



the Ray of Connection

A SOCIETY OF SOULS® NEWSLETTER OF INTEGRATED KABBALISTIC HEALING®

The Miracle of Giving Up

Brenda Blessings

I have been working with a client I'll call Anna once a week for six months. Anna is 58 years old. Her initial presenting complaints were that she was overweight, she was depressed, had great difficulty in moving due to severe arthritis, etc. She would begin each session, week after week, telling me how nothing had changed, she was still in pain, she still couldn't move, nothing was happening. Week after week, nothing would change and, quite frankly, as her healer, it was driving me nuts.

I finally brought her up at a supervision session with Jason, and as I waited for some amazing revelation of how I could help her, he said to me, You may have to accept that you can't help her.

As you can imagine, this was not what I wanted to hear. I had gone through weeks of struggling with my feelings of helplessness, of trying to be with her in her helplessness, and now I'm hearing: Accept that you can't help her.

It was also quite clearly the right advice. I realized that I had never really given up on helping her. I had secretly and subtly still been caught in my own need to help her (transference around my mother).

The next session as she began with her story, I really let myself accept that I couldn't help her. The only thing left for me to do was to be with her, to really be with her and myself in our

helplessness, in our humanity. It felt like a miracle. I could be with her and this was more than enough. I wound up doing a healing of Netzach-Hod that session, but somehow that felt less important than simply being with her.

The next week, for the first time, she began to report movement. She had decided to take some steps and begin eating differently. She had hired someone to help her clean up her house, throwing away a lot of old clutter.

The following week she reported that she was losing weight, that she had hired someone to come into her home to do repairs that had been needed for years.

The week after that, she reported that she was feeling happier, more optimistic and could I help her more with her fears about living. She also started talking to me in depth, relating how her fears had controlled her life.

My prejudice for movement versus lack of movement is still very present. But I understand more clearly now the importance of no movement all of those months and my need to accept it. Most of Anna's life she had had to say yes (Hod-Netzach), taking in ideas and advice and living her life taking care of other people. In essence, she needed to say no all of those months to my ideas and advice and help. She needed to reclaim herself.

When I no longer needed her to

Running and Returning

One asked: "What is genuine insight?"

The master said: "Entering the realms of the worldly and the sacred, the tainted and the pure, the land of the Buddha, the upper chambers of (the Heavenly hierarchy), you will see them all as subject to the law of coming to be and ceasing to be. Buddha appeared in the world, turned the wheel of the Dharma and then entered Nirvana. But he did not see these as the features of coming and going."—Rinzai

Ten sephiroth of Nothingness/Their vision is like the "appearance of lightning"/Their limit has no end/And His Word in them is "running and returning"/They rush to His saying like a whirlwind/And before His throne they prostrate themselves.—Sefer Yitzerah

All of our lives we are moving someplace: from understanding to ignorance, from infancy to old age, from birth to death. Where is the center? What remains constant as the wheel spins? From the Relative side we call Life, we call this center God, and God is the Invisible Place our lives turn around. From the Absolute, there is Nothing to say and Nothing to Do, yet the world continues.

Whenever we do kabbalistic healing we engage with both of these worlds. In the diagnostic process we sit in understanding and disappear into nothingness. We allow ourselves to be friends with wisdom and insight and compassion as well as ignorance, confusion and emptiness. All of these exist for us not as opposites—as they would be if we had only the Relative world—but as brothers and sisters who bring us closer to the Reality of our clients' lives, the Center that makes healing possible. In this way the world goes on, and healing goes on, with the running that is really not running and the returning to the Place we never really left.

I feel profound gratitude for all of you doing this work, struggling with perceived limitation and always finding your never-lost, Light-filled Home.—Jason Shulman

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change, on even the subtlest of levels, she was freed from my projections and could make her own decisions, change as she wanted to, not as I needed her to. It also seems clear that what I had interpreted as no

movement included movement—very much like Gevurah.

