

## **A PASSION FOR THE POSSIBLE**

### **REFRESH A Retreat on the Mountain**

A lecture series based on the book by Jean Houston

David P. Milligan, Presenter

Lesson 1

An invitation to discover more of who you are

You are a seeker. You sense intuitively that you have potential that you've barely begun to tap.

Most of us will log five to fifty times the experience of our ancestors of two hundred years ago.

It has been said that as many events have happened from 1945 to today as have happened in the two thousand years before 1945.

Our everyday lives reflect this quantum leap in the complexity and pace of contemporary experience. We are caught uncertain, unprepared, and unprotected in the face of too much happening too often.

Some of us withdraw from the onslaught. We become workaholics. Or we find numbing solace in addictions or in hours spent staring at the television. Too many of us agree to live lives of serial monotony and the progressive dimming of our passion for life.

The density and intimacy of the global village, the staggering consequences of our new knowledge and technologies make us directors of a world that, up to now, has mostly directed us.

Today our extremely limited human consciousness has powers over life and death that once mythically were accorded to the "gods."

Extremely limited consciousness gives us governments that are too large for the small problems of life and too small in spirit for the large problems.

We can discover and develop qualities of mind, body, and spirit that can overcome these limitations. It is about our natural ability to gain a passion for the possible through the greater use of our innate potentials. Only in this way can we rise to the challenge of our times and ferry ourselves across the dangerous waters separating a dying era from one being born.

Regardless of how meager our self-esteem, we are called into greatness by the necessity of our age, and we have little choice but to say yes.

In a tribe in West Africa, for example, community issues are looked at in ways that we would find astonishing. The question—say, improving waste disposal in the village—is presented in a village meeting. Then people dance the problem, sing about it, draw it in the sand, close their eyes and imagine solutions, sleep and dream about it, dance some more, and then suddenly—a solution! And a very good one, too, for people have run the problem through many different modes of knowing and have looked at it from many different points of view.

Western women are leading the way toward the rise of women around the world to full partnership with men in virtually the entire domain of human affairs. And as women are being equally empowered, men are being freed to discover that activities often seen as “feminine”—feeling, nurturing, collaboration, celebration, relationships—are in fact the domain of all.

Women emphasize process more than product; their special gift is making things cohere, relate, grow. Through women’s eyes, relationships are more important than final outcomes. The world within is as important as the world without.

How do we train ourselves to live in an interconnected world, an ever-changing world, a world in which the unexpected is the expected and the breakdown and reconstruction of everything we ever knew is daily fare?

The good news is that our bodies and minds are coded with an extraordinary array of possibilities and potentials. The bad news is that we learn to use very few of them. It is as if we were a musical instrument with a million keys, but we tootle and hoot on only some twenty of them.

The stupendous music of our minds goes largely unplayed and unknown.

Human beings are not constituted to be content with living as thwarted, inhibited versions of themselves.

Throughout history and all over the world, people have felt a yearning to be more, a longing to push the membrane of the possible.

Many of the so-called larger-than-life people differ from the rest of us chiefly in this respect: It is not that they are actually larger in mind and soul or more brilliant. Rather, they are profoundly present to the stuff of their lives, to what is happening within themselves as well as around them.

They use and enjoy their senses more, they inhabit with keen awareness their bodies as well as their minds, they explore the world of imagery and imagination, they rehearse memories, engage in projects that reinvent the world, are serious about life but laugh at themselves, and seek to empower others as they would be empowered. Quite simply, they are cooking on more burners. And when at last they lie dying, they can say, "Life has been an eminently satisfactory experience."

Believe that you are more, that you contain an inner self, a true self, that can emerge only if you give it attention. You might consider it the fetus of your Higher Self, an evolutionary being ready to be born.

A journey to the four levels of your being

What is it that allows some people to tap into their creative power and do wonders in music, art, literature, and science, while others flounder in despair and confusion, cut off from the creator within?

They are familiar with their interior world and believe that its ideas and images could spark their projects. They have become an archaeologist of the mind, a spelunker in the cave of inner inspiration.

Delving into the depths of our own being is like getting in touch with the forms and patterns of Creation itself.

We are not “encapsulated bags of skin dragging around dreary little egos.”

That little world—each human being—is nested within the greater Environment of Being, which it both contains and mimics.

