

ADRIAAN BEKMAN

Small Guide to a Fulfilled Life

Week after Week Food for the Soul

IMO

Publishing House

Small Guide to a Fulfilled Life

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Index

Preface

1. Serving the other

Week 1: To give versus to take

Week 2: Paying attention versus attracting attention

Week 3: Bringing the other in the game versus keeping everything to yourself

Week 4: Forgiving the other versus getting your own right of way

Week 5: Love for the unknown other versus closing yourself of in what you know

Week 6: Having an eye for your immediate neighbour versus having an eye for well-known figures

Week 7: The other person you meet is your teacher versus following a guru

2. Serving yourself

Week 8: Being at ease versus applying pressure

Week 9: Patience versus rushing

Week 10: Modesty versus overestimation

Week 11: Personal care versus functional care

Week 12: Taking good care of the body versus applying dazzling makeup

Week 13: Feeding the soul with knowledge and insight versus the hunt for matter

Week 14: Keeping your own ideals alive versus putting your ideals on others

3. To develop yourself through learning

Week 15: Passing boundaries versus avoiding limits

Week 16: Honest confrontation versus turning around it and avoiding it

Week 17: Requesting feedback versus giving unsolicited feedback

Week 18: Learning from failure versus sticking to success

Week 19: Integrating your experiences versus taking distance from your experiences

Week 20: Developing one's own style versus going along with what the other likes

Week 21: Honouring your teachers versus rejecting your enemies

4. Living and working with questions

Week 22: Asking a good question versus giving an unsolicited answer

Week 23: Good listening versus expressing your opinion

Week 24: Exposing questions from others with their own inspirations versus answering questions from others

Week 25: Living with a question to gain insight versus having others give the answer to your question

Week 26: Being part of your issue yourself versus putting your issue to others

Week 27: Trust the process and manage it versus having the doubt rule

Week 28: The reality you meet is your teacher versus what goes on in your mind

5. Find the right ratio

Week 29: Making small steps versus a big leap forward

Week 30: Finding the right size versus trying to get the maximum for everything

Week 31: Sustainable Quality versus transiently cheap

Week 32: Giving the other part of the profit versus wanting to keep all the profit for yourself

Week 33: Searching for the golden fit versus putting everything on one trump

Week 34: Delaying on time versus rushing through the corner

Week 35: The other sees you sharper than yourself versus judging yourself

6. Maintaining a good relationship

Week 36: Children raise parent's versus parents raise children.

Week 37: Taking your own space and wanting to be with that other person versus always having to be with that other person and always wanting to find your own space

Week 38: Critical self-reflection in a relationship versus projecting one's inability onto the other

Week 39: Solving problems in the relationship in this relationship versus looking for that solution in another relationship

Week 40: Taking the partner's opinion seriously versus being guided by the opinion of a third party

Week 41: Confessing your own debt versus blaming the other

Week 42: Not lying, not cheating, not complaining, not nagging versus doing this

7. Searching for and finding your own way: Being true to yourself

Week 43: Being true to your ideal versus going with all the winds

Week 44: Being true to yourself versus wanting to meet the other person's requirement

Week 45: The "I" that steers the soul versus other beings steering your soul

Week 46: Trust your heart intelligence and follow your gut feeling versus coming up with thought-out solutions

Week 47: Anyone who does not know the goal cannot trust the road versus randomly pursuing goals

Week 48: Creating judgments in dialogue versus living with prejudice
Week 49: Making a choice versus staying in doubt

8. Cultivate the true human values in your own life

Week 50: Freedom in your thinking, feeling and willing
Week 51: Respect for all what is alive
Week 52: Love for the other person and for all you want to bring forward

Finally

Preface

In this "guide to a fulfilled life" we reflect on a series of life experiences to explore the wisdom of life. In doing so, we assume that it is primarily the soul of man who benefits from these experiences and insights that I have processed myself.

The soul of man is stretched in polarities between good and evil, between inner world and outer world, between past and future. She is confronted with paradoxical realities. Wherever the light appears, the darkness is also present.

In all these life reflections I have used the formulated ... "the one *versus* the other" ... That suggests that the soul has a choice, that the soul in principle can work out of freedom knowing by which idea, by which 'leader' she wants to be guided.

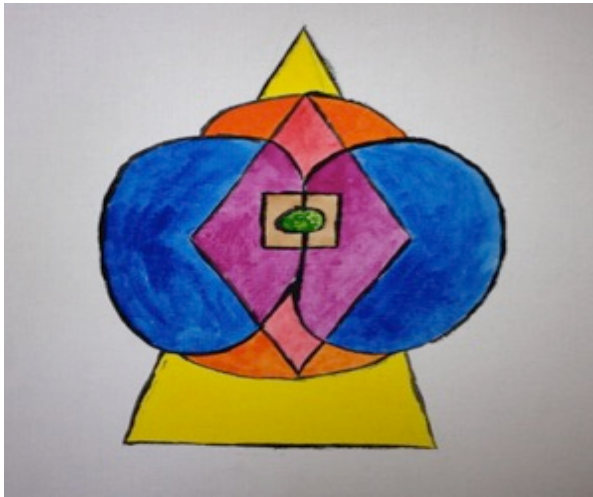
It is our "I" that can handle this choice. Our "I" is autonomous and evident and it can appear in our soul as the unique spiritual being we are. Do we let our souls be occupied by others or do we ourselves want to reign in our soul as the I – spirit we are, that is the basic question we can ask ourselves.

We want to describe every statement we make on only one page. The text shows us where the statement we make comes from, what underlies it. You can also see every statement as part of a guiding concept how to come to a fulfilled life. Every statement is accompanied by a figure. The figures symbolize phases and steps in the development of the soul.

The whole of this text is put in the format of a week calendar. It can be used as a weekly reflection moment.

A fulfilled life relates to what we want to be, to what we want to mean to others. That can give you a happy life, but fulfilment does not always go together with happiness.

It is best to try parts of this concept out in your own life, to experience for yourself how this supports the development of your own life and your own soul, to reflect on that experience and thus gain insight and life fulfilment.



1. Serving the other

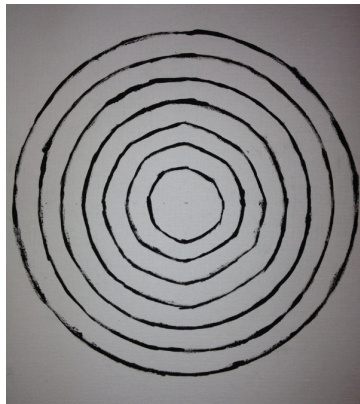
Three thousand years of humanity has brought us to our own individualized soul. Where we used to be a group being, fully embedded in the natural community we are born in and where under the direction of the community leader our predetermined life took place, today we are individual beings with our own personality handling the freedom of choice, the creation of our own live environment and generating our own life fulfilment.

Where we used to be naturally connected with other people for all our life, we now live in organized communities where we meet the strange, unknown other.

We can experience that there is no longer self-evident coherence in our lives and that we must seek and shape this coherence and meaning of life itself. We will only succeed if we can make a connection with the other, the other from whom we have become alienated.

As the philosopher Levinas once expressed: "When the other comes into the situation, appears to me, then my responsibility starts."

It is the great challenge not to get locked up in ourselves but to open up to the other person we meet.



Week 1: To give versus to take

In dealing with other people, we are engaged in a continuous process of giving and taking.

When we take, it often has something to do with what we think we are entitled to. We take our share. Adopting is a positive variant of taking. I take something over from the other: that can be a gift, an opinion. The giving of the other is connected to my receiving. Another positive variant of taking is taking part in something. I participate in something that someone else has organized. The other gives me the chance to do that.

It is when we buy that we take. We are entitled to what has been offered to us through payment. This can be us consuming or we make a purchase of something that we need.

In taking this we can notice that there is a moment of satisfaction, but that this satisfaction does not last long. There is the next thing that we want to take. In a certain sense, this is boundless and accelerating. The more we are able to take, the more we are inclined to take. Not only is satisfaction very perishable, our memory is also of short duration. We quickly forget.

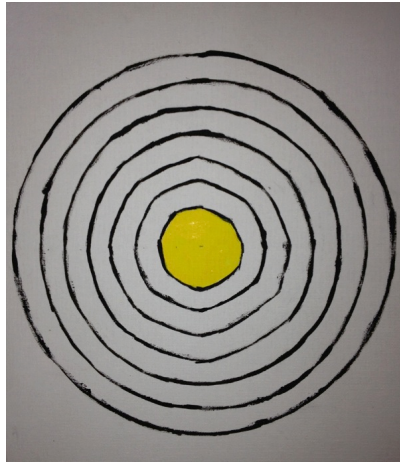
That is different with giving. When we give something to the other, give something for free then this gives connection to the other and is retained in our memory. Not in the last place this applies, for example, to giving love. When we give love to the other, this can completely fulfil us. When that love is mutual, we can experience that this leads to a fully fulfilled feeling. If we give something to the other, that makes something possible for the other, that otherwise would not be the case, then this entails a deep involvement of two people.

We sometimes do not notice that we give in life constantly and thus make something possible for someone else. When we become more aware of this giving, this will enrich our lives enormously. I give the other person a chance, I give the other person attention, I give the other person my love, I give the other person confidence.

Wanting to take more than our part strengthens egoism and that eventually leads to a dehydration of the soul. More and more is needed for less and less effect.

An excess of giving is also not healthy and reinforces extreme altruism and that eventually leads to giving yourself away.

When we take from another person who consciously gives us and when we consciously give to another person who takes this with gratitude, then we can count on a mutual fulfilled inner life but also on creating a good connection with the other persons with whom we live together.



Week 2: Paying attention versus attracting attention

Giving concentrated attention generates a special power between people. We concentrate on the other, on what we are working on together, on our joint assignment and that generates a unique result of our efforts.

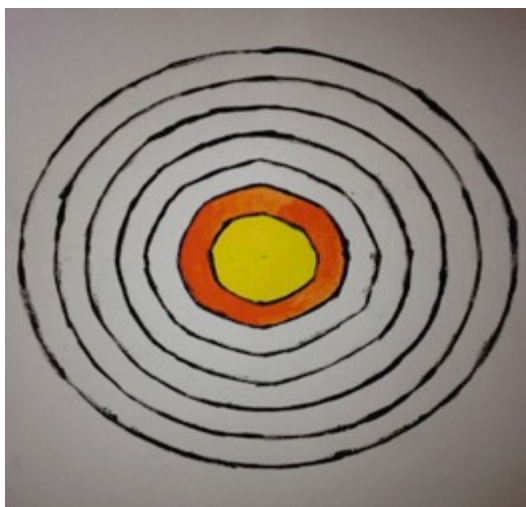
When we educate and guide our children, give them our attention and respond to their questions and needs, then we generate this effective soul force. When we pay attention, something can happen that is impossible without that attention. Through attention we can come to a real connection with each other. We are standing strong together. This gives us a gift and that is: we will trust each other. Trust is a high human good. When we trust each other our interplay becomes fulfilling nourishment for our soul. We feel embedded and adopted.

Giving attention is opposed to attracting attention. We want to be seen by others and when this does not happen enough, we will attract attention. We can nicely observe and experience that with children. When parents do not pay attention to their children, also because they themselves are too busy with other things, then children start behaving differently. This can even lead to children starting to show strange behaviour. The soul of a child is drying up and without food the child soul is inclined to extreme behaviour. We can also experience it in our relationship with the partner. If we do not pay attention to each other, we alienate from each other. But this counts also for our customers. If we do not give them attention, they will quickly turn away and look for those who do give them attention. Attention feeds the relationship between people and good relationships are a most important thing for our human well-being. For customers, for example, the relationship with the supplier is paramount and service provision is a sensitive matter that leads to a further connection or, on the contrary, creates distance.

Giving attention is a soul power that can be born from our “I”. Seeing the other as a unique personality with which we want to connect brings

us to an attentive relationship. Attention starts with concentrating on the question that is asked, the issue that we encounter, the assignment that we take on.

Reading a book with attention, preparing a meal, serving the other, celebrating a party with attention makes this a special event that opens the soul for both ourselves and the other person and allows soul food to come in.



Week 3: Bringing the other in the game versus keeping everything to yourself

Life offers us opportunities but also barriers. We see opportunities to take a step and we encounter opposition. We are highly dependent on others with whom we live and work together. In our inner being we tend to be mainly concerned with how we get our own satisfaction. Where are my chances, where can I progress, how do I achieve my own benefit? That can be done in competition with others. We can make our elbows work. This can take us further but is often at the expense of others. We also want to keep what we get done for ourselves. The advantage that we book is in favour of ourselves.

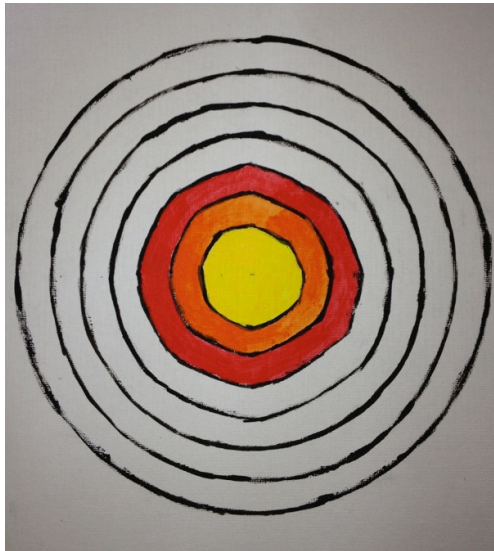
A completely different movement is precisely the opposite and that is bringing the other into play, creating an opportunity for the other, helping the other to sit on the horse. It is precisely in a community of people that you can observe and experience that when we are more focused on bringing the other person into play than just going for our own chance, we all achieve better results together.

