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The Futility of Relationship (The Efficiency of Intimacy)

*And now I must add another to love in my life,
It's one thing to say, to do is another,
If I'm capable of adapting without pressured expense,
In a schizoid society in the classic moral sense,*

Unlimited capacity for love.

*The end's not in sight, it's gone way too far,
This could turn out another un-winning war,
It wasn't inherited, certainly not a joke,
So many human hearts, hanging in hope,*

Unlimited capacity for love.

Grace Jones

Relationships are supposed to fail. Around undeniably natural attractions and drives, the human ego has designed the institution of the relationship. But few relationships, in the end, deliver what is imagined, desired, longed for and expected.

Soon after we've gone under from the drug of love and somewhere far too soon along the axis of time, we start noticing that what we're experiencing through this brilliant coupling doesn't correspond as completely to what we signed up for as it used to.

The First Fight

You will remember that the awareness of this fall from grace hit you first...before any words were spoken. Just before your body chemically reconfigured itself from it's entirely vulnerable and undefended state into a posture that was battle-ready...one that could house both your anger and also

the meteoric rush of panic that was racing toward the borders of your body. And as this barb ripped through the perfect flesh of your newborn love, you knew that it would never regain its once radiant innocence. There would always be a scar, a monument to this failure.

The blessed aura of unity that you wore for weeks...that everyone could see as you approached...that converted your body into an unstoppable energy machine...that opened a book of poetry...that added a completely new dimension to the functioning of your brain, was now diminishing beyond your capacity to revive it.

But, of course...it would now take two to reconstruct the perfection that formerly seemed to be the hand of God working on its own. It would never be perfect again.

This is not a treatise of apathy, resignation or bitterness. And it's not about learning to protect oneself from the inevitable outcomes of intimacy. It's about the wisdom of the breakdown of relationship...when true relating ceases and the ego is forced to be dismantled...when the return to Earth couldn't feel more painful or unwelcome. It's about how relationship and, in particular, how the failure of relationship functions to help us become conscious.

Ego-consciousness is an infant. Attempts to reform it fail as predictably as having a rational conversation with a three month old. You're not being heard.

The romantic promise of a relationship is cultivated around what the ego expects, demands, anticipates and refuses to live without. It has the power to drive us into an encounter with another, again and again, never abandoning what it seeks. Hollywood, Madison Avenue and the Internet have done a frighteningly thorough job of conditioning us into never straying from this orientation. We cannot be a part of modern culture and not be reminded of this every moment of every waking hour. To think that you can conduct a partnership that entirely circumvents this fundamental is entertaining and quite insane.

We've learned to dress up the voice of the ego with the long popular "getting our needs met" permission that the psychological movement has granted us. Some of us are starting to see that meeting our own needs is a powerful option to enslaving someone else to do this work for us. Score one in the battle against being run by our inner infant.

If the ego is, indeed, the primary architect of our relationships, then relationships become a hall of mirrors that can really only deliver the ego back to us. It is the love-child progeny of itself. Witness the evidence of its duality, projections, and compulsions around sensation, sentiment and so forth.

And then there is the sex...with its pumping blood and messy hungers. Who can deny that the ego's set point is centered right here?

The ego is powerfully influenced by the expression of sexuality. It's response to sex, ironically, is one of isolation. It conditions the mind in response to the experience which, in turn, alters and distorts it.

We, consciously or not, experience the bliss of fusion and think accordingly that it has to be the result of this union with our beloved. And it's this union...not any other that came before it or any that will come after.

“I have never felt this way before” you tell her. You’re lying and you know it. But it feels like you’re telling the truth. And, as you say it, you’re surreptitiously booking another date with the only known human-based elixir that can bring you, ever-so-temporarily into the present moment.

It is important to become familiar with the voice of the ego. For the organism, its job is to keep us breathing. For the organism with a personality and a consciousness, its task orientation is more sophisticated. It keeps us separate. The ego’s hostile takeover of all of a person’s needs and desires then becomes confused with those required for basic survival. Learning to recognize the voice of the ego is critical in any attempt to move beyond it. Responding to its tyranny keeps us in our lower natures.