Our responsibility—our capacity to respond to the challenges that face us, our response ability—is to reconnect with the larger Source that we sometimes call divine. When we do so, we reconnect with the energy and the plan for our larger life and all that it entails.

Reconnection means laying down pathways to the Source in whatever way is right for us—meditation, prayer, dancing exuberantly, walking in the woods. We are as different as snowflakes, and our ways to the Source reflect this. We live in what is perhaps the first time in history when people are free to explore their own pathways

But like a new trail blazed through the forest, the path we choose must be traveled often before it becomes useful and familiar.

Eventually the worlds within and without are recognized as inseparable parts of the One Reality in which we live and move and have our being.

These and many other pathways to traditional wisdom are readily available today through books, seminars, and retreats. With such an embarrassment of riches, some of us are easily seduced into become spiritual dilettantes—enjoying the appetizers but never making a full meal of sacred food.

It is important to investigate the forms and practices of the inner life, but once you discover what truly draws you to the Source, you would do best to explore it for some time. Real growth comes with going deeply into an authentic spiritual path and sticking with it through its rewards and difficulties, not from gathering spiritual pollen like some fickle honeybee.

Reconnecting to the Source does not need to be a mysterious process. Each of us has access codes to the many stations of our being. Our tendency is to forget to update them and to tune ourselves day after day to the same old programs.

Meditators and mystics, healers and helpers, visionaries and creators from every walk of life have always visited the wonders of inner space.

In this class we will explore the realms of the senses, psyche, mythic and spiritual worlds within us to discover the incredible “possible” and to develop a passion for that possible.

## **A PASSION FOR THE POSSIBLE**

### **REFRESH A Retreat on the Mountain**

A lecture series based on the book by Jean Houston

David P. Milligan, Presenter

Lesson 2

## **SAVORING THE SENSORY WORLD**

Helen Keller – a model of the senses.

There is no question that our primary knowledge of the world comes through sensory and physical experience.

In childhood our senses are acute.

When we grow up, Wordsworth laments, the freshness and divinity of the world are hidden from our direct perception, and “nothing can bring back the hour of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower.”

Adulthood brings with it the potential to appreciate erotic love and aesthetic joy, a sense of shadows to heighten the sunlight, passion, paradox, contemplative intelligence—the whole human comedy and tragedy.

To regain full use of the senses in adulthood requires some effort on our part, but the labor is filled with delights.

When we wake up our senses, we activate our capacity to think, feel, and understand things in multiple ways. We enrich our concepts and lay down new pathways to appreciating the world about us and within us.

The skin we so take for granted is the body’s largest organ, a space suit for our earthbound existence.

Touch is said to be ten times more potent than verbal or emotional contact.

Babies need touch and holding to thrive and grow.

As adults as well, our abilities are enhanced by a heightened sense of touch.

Develop touch, and you gain sensitivity to the emotional “textures” of life.

Regular practice in high touch forges connections between your aesthetic capacities and your touch receptors.

With so much high tech around us, we need much more high touch for balance

What a blessing that something so enjoyable as tasting wonderful foods is good for us as well!

An enhanced palate is one of the keys to a life that savors the varied joys of living.

Taste teaches us to seek out the yummy in art and music, friends and ideas.

It heightens our appreciation for the sweet, sour, pungent, spicy flavors of life’s rich repast.

For us, too, foods are memory bound.

The many tastes of our lives have stories attached, along with emotions.

Perhaps the reason looking engages the soul is that seeing engages a great deal of the brain. Seventy percent of our sense receptors are located in the eyes. It is no wonder, then, that seeing is the principal way we appraise and comprehend the world.

The way we choose to frame reality with our inward eyes sets in play a whole range of creative and emotional forces. “I see what you are saying.”

A little light bulb goes off in our head, and we have a sudden flash of comprehension—an “insight.”

Sight is also “vision.” Visionaries are people who see patterns of possibilities before they emerge in time or who grasp easily the overall nature of things.

Seeing can heal our bodies as well as our souls. The correlation between imagery and healing has been well documented.

You are more in charge of your health and well-being than you ever imagined.

Try also to spend a few minutes each day holding a picture of your body and your mind in a state of splendid health.

As if this weren’t enough reason to develop your powers of sight, vision is also linked to the creative imagination.

Visual thinking allows us to see a project or idea as a whole.

Creative minds are generally engaged in imagistic thinking, racing over alternatives, picking, choosing, discarding, synthesizing, sometimes doing the work of several months in a few minutes.