You can observe this, for example, in a working community of colleagues. If everyone is busy for himself and has no eye for the other, the whole will produce less results than if everyone has an eye for the other and brings them into play. For example, a customer assignment can be passed on to a colleague who may be more appropriate and you can be brought in by a colleague yourself because he or she passes on a customer assignment to you.

We can experience this in sports, at home, we can experience this in work. To make this possible, it is important to have faith in yourself and in the other. That is not blind faith, but trust that can grow when we play together.

Opposite to "putting the other person in the game" is "excluding the other person from the game". It makes a big difference whether we "include" or "exclude" the other. When we include the other, the other can better take his place in the whole. When we exclude the other, we

deprive the other of his place in the whole. The ancient Greeks already found that excluding is the worst punishment for a person. Being expelled from the community brings man into a soul desert. To be enclosed brings a person into a soul oasis.



Week 4: Forgiving the other person versus getting your own right of way

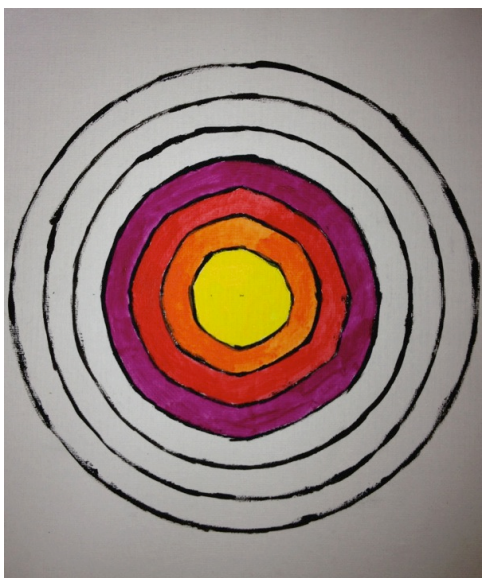
Our living together with others is not always pleasant. Unpleasant things can happen. We can harm each other. When this happens to us, we tend to make the other person pay for this injustice. This can already guide our actions on a subtle level. The other makes a remark that bothers us and we go over it immediately with a sharp counter comment. This can lead to further escalation. We are going to see the other more and more as a dark shadow and shut ourselves off for that other person.

When something unpleasant takes place between me and the other person, it is important that you do not get lost in your own inner self and let negative feelings prevail, but to talk to the other person about this happening and to see together what happened and what that means. Precisely in the reflective conversation with the other person, looking back at what happened, the negative feelings can dissolve and care can be given to this relationship. Images I made of the other can also be adjusted: it is always different than I thought. Sanding is allowed, reflection is a must!

It is a nice gesture to want to forgive the other when you have been done wrong. It is also nice to experience when someone forgives you for something that you have done wrong. With forgiving we cross an inner threshold. We avoid in ourselves that we want to get our right, that we settle an account with the other. We also prevent ourselves from living with a negative mood in which we condemn the other and develop unhealthy self-pity.

Seeing the splinter in the other one's eye and not seeing the beam in our own eye causes us to alienate from ourselves and from the reality we encounter. We get coloured glasses and always start to see and place everything in the same frame. That narrows our souls and we are less and less able to accept the unknown, the unforeseen in ourselves. Forgiveness is a beautiful gesture that cleanses our soul and offers an opening to the other and myself to continue to live together on a good

footing. To be able to forgive, we must be able to restore contact with the other by seeing a positive quality in the other person with which we can connect. We also allow the other person to take their own step and further shape the relationship to me in their own way. Sometimes a relationship ends and we can have peace with it after our gesture of forgiveness.



Week 5: Love for the unknown other versus closing yourself of in what you know

We live in communities of people. There are then the trusted communities in which we are born and in which we grow up: the family, the wider family, the religious community, the national community. We are part of it and are supported by these communities. However, we can also isolate ourselves in these communities and only seek out and retain with the trusted. That leads us to close ourselves in the soul for the unknown other. We get judgments and eventually prejudices about the unknown other. That can already start with the neighbours, the colleague, the foreigner, the client.

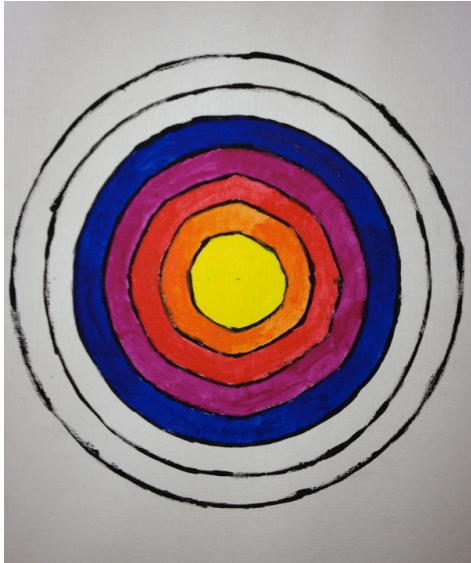
As soon as we come into contact with the unknown other person, come into conversation with this other person, meet this other person, then our prejudices can quickly resolve. We are going to see the second face in the face of the other human being and we discover that we are not that much different and better than the other person.

Processes are taking place in closed communities that not only have a positive content. We can experience in closeness that there is a power struggle, that there is mutual abuse, that there is oppression. In the open communities we can experience that together with the unknown other we can achieve something positive. People who exclude each other in closed communities can work together long and well in open communities. Those open communities are the organized communities in which we work and live. As a client and as an employee, as an owner and as a supplier, we can work and live in these roles in contexts that at first sight seem strange to us but that we get to know in this way.

We all live in a global economy in which we reap the benefits of global cooperation between people who, for example from religious traditions, exclude each other and possibly even fight each other.

In this world context, we can begin to shape our own personal community that transcends the natural and organized community. We

connect a lifetime with other people who want to share a passion, an idea, a task with each other and want to develop further together. We form “I” communities that support and guide us on a personal basis.



Week 6: Having an eye for your immediate neighbour versus having an eye for well-known figures

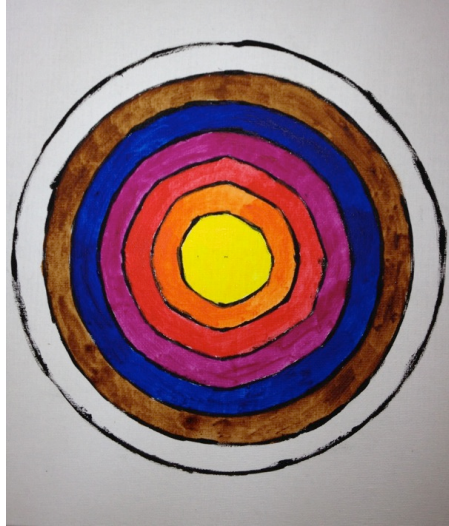
The new media brings us into contact with all facets of a global society. We are aware of what is happening all over the world and about what is being sent to us through the media. We are confronted with wars, disasters, political statements, revolutions, civil struggles, human abuse, terrorism, sports heroes and pop stars. We look into the private lives of publicly known figures. Magazines and journals are full of messages about how these public figures are doing. They mirror the moral standards that are applied in our world society.

We also see the struggle between values and guiding views of people from different natural cultures, but we also see the common values and cultures of our globally organized lives. We all want to be part of a world prosperity and world welfare.

In the streets where we live, the neighbourhoods we live in, the organizations in which we work, the stores in which we buy, the restaurants in which we eat, they are populated by a great variety of people including our loved ones. Do we deal with these people whom we meet immediately in a functional way or do we deal with them in a more personal way? How do we approach each other, how do we address each other, how do we look each other in the eye, do I see the second face of the other person in his direct facial appearance?

The direct human encounter with our neighbour gives nourishment to our soul. Sucking up life messages about the well-known figures eventually gives us alienation from what happens in my life in a direct way. We can actually assume that all messages about others with whom we do not have an immediate encounter always give us a completely limited look at what that other person means. We are going to live in a virtual world and alienate ourselves from direct contact with the other. The contact with the immediate neighbour again gives us a connection with how life is going on today. We can communicate with each other, share our suffering and joy with each other. Especially

during important life events being surrounded with the people you have connected to is important. The distant well-known stranger then plays no significant role.



Week 7: The other person you meet is your teacher versus following a guru

We come as human beings from a history in which an all-dominating vision represented by an all-dominating person largely destined our lives. Even today there are gurus who want to bring us salvation and who thereby demand absolute compliance and obedience. Just as there used to be monastic orders where you were bound for a lifetime as you joined and where you paid tribute to God, now there are guru communities that promise blessed lives to those who join these closed communities.

These communities are closed communities and exclude the other as the outsider. This can lead to people being cut off from other sources than those allowed in a closed community. Everything must come from only one source represented by the leader.

In our socio-economic system, our organized world, there are now many leaders and many communities that we have to deal with and can be part of. We have a multitude of encounters and human connections during our life.

When we meet the other, the other soon can gain an idea of who we are and how we show ourselves to the other. Our "I's" can appear in the soul and we become visible to each other. We can also then start to see the wound of the other, the black side, the light side, the development potential of the other. That is a particularly new fact compared to the older cultures in which we were more of a group being and embedded in predetermined realities.

When we meet the other we can see the other as our teacher. Our soul can be touched by the other, we can learn from the other. That requires an openness in our soul and an interest in who the other person is. When we enter into a dialogue and work together in a process of collaboration, we can gain a deep insight into who the other is and what moves the other. The other can be an example to us.

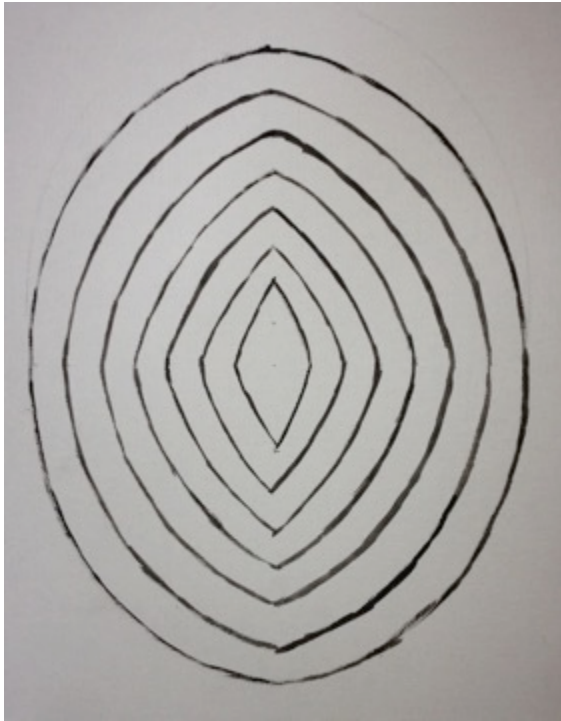


2. Serving yourself

As a person with an individualized soul it is necessary and desirable that I take care of myself. There is no longer self-evident care from the community that carries my life. I'll have to take care of myself. This requires attention for my own needs, desires, ideas and initiatives. How do I get through life in such a way that I can realize my impulses, give my existence a meaning? That requires a new art of living.

Are we capable of giving shape to our life processes ourselves? Are we able to enter into a dialogue with the other person? Are we able to live our biography meaningfully?

Training of the soul is necessary for this to happen. We can develop our thinking, feeling and will into a conscious level of living. That requires a free "I" that finds its own way in respect for the other and in love for doing the good.



Week 8: Being at ease versus applying pressure

We are under pressure in our lives. The pressure of daily worries, the pressure of having to meet the demands of others. The pressure to deliver a desired performance. This pressure is imposed on us by others, but we also do this to ourselves. We put pressure on ourselves, making increasingly higher demands on ourselves. In the school I experience the pressure to learn how to pass the tests. In the work I live with the pressure of having to achieve certain goals. In education, we put pressure on our children to respond to what we, as parents, find necessary and desirable.

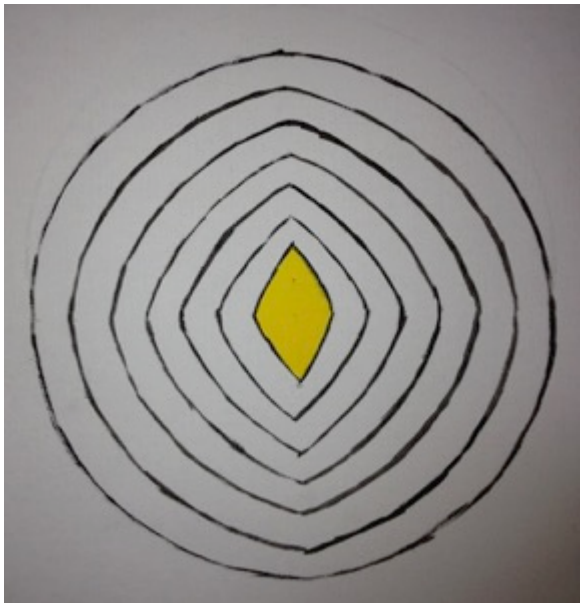
When we come under pressure and that in situations where we cannot change much, then stress arises. This stress can eventually lead to a burnout.