The work with her has helped me to see anew the miracle of giving up, of surrendering to our client, to the process of being in relationship. We

are free to be ourselves in all of our humanity, and change happens organically as a part of the process, not because we make it happen. ○

Brenda Blessings is a healer from Annandale, VA. She graduated ASOS in 1998.

The Diagnostic Process: An Example

Frances Morris

This session was with an ASOS colleague, whom I shall refer to as W. Her presenting complaint was that the left side of her neck and shoulder was quite painful. W. reported that she had a low-grade headache and that she had been seeing a chiropractor regularly who said that he hoped to be helpful in her managing to tolerate stress better. W. also let me know that she had had a Healing of Immanence in Asiyah a couple of weeks before that had cleared energy in her lower back but had not effectively cleared the neck stiffness. In listening to W., I felt that there might be some underlying emotional cause that had yet to be revealed.

W. associated the neck condition with a feeling of: "I can't get what I want. Things should be done a certain way or I'm out of here!" I found myself inwardly smiling with the recognition that this was one of my issues as well. I became interested and curious to know more.

The situation that precipitated these feelings, as W. narrated, was that the leader of her synagogue was not taking the time and trouble to have the five copies of the Torah in the synagogue properly examined to make sure that they had all their letters intact. W. explained that if any letters are missing or damaged, a Torah no longer can be considered sacred and becomes an idol. She said she would not stay in a place that "worshipped idols." I wondered

to myself if her Gevuric presentation might reveal a nega-Hesed wound. This was later confirmed by W. sharing that she had been sexually abused by her father while her mother had been as good as absent.

W. felt that the validity of her position was not being acknowledged and she was no longer able to tolerate the difference between where she stood and the more casual approach of the leader. W. correlated her "not wanting to budge" with "a stubborn, young" part of herself. I asked her what emotions she experienced when she heard herself say, "I can't tolerate the difference...." W. said that underneath the rage was sadness—sadness at the loss of connection with the community if she did leave, and, perhaps more important, that her judgment of them made her feel more separate. W. said that while her presence was appreciated by people, she still didn't feel properly acknowledged or heard. This remark seemed to point to a possible Healing of Immanence as a way of rectifying that wound, but I intuited that we still had more road to travel.

I then inquired whether this situation brought up anything from her childhood. W. told me about the sexual abuse of her father and her mother's lack of cueing into her signals of distress and pain. She said that sadness had always been more acceptable in her family, but that "there was no receptacle for rage," and that she had always had a "bad temper." Her father's dictum, "Never apologize,

never make a mistake," had rigidified her own code of pride and perfectionism. Her only way of dealing with anger was to distance herself because "it was not safe to be angry."

The phrase "no receptacle for rage" as well as the developmental stuckness suddenly illuminated the healing that felt right: Netzach-Hod. As soon as I accepted that truth (as I saw it), my whole body started to tingle. W. had not had a victory for her anger at sacredness being trampled on. As she put it: "The broken letters of the Torah and the devaluing of its sacredness was the same for me as my hymen having been broken and my own sacred vessel being shattered." I shared with W. my entire thought process and she agreed with the final diagnosis.

The healing itself was very powerful for me: re-establishing the sacred container by cleaving to Hod quickly allowed the triumph and victory of Netzach to manifest. The two became an indivisible current of steady strength and richness. W. reported feeling very peaceful and, wonder of wonders, her neck and shoulder pain had become significantly reduced. She left the session looking very bright and happy.

Offering up a summary of this session is simply to share how awed I am by the diagnostic process and how, by just "riding the wave," one is led to the gateway of wholeness. ○

Frances Morris graduates ASOS this year. She has had a healing practice in Belmont, MA, for 10 years.

Question to Jason

Judy Sirota Rosenthal

I feel like the child who does not know how to ask. I have been sitting with the question of questions for several days.

