

Purification and Transparent Imperfection



Purification is an important element of spiritual evolution, representing the process of alignment of the human with the light of the soul. Through the necessity of facing the challenges inherent in living on earth — survival issues, the search for emotional nourishment, and the general low level of consciousness — our human self has developed many negative tendencies. As time goes by, through constant repetition, these tendencies gradually become embedded in our psyche, to the extent that they have become permanent shadows of the subconscious self.

Humanity has long been aware of the detrimental nature of its negative tendencies and attempted to control them through morality and social or religious rules. However it is impossible to control, let alone transform, these tendencies through discipline alone, because the root of negativity is too deep. Moreover, the absence of one's true self makes real and permanent transformation on the relative human level simply impossible. Corrupt and other negative human patterns of thought and behavior cannot be eliminated through the efforts of personality. They can only be kept in check to a limited degree through either repeatedly reinforcing a positive intention, repression or punishment. Unfortunately, the repression of negativity usually backfires, leading to even more negativity, because self-judgment and emotional frustration compound the original issues.

It is important to understand that personality without soul has virtually no chance of being corrected or changed. Living only in the mind and constantly processing the internal chaos of mental and emotional impulses will inevitably result in various forms of

negativity. To empower our ability to transform the mind, we must have established our identity beyond it. No matter how mindful and disciplined the observer is, he himself has no enduring identity. He is constantly in a state of flux, and is therefore a victim of external stimulus and of his innate identification with each thought and emotion as it arises. So in sum, our main concern here is not to find out how to rectify the fragmented personality through therapeutic methods or external disciplines. Rather, we are focused on how to improve and purify personality based on our awakening and access to the light of me.

It is commonly assumed that the purification of personality is an automatic result or byproduct of awakening, or that an awakened person must by default be pure and somehow saintly. This is not the case. Purification is an intricate and long process through which the human self becomes aligned with the higher nature of the soul. The more rooted we are in our higher self, the more access we have to it, the greater our capacity is to transform on the human level.

The principle of purification in this context is governed by a simple law: the human must surrender to the soul. The human must agree to surrender. So long as our personal self has its own agenda, it will resist submitting itself to our higher truth and keep perpetuating its own sense of self, based on ego. To surrender the human does not mean that it is entirely dissolved. Rather, the human has to be embraced as an important dimension of our identity, and to embrace it means that we agree to continue to maintain a degree of identification with our human existence. In doing this, we also accept both the challenges and blessings that are part and parcel of being human. This includes both the positive joys and pleasures and the more difficult suffering and negativity inherent to life, which constitute our tougher evolutionary lessons.

Natural and Acquired Negativity

There can be no life on earth without negativity, because life requires polarities. The need to earn a livelihood, to live in society, and to not necessarily be able to have one's emotional or physical needs met can be difficult and frustrating. Buddha himself was eloquent in describing the human suffering that revolves around illness, old age and death. But he presented a rather one-sided picture by largely choosing to ignore the beauty of life and the positive aspects of human reality. Because one cannot have one without the other, his solution was to step outside of both. Perhaps this was the right choice for him, but it would certainly be a wrong choice for the majority of humans, because having a complete human experience is an inseparable part of our evolutionary process.

There is a type of suffering which is an inescapable part of the experience of being human. This we could call 'natural negativity'. Things do not always work the way we wish them to, but we still need to accept both the silver linings and the clouds as the inevitable polarities of our experience of life. Without being able to feel physical pain, we

would not really be able to appreciate pleasure. Without the night, there would not be the sunrise. Birth is inevitably followed by death. Life is comprised of polarities. What is naturally negative also includes, at times, physical pain and emotional hurt, for our human response is part of the suffering naturally inherent in the conditions of physical life. So long as we have a body, a headache will not be a pleasant experience, no matter how patient we are. No one enjoys dealing with angry or emotionally disturbed people, and it is our discomfort which tells us that something is wrong with the situation.

While natural negativity, as the name implies, cannot be avoided and must be accepted as part of life, acquired negativity refers to the accumulation of harmful subconscious tendencies that add a new layer of unnecessary suffering to our life. Anger expressed when a situation demands it is a natural and correct response in the moment. But when we become an 'angry person', this is an acquired negativity which has become an abnormal part of our character. Such acquired anger is repressed and not conscious, but when it is sufficiently provoked, it will possess us so that we erupt like a volcano. This is an example of an unnatural and aberrant expression of anger.

When one admits to oneself that one's lack of spiritual progress has been attributable to one's laziness and insincerity, the resulting feeling of disappointment in oneself is an expression of natural negativity. But if one then dwells incessantly on this initial feeling of natural negativity, adding layers of emotional self-judgment and self-punishment – this is when unhealthy, unnatural negativity has been added on top. Such acquired negativity is generated psychologically inside one's own personality and has little or no connection with a natural response to the objective challenges we face. To experience negativity naturally means one is not overwhelmed by emotions and does not lose oneself, but rather experiences one's emotions in a balanced way from a base of unbroken conscious embodiment of one's pure nature. When negative emotion runs its course, it disappears and leaves no traces in the psyche.

