weaknesses. External suppression can make us limited and bigoted, but the consequences of internal suppression can be even more severe.

We think that it is possible simply to close the door on negativity and walk away from it. We forcefully try to exclude pain from our awareness by any number of evasive maneuvers. What we are doing, however, is rejecting ourselves, because the pain *is* part of ourselves. In our rejection, we deepen the inner split; we go in the opposite direction from integration and wholeness; and we ultimately feel the consequences in depression, despair, and hopelessness.

When we suppress an unpleasant feeling, we interrupt the natural flow of energies. We do not allow the feeling to clear itself, to resolve itself, to regain its natural equilibrium. The energy becomes trapped, held in storage in a static condition. Where does the energy get stored? It is held in what has come to be called "the subconscious."

*Suppression creates
subconscious Karma*

The mechanism of suppression, therefore, creates much if not all of the mysterious subconscious that has been puzzled over and glamorized since Freud. The subconscious is nothing more than a buildup of energies, potential forces that lie dormant because they were never adequately resolved when they originally occurred. In rejecting our experience, we have created the reservoir of the subconscious. In Eastern terms, the buildup of subconscious forces is called *Karma*.

THE SUBCONSCIOUS

The subconscious is simply a part of ourselves from which we have turned away. The capacity of the mind to achieve withdrawal of awareness and subconscious containment of energies is itself remarkable, and although it appears to be mostly unbeneficial, the habit of suppression and the influence it has had on us has been a major factor in shaping our life and history. We have chosen to turn away, but we can easily turn back to the feelings in the subconscious if we so desire. The inner wall that has grown to divide ourselves is not that solid; it is more like a gray area, where tips of the iceberg are always coming into view. We have only hypnotized ourselves not to fully see and feel those hidden things.

The problem with suppression of feelings is that the feelings are not resolved but merely hidden. When something is suppressed, it is made temporarily unconscious, only to accumulate and break forth at some later time. Anger, for example, does not dissolve when suppressed but remains as forceful as when originally felt, except that it is no longer within the field of awareness. When it erupts, it is likely to cause much more damage because of the buildup that has occurred.

Suppressed feelings influence us in even more far-reaching ways. They leave us much in the position of being ruled by hidden forces – forces that at times can seem uncontrollable, like a separate entity with an independent intelligence and will. We become guided by neurotic, unconscious urges that lead to irrational, self-destructive

behavior. We are attracted to the wrong people, reject the right people, and become compulsive, addictive, and unreliable, all in spite of our best intentions. Our urges are strong and difficult to oppose. Indeed, opposition is impossible because the suppressed energy eventually has to come out. Holding it back will only bring a more destructive release later. We go through life leaving more or less a shambles behind us, accumulating more unresolved energies and adding to our Karma.

*Energy is what
becomes suppressed*

Unpleasant feelings as well as unresolved situations are the kinds of things that are suppressed, but when we suppress, it is *energy* that is put into storage. Emotions can run high, and emotions are nothing but energy moving through the centers of consciousness. When people interact, there is an energy exchange between them. Energy is what enables us to have experiences. Experiences are kinds of energy that we assimilate. Of course, I am referring to psychic energy, which is not yet generally recognized by science. Nevertheless, subconscious energy can build to a considerable strength. It becomes part of our personality, affecting us as well as others.

Since we suppress in consistent yet individual ways, we build a reservoir of negative energy of a specific type. Some people suppress mainly anxiety; some, the sense of worthlessness or sexual frustration, for example. The suppressed energy then creates patterns: unconscious, individualistic ways in which we meet life. Patterns would not be a problem, except that they are often negative, keeping us from full realization of our creative power. Because patterns are usually unconscious, we don't know that it is we who are limiting ourselves.

*Suppression leads
to addiction*

To suppress requires psychic energy. It takes energy to suppress energy; it takes energy to block. The demand for energy becomes a drain on our resources, creating conditions that encourage the addictive cycle. Because addiction provides energy, taken either from out-

side sources or inner reserves, it facilitates suppression. When this additional energy is not available, it is not as easy to suppress, and we come face to face with our pain. Thus, when we suppress, energy is diverted from its positive and constructive expression; we become split, working against ourselves, unaware of our self-undoing.