Sometimes I do not know if I am questionless from history, from numbness, from lack of curiosity, from not knowing how to ask, from too much acceptance or from agreement—thinking in a fleeting moment that I have a glimpse of understanding.

Now it is time to dig and work that soil.

Thoughts and questions may come from the same place. Partly, I want questions to be part of creation—to be responsive and alive, to create intimacy. Partly because I want to know that I am getting it. (Some of the time when you say, "Do you get it?" I don't get it, or don't know how I get it. But I don't ask; the question is not formulated.)

I do not want to stay at this same place. A good healer in some ways asks good questions...allows a space from which good questions can arise. Right now there is a new student's eagerness of "Is this a good question?" an attachment on my part to the question. I feel I have to work hard at it.

It takes me a long time to articulate the question; to stay in relationship to the other or even myself.

What can you teach me about how to find the question at the heart of the matter, not just responding to the other or myself from a place of trying to comfort or to honor? There is an art to it that is not from panic or defense.

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Judy Sirota Rosenthal is an artist, photographer and second-year ASOS student from CT. She wrote this during her first year.

A New Way of Seeing/Being

Cheryl Jacobs

A scene that occurred in my last session of ASOS that I have played out over and over in my head: A student was opening up a different space for exploration and it was very painful. He spoke of his pain and of his yearnings. Jason listened, watched and decided to walk across the room. He knelt down and took the man into his arms and patted him on the back. In this embrace, the man moved more completely into this new space and began to sob. After a few minutes Jason stood up and went back to his chair. There was a moment of considered silence before moving on.

I keep going over it because, while I now have the picture, I have yet to integrate what I saw as a way of being. I saw Jason's willingness to stand in witness of another's agony. I saw his willingness to be fully present, to look into another's eyes and say, "I see you." I saw a safe space created for feelings to come into the light and be experienced. I saw Jason remain intact throughout the entire exchange. He did not strive to make anything different or to affect any outcomes. He honored the space created.

I want to be able to do that. I keep running the scene because I keep hoping that some painless exchange is going to occur in which I will be able to move into that space without having to plunge into the depths of my own pain. And I realize as I write this that I have a desperate feeling that I can no longer avoid doing just that. But I have spent most of my life learning not to go there and the undoing of those lessons seems difficult at best. But I have become more conscious of the effects of not going there and my discomfort is growing great enough that it may pop me through my own resistance.

The practice of form anxiety has connected me with the tension each

cell holds to contain my pain. It has connected me with the amount of energy I expend each breathing moment into holding on to the illusion of being able to shape my experience into a known outcome. My body contracts with the burden of maintaining the need for control, living outside myself so I do not have to confront my fears of what lives inside.

I have two children and they are never far from my consciousness, particularly as I journey along this path of kabbalistic healing. Children are great teachers. If I need to learn about the illusion of having control, I check in with my children. When I fall under the delusion that I can will something to be a certain way (the way that I've determined will be best!), I can trust that my children will provide me with learning opportunities to know otherwise. Because my love for these two is so deep, they provide me with my most vulnerable experiences. They have taken me to the edges of my depths.

Both my children suffer from chronic health conditions. The last couple of years with them have been stressful and very painful for me. The image I have is that of rolling, turbulent seas. I am captain of this boat, and I am at the wheel frantically trying to keep the boat from capsizing by making constant adjustments to its position. I force myself to continue this pattern of action because I believe I can ride out the storm and calm water will return. I do not trust that the boat was designed to withstand these storms. Part of me wants desperately to let go of the wheel and trust that the boat will keep afloat. Part of me wants to be able to look around and witness the glory and power of the storm itself. Part of me wants to plant my feet on the deck of the boat and be the storm. But I hold my hands to the wheel. I

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hold myself to the picture of what it is "supposed" to look like. I hold myself locked out of the experience I am in, because if I pause in my efforts for even a moment, my fear will swallow me and eat me whole. So I keep busy.

