

From Enlightenment to The Aware Ego Process to Source Energy

By Hal Stone, Ph.D.

Introduction

On December 14th of 2012 I celebrated my 85th birthday. It was my intention to send out a few words to my friends on that day in the form of an article that would describe my aging process and my thinking at this time of my life.

However, it seems that as we move more deeply into the aging process, our psychophysiology becomes increasingly recalcitrant, especially when it comes to honoring our intent to do certain things. So it was that my birthday passed very quietly in the presence of Sidra and Tamar and a very few friends - and most certainly no work on my part regarding my creative process other than continuing to grow older.

One of the most significant things about growing older in relationship to another person is the amount of personal work that Sidra and I continue to do. I have mentioned this many different times in writings, conversations and teachings, but I am truly awestruck at how much personal work is required of us.

Our use of the Voice Dialogue process has increased dramatically in recent times. As we age, we are ever so much more vulnerable in life and we feel this core vulnerability in each of our own personal lives as well as in relationship to each other. Some of this is quite shocking to feel and watch happening. We are also aware that we have more time to ourselves and, with more time, the unconscious process begins to heat up much

more strongly than was the case when we were busier with our professional lives. So we have had to do a good deal of work with each other to move through the challenging and sometimes dangerous shoals through which we have been navigating.

Happily, as an integral part of this process there emerge important dreams that bring us remarkable insights. I see these as the ever-increasing power of the Teachers of the Inner Spheres and I have experienced increasing energetic awareness of the transcendental realities. I often feel as though we are in a mortar, and the question for me at these times is who, or what, is it that is holding the pestle. Who, or what, is using this pestle to scrunch us a good bit and who, or what, seems intent on moving us ever more strongly into an ever stronger and ever deeper experience of the transformational process? Who, or what, is it that moves us towards the awareness of the inner map of our own destiny?

Is this God who holds the pestle? Does God carry the blueprint that is embedded within each of us that essentially carries the map of our own moira or fate? If it is God, then what does that mean? If you are Christian that means one thing; Buddhist another; Islamic another; and Judaic another.

And what is the difference between Spiritual and God? Are they the same? Why are so many people totally alienated from the idea of

a God? Why do so many people hate religion and, if this is the case, what then of the reality of higher order energy systems whose origins are most difficult to define?

Or does something else entirely different carry the blueprint of our existence? Could there be a higher energy that is different from what we are aware of, something that is totally different from what we think of when we sense into the meaning of God and ask ourselves all of these thorny questions I have raised?

Recently someone sent us the following quote from the Dalai Lama. It was written on his Facebook front page on September 10th, 2012. Here is the quote:

“All the world’s major religions, with their emphasis on love, compassion, patience, tolerance and forgiveness can and do promote inner values. But the reality of the world today is that grounding ethics in religion is no longer adequate. This is why I am increasingly convinced that the time has come to find a way of thinking about spirituality and ethics beyond religion altogether.”

Sidra and I agree wholeheartedly with this statement. We salute the Dalai Lama for saying this out loud and helping his followers begin to search in new spaces and new places to find new answers to the issues he has raised.

I am nine and a half years older than Sidra and since the spring of 2005 I have become more and more occupied with these issues. This is one of the reasons why we have not been able to write about the aging process together. I have felt strongly compelled to understand these processes and make sense out of the issues I have brought up so far. Sidra basically sees things as I do and she is editing this material and she will join with

me in the writing process as it occurs in a natural way. When I spoke to her about my desire to write something for a birthday statement, she discovered an article that we are presenting to you at this time. I had completely forgotten about this article, an article that I wrote in 2006, and it seemed like a wonderful way to start to introduce my process on these matters.

In August of 2005, my son Joshua died. It was a painful time for me and it raised a good many questions in my mind because he had lived a deeply spiritual life and was totally devoted to God. During the period from Spring to Fall of that year I had about six dreams in which my life was being celebrated by energies or beings or “somethings” from other dimensions of consciousness.