Imagery, then, provides an environment as real and as influential as the tangible environment of our outward life.



Smell is primitive and powerful, but it is also subtle and evocative.

It gives us clues to our safety as well as our seductions.

When you follow your nose, you sniff out the aromatics of existence, know when to advance or retreat, leap into adventure or run for your life.

Did you know that you are able to discern over ten thousand different odors?

Memory is tied to smell.

Focus on your breath, following it all the way in and all the way out a hundred times or so, and your very consciousness changes.

Together you wonder what kind of voice the universe speaks in. The chanting of Om? The hissing of the stars? Or is it the Silence that contains all sound?

Deep listening is an art that can be learned.

One begins by attending to familiar sounds—wind, rain, the purring of a cat, the clatter of pots as dinner is made, liquid pouring into a glass, the whirl of the furnace or air conditioner.

Soon you begin to realize that deep listening involves the whole body.

Allow yourself to receive communication with all parts of your body and mind, not just with your ears.

Your voice is the vehicle of your soul's purpose.

Remember that you are a master maker of sound.

By musicking your mind, you give yourself potent sounds with which to reshape your existence.

As your skill at bridging inner and outer realities increases, some very remarkable things will become possible. An enhanced imagination gives you the capacity to create the blueprint or pattern for something that you wish to actualize in the outer world.

When you add the energies of the psychological, mythic, and spiritual realms to your heightened senses, your capacity for accomplishment will truly be formidable.

## **A PASSION FOR THE POSSIBLE**

### **REFRESH A Retreat on the Mountain**

A lecture series based on the book by Jean Houston

David P. Milligan, Presenter

Lesson 3

## **VISITING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REALM**

As the external world gives us entrance to the interior world, so our interior world impacts our perception of the external world.

In the psychological realm, the past is never finished, and the present is never fixed. You can even embark upon a kind of time travel here, journeying backward and forward in time to heal old wounds and transform obstacles into opportunities.

It doesn't matter what you do for a living. What do you ache for, and you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing?

It doesn't matter how old you are. What will you risk looking like a fool for love, for your dreams, for the adventure of being alive?

First, we must stop repeating to ourselves and others the details of the events or people that caused us pain. We do this not to deny the facts but to push ourselves out of the seduction of tunnel vision into a broader landscape that can reveal potent opportunities for growth.

Then we ask ourselves hard questions: Are we in a cauldron of pain or a chalice of opportunity? Shall we fret and whine, or can we see our suffering as a hand coming from the Higher Power to pull us into a new story

Finally, we tell our story again, not as a repetition of historical detail, but as a tale in which the wounding occurs in the middle, the ending of which is the birth of a new grace.

Personal wounding opens us, as nothing else can, to the larger reality that we contain. Suffering cracks the boundaries of what we thought we could stand.

And yet, through these cracks sprout the seeds of healing and transformation. Being more vulnerable ourselves, we reach out, extending our hands and our hearts to others who are suffering.

We can revision their own traumas in profound and useful ways.

Focusing on the journey more than simply on the destination, we can solve problems by looking for ways to make things develop and grow from within rather than by imposing solutions from without.

Most important, we must become comfortable with using the imagination to discover answers.

We can no longer afford to live as if emotions, memories, and intuition were beside the point.

Co-creators are people like you and me who get in touch with their inner resources, figure out how to use them, and then take an active personal role in their Divine Father/Mother's business of world making.

For one thing, attention to the inner workings of our psyche can help us make creativity central to our lives.

Ideas are diamonds, and they are stocked and stored in the great structure that we call our mind-body system.

Beneath the surface crust of ordinary consciousness, we are all filled with ideas and associations linking with other ideas—the very stuff of evolution moving in us to emerge as innovation. Our deep mind is making associations all the time. It's just that we generally don't inhabit enough of ourselves to become aware of them.

Part of the secret of creativity is learning to look at things in different ways.

Creativity has to do with really noticing the things that are without, letting them bloom in the great within, and being available to the possibility of novelty.

The greatest form of creativity is the re-creation of yourself. Moreover, the creative work you do on yourself will heighten your capacity for creativity in other things.

Your Essential Self, your Guide—the part of yourself that is encoded with your higher destiny, your purpose for being, wants to manifest now as what you yet may be.

Some of you may see this being as representing the Soul itself—the deepest, holiest, most whole part of you.