Pressure is related to crowds around us. A lot is happening around us and influencing us. We are inclined to interfere with that. In ourselves too there is a rush and the coming and going of thoughts and feelings that move through our head and heart at breakneck speed. We are constantly tempted to engage in that bustle. Looking for peace and quietness can give a counter-movement. We look for places and times in which we can reflect and process the many experiences. Our soul is thus not so much occupied by pressure and bustle.

Opposite pressure and bustle is attentative holding back. That is an inner attitude of actively waiting for what is to come. This is based on our acceptance of the reality we encounter and our ability to bring our inner world into proportion with what the outer world demands of us. It is related to peace of mind. I am present in myself, open to what is to come, willing to respond to it without losing myself. For example, it may be good not always to respond immediately but to just insert a moment in which we find ourselves and the right relationship to what comes our way.

If we want to practice this holding back with full attention, being inwardly in conjunction with what actually happens and then just

hanging a bit behind during the event, is a good thing to do. We can be too fast or too slow in what we do and how we respond to what comes our way. Finding the right measure, the right rhythm of life is the art of living that we can practice. Having respect for what comes our way in connection to our peace of mind are a good basis for this basic positive attitude.



Week 9: Patience versus rushing

Our lives take place today in many places and at different times. We are constantly traveling to our destination. That gives rise to much hassle. There may be a traffic jam on the road, there may be a queue in front of the counter, there may be a reference to another counter, there are still so many people holding the line when you make a phone call, in short, we have been sentenced to plan our lives meticulously. When we get out of the planned programme and are delayed, we get inner pressure and rush. We rush to the next destination and hope not to be late. We are being tested. We need an attitude of patience as expressed in Bach's Matthew Passion, "Geduld, Geduld, wenn die böse Stimmen sprechen".

It is an art of living to make our life journey with the attitude of patience. A good habit is always to be inwardly just a bit ahead, which means that we already have an idea in advance of how the process will proceed and that we are present in the situation just beforehand, so that we can start on time. It is then also desirable to close on time.

A father of a handicapped boy described to me how his son, as an adult, had specialized in the repair of old Citroen cars. With enormous patience, his son repaired the cars, placing absolute precision in his work. "He learned that from his educators, who always claimed his" I "and not his disability. He learned to do everything carefully and with patience. He has become a living example for me as a father. "

It is striking how real professionals who fully control their profession do their work with peace and patience. They are not in a hurry and are masters of the situation and the task that has been set. The inner peace and patience eventually come alive in us when we come to experience that hasty urgency is rarely good. When unrest has come in our lives, we are just hanging a bit behind and feel uncomfortable. Building in space in time for the unexpected is one of the qualities of peace and patience. Do not plan too tightly, wanting too much, going too ambitiously

through life. It is better to take small steps and gradually improve ourselves to a level of control that matches the tasks we have. As a soloing musician knows: you just have to be ahead with your consciousness and just behind it with your fingers, then it swings!



Week 10: Modesty versus overestimation

When we face the task, we balance between modesty and overestimation. "We'll just do that" is opposite to "would I succeed?" It is better to work with a certain degree of modesty and gradually discover that there is more to it than going to work full of bravado and then noticing that things are not going as smoothly as thought. This not only applies to the fulfilment of the personal assignment, but also to teamwork and even to the performance of an entire organization.

We tend to promise the other too much, we tend to underestimate the job we're going to do. In the process, we discover that there are aspects to the job that we had not thought of and foresaw before.

We are also sometimes inclined to be too modest, too hesitant because of a lack of confidence. We notice that this uncertainty stands in the way of getting the job done with enthusiasm.

Modesty together with vigilance is a good combination and much better than overestimation with a lack of sufficient attention. It is not always easy to be fully attentive and being not already with our thoughts on the next job. We may want to fix it quickly, but that puts us under stress at the expense of vigilance.

It is good to constantly reflect on what we have done and what we have achieved and to reflect on what went well and what did not go well. We are constantly learning and gradually notice that we are moving forward. The more we have the profession in the fingers, the more modest we become.

It is a long way to go to get the hang of the trade. Is it not the 10,000 hours that we need to master? The path from being an apprentice, becoming a companion, being a master, that is the way we can go in modesty.



Week 11: Personal care versus functional care

In our organized life we are primarily active in a functional way. Both as an employee and as a customer, we approach the other person in a functional way. That means that we want to achieve our goal and need the other person for doing that. For us it is then not so much about the well-being of the other person, but rather about achieving a desired result. When we approach the other person in a functional way, we look just past the other one. We have something else in mind than the wellbeing of the other. This can work okay in the more anonymous processes of working and consuming. We use each other and we don't have much to do with each other after that. It is fleeting and perishable. However, it could be that something is lost with this way of life. What may be lost is the personal encounter, getting in touch with each other, having an eye for each other, having an eye for what the other needs. We are mainly concerned with ourselves and with how the other person can be approached in such a way, that I get further on with my own interests.

It is the personal care that makes the meeting work. It is precisely in human cooperation and living together that we can come closer together and our soul, our inner world, can be nourished with meaning. We experience how the other person is doing well and that provides inner fulfilment. It is precisely functional care that can eventually lead to erosion, to routine, to habit. The special touch gets lost. We become standard.

We can find ourselves in the caring for others. Do you not want to look after the other person in a way that you would wish for yourself?

It is "the touch" that does the work. We want to be seen by the other, we want to be touched by the other. This is what we can do to the other ourselves.

We can notice that when we approach the other with personal care, this other person opens up his soul for us. Personal contact can happen.

That is certainly important when we come into contact with our client, with our colleague, and with the neighbours.



Week 12: Taking good care of the body versus applying dazzling makeup

We want to look good and healthy. There is nothing like good health, we often say to each other. Yet getting good health and maintaining it is a mysterious matter. The food we take, the life we lead, does not always contribute to good health. On the contrary, we make this difficult for ourselves with the way we treat our bodies.

Good health is related to the way we digest our food, the way we take care of our internal organs, says Ayurveda teachings. Our western health care works with statistics and recommendations. Sugars and fats dominate our food and endanger our internal world. It is the taste that counts. We want everything to taste good and with sugars and fats we respond to that. On the one hand we make ourselves unhealthy and then we have to restore the balance with health cures.

Many of us have no peace with the body in which they live. It does not correspond to the ideal representation as it is promoted in our culture. We want to do everything to disguise our body and dress it in attractive designs. Applying make-up can lead to a completely different facial expression than we would radiate with natural care.

It is precisely our soul that makes the body shine. If we were at peace with the body as we received it from our parents and ancestors, if we were to take natural care of this body, if we could let our inner passions radiate into our face, we would have a unique beautiful appearance to be. If we do not allow ourselves to be only guided by what others recommend to us, if we find and maintain our own golden secret, then we can face the world, we can face the other with confidence.



Week 13: Feeding the soul with knowledge and insight versus the hunt for matter

3000 years of philosophy shows us that people live in a constant tension between giving in to their lusts or strengthening their knowledge. Plato and Aristotle showed us this dilemma. Is it about pleasure or knowledge acquisition? They said that the latter would bring more fulfilment and happiness and that it would support us to do the right thing. After all, that is the ultimate goal of human existence: to do the right thing. Doing the good has everything to do with what the other person needs for his development.

In our current life this dilemma shows itself in the attraction of all material versus the attraction of the true, the good, the beautiful. We are overloaded with material goods. We want the beautiful car, the nice house, the fantastic design, the crazy holiday, the delicious dinner. If we have the one in our possession, then the other quickly presents itself. There is ultimately no limit to the satisfaction of all our material desires. Opposite is our spiritual development, the development of our consciousness, our moral content. Do we deal with questions about the human existence such as the question of our origin, the existence of one God or of a world full of gods, the development of our soul, the freedom or the destiny of our lives?

It is almost impossible to escape the material world. There we can however practice the art of moderation. We must turn ourselves to the spiritual / soul world. There we can practice "the rhythmic regularity". With regard to the material world we can practice the "abandonment". We draw a line and we do not burden the earth too much with our material desires. In the spiritual / soul world we can practice the dedication. In meditation or prayer we turn to the essential and pay attention to what our inner questions are about what is / will be our existence before and after death.



Week 14: Keeping your own ideals alive versus putting your ideals on others

Ideals provide the fuel for exceptional performance. Wanting to realize ideals is a laudable pursuit if these ideals have a human content. There is a danger of wanting to realize your ideals in others or, in other words, getting others to act according to your ideal. It is an art of living to work with one's own ideals and to encourage the same with others.

There is the saying that training is not the filling of barrels but the lighting of a fire. It is about the other discovering his ideal and also discovering his own assignment. In the own assignment, the own ideal can give the fuel to want to bring this assignment to a successful conclusion.

In life it works best when you act into the situation on what is being asked there, what is needed there and in some other moment you pay attention to the nutrition of your ideal from time to time. This feeding your ideal can consist of studying inspiring contents that are related to your ideal. It is counterproductive if you keep on expressing your ideal in the situation with others being there. That usually evokes real resistance from the other persons. We can also see this in cultures where the ideal of a leader must be realized by the people. Eventually this is always accompanied by coercion and violence. We are not all bound by the same ideal, we have different ideals. The value of an ideal is expressed in the extent to which it helps us to live a decent life. There are essential values such as freedom, respect and love that can guide us in doing the good. With these ideals we can release, respect and treat the other person with love.

In society, the ideals of freedom, equality and fraternity provide direction for a decent society. They face coercion and violence, domination and oppression, selfishness and exploitation.

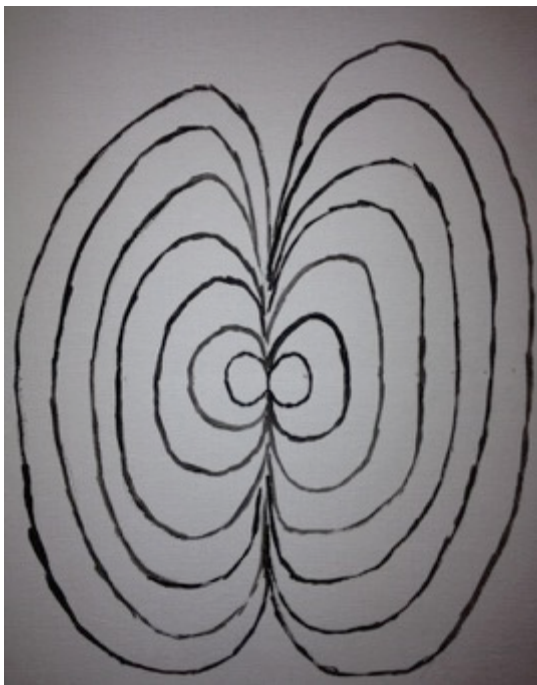


3. To develop yourself through learning

Man has been given the opportunity to raise his soul to a higher consciousness level. Not only do impulsive strivings have to occupy our souls and direct our actions. We can consciously direct our actions, direct our thinking, balance our feelings.

By concentrating on meaningful contents, by practicing essential skills, by acquiring a positive developing attitude, we as humans can develop to a higher level of consciousness. Then we can do justice to the other, support the other in his developmental step.

There are several ways that we can go for our consciousness development. Everyone can find their own way and by doing this be inspired by others. Ultimately, it is up to one's own effort to want to set this consciousness development as a life goal and to strive for it throughout your life. It gives life meaning and fulfils the human soul.



Week 15: Pushing boundaries versus avoiding limits

Life is limited. Between birth and death our life takes place in the here and now. Our life takes place between future and past, between idea and reality, between inner and outer world. These are fundamental boundaries that we have to deal with throughout our lives. These are boundaries that we cannot cross, they are laid within us, they are hereditary boundaries.

We also have many soul boundaries. These are partly laid out by ourselves, partly by the culture in which we are indicated.

We can let ourselves be guided by borders. We do not want to cross them because we fear the unknown land on the other side of the border. We better accept the reality as it is.

What happens if we cross a border? We end up in a different world than we know. We meet other people on the other side of the border with a different culture, way of life, habits. We can feel lost when we enter this unknown world. We must not only want to cross an outer boundary, we must also cross an inner soul boundary. That boundary is expressed by a limit of established views, judgments and standpoints.

We can cross a line if we want to be guided by what we perceive in another person as a guiding idea, guiding concept, steering values. We can see the world through the eyes of the other and we are going to see another world than the one we have seen so far. This is an appeal to our leadership, to explore boundaries and to pass boundaries that allow us to take a step in our development.

We experience fear when we push a line. How will the others respond, those who want to stay behind in the familiar? Who is coming with me in this unknown country?

