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TimeWarp Technologies™ Newsletter:

Welcome...

Here is your TimeWarp Technologies™ Newsletter for September 2008. This newsletter may be duplicated and distributed to those who share an interest in Energy Medicine, neurolinguistics—especially Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP)—and spirituality.

This month the featured articles are “Life in a Full-length Mirror,” by Debra; “School Days,” by Joel; “Fruit and Yogurt,” by Debra; and “Highways and Byways,” by Joel.

Life in a Full-length Mirror

An alternate title for this article might have been *Life with the two JBs Loved by Me*, but I know it is not ever really about anyone other than me, so I will proceed assuming this is the perfect title, and you can decide how your own life is reflecting what is within your thoughts and beliefs and attitudes and behaviors, too.

Projection is one of the recognized psychological defense mechanisms people often use to avoid dealing with what we are not consciously aware of in our own lives—our own Shadow. Because the tool is neutral, projection can also become a welcome means to genuine insight that allows us to recognize and speak the truth, and live in harmony more and more of the time.

In *Healing with Language*, Joel and I write that the Johari Window (see Luft, J., 1970, 2d ED., *Group Process: An Introduction to Group Dynamics*, Palo Alto, CA: National Press Books) allows us to see clearly that much of our communication is based on information we do not fully understand consciously, and relationships are *the crucible in which our character is tested and tempered*.

One of the main things to notice is that virtually all judgments can be disputed, and since judgments almost always have their roots buried deeply in our

unconscious, they are triggered by an underlying fear or need, which means that fear or need is something we are not currently aware of having or are not currently confident in expressing to another. In the chapter on rapport and communication we look beyond the surface message – what is said with the words themselves—to see that every message also contains at least some *subtext* and a *metamessage* (*Healing with Language, Bowman and Basham*). Many arguments start because the deeper meaning might be unrecognized by either, or both, the sender and the receiver. When two people communicate, the message itself may contain only a small part of the actual meaning:

Message: Are you working late again tonight?

Subtext: You’ve been neglecting me.

Metamessage: I’m afraid of losing you.

I read recently that the fantasy of meeting the perfect person that will be able to make you happy has its roots in memories of the womb where our experience was one of feeling safe, secure, and “at one with” our mothers. Even while we have all grown up with an understanding that we come into the world alone and we go alone, what I was reading said that togetherness is illusory. And the play on words that turns alone into all-one hints a bit at what is often called the perspective of enlightenment—seeing ourselves a part of (not a part from) the divine.

For a while now I have been fascinated with the idea of life as reflecting back to us what we need to know in consciousness now. Recently I had written in my journal asking what the idea of the fear of aloneness might have to do with projection and the mirror. I pulled a card from a favorite deck, Osho Zen Tarot, and read the following:

“Everything passes by you; your consciousness reflects it but it does not get identified. When a lion roars in front of a mirror, do you think the mirror roars? Or when the lion is gone and a child comes dancing, the mirror completely forgets about the lion and starts dancing with the child – do you think the mirror dances with the child? The mirror does nothing, it simply reflects.”

What if, when I experience defensive feelings they are telling me something about me, rather than about the person I am reacting to? In the case of the question about working late, as in those situations that had created stress in your life, awareness allows you to address the legitimate (yet inappropriately expressed, and perhaps even unrecognized or denied) need by responding with something like this:

Question: Are you working late again tonight?

Response: Yes, I have a lot to do before tomorrow’s meeting. I know that I have been working a lot lately, and perhaps we can do something special tomorrow, say go out to ginner and to a movie.

That same morning, as I was writing in my journal about aloneness, projection, and mirrors—not knowing consciously what I was working on—Joel sent an article: “Mirrors Don’t Lie. Mislead? Oh, Yes,” by Natalie Angier! Her article reported that people are less likely to cheat, less likely to be bigoted, and more likely to be helpful when in a room with a mirror in it. According to the researcher, Dr. Bodenhausen, “When people are made to be self-aware, they are more likely to stop and think about what they are doing.... A byproduct of that awareness may be a shift away from acting on autopilot toward more desirable ways of behaving.” Physical self-reflection, in other words, encourages philosophical self-reflection, a crash course in the Socratic notion that you cannot know or appreciate others until you know yourself.

Ah, maybe that is why life is best lived in a full-length mirror....

School Days

When September rolls around, it seems as though it is time to gear up for the fall semester of another school year. Even those of you who haven’t spent most of your adult lives working in a school environment probably share at least some of that feeling based on your own childhood memories; memories of getting your children ready for another fall, winter, and spring of school and homework; and—if nothing else—the plethora of “back to school” ads.