This is what I have done with my children: I have kept busy. Primarily, I worry. I worry about their future. I worry about their present and I worry about their past. I rack my brain thinking about what I can do to right situations that are out of my control. Up until the last session of class I believed that I did all of this out of my deep and selfless love for them. Well, I do love them, but I now believe that many of my efforts have been driven by a desperation born of not wanting to be in my own pain. Of not wanting to feel the pain of not having control. Of not wanting to stand still long enough to feel whatever I have avoided in the past.

So I keep running that scene to hold onto it as a model of what it looks like to have stood in your own pain long enough for it to accompany you as a known entity and not some unknown lurking in the shadows

waiting to devour you. Perhaps it even becomes your friend.

I cannot yet stand in front of my children and say, "I see you," because they are mirrors into my own darkness and my own pain bleeds into theirs and it all becomes one. I cannot yet tell the difference. I am unwilling for them to experience their pain because it connects me to mine.

I said that my children lead me to the edges of my depths, and my commitment to this study of kabbalistic healing will force me into these depths. The paradox now is how strong the opposing forces are to move forward and to stay rooted. I notice my willingness to explore my yearning to be different and my apparent unwillingness to lift the veil on why I choose to stay in this familiar yet discomfoting place.

My purpose becomes to define my space so that I can clearly state, "I see me." Only then can I stand in witness of another and say, "I see you."

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Cheryl Jacobs is an organizational development consultant and a first-year student in ASOS from Chelsea, MI.

I started this poem three years ago on an island in Maine. I wanted to make a larger container for it, to set the | | wider (cf. Jason's [*The Set of the World*]). The last two lines came to me on an island in the Caribbean this February during Jason's Omega workshop, inspired by material he presented from his next monograph. He asked, "Who is me? Who is the self?"

Dawn

*Near the sea
the dawn presses
through the open window
onto my bed,
stretching
to embrace me,
my hand still curled
knuckles against my mouth
smelling of sprucegreen forests.
Loving deaf to my no, my sleep,
it woos me through under to bear
me on the current
of a new day.
Who sends this lover?
Who is asking?—Ann Barry*

Ann Barry is a 1998 ASOS graduate. She has a healing practice in Weston, MA.

The Healing of Immanence in the Kitchen

Chaya Sarah Sadeh

When I was in synagogue yesterday, Eve, one of my close friends, came in soon after I arrived and sat in the row behind me. I wondered about this, since we often sit together. In the course of the service, I heard her crying, which is not an unusual occurrence in *shul* (the yiddish word for synagogue.) When I turned around a little later, I saw how miserable she looked, but waited until the service was over to ask her if she was OK. She said, "No," and proceeded to tell me all the things that were going on to make her feel rejected in our community, the bottom line

being "I don't belong here. No one wants me here."

This didn't jibe with my view of reality, but I didn't say anything. It seemed to me that in the depth of her misery she needed time and space to be with what was going on, so I asked her if she wanted company for the afternoon, something we often do on *Shabbos*. She said, "Oh, yes," to my invitation to lunch at my house.

"I want to take care of you," I said, knowing that message was implicit in my invitation but that she needed to hear that there was someone in her life who cared about her.

So we spent the afternoon eating chicken soup with lots of vegetables and chunks of chicken and salad and tea and cookies. Eve cried a lot and complained of a headache, so I made sure she had lots of seltzer in case part of the cause of the headache was dehydration. She talked of how, on Rosh Hashannah, five months before, she had seen that "the door of the cage was opened," and how, in the succeeding months she had left and reentered the cage over and over again.

"I joined the board and spoke my truth and they didn't want to hear it," she said. "The communication is awful;

something comes up one month, a plan is made, and you never hear about it again. You ask the next month what happened and they look at you as if you're stupid."