In the first of these dreams I am in a large auditorium type room with space for a gathering also. It was a very large gathering and it was being celebrated on other dimensions as well as in the here and now. At some point, I was presented with a gift of a video-cassette from this other dimension. The video-cassette contained every dream I had ever had from the time I began my analysis at the age of twenty-two, to the night before this gathering. In addition, all of my dreams had been set to music and the name of the cassette was “The Music of the Spheres.” We were both deeply touched by this dream and by the title of the cassette, so much so, that we then used that title for the next international conference, one that we did in Bergen, Holland under the leadership of Robert Stamboliev.

I was very shocked by this dream and it marked the beginning of an intensification of my attempt to make sense out these transcendental happenings. The gift felt so personal to me and it felt so real. It felt in the dream like people - or beings - who were celebrating me. These could be energies or spirits on the other side. But I

felt like they/it were my friends. Who were they? Was this God or part of the Spiritual God pantheon that is responsible for the spiritual sourcing available to many people?

The problem for me was that it didn't feel that way in the dream. It didn't feel spiritual or God-driven. I have experienced God energy many, many different times in my life, mostly in the dream process. This didn't feel like that. It felt like an entirely different energy. Could the dream process itself be under the influence of a different energy system entirely than what we call spiritual? Could there possibly be two entirely different energy sources that play into the dream process. If this were the case than the "Source Energy" would be the basic source and the "Spiritual Energy" could be a construction of what was created by the Source Energy in establishing the hardware and software creations of the planet earth.

Since this time I have been thinking seriously about this issue of Source energy and its meaning. During the past two years I have had a very large number of dreams that have come to me and helped me to clarify this issue. The 2006 article clearly was the beginning of my attempt to objectify what was happening and so Sidra and I felt it would a good place to start.

The original article from 2006 has gone through a number of editings over the past six weeks and, in the material that follows, I will be incorporating more of my own personal dreams, some discussions of a number of NDEs (near death experiences) and relevant dreams that other members of our community have shared with us.

If you have a dream that you feel speaks to the issue of a clarification of the differences between Source energy and Spiritual energy, please send it to me. All dreams must be typed on computer for easier access. Please use multiple paragraphs so your dream is more easily read. If

the dream is too long, then shorten it by leaving out sections that are not essential. Shorter dreams are easier to understand. We don't want to miss an important experience if we can help it, but if you just keep in mind what it takes to read this material you will easily understand. Please include after the dream your personal associations and what it has meant to you in terms of your own experience of Source energy and Spiritual energy.

Beginning the Chase

I began my Jungian Analysis in 1949 when I was twenty-two years old. I was a graduate student in Psychology at UCLA - not knowing what I was doing there because I really knew nothing of what psychology was about.

I was a confirmed agnostic, so named because atheist didn't sound as sophisticated or romantic. My dream process exploded immediately, and it has been with me as an important part of my life ever since. My days as an agnostic ended with equal speed, and the search for a new consciousness was launched.

As young as I was at that time, I became aware of another reality that lived inside of me. I began to experience the Intelligence that lies within the unconscious and that manifests in many different ways in our lives. For me it was through the dream process primarily that this experience of "The Other Reality" became real and ever more profound.

At first I thought of all experiences of "The Other" as direct experiences of Spiritual energy. It was only much later in my life that I began to understand why I had always been fascinated by these experiences and by the sense of an Intelligence that was guiding me in its own particular way. However, even in those early years, I had the sense that there was a blueprint for my existence and that I was starting to tap

into this blueprint. Again, my only reference point for these kinds of experiences was in the Spiritual realm. And in those years, this way of looking at things worked very well.

Early in my analysis, probably within the first year, I had a memorable dream. In this dream I entered a small room filled with ancient spiritual books from all traditions. Although these books were written in all languages, I was particularly drawn to a series of twelve volumes written in Hebrew that dealt with ancient spiritual truths. A voice then said to me that the knowledge of all these volumes would become available to me at the age of fifty-six.

In 1953 I was a psychologist in the U.S. army; my way of escaping the Korean war draft. I was newly assigned to a mental hygiene clinic at Ft. Bliss, Texas and I lived in a lovely military housing complex with my then wife, Audrey, and my son, Joshua, and my daughter, Tamar. After a year of duty at this clinic I was awakened at 3:00 AM by a very powerful energy – something like what it must feel like to have lightning go through your head and into your body – and I knew that I would die if it continued. From my lips came the never-before-spoken words: “Please Dear God, please take this from me. Thy will, not mine, be done!”