Repression

When the suppression syndrome becomes unconscious, it is called *repression*. Repression is the same as suppression, except that there is no awareness of feelings or the avoidance of them. For example, if you are sad but do not consciously recognize your sadness, it becomes repressed. Proper release is not possible, and the sadness is stored subconsciously. Repression, unfortunately, is common in the modern world. Freud, in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, said that he thought it was unavoidable. His statement is even more appropriate today. Repression comes about because of all the desensitizing that we undergo. Life is so busy, so anxiety ridden, with our attention constantly enticed outward, that we do not realize what our real feelings are. We have lost touch with ourselves.

Continual repression results in neurosis and extensive blocking of the human organism. The result on the emotional level is addiction, depression, and unconscious destructive patterns; and on the physical level, disease. Blocked energy easily can reach the level where it affects the physical, and what is disease but blockage? Looking at prevalent twentieth-century ailments such as heart disease and cancer, I can't help but feel that a main cause is the buildup of subconscious negative forces that the modern way of life encourages. However, it should not be forgotten that humans have been creating their subconscious all throughout history, so modern life should not be condemned outright. The average person, now and in previous times, has always had personal blocking and Karma to contend with.

We are all so similar when looked at from a distance. We all have unconscious yet individualistic tendencies that keep us from reaching our maximum potential. Rarely do we fully realize the higher side of our nature, the love and creative centers. Rarely do we relate to others or ourselves directly, without distorting grossly through our own par-

ticular filters of suppressed energy. We must recognize the truth without becoming pessimistic. We are as we are because life and consciousness is evolutionary. We are growing, and in progress. Our capacities only reflect our current levels of growth.

Let's look specifically at some kinds of feelings that are commonly suppressed or repressed, becoming buried in the subconscious. Our feelings usually relate to the following areas:

SURVIVAL: Fear, anxiety, insecurity about health, money, possessions, death

POWER: Anger, hostility, aggressiveness, helplessness

SENSATION: Sexual and sensual feelings

NURTURING: Cravings for food, alcohol, smoking, drugs, general emotional neediness

SIGNIFICANCE: Worthlessness, lack of self-esteem and meaningful social identity

HEART: Loneliness, jealousy, hate, sadness, grief

Different feelings may be linked, forming complex systems of blocking and suppression. Thus, sexual issues may be associated disharmoniously in one person with security issues and in another with power issues. The accumulation of these negative energies results in stress. If we knew how to dissolve and avoid the buildup of negative energies, we could avoid stress.

The buildup of suppressed energy can vary over short or long intervals. Short-term emotional suppression can happen with fears, sexual impulses, or any feeling that cannot be dissolved immediately. For example, a person may experience frustration in the workplace and not know how to release it, and then go home and take it out on the family. The attempt to release the energy by venting on a neutral party is known as *displacement*. Displacement is common, resulting in hurt feelings, miscommunication, and damaged relationships.

Long-term avoidance of feelings builds a structure of a quite different and unsuspected magnitude. It can build to the extent that a person's whole life is shaped by internal forces of which there is no

conscious knowledge. Conditions that were unresolved in the past have a way of recurring with new faces or circumstances, and we have the choice of taking responsibility and experiencing, or avoiding and suppressing once again.

*The subconscious is carried
over from previous existences*

It may seem remarkable that such complex systems of avoidance, blocking, and suppression could be formed in one short lifetime. My feeling is that they aren't, but that they have formed over extensive periods in prior existences. Whether you choose to believe in reincarnation is a personal decision. For me, it seems obvious that there is some sort of preexistence to physical birth. Just looking at how quickly and definitely children form their individualities is enough to convince me of a previous life.

I believe that Karma, the subconscious, is carried over from previous existences. Life's events are then formed by subconscious forces, to be played out. It is not necessary to agree with the doctrine of reincarnation to have success with processing, but the notion of a previous existence may help clarify a few things for you. For one, you will find it easier to take responsibility for yourself and where you are at, rather than blaming your childhood and your parents. You will realize that early incidents with family, no matter how painful, were merely catalysts to make you conscious of what was already latent within you. In fact, you chose those very circumstances for just that opportunity.

*Focus on present
feelings, not causes*

Because there is usually no conscious memory of previous existences, and because the causes of most emotional suppression are in those existences, it is difficult to pinpoint the source of any current condition. However, understanding the cause is not required to release feelings. In our work, we focus on present feelings, not causes.