The strange thing is that we will experience when we push a boundary that after a while we will discover a new world and that this new world is not so far away from the world we know and are familiar with. We are going to discover communalities with other people, we discover basic human values associated with the human "I". Every person has a

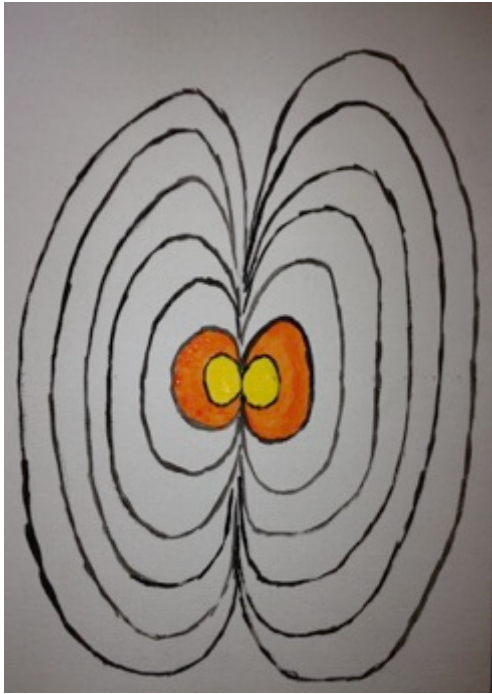
biography, goes through certain phases, is confronted with certain questions. It is precisely pushing our limits that lets us get to know who we are and who the other person actually is. We find a reliable foundation for our existence, namely that we are able to push boundaries and to find our way in the unknown.



Week 16: Honest confrontation versus turning around it and avoiding it

When we meet others, live together and collaborate with others, we are confronted with different views than ours, different ways of action than we are used to, different experiences and feelings than we normally experience. That can scare us, that can repel us from the other, can lead us to avoid the other. Yet we will often find that we cannot escape from that other person and that we are condemned to go through life with that other person or have to go along with each other for a while. That can be as a partner or that can be as a colleague, as a family member, as a fellow villager, as a fellow religious companion.

We are different from each other and will therefore constantly experience that the other is different, wants something different, thinks differently, feels differently. It takes little to be driven apart by the differences that we experience and discover. Wrapping around it and getting out of the way can briefly relieve us, but in the long run this will not last. We will have to show our colour somewhere and reveal ourselves to the other in our being different. That requires confrontation and we might be afraid of this confrontation. This is often the result of not wanting to hurt the other, not wanting to disappoint the other. It is therefore an art to confront. It is especially important to stay in the confrontation concentrating on the case of what it is about, of what matters. Soon we are in danger of becoming entangled with each other because we do not listen to each other, do not understand each other, are not open to what the other is showing. Confrontation requires staying well with yourself and staying in contact with others. If both of us can achieve this, then a confrontation can be extremely enlightening. She can dissolve all kinds of judgments and images about each other. Together we will see what actually divides us and we can discover what actually connects us. A fair confrontation is an absolute social gesture that can bring us together in a new way and which can make our own being into something manageable.



Week 17: Requesting feedback versus giving unsolicited feedback

Have you ever seen a recording of yourself on video? Usually what you see is just a shock. Is this the way I appear, you think while watching. Your hands move a bit uneasily, you regularly sniff your nose. Your jacket is a bit crooked. What you say, alla, it can be, but how you say it can certainly be improved.

Feedback gives you food for thoughts. It brings you to points that you have not seen before in yourself. When the other person gives you feedback, it is important that you have asked for it. Unsolicited feedback usually leads to a defensive attitude, to self-justification, to wanting to explain to the other that he/she nevertheless saw it wrong. If you ask the other person for feedback, it is good to give the other person the points on which you would like to get feedback.

A nice way of giving feedback to the other is to give the other back what talent you have seen with the other and which development point you see with the other. Feedback should not be full of judgments, but should, above all, reflect precise observations, observations that the other can also see looking through your eyes.

A nice way of feedback is a 360-degree analysis. For example, you want feedback on how your leadership works. You ask your own supervisor, two colleagues and 4 of your employees to score you on a number of questions that you give them. You score yourself too. Then you compare the scores and from that you can extract development points that you then discuss with the feedback givers.

Giving and receiving feedback is a strong means to improve collaboration. In teams you can give each other feedback about how your behaviour affects others. That often gives surprising insights. You look at yourself through the eyes of others. The trick is then not to justify your behaviour directly, but first to accept and process what the others say. The other usually sees it sharper than you see it yourself.



Week 18: Learning from failure versus sticking to success

Our society is driven by a desire for success. Organizations and their managers are particularly looking for success. Increasingly better results, growth and rising profits are signs of success. On the other hand there are in our life practice countless failures and we meet failing people. We have a hard time tolerating failure and we want to hide this as quickly as possible. Yet failure is an essential part of life. It shows that we are not Gods who have everything under control. We are beings who are equipped with a soul that does not naturally do the right thing and think the right thing. We have been condemned to find our way in freedom and that includes failure.

Failure gets value if we want to learn from it. We can look back on what has failed and ask ourselves what contributed to this and what can be done differently next time. When we speak to people who have created something that has value in life, then their story will not be a succession of successes, but a learning of what did not work, and continually taking steps to improve the process and ultimately achieve what you strived for.

When we are successful and impress others by this, our success can give us a reputation. That reputation can remain the whole lifetime as we see this with athletes and musicians, for example. Success is achieved at a young age and can be used for life. The question is whether hanging on to one's own success leads to a fulfilled life. Time and again we are confronted with what once was and we do not see what we have become today. It is not uncommon after the early success that a life full of failure follows on all sorts of other fronts. Relationships are falling, the money is running out, we are investing in things that are not going well, we are getting worse.

Life gives fulfilment if we can make small steps time and again, if we learn from what did not work, if we try again and gradually become able to achieve something essential again and again. This can be in the profession, in the community of life, in the practical care for others.



Week 19: Integrating your experiences versus taking distance from your experiences

We gain experience. We experience and process what we undergo there. Those experiences are not always positive. We can experience dramatic events that overthrow our lives. We experience violation of our lives, we experience struggle and defeat, sometimes violence and abuse. Those negative experiences occupy our soul. They are not easy to ignore, they keep coming back to our consciousness.

We want to distance ourselves from difficult experiences, and sometimes even pretend that they have not taken place at all. Denial is a common gesture in difficult times.

After denial, we want to belittle the events and refer our experiences to the periphery of our souls. Yet this does not work and they seem, with increasing force, to come back to our memory and consciousness.

It is an art of living to integrate all your experiences into your existence. Don't hide anything but process your experiences. They can eventually become your life capital. If you manage to integrate your experiences, then in the long run not much will overthrow you anymore. You will be firmer standing in your shoes.

To be able to integrate experiences, it is important to be able to communicate with others about these experiences. Taking someone into confidence and expressing yourself to that person can lead to those experiences getting a place in your soul. They are there, you cannot deny them or lose them. You can process experiences into insights that help you further. Sharing them with others that you trust also shows that you are not the only one with such experiences. Much that happens to us also happens to others. It is precisely helpful, when we are experiencing something that will keep us busy for years, to come to see others who have experienced something similar. We can develop mutual support and we can see that life can go further if we process experiences and give them a place.



Week 20: Developing one's own style versus going along with what the other likes

A person is easily prepared to be guided by what others think is beautiful and good. As a child we follow the tastemaker, as a teenager fashion, as a young adult the big example, as an adult person what the boss wants, as an older person what has remained unfulfilled. But it can also be different. You discover your own style of being. You behave according to your own standard, you make your own step, you set your own goal, you are not afraid to go another way, you open a mental door to your own world of existence.

There are standards in the profession that must be followed. Yet it is precisely the people with their own style that take the profession further and offer new possibilities. A personal style shows itself in a performance that is inimitable. It is based on the unique personality that shapes things. This shows itself in the manner of dressing, in the manner of speaking, in the way of appearing.

The first basis for a personal style is the uniqueness of the face. No human face is the same. Everyone has their own appearance and we can show that if we strengthen it instead of hiding it. We can suppress the tendency to adapt to what others think is fashionable and to contrast it with our own design.

A second basis for one's own style is shown in the surprising element that ensures that not everything is present in complete harmony and similar to what is found beautiful, but that there is just a small dissonance, a rhythm shift, a surprising step.

A third basis for one's own style is the complete familiarity of the person involved with the way in which he appears. Body, soul and spirit show themselves in a unique composition. The composition is displayed in all sorts of variants. There is no routine in it, no habit, and it is precisely the pleasant quality of one's own style that makes people appear as unique beings.



Week 21: Honouring your teachers versus rejecting your enemies

In your life you meet masters who become your teachers. They can be teachers in the school, managers you admire, colleagues you want to follow, clients who ask you nice questions. They take you further in your development.

You also meet other people who are going to be hostile to you. There is tension and revulsion between you and the other and the other becomes an enemy of you. Preferably you put a stick between the legs of your enemy so that he stumbles. Enemies can attract your energy, negative energy. You want to take on the battle, but often that doesn't really work. The enemy remains a hidden danger.

Your teachers, on the other hand, give you energy, they know how to touch you, they offer you openings, they catch you if you fail and encourage you to continue.

It's nice to get an eye for the others you learn from. That's a lot more people than you realize. That applies both in practical life and work, in soul-based development, for spiritual maturation.

Teachers help you get a grip on practical life. They train you in practical skills. You are therefore able to master the material yourself. Teachers also help you control your soul. They help you deal with emotions, with impulses, with thoughts that guide you. They feed your ideals and advise you on difficult issues and decisions. Teachers help you with your spiritual maturation. They help you to meditate, to pray, to reflect, to discover the meaning of life.

Teachers give you truth, beauty and goodness. Enemies give you fear, hatred and guilt.

Love your enemies is not only a beautiful slogan but a deep wisdom. Your enemies are also your teachers and speak to you about something that needs to be brought to change, to renewal. Only much later will you see how an enemy has taken you to a step that later turned out to be important in your life progress.



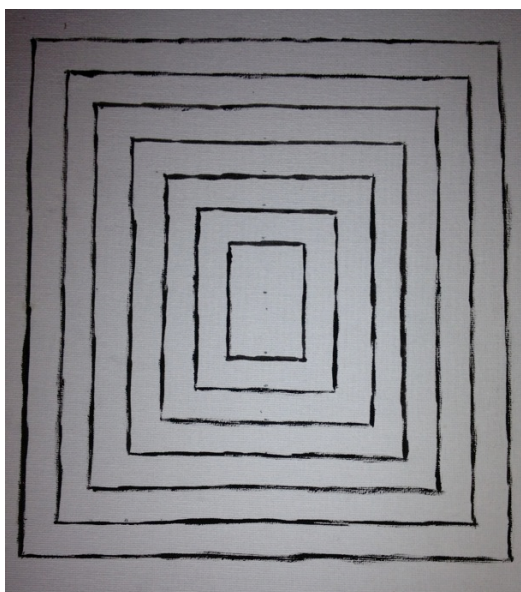
4. Living and working with questions

The human soul appears in the form of questions. Questions are the manifestation of the paradoxical soul. Things are not right and we want to make them right. Everything we want to create generates a problem. How are we going to do this? Everything that is made generates a problem. How are we going to take care of this? Every problem requires a solution. Every change starts with an issue that we are also part of ourselves.

Living with a question lets us discover worlds that we didn't see before. The question we live with determines what we see. If new questions arise, we will discover new realities. This way we can steer life with questions.

The question is whether we live with questions that also make sense, that take us further, that have to do with our life impulse. We can worry about questions that don't really matter to us. We can ignore questions that could have taken us further.

Cultivate meaningful questions in your life.



Week 22: Asking a good question versus giving an unsolicited answer

Asking the decisive question can trigger a decisive development. Questions set us in motion. We search, we investigate. Every religion, every art, every science starts with a question. They are the three manifestations of the human soul in our search for the meaning of life, the foundation of our existence.

People who take us further are those who have asked us the right question. They have perceived what we are concerned about and have asked us about it.

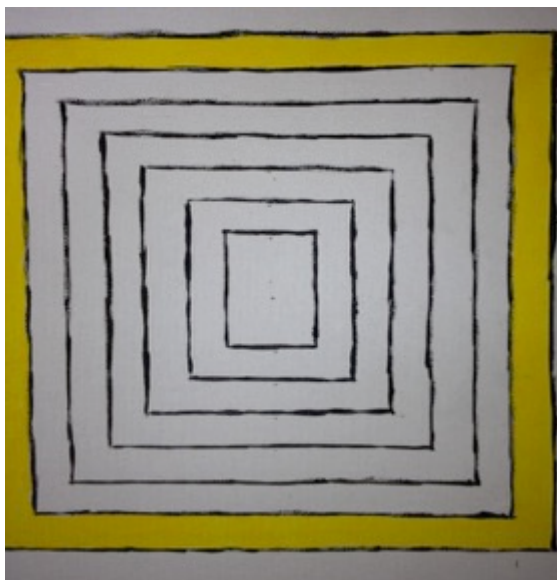
"How are you," is the opening question we know. A meaningful question if we don't routinely ask this to the other. This question can open the soul and we become visible in what concerns us here and now.

When the question is asked to me and I share my problem, the other person can ask questions about my question. Then something essential happens. The issue will change during my telling. The question is no longer outside of me but I become part of my question, I have become the issue myself.

Meeting the other person and giving unsolicited answers can be counterproductive. It evokes resistance. I am so filled with what concerns me that I attack the other with all my considerations, all my finds, all my beliefs. I talk to the other person and give answers to questions not asked by the other person. There is no creative process in which we move our questions in dialogue with each other and possibly discover new answers ourselves. Only self-discovered answers give us direction for our actions, for our next step in change.