Acquired negativity manifests in many ways, but is invariably a reflection of an immature relationship with our own self. Although created entirely in the mind, it is rooted in our emotional existence. We have two emotional centers: the solar plexus and the heart. The heart is the higher emotional center responsible for feelings such as pain, love and sadness. Solar plexus is the lower emotional center, and is responsible for emotions related to power and survival. The solar plexus is where we experience acquired negativity – fear, anger, excessive control, and our fundamental insecurity relating to physical and psychological survival. Acquired negativity on the level of the higher emotional center is more personal in nature and relates to feelings like emotional neediness, clinging, possessiveness, self-pity and self-victimization. There is usually less negativity in the heart due to its being closer to the soul but, when the evolution of the heart is distorted, it can also acquire and harbor many negative tendencies.

Interconnection between Mind and Emotional Centers

When people are not in touch with their emotional centers, their emotional experience is limited to the mind. It is important to appreciate that our brain is not only an instrument for thinking, but also controls the entire body and contains glands that are responsible for processing our emotions as well. Conversely, there are other people who primarily experience reality through their emotional centers and are out of touch with their minds.

Our mental and emotional centers are interconnected and work in tandem, so the mind processes information from the emotional centers, and vice-versa. So, for instance, when you are angry with someone for the wrong reasons, after some considering or reflection you let go of your anger. However, when your pattern of acquired anger is too deeply rooted in you, and your insecurity prevents you from being able to be objective about your issues, even though your mind knows that it is counterproductive, you will continue to hold on to the anger.

Often, emotion is felt first and then the mind follows. If the negative emotion is felt for a wrong reasons, the mind is convinced a negative response is justified and will reinforce the feeling, blowing it up out of proportion. This can be seen in people who let their minds build the intensity of their anger, so that the angrier they are, the angrier they become. If the mind realizes that the negative emotion is not justified, it may decide to let it go. If the emotion is not too deeply embedded, there is a good chance of it being dissolved. But when negativity is already deeply rooted in the psyche it can become obsessive and, unless one has sufficient strength to oppose it through higher intention, it will continue to possess one no matter how unjustified it may be.

Sometimes the thought comes first and the emotion follows afterward. For example, when you sit in meditation, thoughts about your financial security may arise, and you begin to worry about how things can go terribly wrong. Anxiety then builds up and you enter an abyss of fear and negativity. No matter where the origin of the negativity is, the decision of what to do with the emotions and how to respond and deal with them always happens in the mind. But when the negativity is too deeply seated, the mind can be powerless to oppose it. Also, if the mind is at a low level of subconsciousness (in terms of ignorance and impurity), it will not even have the right intention to work with negative emotions in a constructive way. Such a mind will further intensify any emotional negativity.

The evolution of our emotions and intelligence cannot be separated. There is no such thing as a mind without emotions or emotions without a mind. Since any decision to change oneself comes from our intelligence, the evolution of consciousness is the real base and starting point of our emotional transformation. However, the awakening of consciousness alone will not automatically manifest such a transformation. In fact, one may even choose to use one's access to consciousness as a comfortable place from which to continue denying one's psychological issues. Denial of the human self can itself

become an art form, but there comes a point at which our spiritual evolution will be blocked by our unwillingness to engage in this part of our existence. The human is an important component of the soul and must serve her light. If he is not included, our very incompleteness will, on its own, pull us away from our further awakening and surrender into pure subjectivity.

Purification and Healing

Although they are fully connected, purification and healing are not exactly the same. Purification refers to the transformation of the subconscious mind, and how the conscious mind responds to the spontaneous manifestations of our subconscious. Purification is linked to our emotions as well, in the sense of how our mind responds to arising emotions, and which type of emotions we trigger through our thoughts.

Healing refers to the transformation of negative subconscious imprints and tendencies in our emotional body. Healing occurs for both lower and higher emotional centers. The healing of the solar plexus is about dissolving fear, insecurity, lack of confidence and any other manifestations of emotional powerlessness. Healing of the heart has to do with the dissolution of deeper personal issues, such as our inner pain, feeling starved of emotional nourishment, and lack of self-love.