Accepting the possibility of a previous existence also implies the continuity of life after "death." This idea greatly helps me – intellectually at least – in working with the fear of death, which is really the

primal fear. Psychics have brought back much documentation of life on the “other side.” I personally find their reports, taken as a whole, to be adequate evidence of something beyond the earthly shell.

PROJECTION

Projection results from the accumulation of energy generated by suppression. It is an automatic, unconscious mechanism, which assigns subjective value and identity to persons or events in the “outside” world. Feelings that are suppressed are experienced indirectly through the other persons or events – it appears as if the feelings are caused by or coming from others. In addition, suppressed qualities are attributed to others. Others are usually then criticized for the feelings or qualities that we have projected onto them. In advanced cases of projection, we actually attract people and circumstances to us that correspond to the feelings we are holding within.

*In projection, we try to avoid
responsibility for certain feelings*

When we project, we unconsciously assign responsibility for our feelings to other persons or situations, and we think that they “caused” our feelings. We generally choose these persons or situations skillfully, to appear justified to others and to ourselves. We fail to see that the other is only “bringing up” suppressed material from inside ourselves. They are not the cause of our feelings, although they may be considered to be the stimulus. If that feeling or reaction was not already latent within, we would not have responded in that particular way. Think of how differently various people react to the same situation. In projecting, we see through the distorting filters of our own suppressed energies. We do not see reality as it is, and we react inappropriately.

For example, if you have suppressed your anger, you will see others as responsible for “making” you angry because of what they do. You will blame them. You also will perceive others as being angry and directing their anger toward you when you are not angry. You will be likely to condemn them for their anger. If you have suppressed your

sexual feelings, you will perceive others as making uncalled-for sexual approaches toward you, and you will judge them harshly as well as condemn other forms of sexual expression not directly concerned with you. If you have suppressed your feelings of rejection toward others, you will think others are rejecting you, and you will blame them.

Similarly, after you have blocked your power through suppression of your energies, you will assign that role to outside agencies, thinking they are responsible for blocking you. You will appear to be entirely justified in your blame. Even an impartial observer might agree that you are contending with an outside force.

The truth is that there is no outside force. Miraculously, we project our subconscious energies onto what appears to be the outside world, creating our entire experience. We are literally responsible for our perceptions as well as whatever happens to us. Accidents that happen “to us” are, unfortunately, only extreme cases of the negative forces that are hidden and stored within building to the point where they can affect us physically. Remember, *energy* is what gets stored in the subconscious, and energy can build to powerful levels if not released.

We never see *what is*. We see only what we have projected. Because of the hidden magnitude of the built-up subconscious, the extent and significance of the suppression-projection mechanism cannot be clearly perceived. To succeed in processing, you must accept intellectually the condition of suppression-projection as a working axiom, even if you have to do so on faith. As you begin to integrate material that was previously suppressed, the truth gradually will become evident, and you will be astounded as well as fascinated.

Up to now, we have examined the suppression of negative feelings and interactions. However, positive events also are suppressed and then projected onto the “outside” world. The shield that was created to avoid negative feelings also blocks positive feelings, and projection becomes the sole means to connect to the feelings. Your most cherished times, someone you thought really loved you, was just the love already within you. Someone who helped you was you helping yourself.

To succeed at self-transformation, you must make the leap from perceiving the universe as a collection of separate individuals and objects acting on you, to perceiving it as a field for your energies, which you project and then take back as if there were an objective outside world. Incredibly, other individuals also have the exact same capability of creating their own universes, simultaneously with you. Try this right now to develop your feeling capability.

EXERCISE

Feel your energies as they go out into the world. Assume that you assign the value and identity to everything you perceive. Your impression of the external world comes to you through your filters of suppressed energy, and your suppressed energy draws corresponding events to you. Assume that when something happens, it has not happened by itself but you unconsciously created it through projection or attracted it to you. If a person seems to behave in a certain way, it is your perception. Focus your awareness on your energy field, and feel the connection you have with your perceptions and reactions. I am not referring to intellectual understanding but to feeling. Simply feel your connection to what you perceive as the qualities of the other.

While you should cultivate a sense of responsibility for your feelings and experiences, based on an understanding of suppression-projection, *by no means should you assume guilt or be self-condemning*. Remember that others are also ultimately responsible for what happens to them, although this does not excuse us from hurting them.