There are different types of questions. There are care questions. They are called upon to take care of the existing already created by us. Everything that people make appeals to us with the question: do you want to take care of me? If we do not do this, what we created will vanish. There are problematic questions that require a solution. Expertise is needed to advance this problem question. There are also

change questions and they require a new initiative. No known answers can help here, new answers must be created here.
Living and working with questions opens the soul to new realities.
Answers close the soul.



Week 23: Good listening versus expressing your opinion

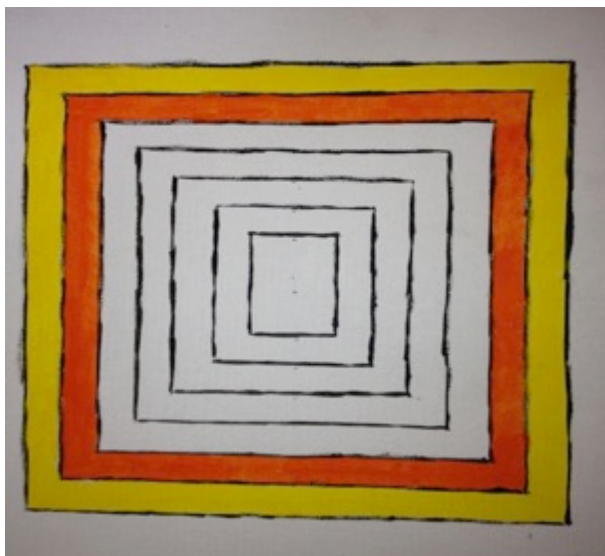
Listening is an activity of the soul that is of great value for acquiring a meaningful, fulfilling existence. By listening to another, we carry that other. We form an inner scale in which the saying of the other can be experienced and carried. Good Listening has several dimensions. First of all, content comes across. We can follow the content of what the other person says. That requires an effort from the head. We can also listen to the emotional charge of what is being said or shown. How is the other person internally connected to what he says? What emotion goes with this? Can I "hear" the inner mood of the other person? Then I listen with my heart. We can listen to the other person's will. Where does this other person want to go, what does this person want to realize? Then I listen with the belly. As a human soul we are multi-faceted and can listen to each other on multiple levels in parallel.

Opposite listening is expressing your opinion to someone else. "Oh yes, I know that," "you have to do that differently," "but you can't do it that way," "what an idiots, say." What the other person tells us immediately evokes our own thoughts and feelings, our own judgments and experiences. We would then like to turn that person to another answer and thereby hinder the other person from further expressing and exploring the issue themselves. It remains on a superficial level and the other will not speak out. It also adds nothing.

If the other person listens well you can feel that this is wearing you. This is important in professions that rely on good listening, such as the doctor or teacher or consultant. But the manager can also make good listening a force that supports others to take their steps.

Good listening requires restraint in our own inner self, requires constant consideration and awareness of what to allow and what to hold back. Everything that comes to judgment, reactions, we should keep back while listening. It is precisely the interest in the other that forms the basis for good listening. In listening we can hear the second voice of the other. We not only hear and feel what the other person is saying and

showing, but we also hear and feel the unspoken thing that the other person is moving and of which the narration is an appearance. We hear the author who directs the story and we can talk to this author from a good listening. When listening is mutually paramount, we can immediately edit the actual questions at a deep level with each other and thus both come a step further.



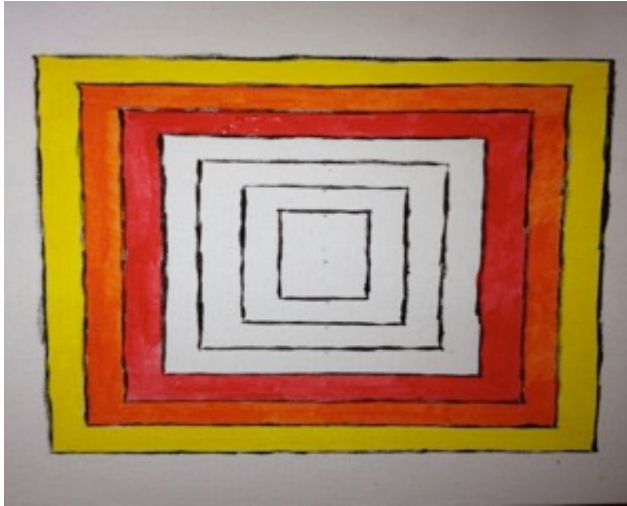
Week 24: Exposing questions from others with their own inspirations versus answering questions from others

As a young consultant I had the privilege to spend several years in dialogues with Bernard Lievegoed, together with some colleagues, in which he reflected on all our questions. What I soon noticed was that after a preparatory conversation with Bernard, in which he wanted to know what our questions were, we did not receive any direct answers from Bernard on those evenings. He spoke extensively about the themes that occupied him or that had played a major role in his life. For example, he told us about the Parcial story that he occupied himself with at regular intervals throughout his life. "This is the story of modern man," he said. "Man comes to the earth completely naive and not knowing anything and must find his way in dialogue with other people." Parcial meets King Amfortas in his castle. Strange scenes take place. But Parcial keeps his mouth shut, does not ask a question, as he was raised to do by his mother. After leaving the castle, Parcial experiences many adventures that make him wiser. At some point he comes again to Amfortas castle. He sees that the king is wounded and he asks him the question: "What are you suffering from, uncle." Then the King's healing process can begin. Parcial later becomes the Grail King.

Bernard Lievegoed told us: "If you get a question, don't give an answer, but tell, inspired by the question, what concerns you in your life. In a curious way, the question of the other and your inspiration has everything to do with each other. After all, the question is asked to you by the other person".

This has become a guideline in my own practice. If a customer asks a question about the development of his organization and the people who work in it, it is good practice to let the customer express how he sees his issue and how he deals with it. You do not concentrate on the content but on how the customer relates to and deals with his issue. That is the starting point for sharing your vision that comes to mind in relation to the themes that you are working on together with your

client. Through your story, the client sees a process that we can do together to get the issue moving, in development. We look for new ways for people who are on the move with this issue.



Week 25: Living with a question to gain insight versus having others give the answer to your question

To gain insight, it is advisable to live with your own questions. A question keeps you busy for a while. You look for inspiring impulses. You read, watch and have conversations. The question comes to life in you. Then you start seeing things that you did not see before. There appears to be a whole world behind your question. You will discover that world. The temptation is to want others to feed you who are only too happy to answer the question you have. In essence, your question stands still, since the answer has been given. That answer can become a belief and conviction.

It is the art of living with a question that this causes the question to move, develop and change. You will discover new dimensions, but you will continue to search and investigate the different sources that you come across. By living with a question, an input process starts. You become fascinated and inspired. New questions develop and with that new perspectives.

It is good at some point to let go of the question and wait for what is to come. In a sense, the question disappears in your subconscious where it continues to work. At some point new challenges come your way that you later recognize as workings of the process of life with a question at an earlier time. Aging has arisen and consciousness has arisen.

This is a soul process of "metamorphosis" and "steigerung". In this way, the issue, your question, reaches a higher level of existence. It acquires moral dimensions and connects with the fundamental questions of being human. These are questions about our origin, our soul development, our freedom and our destiny.

We connect the process of "becoming" with the process of "being". The fruits of our soul effort are absorbed in our "I", our unique personality. They become a basis for our existence.

In this process we cannot ride on someone else's bicycle. We can get advice from others, but we will have to develop the question of our lives

in our own way. That requires courage and perseverance. Be true to your own questions.



Week 26: Being part of your issue yourself versus putting your issue to others

How often are we confronted with an issue where the issue for us is the other person. It is the partner who is wrong, the teacher who makes it difficult for us, the customer who is annoying, the colleague who competes. We tend to put our dissatisfaction on others and to free ourselves with that. After all, we have the best intentions, but we doubt whether this also applies to the other. We distrust the other and distance ourselves.

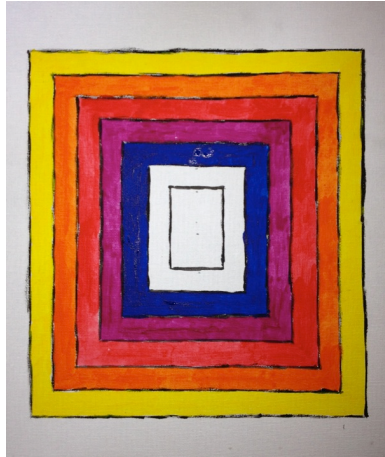
With some effort we can realize that we ourselves are always part of the issues that come our way. We first place the issue outside of ourselves, but if we focus more on the issue and involve others in it, we will discover that we are part of the issue ourselves. We are part of the issue and the issue is part of us.

For example, it is possible that the team members in the team you lead do not work well together. That annoys you. You find the team members operating substandard. When you talk to a colleague about it confidentially, it gradually becomes clear to you, through questions from the other person, that you are part of this problem of not working well together. You will see that you often inform the team members too late, that there is an inequality in attention for team members, that you lead the team sessions somewhat limply. The team members have actually withdrawn and everyone works on their own.

When you discuss this with the team members and thereby keep the issue to yourself, a lively conversation starts immediately in which the team members speak out. They also see that it can be done much better, but with a somewhat wait-and-see chef, it becomes difficult to keep the spirit in it.

We tend to project our inability on others. Others can hold up the mirror to us and show us that we are part of the issue. In that sense, changing is always a dialogical process in which all parties involved will ultimately have to change if things are to go better. What change that

must be, will gradually have to be discovered in a special process that focuses on the necessary change.



Week 27: Trust the process and manage it versus having the doubt rule

Our life takes place in processes: a work process, a learning process, a family process, a reflection process. In these processes it comes down to steps that we take and to progress rhythmically. Processes must also be coordinated. Too much work process and too little family process can lead to misunderstandings. It is therefore important to direct and steer your processes.

Directing means first of all that your awareness develops that there are different processes in which you live and move on. In addition, it is important that you understand which people are involved in which process and how you can involve these people in your process in a fruitful way. Not too much and not too little, more focused on the core of the matter than on side issues. It is also important to control processes in time. It is good if you have a look ahead for the different processes, that you are actually being present in the processes and that you say goodbye on time in one process, so that you can go to the next process.

If you feel not well about one process, it has an effect on your behaviour. Doubts can arise quickly. Am I right here, am I doing well, shouldn't I be somewhere else right now?

Processes sometimes have a course that is unpredictable. Change processes in particular have unforeseen surprises. It is an art to trust the process. Not knowing exactly what is coming, you trust that you are able to handle the surprise. If we trust the process, it will radiate on others. It is not about a tough act that keeps you going, but it is your self-confidence to deal with the situation that counts.

When doubts arise having such a basic attitude as described, you can deal with these doubts in such a way that you stop and refocus. Something may have been overlooked that is important in the process.



Week 28: The reality you meet is your teacher versus what you come up with

It is our head that can make life complicated. The legs are much more linear, they go one way. Our head is going in all directions. What happens in the head is rather a processing of what has happened and this can give us clarity about what is going on and how to proceed. In this way you can try to move forward in a very planned way in life or you let yourself be guided by what comes your way.

On the one hand, the reality that you meet is a teacher. It is not for nothing that something happens to you, that you meet someone, that you get a question or a challenge. That has karmic dimensions. It is destiny in a certain sense. On the other hand, you can steer your life by moving to those realities that are meaningful to you and not getting stuck in realities that do not correspond to what you are looking for in life.

There are two parameters that you can trust and follow. The first is to listen to what the heart tells you and the second is to follow your gut feeling. The heart is an extremely sensitive organ that constantly scans reality for its meaning for your life. The abdomen, where a lot is processed and transformed, is connected to the subconscious that can tell you if you need to go into something or that you better keep your distance.

With the head you can translate heart and stomach signals into clear ideas, clear representations, which give you confidence that you are on the right track. The head is a good comrade for analysis and raising awareness of issues and judgments, decisions and next steps that come from the heart and the belly. The head can then perceive through the senses and express itself through your speech and listening organs.



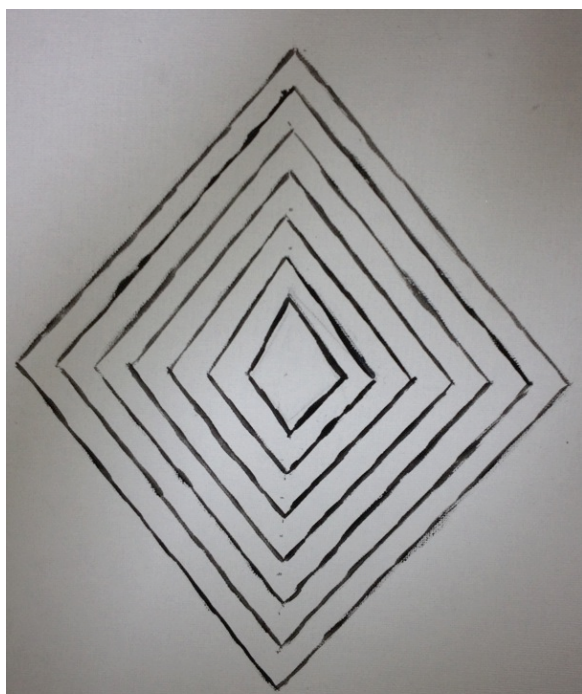
5. Find the right ratio

We have been taught that life consists of causes and consequences. We have also been taught that life consists of questions and answers. We have been taught that life consists of customer and supplier. We have been taught that life consists of goals and means.