I awoke in a sweat and I knew that whatever was “running me” in my life had just raised the ante by a thousand percent. I went back to bed about fifteen minutes later and the energy came again; and again I said the same words; and it stopped again. This happened for the third and last time that night with the same outcome and I was finished sleeping for the night. It was no longer a matter of saying that I was no longer an agnostic. It was now the case that I was a confirmed disciple of God and that I was quite terrified about this energy returning – which, in fact, it did in different ways in a few later dreams.

Both of these dreams had a strong impact upon me and, along with other later experiences, led me deep into an exploration of the worlds of religion and spiritual reality. In a way it was really a neat trick of the Intelligence to hit me with the library dream. It was profoundly Spiritual and I could have only interpreted such a dream as coming from an internal Spiritual sourcing. It certainly did hook me and helped to send me on a very rewarding Spiritual path that most certainly carrying with it my own drive for enlightenment.

A Short History of What Followed

The years passed and I immersed myself in my Jungian studies and in spiritual studies in general. I meditated and I prayed and I thirsted for God and I tried my very best to move on the fast track towards enlightenment. I read the autobiographies and descriptions of Spiritual Masters of all religions and I pushed myself as hard as I could to reach this goal to the detriment, I might add, of a more conscious relationship to my own family as well as to life itself.

My primary energetic linkage was to Spirit and this kept me much less available to the central people in my life. It wasn't that I didn't feel love and linkage to my wife and children. It is simply the case that when we are identified with the spiritual hierarchy, it is unusual for family and friends to have the same meaning to us.

This is an error in judgment shared by many spiritually-identified people. It may be the intent of a spiritual part of us, but it is certainly not the intent of the Organizing Intelligence or what we now refer to as Source Energy. Source Energy is an entirely different energy source than Spiritual energy. It requires that we embrace all of life – all in us that is related to spirit and all that enables

us to live our lives on earth to the fullest extent possible. It means really embracing heaven and earth! It took a long time before I truly began to understand any of this.

The years passed. I became an analyst in 1961 and then left the analytical world in the early seventies. I began to experiment with a variety of treatment modalities. I found a new appreciation of all the different approaches to growth and began to use them in my clinical practice. New worlds were opening for me.

In the early seventies, Sidra and I met and, together, we began to explore these new worlds. Out of this emerged our work with Voice Dialogue. I was changing dramatically through all of this and being with Sidra galvanized this change. She was a full-on woman of the world and I loved her and I had to rise to the challenge of integrating what she carried for me. At my core, however, I was still waiting for enlightenment. I knew how powerful the energies were and it was worth all the effort and study to galvanize them on my behalf. I was still chasing God in a variety of ways and this was the case as I turned fifty-six (that fateful age) in 1983.

Turning Fifty-Six

Sometime before my fifty-sixth birthday, I had a consult with an astrologer friend of mine who told me that I was going to be having a huge transformational experience and a great change towards the end of my birthday year. This would have been in November or December of 1983.

Well that was all I needed to hear! The oracles had spoken and I was about to finally have the experience of enlightenment, of becoming one with God. I really didn't know what it was going to be exactly but I was ready for "IT" and I was going for it!

Sidra and I had already started to teach all over the U.S. and Europe. We planned a teaching trip to Israel in conjunction with a few other European cities towards the end of the birthday year. Since my birthday is in December, I planned to complete our work in Israel a few weeks before my fifty-seventh birthday.

At that time we were trying to train people in the use of Voice Dialogue in Israel and - in particular - we were trying to establish a means of communication between Arabs and Israelis. We wanted to see if - using our work with disowned selves and underlying vulnerability - we could help at all in a situation that was extremely problematical at that time and seemed destined to deteriorate even further. It was a difficult task and we gave it our best shot with very little success so far as actually working with the two groups together.