Some may sense it as the inner strength and vital force that directs your life and growth toward becoming all you are capable of being.

Our Essential Self has a radiance that our local self does not.

It is in touch with both our life and the Life of the Universe. It is in touch with the wisdom of the earth and the wisdom of the heart.

The Essential Self knows the possible paths our life may take and wants to help us choose the best ones. It knows how to turn imagination into reality and make the life we live fulfilling and creative.

A good memory is a valuable thing. It increases our intelligence and creativity by giving us access to the thousands of images and ideas that once were ours.

It allows us to inhabit our lives more fully—to be present to the whole range of our experiences and not just dwell on the hot spots.

Imaginative memory also enhances your creativity because it gives you practice in making associations in the theater of the mind.

Your Essential Self has direct access to all the things you have learned, seen, or imagined.

You might also imagine that your Essential Self links you to the collective unconscious—the soul and memory of the whole human race.

A vivid image helps give you the energy and focus to stick with it until your dream becomes reality.

The psychological realm is home to many kinds of time, as you will soon see.

Your body runs on biological time with its circadian rhythms that govern cycles of sleep and waking, digestion, respiration, and other natural functions.

You are also familiar with time flying when you're having fun, time crawling when you're bored, and even time standing still in moments of shock or wonderment. You regularly experience being out of time, wasting time, over-scheduled time, falling-in-love time, anxious time, meditation time, timeless time.

If you have ever been in a high creative moment or had a mystical or rapturous experience, you know what it is to feel eternity crack your usual categories of time.

When we think in images, our brain seems to need less time to reach a conclusion, relive an event, or rehearse a skill than it does when we think in the ordinary way.

Once you gain access to the varieties of time, you can rehearse and improve skills with rapidity and have all the time you need for what you wish to do.

Actually, we stretch time as well as shorten it all the time, but rarely are we aware of it.

Having more subjective time also gives you more time to rehearse and remember joy.

Remembering joy opens you to better relationships, deeper understanding, and more appreciation of life.

Rehearsing joy is a way to build a life of appreciation. Remembering joy gives us a truer perspective on my life.

Focusing on negativity increases our sensitivity to pain and fixates us more intensely on whatever difficulty comes our way.

The practice of gratitude for whatever the day brings reveals the side of life beyond the shadows. Note the change in your mind and body as you practice gratitude.

Your memory and creativity may also improve because you attend to things more closely when you are in a state of gratitude.

Now might be a good time to meet again some of your inner crew and learn how they can help you in your daily life.

Watch children play with their inner crew.

Make a list of your inner crew.

At this level of the psyche, an enormous amount of information is available that is not normally processed by the conscious mind.



Your inner master of a skill has access to all the knowledge that you ever gleaned, consciously or unconsciously, about the skill, as well as some new tricks.

When you call on the master, some of this hidden knowledge can be harvested and integrated into your learning.

If you give time and practice to rehearsing skills on the inner level, their outer manifestations will grow in you more quickly.

Skills relevant to communication and improved relationships can be gained using this process.

Getting in touch with the Essential Self of someone you know can improve communication instead of continually getting bogged down in tired old patterns of relating.

Learn to work with the Healer.

You might think of the Healer as the representative of your innate body wisdom and intuition, the part of yourself that has access to billions of bits of information about your health and its improvement.

By allowing the essence of the Healer to occupy the forefront of your consciousness, you can gain a better sense of what you need to do for yourself to achieve and maintain your best state of health.

You can learn to work with other members of your inner crew—the Inventor, the Lover, the Student, the Writer, the Group Organizer, the Mystic.

If the idea of having so many “beings” within yourself seems strange, it’s because our culture puts so much emphasis on each person having a single, consistent personality or role.

We tend to see ourselves through a single lens as a lawyer, a teacher, or a homemaker, as if that single label expresses all of what we are.

We describe our personality as “outgoing” or “quiet and shy,” as “friendly” or “solitary,” as if these terms express all of what we are or can be.

On the inner level, this emphasis on a unified personality translates into a limited “local ego” against which we measure and weigh every new experience and challenge.

How many opportunities for growth and enrichment do we deny ourselves by thinking of ourselves in this limited way?

Also included in our internal congregation are beings that seem to be ourselves at earlier ages.

The trick is that these earlier versions of ourselves are often caught in attitudes and woundings we experienced at earlier times in our life.