As most of you already know, the September to June calendar for the school year was established when most people worked on farms, and children spent most of their summers helping their families with the work required to ensure a good harvest. For most children in earlier times, the end of the school year meant the start of a summer of hard work. As people migrated from farms to cities, children were

free to greet the summer with the saying, “No more pencils, no more books, no more teacher’s dirty looks.” I don’t know about you, but on the last day of school for the year, I felt as though I had been set free.

Some of that, of course, is simply the result of natural need for “unstructured” time. Most of the children I knew still had chores and other obligations, including piano or dance lessons and Little League baseball or AYSO soccer. Having been a boy child and having had a boy child, I’m not sure what girls might have done for the long stretch of the summer months. Whatever it was, it felt good to slip the yoke of school in June, even if we knew that we would be back “in harness” in September.

Even though my friends and I protested, we were generally glad when it was finally time to go back to school; catch up with friends we hadn’t seen over the summer; and become acquainted with new pencils, new books, and the dirty looks of new teachers. It also ended the need to ask our mothers what we could do ... and provided the opportunity for us to learn new things.

Children are naturally curious and eager to learn. At the same time, however, they resent the highly structured environment of most schools. It is not by accident that one of the words most children learn first is “No.” “No” is the word, after all, that allows children to express independence from the adults who manage their lives. “Eat your peas.” “No!” It is no wonder that after the initial excitement at going to school, making new friends, and learning new things wears off, children increasingly begin to view school as punishment. In the U.S., the turning point is at about the fourth grade. For students who are less academically inclined than others, it occurs earlier.

The disillusionment sets in earlier for boys than for girls. I don’t know for sure why that is, but my own experience and what I have read suggests that boys are more restless than girls during those years, and most of the teachers for the early grades are women. Girls may want to “be like Mom,” while boys struggle to gain independence from Mom. All that sitting in rows pretending to pay attention to what the teacher is saying leads to a lot of clock watching. It is simply not a natural environment for learning.

School has, of course, become increasingly important as society has become more complex. In the “old days,” culture didn’t need rocket scientists. We now need a slew of them—along with all sorts of doctors, lawyers, and engineers. We need social scientists, linguists, and bilingual politicians. We need more education than ever, and we need to discover ways to make it more enjoyable for those undergoing the process. Students learn attitudes and feelings along with whatever else is being taught, and those attitudes and feelings often last a lifetime. For too many, the drudgery of school becomes the drudgery of work.

From time to time I wonder what our lives would be like if school and learning had been more fun. Would we have learned less? What would it be like if the work we need to have done were more fun? How

would your experience change if you went into a bank and the tellers actually enjoyed being there? Or you had a joyful server the next time you went to the restaurant? Or your doctor and dentist were happy to see you?

While it would be really wonderful to have our cultural norms change all at once, that's probably not going to happen. We can, however, undo some of the anchoring we received when we were in school about the need for regimentation, following the rules, and being unhappy about it; and we can learn to more joyful ourselves. We can be the parent who makes our children's teacher feel good about teaching. We can be the customer who makes bank tellers and restaurant employees smile.

We can get out of our old "school daze" and become the change we wish to see in the world.

Fruit and Yogurt

My dad had some funny rituals about food. He had three breakfast menus that he rotated like clockwork. On a fairly regular basis, he would proudly tell us all about them, as though we had never heard the stories before. "On Sunday I have French toast and two sausages. On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday I have two eggs and toast. On Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday I have oatmeal with brown sugar and maple syrup."

I seem to prefer what could be called *cereal monogamy*. That is a bit of a joke, based on the idea of those persons who are strictly monogamous, while in a particular relationship, but then leave that one and enter another relationship, where they are again monogamous. In some way, that is how I am with my breakfast menu. For many years my standard was a bowl of raisin bran. Then it was a fresh-fruit smoothie. For a few years now, my current standard breakfast menu is fruit and yogurt. While the fruits I use may vary according to seasons it is always fruit, always plain organic yogurt, and it is always topped with fresh-ground flax seed.

Preferences are so interesting. Some people say the purpose of incarnation is to learn to make wise choices. Perhaps having preferences is part of that learning.

Having been born and raised in the Midwest and still living in the Midwest, I am not sure how the Midwest differs from other places in the country. I think I prefer the Midwest. It is not quite Southern hospitality, but my folks were from Arkansas, so I might have learned that preference from them. We never had a stranger share a meal with us. We had plenty of *new friends* at our table, though, if you know what I mean.