To continue with this narrative, it was now 1983, late in my fifty-sixth year. We had scheduled three or four days to rest in Safed which was a spiritual center (some mystics believed that the Messiah would come to Jerusalem through Safed and others believed that, until the third temple is built in Israel, God's Manifest Presence rests above Safed). It was my idea to plan our travels in this way so that my enlightenment experience could finally happen. We had finished our teaching and had some time off.

For me, however, my time was running out. I know that what I have shared with you so far may sound a bit crazy and what I am going to share with you next will sound a bit more crazy, but in truth the search for God often makes us do strange things. I felt that if I was going to have an experience of enlightenment, it was going to happen in Israel where we were really trying to do some very significant work. I felt that it just had to happen!

It was the end of our last day in the city of Safed and we planned to leave for home the next morning. I felt that this was it, and that once we left Israel we were very close to the New Year and to my next birthday. I was feeling very disappointed; my journey towards enlightenment looked like it was never going to reach the goal. How could God disappoint me in this way? How could I have a dream that I felt had to do with enlightenment and then have it not happen?

On this last night we were in a lovely old hotel looking out over the quiet valley below. Sidra was tired that evening and she had gone to sleep about 9:00 PM. I was standing at the end of an open portico of the hotel, looking out into the night, watching the lights of the valley below and the hills of Lebanon rising in the distance. I was hoping against hope that my enlightenment might still happen on this fated evening.

The time seemed to pass quickly. It was as though I were in an altered state of consciousness. It was 10:00 PM and then 11:00 PM and then 12:00 AM. I was very much awake. Then it was 1:00 AM and then 2:00 AM and then I looked at my watch and it was 2:30 AM.

I looked up again into the night and suddenly I started laughing. I stopped counting time. I stopped searching. I began to laugh and laugh and, at that moment, Sidra emerged from our room and walked towards me asking me what was happening. When she came close, I was still laughing and I said to her: "Sidra – I get it – I finally get it. This is it – this moment is it – right now – this moment is it!"

Learning to Plant Your Feet, One at a Time

In those few moments I went through a momentous shift in my consciousness. It was as though I were re-born in a certain way. It

was not the kind of re-birth I could have ever expected. It was so light and so funny. How could I have not known this?

I realized in those moments that as I walk and I put my foot down: where I touch the earth is my new reality. I am now present in that moment; that is, until I move to the next moment. I saw that my path was a very different path from that of the "Hal" who had been present a minute before. I was no longer going to be chasing God in the way that I had been doing. I was going to be learning how to be present in life. I would be surrendered to God, or to some greater power, but I would also be surrendered to life – to living a life of presence on this remarkable planet of ours.

The shift that occurred within me that evening opened for me a new level of exploration and a joy in the act of living life. I had always had the notion that I had to get the personal material out of the way so that I could move more deeply into spiritual realms, the important part of living. The future began to look very different to me now. I was no longer going to try to get through the personal aspects of life and relationship. I was going to live them and understand them in an entirely new way.

I am constantly surprised at how the aging process has gone for me in my life. My fantasy was that, as I got older, I would become wiser and deeper and more introverted and always keep moving inward as I prepared for death. Instead, I find myself increasingly more involved in relationship, more committed to life and to feelings than I ever have been in my life.

From the time of this experience I have learned to cry more easily - to feel what Sidra calls the "tears of the heart" - as contrasted with the tears of pain and suffering which are always there waiting for us. They are really quite different!

I began to really feel the power of relationship – the path of relationship – with a new passion and understanding. In that moment I began to dis-engage from my identification with the Spiritual hierarchy and step into Source Energy which allowed me to embrace the energies of the world and of relationship with the same passion that I had embraced the world of spirit and God.

I didn't call it Source Energy in 1983. Writing this article in 2006 was the first time that I began to use that terminology.

I realized also that there are many enlightenment experiences along the path of transformation. Anytime that we experience the surge of new energies, whether they come from unknown energy systems within our own body/psyche or directly from the Universe itself, there we have the possibility of an enlightenment experience.