This voice is wily and highly adaptable. It’s a master of disguise and also of argument. It proliferates in the fertile abyss of our narcissistic wounding...in those places where our spiritual perfection wasn’t reflected back to us by our human caretakers. When we over-identify with this voice, our needs and opinions become life and death issues.

We are calibrated to find our mothers and fathers in our partners. Where we are with our understanding, transmutation and forgiveness of these relationships will be evident in who we are drawn to and who is magnetized to us. It is always a hand-in-glove fit. On an energetic level, it looks more like a contract. A very wise God brings every partnership together. We are encouraged, often times through force of repetition (same relationship, different person), to discover the uncomfortable perfection of this seemingly random connection with our partners. But very few choose to make authentic contact with this awareness beyond its discovery.

Let’s return to the sex. Restraint around initiating the first encounter is something that most of us have a hard time with. And many people report that a certain lack of objectivity ensues after merging sexually. There are very powerful energetic and chemical explanations for this. Once this has happened, our orientation to the other person shifts immediately from outside to inside, from objectivity to subjectivity, from having more free perspective to having decidedly less. From this point on, the two people have a type of lock on each other. If they decide to move forward into further experience and greater intimacy, they will continue to configure to each others energies, issues and karma, but now from within the entity that is the new relationship. Even if they never see each other again, they will remain changed by the experience and continue to influence each other beyond the encounter.

The best energetic argument to dissuade one from premature sexual involvement or from “sleeping around” in general has to do with some unseen but potentially devastating outcomes. Exposure to and involuntary involvement with the other person’s entire field of karma as well as any negative elemental or predatory forces that the person may be hosting are probably the most important to consider. These can not only frustrate, compromise and disfigure you for life; they can follow you into the next. This should be enough information to inspire a little research before getting naked. The stakes are higher than you can imagine. Energetic hygiene is something that very few people are aware of, let alone,

practice. The good news is that it is possible to deliver yourself to a new partner as a “clean slate”, an energetic virgin. The ego, however, is fundamentally unconcerned with this reality.

In the end, it can be argued that if you decided to “go there”, then you were meant to. The lower and darker forces that can run rampant through the environment of sexuality ultimately serve us in our growth. But growth from this kind of awareness can come at a very high price and is often times a retrospective feature of our “mistakes”. The slow integration of consciousness-raising experience allows us to choose from a place beyond ego. The abiding intention of this process is to suffer less and to cause less suffering.

References to how critical it is for marriage to be the sacred vessel for sexual union are written into almost every ancient religious text. For the most part, this has unfortunately been interpreted as a need to take a walk down the aisle in order for this type of intimacy with our partner to be recognized and sanctioned by the established religions and their social communities.

Most modern couples, openly or not, quickly dispose of these regulations and, if they ever make it to the place where they are seeking familial and societal recognition, the marriage is conducted more as a formality that also serves to appease the relatives.

Part of the magic of the sexual act is that it naturally brings two people, if only temporarily, into a powerful state of communion with each other. This is marriage.

If already in that energetic state with each other, there will be no backlash of discord afterwards. They will be able to functionally pull away from each other and reset the energetic charge of attraction.

If the two are seeking to be in that state of communion with each other, but aren't quite there, then anything that is “not of love” will be drawn to the surface to be dealt with. This could serve as the essential mechanism by which they can naturally separate but, more often, these gaps in the consciousness will constellate into future issues or obstacles to the smooth harmony experienced during the romantic phase of the bonding...where everything seemed to go perfectly and was expected to ad infinitum. In this way, all intimacy is efficient.

The notion that “relationships are work” springs from the vast degree of experience we have all had that proves it. Talk to anyone. An honest and thorough inventory of relationship expectations followed by the realities of what has actually been experienced; the results, and ending with all the explanations, excuses and justifications for why it all went the way it did can sum up a history that most of us can relate to.

Looking at the astrological placements of the first house (of self) and the opposing seventh house (of other / intimacy) gives us a clue that this axis is where we are destined to discover and unlock the secrets of our consciousness that direct this dynamic. It's tricky because the ego runs interference on the sensitive material, protecting us while maintaining its authority. As a result, it's easy to stay in projection.