One example followed another. She told me the story of a weekend she spent with her parents fifteen years ago. "They knew I was coming, but they had only enough food for themselves. My father had divided the food between him and mother. There was none for me. My sister came, and they ordered Chinese food. My sister asked what I wanted, and my mother said, 'Oh, Eve doesn't want anything.' When the food came, there was nothing for me. I wanted to leave, but here's the horrible part: My father got sick and he couldn't take care of my mother, who is an invalid. I stayed to take care of her. How I betrayed myself that day. I never went back there after that."

The afternoon was filled with such stories, and talking them out seemed to help. Finally, she said to me, "Why am I making myself so miserable? I don't understand."

I said, "You don't have to understand right now. All that's important is to know that your misery is important. It's taking you somewhere." At this she looked at me with such gratitude and said, "Thank you." I knew then that a healing had occurred. Throughout the afternoon I was filtering this experience through the diagnostic process. All that I've learned so far came up in my mind.

Which healing would I do? Netzach-Hod drew my attention, but of course we were not in my office, we were in my kitchen. I hadn't offered her a healing session; I had offered her lunch. But the healing had occurred anyway. We

created a container for her suffering, and when Eve left she spoke of her exhaustion and her thanks for the good food and my friendship and the knowledge that her suffering is an valuable part of whatever it is she is working through.

I remembered Jason telling us that the object of learning Kabbalistic Healing is simply to become a healing presence. I thought of my gratitude to Jason for how well he models that for us. As I was falling asleep last night, recounting my day to myself, I saw myself a little closer to being a healing presence, a major object of my desire.

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Chaya Sarah Sadeh is completing her third year in ASOS. She has practiced as a healer and psychotherapist since 1980.

Abba-Imma

Brenda Blessings

I am a graduate of ASOS and have been constantly amazed by the power of this work. The healing that has affected me most profoundly as of late is one in which I was the client. I have been consciously working for the last year and a half on the issue of becoming a mother.

Although part of me wanted to be a mother, it was also quite clear that I had a number of unresolved issues. I had approached the stage in which I had finally let myself feel how deep the desire was to be a mother. It was as deep and as passionate—in fact more so—than anything I had ever allowed myself to feel.

An opportunity to receive a group healing presented itself at the Days of Practice in January. At that time, I revealed my longing, my desire to be a mother, along with some of my fears and the need for a click to happen inside of me in which I could really give myself permission to have something in my life that I wanted this deeply.

The fulfillment of desires was not a major priority in my family. The family values were based on hard work and survival. After listening carefully and probing gently into my life, the group decided on an Abba-Imma healing. They noted how strong and present my longing was, as well as how difficult it would be for me to allow its full expression based on the family value system. They chose to have one male and one female from the group hold Abba-Imma while the rest of the group supported them. As tears streamed down my face, I felt Abba-Imma seeing me and I felt my resistance to being seen, to receiving their attention and then I felt my body/my being relax as I took in their steady gaze, approval, loving kindness. I felt them and I felt myself.

Upon reflection, I realized in this moment, I became self illuminating anew because I was seen—as a human being, as who I am—not simply as an extension of the neuroses of my parents, but in wholeness. I was seen, loved and held as I am. I became free of the pseudo-wholeness of

mother-father in a new way—free of living from the projections of my parents. I entered the present moment. The father-mother pseudo-whole from which I had sought nourishment was released, transformed. In its place, true, deep nourishment from the essence of Mother-Father-from Reality, could be received.

I drink deeply from the cup of wisdom and understanding, and as I do, I recognize that even if it's just a drop more than before, it is the drop that makes the difference between bare sustenance and nourishment for real growth. I am free to make my own choices of motherhood—neither resisting my past or reacting from it. NOW is where I live.