It is important to understand that healing is not just a simple matter of dissolving negativity. Rather, it happens through the overall empowerment of our emotional existence. Healing of the solar plexus requires us to link it with consciousness, heart and being and embodying it through emotional pure me. One's identity has to shift into pure me, and the light of the soul has to deeply penetrate this area. Healing of the heart can happen only when we activate the quality of self-love and connect with our divinity. The heart cannot be healed through the giving and receiving of love and emotional nourishment from an external source, as it can never be full enough and will continually want more. The heart can only be healed and fulfilled by realizing its own divine nature

Purification is the alignment of our subconscious mind with the higher truth of the soul. For the mind to be able to stop circulating its endless negativity and reach purification, it has to serve our true self. The impurities of the mind are stored in the individual unconscious mind, which then programs the subconscious mind negatively. These impurities were initially created out of the mind's inability to respond adequately to emotional challenges. Hypothetically speaking, a mind that had no emotions whatsoever (or was linked only to completely neutral emotions) would not create impurities. Of course, it could still be ignorant, unintelligent, and unconscious, but it would be incapable of producing acquired mental-emotional negativity. Such a mind simply does not exist of course, not even in the most un-emotional of individuals.

Often acquired negativity is just a byproduct of our general frustration with life, through such issues as not having our desires fulfilled, not being loved or accepted, not being able

to cope with the demands of the external world or to express oneself physically, emotionally, and mentally. This can be observed in the early stages of the development of young children when they become upset and angry and have tantrums. It is no wonder that some of them become cruel to animals or to other weaker children. As they grow up, this negativity is usually not released, but repressed through social constraints until sufficient provocation will trigger its explosion.

Impurities exist in everyone's subconscious mind. They are constantly being processed and circulated by the semi-conscious observer, who is struggling to maintain mental equilibrium and sanity. Because the mind is naturally connected to a more conscious sense of self than our emotional centers, negativity naturally links itself with self-awareness and self-image. As examples, the negative semi-conscious or subconscious personality impurities of arrogance, an inferiority complex, and other egoic tendencies are formed only in the mind, but reflect what is being felt in the emotional centers. For instance, when one dwells upon self-pity or a sense of being a victim, this shows us how the me in the mind has unskillfully interpreted hurt felt in the heart.

We have less control over the healing process (transformation of the emotional centers) than over purification (transformation of the subconscious mind), because we have more freedom to correct how our mind responds to negative emotions than we have to alter these emotions directly. Having said that, healing is impossible unless we have significantly purified our mind. It is common for people undergoing therapy to resist and sabotage their healing at a subconscious level by indulging in lower tendencies and reinforcing negativity in the mind. True healing cannot begin unless we take responsibility for our thoughts and how our mind responds to our emotions.

Activating Higher Intention

While we may have a hard time changing the established emotional and mental structure of our personality, we are always free in the dimension of intention. The simple fact is that in order to change, we must have an intention to change. Everyone uses the power of intention in one way or another, but it is usually a lower intention that serves the agenda of the false self. The ego does not want to be unhappy, sad, or depressed, so it will do whatever it can to put an end to, or to prevent, suffering. If needed, it will take antidepressants or will even become an alcoholic to numb its suffering. So there is always an intention motivating our behavior, but it is rarely connected to the wisdom of the soul. The nature of lower intention is that, not only does it perpetuate our negativity, but it also reinforces it, making it stronger. When dwelling on jealousy, envy, or hatred, it is the lower intention that aggravates and reinforces these destructive emotions.

Activating higher intention is the prerequisite for any psychological and spiritual transformation. This is the point at which the personal self begins to link itself with the will and purpose of the soul. However, the human mind is full of contradictions and, even when we manage to activate higher intention, we will still face opposition from our

lower intention. This represents the proverbial struggle between light and darkness within the mind and heart of each human being.

As our strength and integrity increases, our higher intention grows stronger and our lower intention grows weak. The more we become one with the soul, the more natural and spontaneous our higher intentions become – until we become one with higher intention and begin to embody it. To be one with higher intention means that one does not have to use the power of will to activate it, for it has now been assimilated into our existence. We then realize and identify with the basic goodness, self-love, compassion and spontaneous wisdom of our higher intelligence as being our own self. However, for the higher intention to be fully integrated, our emotional body has to be largely healed, or else its negative emotional imprints will be in conflict with the will of the soul.

Embracing Human Emotions

The concept of purification is as old as human spirituality. In India, negative tendencies were often referred to as *vasanas*, *samskaras* or *kleshas*, which one worked to dissolve on the path to self-realization. In Buddhism there is a lot of emphasis on cleansing or conquering impurities such as anger, fear, aggression, pride, attachment, desire, greed, and resentment. They have been categorized as the five defilements (sensual desire, anger, sloth-torpor, restlessness-worry, and doubt), and the three poisons (ignorance, attachment, and aversion). The problem with these traditions is that they are rooted in the denial of our human consciousness, and their objective is not only to eliminate human negativity, but also to take us out of our human sense of self.