We have discovered in our life practice that human life is always a two-way movement.

We are both cause and effect, question and answer, customer and supplier, purpose and means.

In that sense, it is always important to find the right relationship and the right perspective. Life is multiple and not single. There are several options, different views, a variety in which direction to go. Finding the right relationship means doing justice to all who are involved to the extent that everyone feels they can live with the process and the outcome.



Week 29: Making small steps versus a big leap forward

When we set a goal, it is an act of art to find the way to it. The question arises as to how we want to achieve this goal and why we would like this to happen. This how and why question gives us reason to think about how we want to proceed. There we have the choice whether we want to approach our goal step by step or whether we want to reach our goal as quickly as possible with a big leap.

If we want to take the big leap then it is not unlikely that you are at risk and that we experience a dropout and that you have not been able to make the leap. You can become a victim of the jump that is too demanding.

It is better to make small steps forward. Experience shows that with small steps there will come times when we can realize a bigger breakthrough with the next small step. We suddenly notice that we have arrived in a different environment, in a different time frame, in a different atmosphere. We are surprised about what we are now seeing and experiencing. In this way things can suddenly come together that were almost unthinkable before. This has to do with development. Development is not linear. It is a progression and sometimes a relapse. It is a turning of side roads to eventually reach the main road. It is a combination of steps and sometimes a lonely personal step. In addition, we can learn from our steps and experiences. We notice that something works well or not. We notice that even the slowest companion can come along. We are also going to see that the goal is shifting, a different dimension is becoming visible, and multiple choices can be made.

The big leap forward comes to us when we are stuck in the existing, have no peace with that and assume that the big leap helps us out of misery. If we make the leap it appears that in the first place we sometimes have a liberated feeling, "we are redeemed", but that soon the new situation is also not ideal and sometimes brings us back to what we just wanted to escape.

When we realize goals and we go for them, we will see that we will eventually return to the place where we once started. We have become a different person and see the place with different eyes.



Week 30: Finding the right size versus trying to get everything out

As humans, we have many options, but we also meet our limitations. Not everything is possible and it is a way of life to be able to properly assess where there are opportunities for us and where we encounter obstacles that prevent us from pursuing what we are striving for.

Our goal may be to want to get everything out of life, whatever is in it. With unbridled energy we pursue what can satisfy our desires. We set the bar high for ourselves and want to become the best on all fronts. It is also possible that we make the opposite movement. Everything is too much for us, we would rather avoid it, and are quickly satisfied. Finding the right balance between too much and too little is a task that guides us throughout life. How do you do that, how to find a good balance?

It is essentially a balancing act. We balance between the ideals that drive us and the realities that we meet. We balance between what we want to achieve for ourselves and what others ask of us. We balance between what we control and what we can still learn. We balance between what is familiar and what is unknown.

An essential element in this balancing is the quality of the process we are in. Our life is a whole bundle of processes that we carry out together with others. The work process, the holiday process, the study process, the family process, the reflection process. Are we well versed in those processes and do we deal well with the issues that play a role in the processes? Are we making progress or are we experiencing stagnation? You can devour one process completely and then other processes will fail. The work process demands a lot and the family, for example, complains that you are missed and you are away too much.

In the various phases of life this balancing is always of a different order. In the youth we are largely destined in fixed contexts. We live and learn in contexts that others manage. As we get older, we create the context ourselves more and assume responsibility. That requires a more conscious balancing. When we are older and withdraw more, it is an art not to relax and fall asleep.

If we feel at home in the processes, on the move, connected to others, filled with what we do, can be who we are, then a good healthy balance has been found.



Week 31: Sustainable Quality versus transiently cheap

It took a while before I realized this. Sustainable quality is better than transiently cheap. Take for example food that you buy in the store. At the mass grocer you can buy vegetables, meat, chips and coke for a bite. If you pay a little more attention to the question where do these products come from and how are they grown / made, then you are shocked. They are industrial products that have been released into the world with a raw material from a chemical feed. In the recent past, many products were processed with fat, now it is more sugar. The taste is thus affected and our taste organs get spoiled. People no longer enjoy fine food of a healthy quality. We prefer a sugar bomb. Similarly, you can buy all kinds of consumer goods cheaply, but the production process is not uplifting there either. Garments made from natural raw materials are now produced cheaply with chemical raw materials. When you wear them, you notice that they do not breathe and you walk sweating on the street.

All this tempts us to gather a lot of matter, to feed our bodies with pathogenic substances, to have to throw the package away and especially when it is packed in plastic. Nature is spoiled with all our waste that is not processable and digestible.

However, it is possible to opt for everything for a quality product that is sustainable and environmentally friendly. Is it food, energy, means of transport, utensils, you can choose quality and that gives your life a much healthier physical and soul-based fundament.

The choice for sustainable quality does not have to depend on having a high or low income. The choice runs right through the wealth classes of our society. It has to do with consciousness. Are we in contact with what is going on in the world and how that world is on the rack of our human production? Are we aware that the earth is a living organism and infused with spiritual substance? Do we know our responsibility for the well-being of the world and earth? Are we guided by that awareness?



Week 32: Giving the other part of the profit versus wanting to keep all the profit for your self

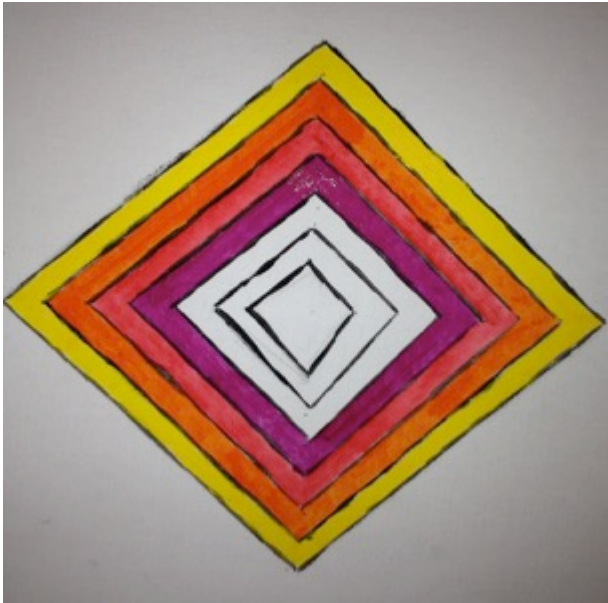
The concepts of success and profit are closely linked. "The winner takes it all". The question is whether that will make you happy in the long run. We want a successful life and look forward to the profit we can make with our businesses. It can lead to a stronger egoism, a complete focus on your own interests. You fail to notice that many have contributed to your winnings and that these others may be scantily rewarded for what they have achieved for you. You can imagine that for those who earn a profit many others have made an effort. They were not in a position to claim their share of the winnings.

Gaining profit gives you a special responsibility. Profit creates a free space and gives you the question in what you would like to invest your profit. Or that you ask yourself the question to whom you would like to donate it to? If you live with the awareness that your profit is the work of many others, then you can build the bridge to the idea of making a next step possible for many others with your profit.

Making a profit can become an obsession. Companies and owners can be driven by their profit pursuit and their desire to be able to cash-in an ever-growing profit. For some people this runs into the billions, for all those others these profits pass by.

There are people who, despite a low income, are always willing to give a part to others who need it more. There is a fundamental value behind this, which you can summarize with the words: "If the other person is doing well, I will also be fine". Giving away to others can make a deep fulfilment of the soul possible. Connecting with the suffering of others and offering help means answering to being fundamental human. We are here to support and help each other. We are not ready before the others are doing well. As a philosopher once said: "We see the suffering of another person and we experience it as our own suffering. We are not ready until we have stretched out a helping hand. We can become

aware of all those others who support us in our process and we are grateful for that.



Week 33: Searching for the golden ratio versus putting everything on one map

We dream of winning the lottery. The big prize becomes our share. The silver fleet is entering. We have put all our capital on one map and if it wins, we will be covered for the rest of our lives. That can be our game in all kinds of life spheres. This can be done at work, for example, by setting up a large, comprehensive project and doing everything possible to ensure that this is successful. This can be done at home by focusing all your energy on your child who has to succeed on all fronts. That can be done in the sport meeting by throwing everything in to fight the other.

It works better if you want to play all the cards that you have in such a way that a good value creation takes place and the various processes in which you live are based on a good mutual relationship. The golden ratio is the optimal relationship between your life processes, the life processes of others who stand next to you but also having a good relationship between your inner processes and the outer processes in which you move.

How this looks for everyone is different. There is no absolute measure. Everyone will have to find their own golden ratio. For example, what works well for one person does not have to do that for the other.

It is an art of living to free yourself and others from compelling conventions and living in illusions. It is important that you come to a personal relationship with others, that you achieve optimum fulfilment of life in an interaction with others. This also means that you must deal with setbacks and disappointments, share them together and have the courage to try again, to try it in a new, slightly different way. As Goethe once said: "Alles ist ein versuch".

Everything is an attempt, none of what we do is absolute. Again and again it might have to be a little bit different: what was good yesterday does not have to be good tomorrow. This golden fit requires a high

sensitivity, a sensitive perception of what happens and for how it works, including how it works for others.



Week 34: Delaying on time versus going through the bend briefly

"To be in a hurry is rarely good," the saying goes. Our wish for something to be done quickly is often met by delay, postponement and sometimes stagnation. Going sharply through the bend briefly can be compared to that. We think we can bypass a lot and reach our goal so quickly. But the bend can also be too sharp and we lose control and land in the ditch. As in many life processes, we have to search for the right progressive step. We have to orient ourselves again and again, see where we have landed and what the next steps might be. It makes sense to slow down.

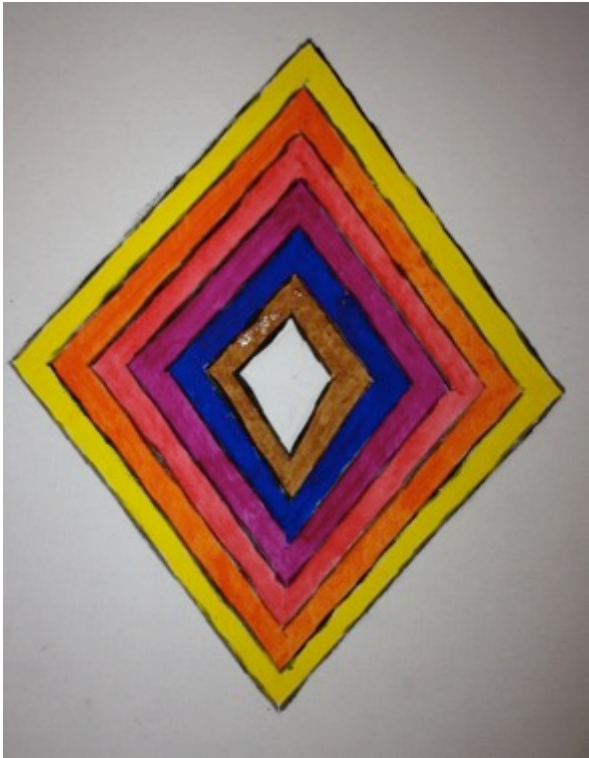
Slow down has a paradoxical efficacy. We experience that something we are dealing with is not going so fast as we wish, but that could mean that something else we otherwise would have overseen can be taken better care of as a result of which we as a whole move in the right speed and with better results. We sometimes have to take detours to reach our goal in the best possible way.

Delaying can have the quality of holding back. We restrain ourselves before we take the step. This provides a moment of peace in which we can combine all our strength and fully concentrate on the next step. That's a nice gesture.

Also in the meeting and the conversation it is effective to keep up once in a while, to slow down in order to get better to the point. Inner haste disturbs the concentration and the being with the other. Precisely because of restraint and delay, we can come together, commit ourselves and come to decisions that take us further. We can miss our goal and then have to start again if we go too fast and go too short through the bend.

The image of the fast hare and the slow turtle also tells us that speed and going short through the bend can also lead to being quickly distracted, to turn to something else in between, to forget even where you wanted to go and get lost. The turtle quietly goes its way and arrives

sooner than the tangled fast hare loosing track with all his short jumps through the many bends.



Week 35: The other sees you sharper than yourself versus judging yourself

You look in the mirror every morning for years. You see your face slowly aging, wrinkles and traits appear, the hair bunch thins out. But it is a familiar sight that will guide you throughout your life.

You meet other people and they look you in the face. What would they see? Your performance is accompanied by the facial expression they see and they observe how you behave. The other person sees you sharper than you looking at yourself. Your soul speaks through your face. The other sees behind your first face, possibly unknowingly, a second face. The second face shows your "I" as it works in the soul. It is therefore essential to look at the other in search of the second face. In it you will find the unique personality of the other. When we see each other like this and come into this personal meeting, something special can happen. We are recognized by the other and we feel seen.

All this is much more reliable than all the judgments you make about yourself. You do not find yourself beautiful, or not attractive, too slow or not adapted enough. You worry how you come across to the other, what that other person will think of you, what the other person will hold of you. These are unnecessary worries if you enable yourself to connect with the personality of the other person and not with how this other person appears to you externally.