In a psychic time-warp, they are playing out the same sad stories over and over again. They do not know that we have grown up and moved on, and they persist in projecting old traumas into our current mindstream.

You may be able to provide comfort or to heal some of their pain and, in so doing, to redirect the patterns and emotional coloring of your present mind.

Take a moment to think of the times in your life when it would have been very healing for you to have been visited by your present self, who is possessed of the wisdom and understanding you've acquired in the intervening years.

We know that the episodes of our life are coded in the brain. But the brain does not make much distinction between what historically happened and how a memory has been reshaped or reimagined.

As a result of this exercise, your memories of what happened have been joined to new memories of comfort and healing, encouragement and empowerment.

You are doing real brain work here—modifying the track of the past as it is imprinted in your cells, releasing bad habits, freeing new mind, bringing energy and soul back to times when they may have been lost.

The glory of our minds is that we can time-travel in ourselves, entering into a point of pain to begin the process of releasing and healing.

## **A PASSION FOR THE POSSIBLE**

### **REFRESH A Retreat on the Mountain**

A lecture series based on the book by Jean Houston

David P. Milligan, Presenter

Lesson 4

## **THE MYTHIC JOURNEY**

Beneath the soil of your everyday world lies the vast root system of the Once Was and the Could Be.

Storytelling is the oldest form of teaching and the basic vehicle for the transmission of culture from one generation to the next.

Story is the juice through which consciousness and culture move.

If a visitor from another planet came down and asked the human race, “What exactly are you?” we would have to reply, “We are storytellers.”

Stories are the currency of human growth. As they are told and retold, heard and reheard, they reveal their deeper meaning.

How we view our life as a story often determines how life treats us.

Seeing our life as a great story can fill us with the passion for the possible.

Myths are great stories that have been told so often over so many years by so many people with so many cultural variations that they have become part of the structure of human consciousness.

Myths express so well the deep coding of human consciousness that people of all times and all places have felt compelled to tell and retell them to express the deepest truths they know about themselves.

Joseph Campbell, who probably understood myth better than any other figure in our century, put it best: “The symbols of mythology are not manufactured; they cannot be ordered, invented, or permanently suppressed. They are spontaneous productions of the psyche, and each bears within it, unchanged, the germ power of its source.”

Nobody escapes myth, hard as one may try, ordinary as one’s life may seem. Humans, in heart and soul, are mythic beings. Coded in our very cells, story breeds in our bones, cools in our blood, travels in our nervous system, incarnates with us in the womb, weaves through the roles and rituals of our lives, celebrates in our triumphs, grieves in our tragedies.

From its very inception, our life is a great story, a true myth. Each of us is grown in part from the sperm that made it—the heroic one of millions who battled its way upstream against insuperable odds to come together with its cosmic other half, only to die gloriously in an explosion of new life.

Every adolescent yearns for the land over the rainbow, the magical country of adulthood where we will shed our gawkiness, take on important tasks, be seen for who we really are, and find the glorious other who is our soul’s companion.

The typical midlife crisis is a kind of passion play. We lose a job, our marriage falls apart, we face serious illness. This stripping away of our hopes and dreams often seems a kind of death.

But as happens in myths, our suffering occurs in the middle of the story, the end of which is access to greater skills and understanding and even resurrection into a new way of being.

Death, too, is a mythic transformation—not an end but the crossing of another threshold, an adventure into the Great Mystery, where we join our energy to the Originating Place from which all great stories come.

When we are reminded of and reconnected to the stories of generations past, a rich and varied world of experience opens to us

Myth is like a force field charging the incidents of our personal history with meaning and significance.

It sustains and shapes our emotional attitudes, provides us with life purposes, and energizes our everyday acts. It gives life meaning and momentum.

We soon discover that we, too, are valuable characters in the drama of the world soul, pushing the boundaries of our own local story and gaining the courage to be and do so much more. The name of the myth is Your Story.

How many stories begin in a wasteland, where hopes are thwarted, rigid forms are imposed, and young people are discounted?

All wasteland situations contain in embryo the loaded time, a magical opportunity to seize the day and turn it around.

This generally requires a radical shift in consciousness to do this, for it's not always evident which path to take. Often one has to be moved out of stuckness by circumstances and outrageous forces.

We generally are "Called" when we find we are living in an outmoded condition, when nothing that we do works, when we have outgrown the comfort zone and feel that our true home lies elsewhere.