We don't have to die to have an enlightenment experience, nor are all enlightenment experiences sourced by the Spiritual Hierarchy. I fully respect the path of seeking enlightenment that many men and women choose who seek the union with God as the highest value in their life. It is simply that this is not my path. It is not the path of anyone who works with the Aware Ego process because when we feel the opposites of human existence, we are led ultimately to Source Energy from whence came the whole idea of an Aware Ego Process.

Looking Back from 85

Speaking for myself, it seems quite clear to me at the age of 85 that we were not placed on this planet in a physical body simply to find God and exit in an exalted spiritual state. Embracing both sides means just that – embracing both sides: embracing Heaven and Earth; embracing the ecstatic orgasm, as well as the ecstatic vision; embracing boredom

as well as excitement; embracing the good and the evil. The opposites go on and on. One more thing is for sure as we trod along this path – it is very difficult to feel bored.

Embracing opposites through an Aware Ego process is what gives us ever-increasing degrees of choice and enables us to live an ever-increasingly conscious life. This life is not an easy life: there is so much to learn and to experience; there are oh-so-many bonding patterns to live through and look forward to; so much accountability that one learns to use creatively in the service of consciousness; and there are so many surprising rewards.

The experience in Safed occurred in 1983. This article that you are reading was originally written in 2006, twenty-three years later. I am here revising it seven years later, in January of 2013. It has taken me these past thirty years to deepen my experience of Source Energy and to begin to make sense out of the difference between Source Energy and Spiritual energy. Whoever my teachers have been on the inner level, it is absolutely clear to me that they have been with me from the beginning and they continue their work today.

In the articles that follow this one, Sidra and I will be sharing with you our understanding of this process. I repeat again what I feel to be true – that the Aware Ego process leads us inevitably towards the experience of Source Energy in some form. The ongoing practice of embracing opposites and learning to hold the tension of opposites can really lead to no other place. More of this at a later date.

We seem to be in a period of accelerated growth and change and are continually struck by new insights that occur as we deal with our personal relationships. This kind of learning is interspersed with other experiences, mainly through our dreams or through our work together, where Source Energy infuses us with its images and understanding.

I shifted at that time in Safed from a spiritual path to a psycho-spiritual path: what I would call

the path of the Aware Ego Process. We must learn to embrace the opposites of body/emotion/mind or the material world on one side and spirituality or the spiritual world on the other side. Then, after a time, it doesn't matter which side you are working on, the material or the spiritual. And I no longer am interested in leaving this life for something better or more important, because I'm having such a good time in so many different ways and Sidra and I, together, have such a great joy in helping people learn how to move towards these kinds of understandings.

Enlightenment is a vision of the spiritual primary selves. It is a beautiful vision generated by the search for spiritual reality and spiritual experience and spiritual clarity. As I have said, I honor that path, but it too-easily leaves out life and I am so grateful that I had this kind of understanding before it was too late to do all of the work I've done and to continue doing all of the personal work that always has to continue being done. Besides this, I am so grateful for all the fun of meeting and enjoying all of the people that have blessed my life these past thirty years.

If someone has an enlightenment experience, using the term as it is used in the East, does it mean that the individual has embraced all the selves? I don't believe this to be the case. Instead, I believe it means that such people have devoted themselves to spiritual work and practice and have had a direct experience of god and/or cosmic reality/ cosmic consciousness. It is clear that many aspects of the great mystery become known to them and major changes in consciousness will occur within them.

But do they know how to live in relationship? Do they know how to raise step-children? Do they know how to earn money and invest it? Do they know how to deal with acting-out children? Do they know what their disowned selves are? Do they know when they are in a positive or negative bonding pattern? Do they know the difference

between love and a positive bonding pattern? Do they know what happens in the unconscious when you convince people that they must be more loving and compassionate? Do they understand the reality of the "dragon energy" that is a part of them? Do they know that the powerful dark energy of Ghenghis Khan is a part of them?

It is very doubtful that this is the case. Source energy requires that we learn about these issues just as we have also learned about and surrendered to divinity. They are not mutually exclusive. It is our fate to live both sides in the psycho-spiritual path.