As you get older, you can let go of all your self-judgments and rely more on what the other person perceives. It is fascinating to hear the other person when you ask him/her what the other person notices about you, what he/she sees and experiences. That sometimes gives surprisingly true statements that can adjust your own self-image.

Children still have an eye for the second person in the first. They go to you confidently or stay a bit distant. They really feel in which soul mood you are in there and whether they want to be part of it or not. This is also where the game comes in. Children play with each other and do this more out of their own self than from all kinds of prejudices. In this

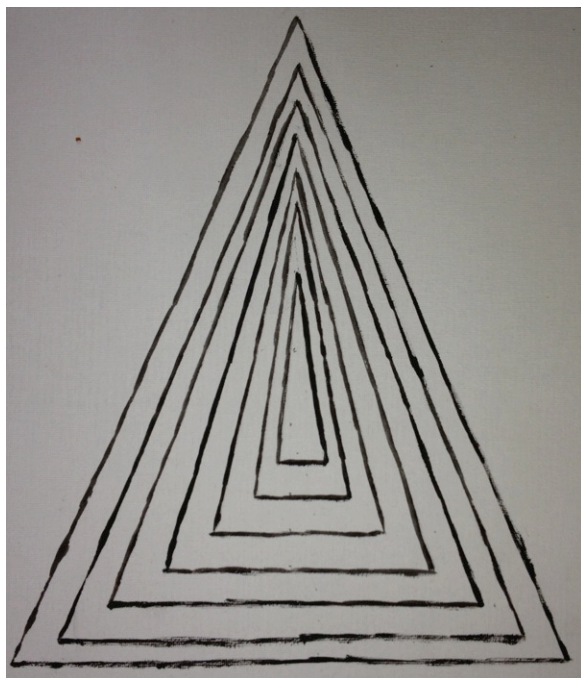
way deep friendships for life can arise. As older people, we can consciously do this game of meeting together.



6. Maintaining a good relationship

We are not alone in the world but live together with others. We share our lives with those others. We build a relationship with each other. We become part of each other's lives. In the old communities, relationships are primarily tied to heredity and, in a sense, predetermined. In our organized life, our relationships are connected to what we do together. We work together, serve each other, learn together, and travel together. This is how the relationship with the other forms itself based on what we experience together. More in-depth relationships can arise from

this. We become aware that we share a common impulse, want to realize a common ideal, have chosen a common destination. That forms our personal community in which we build and provide meaningful relationships with each other.



Week 36: Children raise parents versus parents raise children.

It is generally the case that parents are expected to raise their children. In addition, it is not a rule at all that children raise their parents. Yet it may well be that the latter has as much relevance as the former.

When my oldest daughter was three years old she was standing next to me in the kitchen on a stool and wanted to do the dishes with me. In those days without a dishwasher, the dishes were done by hand and that was one of my household duties. As a child I did the dishes after dinner, together with my older brother, for a family of 7 people: 2 parents and 5 children. With a daily three-course menu this was quite a job. Our parole was "doing everything as quickly as possible and breaking the time record every day". This against the will of my mother, who was evicted from our kitchen every day. This washing up with speed was my habit and that was by no means consistent with doing the dishes with my daughter. At first I was a bit irritated when she wanted to participate, but soon I thought: "Who is raising who here". It all went a lot slower but doing the dishes became a game with my daughter that brought us both pleasure and dishwashing got a new meaning.

It opened my eyes to the fact that children educate parents by properly educating them with their questions, their steps, their individuality and desires in relation to our parental inability. For myself, I formulated the principle that parenting is a mutual process between parents and children. In that process it is important that I have a very clear picture of what important values of life I am practicing and that my child can experience these values in my behaviour. My child can learn from all the impulses I give as a parent and educator but in doing so, the child herself look for what works best in what you do most and what does not work well.



Week 37: Taking your own space and wanting to be with that other person versus always having to be with that other person and always wanting to find your own space

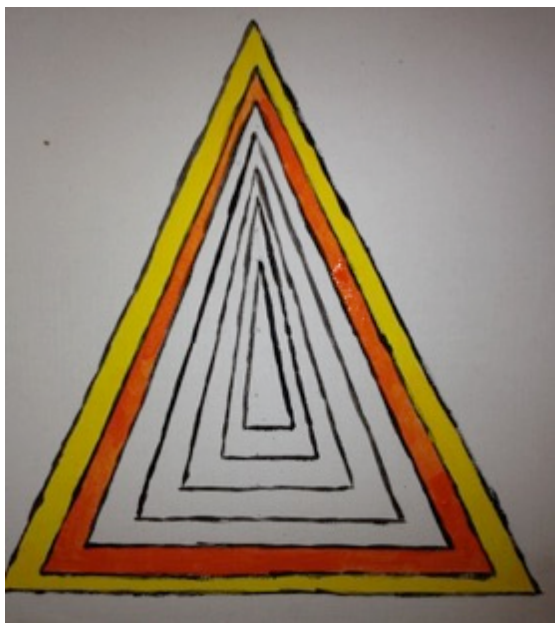
You get your first girlfriend or boyfriend that you love. You want nothing more than to be with that other person. You get a regular relationship and you always want to hang out with the other person and experience the beautiful things together. You get married and want to share everything with each other. You get a house, you may have children, a circle of friends, life processes such as working together, eating, taking a holiday, learning, sleeping, making love.

You notice at a certain moment that you sometimes secretly desire to have something for yourself. To be able to indulge your own hobby freely, get a breath of fresh air in a different context, shift your horizons without having to constantly tune with your partner. A change is taking place in which being together threatens to become routine and taking up one's own space becomes more and more attractive. Fixed relationships can break up because the partners want to break out completely.

When the basis of your existence is taking your own space, living in your own processes and that also applies to the partner, a feeling can arise that you want to have moments for being together. You are not going to get involved in your partner's processes, but you like to share experiences from processes with your partner.

In a relationship, not only the light side plays a role, but also the dark side. Each has a double who encounters the other with increasing strength if you are always together in a permanent relationship. You can argue wonderfully about it and then make it up again, but somewhere this is no longer going to work constructively. When the other person does not emerge as a unique "I" and the double always appears, the good energy, the mutual love, disappears. The spring dries up.

Taking in by both partners of their own space can ensure that new common living space is created for sharing.



Week 38: Critical self-reflection in a relationship versus projecting one's inability onto the other

In a permanent relationship we can get involved with each other. The partners no longer know exactly who and what they are themselves and who and what the other person is. "Just look at yourself" you hear the other person or you hear yourself say. It is therefore an absolute necessity to take a critical look at yourself at regular intervals and to reflect on yourself. You can do that by sharing with a therapist, a coach, a discussion partner. You can also do that through targeted self-reflection and self-study.

A good starting point for self-reflection is to investigate how and what you tend to project onto others. You see the splinter in the eye of the other, and not the beam in your own eye. What is unprocessed in yourself, has not found a place, has not been worked through, that is quickly mobilized if you observe something with the other that communicates with this unprocessed own past. It spontaneously arises as an unjust judgment about the other.

In organizations I come across managers who complain about the functioning of their team. "They do not work together, are not really motivated, do not take their own responsibility". I sometimes say to my client: "You mean I don't work together, I'm not really motivated, I don't take my responsibility." First of all, that is of course denied: "How do you get to that statement?" is said to me. It is a natural tendency to first describe the problem outside of yourself, and if you talk to someone else about it, it may well be that the problem is slowly becoming an "I" problem. How can I ensure that my team ...? That opens up to all others to actually tackle the problem because you yourself are willing to take your own steps.



Week 39: Solving problems in the relationship inside this relationship versus looking for that solution in another relationship

You argue with your boss and later argue about that with your partner. It doesn't work well with a colleague and you complain about that to another colleague. You disagree with your neighbour and gossip about that with the other neighbour. We tend not to express displeasure in a relationship there but to share it with others outside the relationship. That sometimes gives relief but does not solve anything. It is better to discuss issues in the relationship in which they play.

As soon as you tell the other what is bothering you in this relationship, this issue immediately gets a different meaning in your soul. What an elephant was in your thoughts / feelings before the conversation can be a mosquito at the end of the conversation or the other way around.

Talking to each other about your feelings, about what blocks you, about what doesn't feel right, already gives room in the soul that this feeling can change. If the other person responds to what you say, you can explore it together and the issue acquires a different meaning.

A colleague of mine constantly emphasized that if something happens between you and another colleague that is unpleasant, you reflect on this shortly after. You dialogue together on a reflective level and look together at the effect of that unpleasant moment on you and the other. This way you can both continue. If you do not do this, unpleasant experiences become ghost images in your soul.



Week 40: Taking the partner's opinion seriously versus being guided by the opinion of a third party

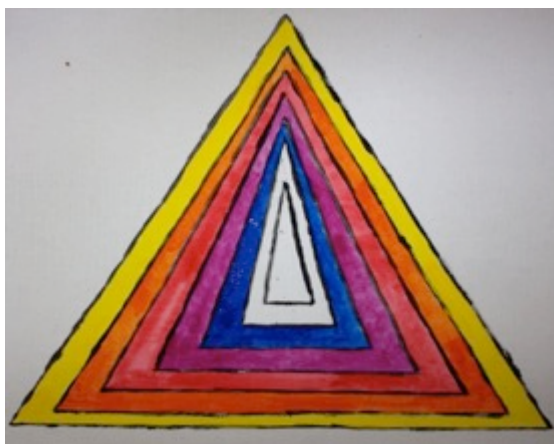
How do you arrive at good judgments? Good judgment stands between no judgment and prejudice. On the one hand, every situation challenges you to give an opinion about it. Sometimes that is formally desirable, such as an employee review, but it also happens almost automatically in yourself when you get into a situation where things happen that are strange to you. Assessment of what happened can be avoided, keeping distance from what has taken place there in that situation.

Pre-judgments are established judgments that are fixed in you and that immediately appear when you recognize a situation you have previously assessed more often. Prejudices can block you from seeing further.

Judging is a dialogical process in which we are not immediately free with each other to do the right evaluation. You sometimes forget to look at the facts, you have strong views that lead you to the same judgment, you forget to look at the future and what is possible, you have no goal in mind.

In a marital relationship it comes to constant judgment and often to pre-judgment. In having a strong conviction and a fixed judgment our prejudice attitude appear. You reject the others view under all circumstances and take distance. How do we arrive at good judgments together? Turning to others that are not directly involved to hear their judgment and preferably a judgment that is favourable to you may be something you like to do. The judgment of another person who is not directly involved in the situation is taken over by you. You communicate that judgment to the partner. Now there is actually someone else between you and the partner. That can have a devastating effect on the relationship, you actually do not come into contact with each other anymore, you do not trust the other person in his/her judgment. There are clairvoyants, fortune tellers, advisers and coaches who, based on

their insights, arrive at judgments about the client's question and situation. He or she takes that into account in the relationship and experiences the alienating effect on the partner. The other blocks inside and blocks the conversation. This strengthens your conviction and brings you further away from the other than coming closer together. Trust the process that together you must make judgments based on your common strength, which then form the basis for decisions that you take together.



Week 41: Confessing your own debt versus blaming the other

There are three forces that want to occupy our souls and that is fear, hatred and guilt.

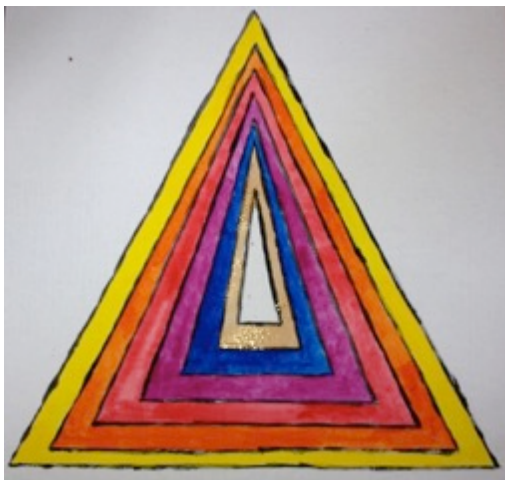
We fear the unknown. Fear feels like driving in dense fog. You always fear being hit and you try to continue your way in the fog with great effort. You get into situations that disrupt you and where someone else get in your way. That can lead you to develop a sense of hatred towards this other person. You want to avoid that other person, you prefer that the other person disappears from your life. That can evoke feelings of guilt in you and you are more than happy to place that guilt on the other person. It is the other who does harm and who is to blame that it does not go the way I would like to see it go.

With every collision with another person, the first tendency is to blame the other. He has not paid attention, actually has bad intentions, is out to be bothering me, wants to hinder my next step.

It is a noble gesture to confess yourself. It shows that you are able to reflect on your behaviour and performance and how this works on others. You have seen and experienced that the event has wronged the other, that it was a wrong choice of yours and that you have not done justice to the other.

It is very important for victims that the perpetrator confesses guilt. It is extremely painful if the offender refuses to do that. A debt confession is required to be able to continue. That works if the people involved really mean it and draw consequences for themselves, change their behaviour, now pay more attention and stay more attentive.

Fear, hatred and guilt occupy the soul and it requires "I" - strength to deal with these soul forces. Existence anxiety requires confidence that you are capable of handling difficult situations. Hate requires that you are able to see your own black side and to shine an inner light. Guilt requires willingness to pay penance and also requires forgiveness.