To be in a partnership of any kind, cooperation, negotiation and compromise are essential. But is it possible to be in a relationship and not have to severely

compromise who we are? What I'm referring to here is that moment when we look back and discover that over the last three, four or five years we actually abandoned important parts of ourselves just to be with this other person. Parts of ourselves that we regret giving up and that we wish we had back. This is not compromise, it's sacrifice.

Your (relation) ship is either sailing or it's sinking. Those built primarily around ego-consciousness carry too much ballast to stay afloat for long. But, even as they sink, they are functioning. We only rush to rescue someone who is actually drowning. Our attention is drawn to that which isn't working. How we encounter the information that we receive as our ship goes down describes whether or not we will carry the same wounding and consciousness into the next moment or into the next round of primal dating-mating.

The unconscious drive to propagate the species and/or increase life force will always bring us together. But it's a perfect consciousness that miraculously finds the needle in the haystack each time. Unless one is completely cut off from one's higher nature, the perfection of each union will, in time, show itself with alarming clarity. Even if it's something as simple as learning to say "no" to a particular overbearing personality trait that keeps showing up, partner after partner.

Relationship is but a messenger of our karma and our evolving consciousness. Too often it is blamed for the material it delivers. By accepting that parts of our consciousness, through intimacy, are given a vehicle so that they can finally be mobilized and transformed can help when the fireworks fizzle and we find ourselves, once again, in a head-on collision with ourselves.

Freedom through Neptune

The astrological significance of the planet Neptune provides an answer to the unending complications that the human ego throws at our instinct to bond. It involves the creation of a consciousness that is so much larger than the problems that plague relationships that the problems seem to go away on their own.

The higher octave of Venus (mundane intimacy) is Neptune...it is where we deliver ourselves to be embraced by Spirit. We have now learned and integrated enough to surrender our ego identification and all of its problems without denying them, and thereby enter an entirely new field of trust...one that isn't conditional.

It's a new day when we can welcome whoever comes along, knowing the perfection of the encounter before it ever hits the ground. We are mindful, self-responsible and free from all victim orientation. This is bliss. We can handle anything that shows up and know that our true (spiritual) autonomy and dignity cannot be touched, regardless of what goes down.

The legacy of our spiritual inheritance includes the vast infinitude of all of our lives; the ones we have lived and the ones we have yet to live. It includes a consciousness that goes beyond them as well. In the grand scheme of things, we're working through some very specific, critical and finite material in this life. It's as important to reference and connect with our greater wholeness. Here we can gain refuge, inspiration, guidance and strength through the outer, unlimited

realms. All of which can be utilized in our efforts to illuminate and transmute the environment of our human, conditional experience of intimacy.

Within the energy represented by Neptune, there is no “relationship work”. We have truly ascended from the struggles of intimacy that were formerly our prison, created and held in place by the ego. When we are finally frustrated by the futility of this arrangement, we can begin the artful work of our surrender to Spirit where we consciously yield to what we may fear is the encroaching entropy and chaos of the Piscean destiny that ultimately awaits us all.

Ironically, it requires a profound level of (positive) ego-strength to go beyond the trap of (negative) ego. But we must have something to surrender before we can surrender it...there must be an identity and an awareness of that identity.

It is here that we finally ascend into the functioning of our higher selves because we have created a consciousness that can hold our lower natures and still provide us with a choice...between the ego-brain, with its unending and ever-changing list of imperatives around how to remain safe or the more subtle heart-chakra orientation, with its softly chiming bell-tower voice, “you are safe.”

The Work

Can we trade out the old standard with all of its hazards and let-downs for the Neptunian ideal? Can we read a trendy, inspirational best-selling book...like the very popular paint-by-number formulas that periodically invade the consciousness-seeking market and its bookstores - book after book, wave after wave - and spontaneously be released from this bondage? I’m referring to the ones that present a very refined realization of enlightenment, stripped of its vast network of evolutionary requirements and life experience. Like white sugar, we’re given a brief lift out of our spiritual inertia and then dropped hard because there’s no nutrition there to sustain the charge. Can we just identify the critical differences, click our heels together three times and be transformed / transported into the realm of work-free relationships? No, a thousand times, no.