How has the Call come for you? Was it a quiet nudge, a loud yoo-hoo, a devastation of the life you had known, or simply a rising of your spirit to open the doors and windows to another way of being?

The Threshold Guardian is a monster who guards the gateway to the larger reality we seek.

In our own lives, the Guardian can show up as our boss, our church, our parents, our place in society, or even our timeworn habits.

In its most subtle and devious form, it manifests as a characteristic mood or emotional quality that colors our consciousness, blocking our access to a larger palate of emotional possibilities.

The Guardian is a creature of fixed habits and attitudes. It has a narrow and insular view of its place in the world, and little can be done to budge it. It blocks our path by turning us into a witless version of itself, destroying our moral and spiritual fiber, or even swallowing us whole.

In virtually all myths, one is required to prove oneself faster, wiser, and more ingenious than the Guardian in order to make safe passage.

On our life journey, we all experience the Belly of the Whale in some form.

The Belly of the Whale is a powerful time, when we know we must grow or die.

If we ignore or avoid this time of growth, we may fall into a period of depression or toxic self-doubt.

If we say yes to it, our time in the Belly is time when we go inward, take inventory, and become aware of a Force within ourselves that links our life to Great Life.

We can practice sensing this Force in our everyday life.

You may come to know and feel the ordinary for what it is—manifestations of the extraordinary life that flows through all things.

The Road of Trials is a part of all journeys.

The hero or heroine enters an unbounded, fluid landscape, symbolic perhaps of the dread that we feel before the unknown and unexplored regions of ourselves—be it desert, wilderness, sea, or outer space.

One is thrust into a series of challenges for which one has had little preparation. Somehow one finds the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual resources, not just to survive, but to triumph.



The Triumph is a time for celebration. The journey has been taken, the obstacles are overcome, your knowledge and willingness to serve have brought you to the Temple of the Heart, the place from which the greening of your world will proceed.

But first you must acknowledge and be acknowledged by the one who is known as the Beloved or Heavenly Partner.

This glorious being is your other half, who dwells in the depth world, the Godself from whom you are now able and willing to receive the gift of full recognition.

When you are known for who and what you are, you will be able to know others and recognize the Godself in them.

Now you have gifts to give because you have received so much.

## **A PASSION FOR THE POSSIBLE**

### **REFRESH A Retreat on the Mountain**

A lecture series based on the book by Jean Houston

David P. Milligan, Presenter

Lesson 5

The conflict between who we are and who we want to be is at the core of the human struggle.

Archetypes are your energy guides to your highest potential

Archetypes are spiritual energies

These spiritual energies connect us to the physical, spiritual, and mystical

Ex: The Platonic Eros

Physical: sexual instinct

Spiritual: passion for beauty and wisdom

Mystical: vision of the eternal, the ultimate source of all beauty

These archetypes are a support system and can be thought of as intimate companions

The more you know about how archetypes work, the more easily you can observe their influence on your thoughts, your attitudes, your behavior, and your personal myths and symbols.

The archetypes govern your relationship to your personal power and to spiritual power and are expressed through every aspect of your life.

We can only excel at what we are and not at what we would like to be.

You can pretend to be something other than who you are but eventually you will run out of energy to continue because that's not authentically you.

patterns of consciousness that form the essence of human nature.

Archetypes are both intimate and impersonal patterns of consciousness that form the essence of human nature.

Viewed through the heart they are personal enough to be called companions

Viewed with the mind, they are impersonal, symbolic patterns that serve in the energetic organization of your spiritual evolution

A personal experience filtered through an impersonal or symbolic attitude creates a vastly different psychic chemistry from taking everything personally

We have to balance a personal heart with a symbolic mind

Long before we become emotionally and spiritually empowered, we must engage our personal power in the material world

We also begin to understand that how we respond to our archetypes require us to have a moral compass or suffer the consequences

In engaging the physical world and the moral choices that present themselves, we develop self-esteem – this is the beginning of spiritual maturity

You have four constant archetypes at work in your life:

The Child, Victim, Prostitute, and Saboteur

These are the four survival archetypes

Archetypes are neutral

These four archetypes are the intimate companions of your intuition

They make you conscious of your vulnerabilities, your fear of being victimized

They allow you to see how you sabotage your creative opportunities or abort your dreams

They can also become your allies in fulfilling opportunities and dreams

Your archetypes will become your guardians and will preserve your integrity, refusing to allow you to negotiate it away under any circumstances