Meeting Evil

I remember that I stood before Evil once in a dream. This dream occurred in the year 2000 when I came close to dying from an overdose of pesticide; I'd been exposed to insecticides during our teaching trips to Australia the previous years. My deteriorating physical condition was like a death experience for both Sidra and myself and I came very close to moving to the other side. It was with my recovery, which took four months, that this dream came to me.

In my dream, I entered the garden with the feeling that I had died and could not be harmed by being in this space. A man was standing before me as though waiting for me. He was himself the personification of evil. I had entered this garden, which belonged to him, for the express purpose of meeting Evil. When I saw him I stood still and we just quietly looked at each other. I realized that we had been at war with each other – dreaded energies of each other - for century after century of time. Here we were in this incarnation fighting, yet again. At one time I am on top and winning and then he throws me over and he is on top and winning and on and on the war goes on.

Suddenly I looked at him in my dream and I felt a great sadness come over me. I saw and felt these ongoing wars between us over the centuries

and now, this time around, we were at it again. I felt a deep core sadness and from this space deep within my soul I apologized to him for all of the pain I had caused him through the centuries.

He was shocked at my words and my pain for him and he stood looking at me as though transfixed. Then he apologized to me and seemed to touch into that deeper source from which my words came. Then I began crying for I realized, at long last, that Evil was my Brother. Though no words were spoken out loud it was clear to me that he knew this too well, much more deeply than I. We stood there quietly sharing our thoughts and feelings with each other in the silence of this remarkable moment and from this space I came to consciousness. So ended this dream.

This dream, this meeting with the dark side that I have been working with all of my life, would never have been possible if I had not been blessed with the ability to separate from my drive towards enlightenment through my relationship to Sidra and her passion for life; through my daughter Tamar and her ever-watchful eye concerning my health and well-being, and to the intensity of my own personal process, in particular my dream process. I have met many remarkable energy systems that I would never have met and I can only gasp in amazement at the power of this Intelligence, once it gets going inside of us. This is what the work is really about from my perspective.

Beyond Dualities

The psycho-spiritual path is a path of inclusion, of embracing. It is not direct. On this path we are always working between opposites and learning to spend more time in a “middle way”: the Aware Ego process. We are always reaching for a new kind of balance as we stretch to encompass all we can that lies within and outside of the human psyche.

I am very grateful for the years I spent searching for enlightenment because I learned so much and developed strong transpersonal muscles swimming in that oceanic world. I am also aware of how much I wasn't present to my personal life during those years and the pain I brought to many people who were very dear to me and very close to me. The unconscious is indeed unconscious as Jung used to love to say.

Knowledge comes from the primary selves. The primary selves are the ones that accumulate information and facts and applied methods for the use of all of this knowledge - both the knowledge of this world and the knowledge of energies that lie beyond our usual modes of perception. Wisdom comes through the development of the Aware Ego process because here it is necessary to embrace opposites – over and over – forever and ever. If you are in a traditional enlightenment process, remember that this is only one side of the coin. On the other side is life, itself, in all of its manifestations. Our job is to embrace the total reality of both sides. Our job is to learn how to embrace and live heaven on earth.

This is indeed a huge stretch for all of us, but I can say now with some sense of authority, looking back at the life that has led me to the start of my eighty-sixth year, that the effort is well worth it and the rewards are indeed great.

What is it within us that drives us to learn to embrace opposing energies? It is the Source energy that pushes us in this direction. It is this Source energy that was instrumental in the discovery and evolution of the Voice Dialogue process. And please keep in mind that Voice Dialogue is simply a method for birthing the Aware Ego Process. For us, it is still the best method that we have found for birthing the Aware Ego process. Ultimately this Aware Ego Process can lead us to a deeper and more

Hal Stone, Ph.D.

direct experience of the Source Energy that lies beyond apparent dualities; suddenly the apparent duality of earth/world energies vs. spiritual energies has a chance to become clear to us and this duality that has existed for so long, is no longer an issue.

The process of the Aware Ego brings honor to these two dimensions of reality and I do believe that the Universal Intelligence / Source Energy / Organizing Intelligence would smile, and even laugh, at the idea of our embracing a union of such opposites.



Hal Stone
January 21, 2013

Originally written
September, 2006

www.voicedialogue.org
halstone@mcn.org