

POINTS TO PONDER AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING – “THE COMMUNITY WITHIN AND THE COMMUNITY WITHOUT” - SERVICE ON FEB. 17, 2008 AT THE PAINT BRANCH UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH- Rev. Gail Tapscott, Presenter

All of us have many competing voices or energy patterns within our personalities that can seem almost like autonomous selves. Several schools of humanistic or transpersonal psychology call these entities subpersonalities. Playing around with our subpersonalities can be a fun and creative way to become more self aware and to better monitor our interaction in the groups we belong to.

All of us have a component of the personality that could be called “the protector/controller.” This is sort of the executive branch of the personality. It is somewhat similar to the concept of the ego but functions more like a traffic controller as other semi autonomous parts of the personality compete for control.

Most of us have a pusher subpersonality that is always pushing us to do more and be more. This pusher often combines with a critical voice that makes us feel that we have always got things wrong. Other subpersonalities in this category are: the perfectionist, the people pleaser, the fighter, the judge of others, etc. Some systems call these the heavy weight subpersonalities.

Most of us also have one or more child like subpersonalities such as the lost or wounded child or the playful and magical child.

We also tend to have various types of parental energy patterns that can include the over protective mother, the nurturing father or the angry and hostile parent.

The goal of a happy and healthy life is to develop ever more awareness and to be able to find the strengths and weaknesses in all these energy patterns and make sure the best one is in charge in each group or situation you find yourself in. Many interpersonal conflicts in family, work or church settings occur when a childlike subpersonality clashes with a heavy weight or a parental subpersonality. Developing a strong “witness” or observing component in the personality is a sign that we are moving toward ever greater awareness and is a prerequisite for any type of spiritual enlightenment.

PLAYING WITH SUBPERSONALITIES

A fun exercise for learning more about your sub-personalities and playing with the concept is to create what I call a subpersonality pie. You draw a large circle on a piece of white paper and divide it into what look like various sizes of pie slices. Then think through what seem to be some of your most noticeable inner voices and create an image or a name for each of these sub-personalities. It can be fun to keep a sort of journal about the ebb and flow of the various sub-personalities as you go through your day. Notice which ones work for you and which ones sabotage you.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

Assagioli, Roberto, (1975). "Psychosynthesis: Manual of Principles and Techniques." Available from Psychosynthesis Press, London and Toronto.

Brown, Molly Young, (1993). "Growing Whole: Self Realization for an Endangered Planet." Hazeldon.

Ferrucci, Paolo, (1982). "What We May Be." Wellingborough and Tuchman Press.

Rowan, John, 1990). "Subpersonalities: The People Inside Us." Routledge, London and Newberry

Stone, Hal and Sidra, (1989). "Embracing Our Selves: The Voice Dialogue Manual." New World Library.