They will allow you to become completely self-reliant

Through them you will come to see options where others see excuses

The Child: Guardian of Innocence

Our entry point into this physical world – we start off with this archetype

This archetype establishes our perceptions of life, safety, nurturing, loyalty, and family

It has many forms: The Wounded Child, the Abandoned or Orphaned Child, the Dependent Child, the Innocent Child, the Nature Child, and the Divine Child

The core issue of all the child archetypes is dependency and responsibility

They teach us when to take responsibility, when to have a healthy dependency, when to stand up to the group and when to embrace communal life

During adolescence we become: self-aware, self-conscious, and self-centered

During adolescence we become aware of: the power of our mind, the pull of our heart and the passion of our body

Confronting the Child archetype within you awakens a new relationship with life and a fresh beginning

This archetype brings you in contact with the untapped resources connected to creative thought – the sensation that anything and everything is possible

The Child often inspires you to act outside restrictive boundaries or to explore an adventure without the burdensome weights of the adult mind

The Child must not be overindulged but it needs support to grow up

#### The Victim: Guardian of the Self-Esteem

Being a victim is a common fear

The Victim may manifest the first time you don't get what you want or need

The core issue of the Victim is whether it is worth giving up your own sense of empowerment to avoid taking responsibility for your independence

Avoiding conflict only works if you know that you can stand up for yourself if need be

The Victim comes full circle from being a symbol of weakness to being a reminder of our own strength

The lessons associated with the Victim demand that you evaluate your relationship to power, particularly in your interactions with people with whom you have control issues and need to construct personal boundaries

The primary objective of the Victim is to develop self-esteem and personal power

#### The Prostitute: Guardian of Faith

The Prostitute comes into play most clearly when our survival is threatened

Its core issue is how much you are willing to sell of yourself – your morals, your integrity, your intellect, your word, your body, or your soul - for the sake of physical security

The Prostitute embodies and tests the power of faith

Without faith, however, you will eventually meet the price you cannot turn down

The Prostitute points out the places in life that we try to find short cuts

The Prostitute comes into play when we are met with an opponent who will try to buy us

The Prostitute is the ally who puts us on alert every time we contemplate shifting our faith from the Divine to the physical

#### The Saboteur: Guardian of Choice

The Saboteur can cause you to resist opportunities

The Saboteur is the mirror that reflects your fears of taking responsibility for yourself and for what you create

The Saboteur archetype may be the one most intimately connected to your ability to survive in the physical world

The Saboteur can inspire you to acts of courage by following your intuition

The core issue for the Saboteur is fear of inviting change into your life

The intuition of change can reorder your whole familiar world

### Living in the shadow

The concept was initially coined and explored by Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, Carl Jung. He tells us that our shadow is the person we would rather not be. The shadow can be seen in the person in our family whom we judge the most, the public official whose behavior we condemn, the celebrity who causes us to shake our head in disgust.

The human shadow is our dark side; the place within you that contains all of your secrets, repressed feelings, primitive impulses, and parts deemed “unacceptable,” shameful, “sinful” or even “evil.” It is our lost and forgotten disowned self.

Contained within our shadow are the many things that parents, teachers, friends, cultural morays have told us were unacceptable.

Robert Bly describes the shadow as an invisible bag that each of us carries around on our back. As we’re growing up, we put in the bag every aspect of ourselves that is not acceptable to our families and friends. Bly believes we spend the first few decades of our life filling up our bag, and then the rest of our life trying to retrieve everything we’ve hidden away.

When the human shadow is shunned, it tends to undermine and sabotage our lives. Addictions, low self-esteem, mental illness, chronic illnesses, and various neuroses are all attributed to the Shadow Self.

The I Ching tells us, “It is only when we have the courage to face things exactly as they are, without any self-deception or illusion, that a light will develop out of events, by which the path to success may be recognized.” Only in the presence of an unwavering commitment to facing our demons does the doorway to self-discovery open.



## **A PASSION FOR THE POSSIBLE**

### **REFRESH A Retreat on the Mountain**

A lecture series based on the book by Jean Houston

David P. Milligan, Presenter

Lesson 6

## **THE SPIRITUAL QUEST**

Almost everybody seems to be on a spiritual quest or experiencing a growing hunger for it.

The thing about everybody is that they try everything. For sheer creativity and inventiveness, nothing beats spiritual adventuring.

Mostly, they shout at God, begging the Great One to finally show up in their lives.