I do know that when I was at the scene of an accident on I-94 several years ago, I took three *new friends* into my van. I drove them to Community Hospital in Watervliet, where an ambulance was taking the fourth person who had been in their vehicle. It was a 13-car pile up that had resulted from a jack-knifed semi. Thiers's was the first vehicle to hit

the truck, and then all the others hit them and one another. When their friend (he was the husband of one of my *new friends*) was treated and released, I drove all four of them to Meijer in Benton Harbor where they could get underwear and toiletries for overnight because everything they had for their weekend away had been blown to smithereens in the impact. Then I took them to a hotel and made sure they got a room. I gave them my phone number and told them to call me when they got up the next morning, and I would pick them up and take them to get a rental car to drive back home. We had such a lovely morning.... I drove them down to see the beach, and the bluff, and downtown St. Joseph. I thought even if it has been an accident that got them here, they should have an opportunity to enjoy the area that has been described as the Riviera of the Midwest.

My husband, John, and I spent four days in Hershey, Pennsylvania, once and we had the most unusual time of our lives. For four days, whether we were out to dinner, at a museum, walking the beautiful river front park, or entering or exiting our hotel, we had not one person speak to, wave at, or make eye contact with us. The last morning we were there, as we were out for a walk on that river front park, a vehicle pulled over and the passenger motioned for us to come over. I knew instantly it must be someone from out of town lost and needing directions. I said to John, "We are the only people who cannot help them but the only ones they knew they could ask."

Perhaps regions of the country have personalities. Perhaps towns have collective identities that influence those who live in them. Maybe life was just offering the opportunity for you to know what is really important to you. Maybe in the same way that we all get to choose what we like to have for breakfast, we all get to choose the kind of lives we want to live and we live them. I know that I have never given time or attention or genuine affection to anyone without getting back much more than I gave. What do you have for breakfast? Neither Man nor Woman lives by bread alone....

Highways and Byways

In "The Road Not Taken," Robert Frost says, "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference." When people think about Life, one of the most common metaphors is, "Life is a journey." The metaphor presupposes a beginning, movement through time and space, and a destination or end. It is, of course, not the only metaphor possible for Life. The metaphor, "Life is a garden," presupposes an organic cycle of sprouting from the earth, growing, blooming, scattering seeds, dying, and returning to earth. The metaphor, "Life is a circus (or carnival)," presupposes a variety of displays and activities primarily designed for enjoyment.

Each of these metaphors encourages a certain perceptual frame. If you are on a journey, you have a purpose and destination in mind. This would also be

true of the kind of journeys known as an *Adventure* or a *Race*. An Adventure would, perhaps, presuppose greater risks and rewards than a typical journey. A Race presupposes a need for speed and winners and losers. There is nothing in the principal metaphor, however, that would preclude a journey from being adventurous from time to time or would eliminate the need for racing on occasion.

The Garden metaphor, on the other hand, does not presuppose much in the way of movement. Rose bushes do not as a rule head out on the highway looking for adventure or see if they can beat the marigolds to blooming. The “life energy” of the Garden metaphor is naturally peaceful and quiet. The Circus metaphor, on the other hand, suggests that the purpose of life is simply to have fun (to eat, drink, and be merry) until the show folds up the tents and moves to another town. The “life energy” of the Circus metaphor is basically helter-skelter—you do not have to take the rides in any particular order, and you can have ice cream and cotton candy before hot dogs if you so desire.

One of the most important things about our metaphors for Life is that they determine the perceptual frames through which we view the environments in which we live. Those on a journey look for places to go, things to do, and traveling companions. Those in a garden look for ways to encourage growth and fecundity. Those in a circus look for ways to maximize their pleasure before the show closes. Even though we aren't always aware of them, the metaphors we use influence the choices we make. Those in a race, for example, may be very good at getting ahead but probably won't take time to stop and smell the flowers. Those in a circus may find every day exciting and pleasurable, but they may not spend time thinking about where they want to go in life.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if your metaphor for Life were sufficiently flexible to give you more of what you want and less of what you don't want. In these days of four (and more) lane highways and fast travel from place to place, the journey of Life may seem to be more a race than a pleasure trip. What happens if you see yourself getting off the highways and onto the byways of Life?

When I was growing up, my family drove across country on two-lane roads. We saw the hills, mountains, valleys, and deserts at a leisurely pace. We went through the small towns, ate in small-town diners, and stayed in small town motels. We stopped at the tourist attractions along the way, fished in the rivers, and swam in the lakes. We took time for carnivals and, on one trip, we even took time to attend a circus along the way. The trips unfolded before us as grand adventures. The really interesting thing is that, as an adult, I had forgotten the leisurely pace and varieties of exploration that those trips made possible. As I grew older, the pace of my journey quickened, and I

spent less time exploring alternatives. In some ways, the adventure had become a race.

As you think about the unfolding of your own life, now, envision what the roads less traveled have to offer. How much pleasure can you find along the byways of your life? How much can you enjoy stopping in a garden or park to smell the flowers and taking a carnival ride or two?

What's Coming Up?

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