We cannot dissolve negativity by self-denial at its own level because in order to transform, we must embrace our human reality with love and wisdom from a more awakened level of awareness and consciousness. For instance, is attachment inherently negative? Are anger and fear always bad? These emotions are perceived as undesirable because of their disturbing quality, but they are not inherently negative; when they are experienced for natural and healthy reasons, they are actually examples of positive negativity. It is the acquired negativity that is inherently negative, while the natural negativity is a normal and constructive part of our human experience.

If we were to call all negative emotions ‘impurities’ and magically dissolved them all, we would actually be incapable of living here, with the exception perhaps of very artificial environments such as caves or ashram where we avoid any interaction with the world altogether. Still, even then one could not manage one’s basic physical existence as a human without experiencing a degree of healthy attachment to the body. For instance, can we say that aversion is wrong? If you are served food which is foul and dangerous, aversion is what makes you not eat it, and preserves the health of your body. When you encounter someone who is dishonest or deranged, your aversion moves you away from them, protecting you against being harmed energetically and spiritually. And is desire negative? Without desire you would not live another day. In addition to the basic desire

for survival, the energy of desire is also an essential part of your higher intention to transform and evolve spiritually.

Some negative emotions are inherently negative, meaning they cannot manifest as natural negativity. For instance, envy, jealousy, conceit, and hatred are inherently negative and, as spiritually crippling tendencies, do need to be dissolved. The line between acquired and natural negativity is not always clear, but we can sense intuitively when an emotion is simply wrong. While anger has its place in the right situations in our human reality, hatred is inherently negative. Hatred is anger that has been distorted and magnified, resulting in it becoming unstable, dark and self-destructive.

Desire is natural, but greed represents excessive desire taken to compulsive and unbalanced lengths. Pride in moderation can be a positive and natural reflection of one's abilities and achievements but, when it is swollen into conceit, it becomes impure and ignorant. It is natural to experience worry or fear at times, but to live in constant worry and fear or to be prey to incessant anxiety is neurotic. A certain degree of attachment can be positive, but when it is disproportionate, creating over-dependence, it becomes negative neediness and clinging, blocking our potential for healthy relationships. There is nothing wrong with feeling some attachment to a partner in a romantic relationship but, when it turns into possessiveness or an obsessive dependence, the healthy emotional connection has become corrupted. In fact, even to call attachment a negative emotion is not correct. It is so integral to human and physical life that it is truer to see it as fundamentally natural and positive. If trees in their natural settings were neither attached to the earth nor supplied with water and sunlight, our planet would be a desert. It is not natural and wholesome attachment that is negative, but excessive and neurotic attachment.

It seems that it is easier for human beings to go to one extreme or the other: either to over-indulge in their emotional tendencies or to try to sever them altogether and renounce their human self. Of course, no one can cut off their human emotions, including the negative ones, entirely, but the idea seems appealing to those who are desperate to escape their human condition.

Buddha spoke about the middle-way between the extremes of self-deprivation and indulgence. In principle, it is a very good concept, but how it has been interpreted and practiced is not a middle way at all. It was called a middle way in comparison to the extremity of those who used to torture their minds and bodies with various practices of excessive self-discipline or ascetic tapas. From our standpoint, many Buddhist practices are also extreme in terms that they refuse to include and embrace our human existence.

In terms of facing various challenges related to our emotions, to find a true middle way we have to purify our acquired negativity, but still include the aspects of it that are natural and normal parts of living. We must look for a true balance, a place of wisdom and self-love, from which we can live while embracing some of the challenging, or negative, experiences which are inescapable elements of life on earth. Such a position is not a fixed

state, but rather a matter of constantly balancing and re-balancing our emotions through renouncing any false negativity that is taking us away from our integrity, basic goodness, and soul, while at the same time mastering and minimizing natural negativity.

Transparent Imperfection

There is no such a thing as a perfect human. As long as we live in a dimension of imperfection, we cannot avoid reflecting some of that in our relative existence. The need to compete for food and space, as well as to seek emotional fulfillment in a reality where each me is relatively separated, is challenging on many levels, and some negative emotions are unavoidable in responding to these challenges.

As far as purification is concerned, our goals must be clearly defined. It is not about the elimination of all negativity, but about dissolving unnatural acquired and conditioned negativity, so that we are not in conflict with the principles of self-love and compassion. Once we have attained sufficient levels of mental and emotional purity, we can begin to express our emotional self in a naturally positive way. We are not trying to become saints or holy men or women, for these are artificial created and idealistic concepts. The idea is to become a normal and healthy human being, living one's human life in accord with one's human nature. But to become a real human being, we must awaken our true subjectivity and embody the light of the soul. Only from the soul and our absorption in universal subjectivity can we become truly normal and universally natural.

A complete human being is someone who has realized his inner perfection, as well as embraced transparent imperfection on the human level.

Blessings,

Anadi

For a full glossary of terminology, please visit our website: anaditeaching.com/glossary