The most recent offering (and it’s no secret, by the way) reduces the lives of all the enlightened masters that ever walked the Earth into an easy-to-swallow inspiration pill. These masters became enlightened through a long process of evolution and purification. There was a refinement of the ego through an ascending spiral of integration which was reflected in their astrology charts. Their relationship to the planet, to their path here, through so many different things, enabled them to finally break free of the restrictions that all of us have been imprisoned by for eons. Their lives, lessons and transformations were not easy or immediate...and they had a serious “leg up” on all of us.

Your intention to hold a certain vibration or frequency will put you on a path that will challenge you, to say the least. Your astrology chart, the map of the evolution of your soul, is fraught with energetic deficits as well as strengths and promptings for evolution. You’re already on that path.

If you’re consciously tired of being trapped in a redundant cycle of repeating karma and suffering, you can change it...you can pivot in this moment – now -

and begin a new trajectory of lives that are moving towards greater Light. Just like the Earth races are pivoting out of Kali Yuga, the point of greatest darkness, at this moment.

The simple intention to shift all relating to a self-responsible, self-aware and transcendent model can activate the Light Body. You are a master of certain spheres and a beginner in others. We all have a homeopathic effect upon each other. Through this we can see that we are all designed to help each other raise our respective vibrations by interacting through both our stronger and our weaker natures.

“Big picture” or multi-incarnational awareness is essential here. Our immediate gratification world has trained us to shove our personal evolution into the same machine that processes the desperation of our desire nature with all of its acquisitive compulsions and intentions. True evolution takes a bit longer. Consider the hundreds of thousands of years when aquatic creatures with half-formed lungs flopped onto beaches and suffocated in their glacially slow movement towards becoming air-breathing terrestrial animals. Their lives weren’t wasted.

So we’re talking about a different type of commitment here. Fortunately, as we accelerate into the home stretch of the Mayan Calendar reference for this period, it’s taking less and less time to learn and assimilate new material. We can use this to our advantage, especially when facing a new body of work. It won’t take as long as it used to.

The walls of our hearts are formed by our ability to say “no”. Without this, we lose the positive critical feature of self-identification that separates us from all others. As a practice, it can define us as separate, autonomous beings, but in a much healthier way than through conflict. Cultivating an attitude of acceptance for the circumstances that arise through our intimate connections along with a compassionate ability to say “no” to people, situations, places or event-moments that are not in harmony with our soul vibration can gain one freedom from many of the typical hazards that arise through intimacy.

“What is this person showing me about myself?” is a difficult and powerful question to ask yourself when someone is behaving in a way that really tags you, when the heat is really turned up. Avoiding an ego response to the answer is probably the fastest way to integrate what you have witnessed and move beyond it, that is, avoiding anything that would load the observation with an emotional charge...shame, guilt, pride and so forth, along with any desire or intention to change or alter what is being witnessed.

Finally, listen to the voice of the ego as the rush of new love floods your body with dopamine, triggering all of its expectations and responses that are connected to the notion that you might suddenly be delivered from deep feelings of being lonely or incomplete...that your world will magically enter a state of homeostasis where things will finally start to feel good and make sense. Where you will be able to give and receive love, but in a way that feels resoundingly similar to your reality before that perilous fall from grace when mother was distracted, stressed-out or afraid and the inception of simple mal-adaptive behaviors to gain her attention back took off in every direction like flares into the

oblivion of a night sky.

We are never beyond this instinct. We can, however, learn to manage it. We can intervene and evolve that which originates in our ego and sexual natures. We can convert it into higher love...into a higher life condition. Growing up, in this sense, has little to do with the conventional model of maturity. It involves the development of a new consciousness and a refinement of the ego that is the result of a new commitment. One constructed and expressed through an entirely new language that actually co-exists, in a parallel sense, with our conditioning and lower natures.

*You are encouraged to say to your ego:
'You have created tremendous trouble for me,
and I don't like you. I'm going to destroy you.'*

Chogyam Trungpa

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