Note: Weeks after this healing, I continue to be amazed at the freedom I now feel in simply being myself. Life as a whole feels much more vibrant, vital and alive. Colors are much more vivid. Life has a whole new sweetness and poignancy. I am much more willing to be present with myself, my clients and my family. ○

Tips and Advice on Explaining ASOS to the General Population

Cheryl Jacobs™

THE BEGINNING

"Hi, what's new?"
"Well, I'm going to start school in September to study Integrated Kabbalistic Healing.™" [Looking blank]
"What's that?"
"It's a healing of witness based on the belief that we are one with the Divine."
"What do you do?"
"Nothing."
"Nothing. This sounds like the Seinfeld school of healing."
"No, no. It is something but paradoxically it is both something and nothing at the same time."
"What is the something?"
"The something is whatever transpires at the discretion of the Divine, although it is not always immediately clear what that is."
"Well, what does a healing look like?"
"Let's see. In the Healing of Imminence you have the vertical holy one and the horizontal holy one, so named to distinguish who is lying down and who's not, because to give is to receive, and to heal is to be healed."
"Do you have to be Jewish?"
"No."
"Do you run energy?"
"No."
"Aren't you trying to cure something?"
"No."
"Aren't you trying to make something different?"
"No."
"What is it you are doing?"
"Nothing."
"So, if I came to you I could expect nothing?"
"No, I think it would be fair to say you could expect something, but I would have done nothing to exert my will over the outcome."
"I'm still not sure why I would come to you."
"I think that's second year."

SESSION 1

"How was the session?"
"Profound, wonderful, intense. Scary at times."
"Can you tell me what you did?"
"Well, let's see. We did a lot of work with fields."
"Fields...you planted?"
"No, energy fields. We focused on issues of transference. You know: what's mine and what's yours and what I think is yours but is really mine and what you think is mine but is really yours, although sometimes it could be both of ours. Jason calls it Riding the Wave of Transference.™"
"You spent a lot of time on this?"
"Oh, yes, it's very important. Oh, and there was all that anxiety. Boy, was that a great learning experience. Jason, is a big advocate of Anxiety Learning.™ Just allow yourself to be in your anxiety and watch what pops. Cool, huh?"
"Was that the whole weekend?"
"No way! We also worked with altered states of reality."
"Something like this conversation?"
"I don't know what Jason did exactly (although I heard a clicky noise) but he altered the reality of the room so that we had a shared experience of being a bird."
"I'm beginning to see how this all fits together..."

SESSION 2

"Wow, this was indescribable!"
"Try."
"Well, remember I mentioned that Jason found Anxiety Learning™ a useful tool on our path of learning kabbalistic healing? He just outdid himself this time. He developed something he calls Form Anxiety. It was life changing to learn this, this, this thing."
"What thing? What is it? Is it something you do, think, feel, meditate on?"
"No."
"No? Then what is it? Wait, it's not

another one of those nothing things?"
"Yes! Is he brilliant or what? Who else would have had us sit in a chair with our eyes open, doing nothing and have it be life altering? Where does he come up with this stuff?"
"So, let me try to understand. You just sat there in a chair doing nothing on purpose and it was significant?"
"You've got it! Makes you wonder doesn't it?"
"You've got that right."
"So then, as if we weren't anxious enough, he puts the icing on the cake. We spend the rest of the weekend Remembering What We Don't Know."
"How can you remember what you don't know?"
"Of course, we wondered the same thing, but in retrospect I think it must have been the culmination of a learning block. You see, once you learn to Ride the Wave of Transference™ and can distinguish what is your own Stuff from someone else's Stuff, you can then further sharpen those abilities by the time spent in Form Anxiety™ to begin to clarify more of that Stuff. Why, then it becomes fairly simple to know what you don't know. I say simple, but darn if that Anxiety Learning™ doesn't keep popping in."
"It seems incomprehensible to me."
"Sorry, one of the problems we all have is trying to find the vocabulary to explain something that has no common frame of reference. Jason said in the third year we would address this issue. So for the next two years we're going experience some anxiety trying to explain to other people how profound nothing can be. Oh, my God, the wisdom of this man! He has positioned us for two whole years of Anxiety Learning™. What more could we ask for?"
"Nothing." ○