The complexity of the present time seems to demand a deepening of our nature if we are going to survive.

Spiritual deepening requires exploration. And for all its byways, exploration leads ultimately to the spiritual source of our existence.

Though expressed in different words, a majority of religious/mystic traditions hold that each human being contains a Godseed, a divine essence that can be nurtured through spiritual practice into a fully matured expression of the God stuff within.

But all paths seem to agree that in addition to inwardly directed practices, spiritual growth also requires simple acts of compassion and service based on the recognition of the divine presence in all beings and the wish to serve the God in one another.

Belief in a divine essence as the basis of reality is not limited to explicitly religious paths. Scientists of a spiritual bent explain reality in terms that are not much different from those mystics use.

Speculative scientists often use the metaphor of the hologram to explain humanity's place in the Universal Mind.

The common quest often centers around, “I just want to know who and what I really am, that’s all.”

Saint Francis stated the problem in a similar way when describing the goal of the spiritual quest: “What we are looking for,” he said, “is who is looking.”

The Godself within is a natural birthright that comes with being human.

If we could only know this absolutely for a minute it would be like waking up from a dream.

There would be a powerful clarity and vitality to everything—people, trees, rocks, jet planes, our own body.

Best of all, other people feel enriched and nourished around them. Everyone they touch becomes more, because they themselves are more.

Pathologies spring up around this lack of clarity—mental and emotional delusions, disappointment with life, adulthood’s inevitable neuroses. As life progresses, more and more we lose awareness of the Infinite Self’s appetite for wonder and delight.

In the Realm of the Senses you opened new doors of perception.

In the Realm of the Psyche you discovered your soul’s partners who can connect you with greater creativity and the mastery of skills.

In the Realm of Myth and Symbol you quested for a clearer vision of your life through the transforming adventures of the hero’s journey.

But now we have reached the final threshold. Our challenge here is to learn to live so as to come back to who we really are.

“Be!”

That, is God knowing.

It is the spark of creative or spiritual sophistication that gives a person grace under pressure.

We are in a dialogue between matter and Spirit, human consciousness and the rhythm of the natural world – a spiritual drumbeat of creation.

It is love that brings you closest to God and to creation.

Love opens your heart so that the whole world can stream in to be cherished.”

Through love of the Divine Beloved, our mind and soul awaken to everything that can be known in the inner and outer worlds

Feel and believe that the One who is Love Itself is communing with you.

The Beloved yearns for you just as much as you are yearning for the Beloved.

The Beloved who is within you – the Beloved in others – the Beloved That Is.

Just as the physical eye is the extension of the brain, so the spiritual eye, often imagined as being in the center of the forehead, is seen as a symbol of spiritual vision.

In the process of awakening, the physical eye and the inner, spiritual eye become one.

“If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.” – Jesus Christ

Attention (What we are watching) means mindfulness to whatever is before you—sensory impressions, memories and emotions, stories. Attention helps you go off automatic pilot and be present to the glory of the moment.

Gradually mindfulness becomes a habit, and the world and your relationship to it changes.

Mantras, chants, and meditations fill up the mind with positive ideas and emotions, pushing out fear, anger, suspicion, jealousy, and other negative states.

Service—whether it is comforting a friend or saving the redwoods—will provide its own teachings,

Love that is the heartbeat of Eternity in time.

In the presence of such Love, your heart dissolves its fortress walls so that the Beloved may enter.

There is, for now, no more seeking. You are Home, at home in a sacred place that has always been within you.

You and Everything have become water poured into Water.

You and the Divine have become one taste.

With your senses tuned and your psyche primed, with a mythic path beneath your feet and the immensity of Spirit holding it all in Love, your life can be your work of art, your great creation, your everyday passion.

The great Kingdom within is your birthright, your splendid inheritance.

All that is required now is that you continue to till the soil of your soul.

On a day when you are feeling dim, go into the sensory realm and burnish your senses until they shine. Meet with cooks and musicians, painters and sniffers, and those for whom touch is the road to glory.

Should you be feeling ill, visit again with the inner Healer and rediscover ways to embrace health.

If you are feeling low and without purpose, go mythic!

You have within you a thousand heroic stories.

And when Spirit calls, answer. The spiritual realm is the source of all the others. There you return to the heart place of your Home's Home.

Now you have a passion for the possible.

Now you can live the life you were meant to live.

So just do it!