We have taken the concept of suppression-projection further than psychology usually goes with it. We have entered the mystical realm where reasoning and thinking do not apply. This is necessary to reach our goal of inner integration. Fulfillment can never be found through the analytic faculties of the mind; fulfillment comes through the feeling center.

When we project, the world becomes a mirror, reflecting our own qualities back to us. Of course, a great deal of independent activity does go on outside of ourselves, and other people do have a basis of

independent character. When we project, we carefully select the appropriate “screen” – a person or situation with some element of what we are projecting – and we load our perception of them with our own energy.

If we try to analyze how much of our perception is projected, and how much is “real,” we become distracted from our work on ourselves. No objective evaluation is possible anyway, because we are not clear within ourselves. Therefore, we assume that we are projecting the entire contents of our perception when we use processing techniques. It is very likely that after the issue has been integrated, we will spontaneously see exactly what the other is bringing and what we are bringing to the situation.

*The client projects
onto the therapist*

In light of our discussion of projection, we may more completely understand the value of the relationship with the enlightened therapist. In contrast to an interaction with an average person, where both people normally project onto each other, the therapist ideally does not project subconscious energies onto the client, or at least remains aware of and nonreactive to these projections. This includes having no demands or expectations. In addition, the therapist does not react to or reject but maintains awareness and acceptance of the projections of the client onto the therapist. This is the essence of therapy and the catalyst for the healing transformation. The client is able to become aware of projections more clearly than in relationship with other people, because the mirror is now exceptionally clear. Nonetheless, you should not become discouraged from processing interactions with people in general.

Whenever you react strongly to the stimulus that another person provides, it is safe to assume that suppressed energies within you are surfacing. If you were clear within yourself, you would not be so affected by the negativity of others. Your reactions would not be as pronounced or as judgmental. You might then experience a “normal” amount of negative emotion in response to certain circumstances, but processing techniques are still an excellent approach for clearing these feelings.

CLEARING

On the psychic level, the purpose of projection is clearing. The psychic body, which stores the suppressed emotional energy, naturally wants to clear, or cleanse, itself of this negativity. Projection automatically occurs to bring the energy to a conscious level. However, projection by itself does not result in clearing. If it did, all the world would be liberated. The projected feelings must be handled correctly, or it is all in vain – the projected experiences are resisted and resuppressed, and the amount of negative energy in the subconscious grows. The opportunity to learn through projection is lost.

*Feelings must be experienced
in order to clear*

Clearing of suppressed material takes place only when you finally allow yourself the *experience* that you have been avoiding. The energy, the feeling, must be allowed into consciousness without resistance in order to be integrated. With painful events, the pain must be accepted and experienced, but you will learn how to minimize and neutralize pain by observing it from the Witness vantage point. The Witness capacity brings about a *nonidentification* with painful feelings, making them more easily integrated and released.

Suppressed energy is released through conscious experience of it. As you allow yourself to have the feeling, the feeling will change. Pain will dissolve, becoming neutralized. Facing feelings is all that is necessary to clear suppressed negativity, and once something is faced, it can be cleared in a surprisingly short interval. The problem is that our unconscious self-rejection prevents us from really facing our feelings, even when we want to – we have lost the capacity for feeling. Exploring and regaining that capacity is what we are learning here.

Life becomes your therapist

As you go through life, you will have various encounters that bring up your subconscious energies into conscious awareness. These energies surface when conditions are appropriate for them to be released. If you can learn to integrate these energies as they come up,

you will be meeting life most creatively. You will be *using* your circumstances instead of being abused by them. It is for this opportunity that we incarnate on the Earth plane.

Amazingly, each individual's life is designed to provide just the right circumstances for the clearing of hidden negative forces within. By correctly utilizing these circumstances, you can work on yourself very effectively without a therapist. Life becomes the therapist, and indeed, life is the best and ultimately the only therapist. Your circumstances at this very moment are the ones you need. They are bringing up negative energies from your subconscious to be cleared. When you integrate them, that is, when you accept and experience them without resistance, clearing takes place.

Projection may lessen if you practice contacting your feelings directly, as in meditation. However, you should not expect to stop projecting, because projection is a natural way of clearing. You must learn to become aware. Realizing what is happening, you will smile to yourself. You will not "buy into" thinking that the other is responsible for your experience; you will "own" your experience, meaning that you take responsibility for *what is* before you. In so doing, you achieve the control over your life that you seek.