Week 42: Not lying, not cheating, not complaining, not nagging versus doing this

There are ways that you can go where you get into trouble sooner or later. The statement: "Even though the lie is so fast, the truth will catch up with it", already tells us that the way of the lie has its irrevocable end where you get stuck.

Not lying and not cheating indicates that we are on a dangerous track when we are lying and cheating. We fool the other person and possibly do the other person a disadvantage. But we also harm ourselves because lying and cheating hollows out our own soul. We disconnect ourselves from our responsibility and alienate ourselves from the other. Not complaining and not nagging work in the social reality in a positive way. When we are complaining and nagging we draw the other down to a level of togetherness that is not attractive. You put the other person in a position that he or she starts to feel sorry for you, and then withdraw, take distance from you.

Opposite to this is being honest and being positive. These are forces in the soul that lead you to a moral life in which you allow the other person to show himself in a positive way.

It is the "I" that can help you stay strong and find the strength to be honest and positive towards the other. It is a constructive life experience to go through life with honesty and to be open for experiences that can also be unpleasant and difficult. Processing these experiences helps you to become stronger standing in your shoes. You do not have to take advantage by showing yourself different than reality actually has to offer.

Not lying, not cheating, not complaining, not nagging is nourishment for the heart. The heart balances and gives our life rhythm. The heart does not like stagnation and disturbance. The heart wants our life to flow within a rhythmic sequence, the heart tells us to go step by step. The negative forces disturb and lead to irregularity and stagnation in our life processes. That can kill in time our life energy. Honesty is the

best steering principle and having a positive attitude creates her own space for new possibilities. It is all food for the heart.

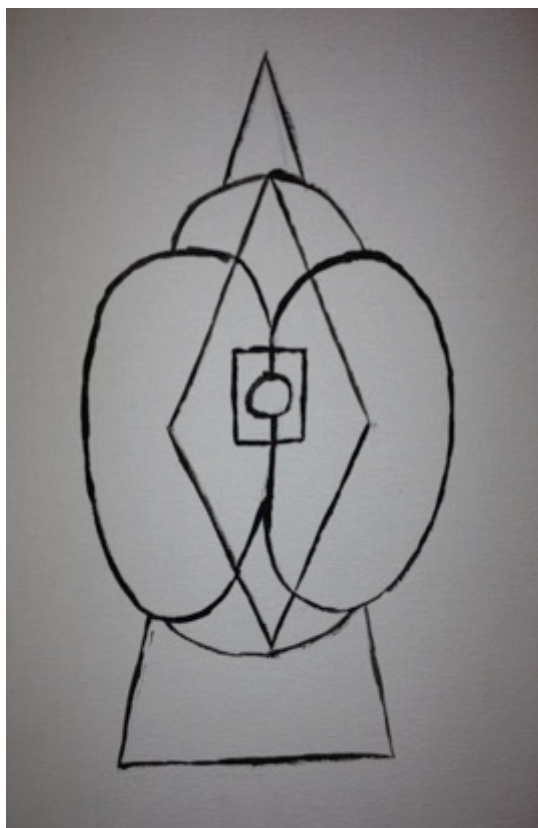


7. Finding your own way and finding: Being true to yourself

We are claimed for many things in life, we are taken along in other people's adventures, we enter into obligations and engage ourselves in all sorts of things. There is much that leads us to losing ourselves. This can lead to stress, illness and burnout. It is an art to be true to yourself. That is not only being true to deeply felt ideals, deeply wanted goals and results, richly experienced happenings, it is also returning to what is essential to you in life and what gives you fulfilment.

Faithfulness requires a high consciousness, an awareness of one's own "I", one's own soul. It ensures that you are always awake for what you are and what the other person is, for who you are and who the other person is.

There is much that will try to break in to being true to yourself. We are tempted and we let go our good intentions, we lose ourselves. As a result, we fall into a downward spiral and lose contact with ourselves. We are afraid, the circles around us are getting smaller and narrower, we are coming to a standstill and are moving backwards.



Week 43: Being true to your ideal versus going with all the winds

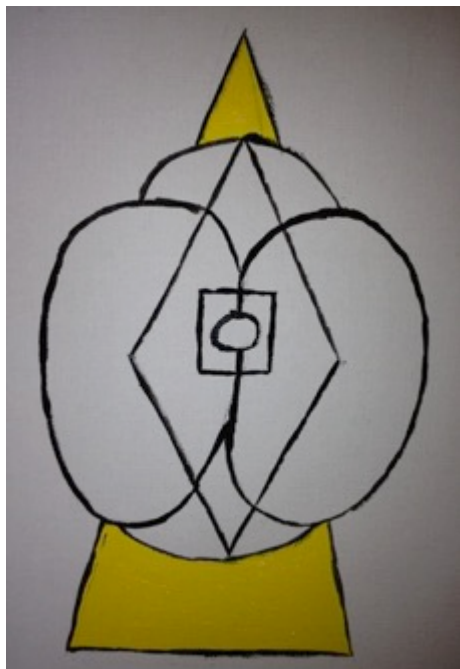
We have a very special quality as a person, we want to live with ideals. Not only are we bound to reality, to our primordial instincts and even habits, but we can imagine that life and the world can look different than what we find now. Ideals have an inspiring effect but can also have a dangerous effect.

The inspiring effect of an ideal is that we continue to strive for a better world and a better life for ourselves and others. The dangerous effect of an ideal can be that we want the others to fit into our ideal. Then it may even be that victims fall because they do not share this ideal but are forced by you to live in it.

Opposite to the working of ideals is being moved by the blowing wind in all possible directions. We often disagree with each other and have a different view. If you are not sure about your business, you can easily be moved in different directions without really being connected to it. That weakens your inner world and you become a little bit colourless soul.

So we look for a very subtle balance between improving the world with an ideal and being prepared to go along with others in their ideal.

It is good to realize that everything that people make and experience is transient. Where in nature and cosmos there is a self-regenerating capacity, man in his own creations must always decide to make a step again. Ideals are therefore appearances of a force constantly striving to achieve the good, to follow the truth and to create the beautiful.



Week 44: Being true to your self versus wanting to meet the other person's requirement

Others place demands on us. The parent to the child, the teacher to the student, the boss to the employee, the audience to the politician, the football fan to his player. We are constantly under pressure to meet those requirements. This can lead to us losing ourselves. We no longer know who we are and what our life is all about.

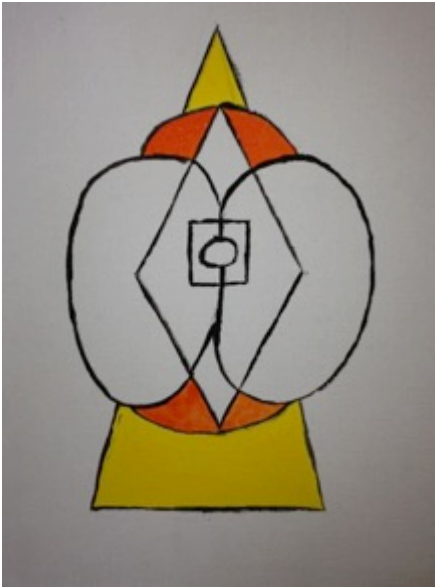
So it requires being true to yourself. That means, among other things, that you develop awareness of where your limits are and which limits you are willing to stretch. It means that you are aware in your inner life of the impulses that you want to realize.

An important ability in life is to seek advice from others. We cannot know everything ourselves and we cannot do everything ourselves. There are others who can help us. This can support us in finding the way. It can also lead to us relinquishing the direction of our lives to others. That usually doesn't work out well. It is very sensible to ask someone else you trust, but it is important to keep control over yourself.

This dilemma is certainly present in a managerial position. You bear responsibility and want to lead others to a goal. But those others have their own steering mechanisms, their own will, their own idea and desire. So it is not good to impose your will on others but it works better to bring your own will into dialogue with the will of the others. We often think differently, but in doing we are often closer to each other than we think.

We are going through a development process in our human biography. We encounter difficult situations, can experience a crisis, want to change ourselves. Then those are moments where being true to yourself is asked. Am I still connected to the theme of my life, am I where I want to be, am I who I want to be with? Others want to influence me and have an interest in me not changing, not leaving, not taking a step. Then it takes courage to choose your own step and not want to respond

to what others want from you. You are happy to serve the other person well.



Week 45: The “I” that controls the soul versus other beings controlling your soul

Bernard Lievegoed once said: “The human soul is occupied. Many want to rule in our souls. We can create a free space in our soul where our own “I” can enter. ”

As a person you can very well feel that. You experience how it stirs in your soul, how all kinds of voices speak in your soul. Those are voices from your parents, educators, bosses or children. There are ideological voices in your soul that constantly call you to express your political opinion. There are passive voices in you that ask for attention and call to you “care for me”. There are historical voices that bind you to who you should be as a hereditary being.

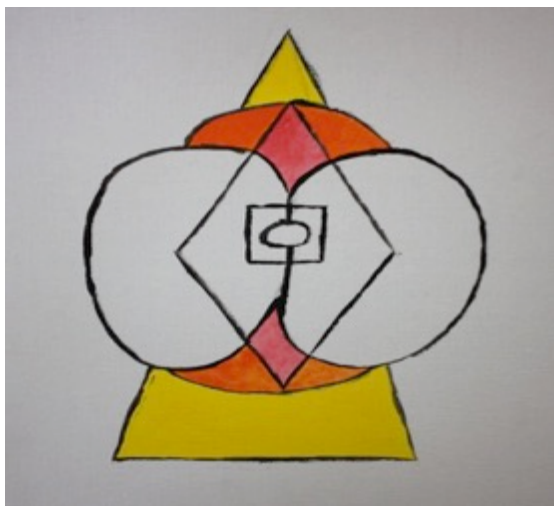
It is not easy to hear your own voice within. It is the “I” voice that can ultimately direct the other soul voices.

Different voices can reinforce each other and dominate your inner self. Other voices hardly get a chance and are not heard even though they are there.

Nature and the cosmos are full of beings who want to express themselves in your soul. There are moral beings who call you to order if you do something wrong or unauthorized. There are tempting beings who want to get you to something that you don't want to do. Those beings can have a power that takes hold of us and that our weak ego cannot compete with. That leads to addiction, illness, violence.

That our own “I” can take control of the soul depends on whether we practice and learn to mobilize our “I” in the soul. That own “I” depends on it being invoked. The “I” must be invited to appear in the soul. For example, meditation can help. You try to perceive your own thoughts and feelings, to think a fruitful thought yourself. We can learn to develop positivity towards another person and see the good in the other. We can try to perform an act out of freedom and not out of coercion. With these exercises you open a space in the soul where the “I” can appear. In

dialogue with someone else you can appear out of your “I” and then a liberating force works in your own inner self.



Week 46: Trust your heart intelligence and follow your gut feeling versus coming up with solutions

When the child is born first it starts breathing and then eating. It learns to stand up and walk, then to talk and then to think. We think the head of man is the most intelligent. But the heart and abdomen may be more intelligent and reliable. We can think of anything but that does not mean that it is wise to follow all those thoughts.

We live with doubts and think about how to defuse those doubts. We come up with plans that may not end up in much. Where the head is desperate looking for food through the senses and sets the senses to work, the heart experiences what is and the legs go their own way and bring us to the places where we must or want to be.

The heart is a beating organism that regulates blood flows and provides its refreshment through the absorption of oxygen. The heart with the lungs are the beating rhythmic organism that moves us and allows us to breathe in and out with the outside world. The abdomen is a working organism where food is digested and converted into new energy. That is connected with organs that cleanse us and clean us up.

Many expressions of the human soul do not come through the head but through the heart / lungs and through the abdomen / organs. Thus, the memory is not only created in the head but especially in the etheric body that carries our physical body with life and energy. Our language is formed and developed in a dialogue with others in which collective impulses are processed by the heart into meaningful contents. The conscience for good and bad is between heart and stomach and lets us feel whether something is okay or not.

The head is a dying organ that can help to bring everything that directs and determines us into our consciousness. There the light can shine and illuminate what is important and what is being referred to by the subconscious.

Coming up with head solutions leads to conceived products that have no lasting effect. Much of the transitory that just is satisfying us for a

moment but is not really feeding us has been thought up by others and is being sold to us as a nourishing product. Conceived art, conceived marketing, conceived systems and structures can not compete with our own consciously made impulses that we share with others.



Week 47: Anyone who does not know the goal cannot trust the road versus randomly pursuing goals

An old American surgeon wrote a book in which he reflected on his experiences with and observations of his patients. The essence of his book was the conclusion that he observed two different biographical processes among thousands of patients. There are people who have given up somewhere and slide down early on to a life that was not experienced as meaningful, and there are people who are there until shortly before their death and know how to give meaning to their lives. All this is independent of being male or female, being rich or poor, being healthy or sick, being disabled or not being disabled, regardless of nationality and age.

It is a description of the human soul in which the "I" of man may or may not arise in his own biography. He saw people who "mentally died early" and people who were "fully alive" until shortly before their death. The distinctive quality between these two soul constellations is that the first one lives without a purpose and the other one lives with a purpose. You don't have to think this is about setting big goals, they can be very small and modest goals. In this way an old lady can take care of her plants and derive attention and joy from them. But the most important distinction was if a human being is living with goals that have to do with supporting others. Not being caught in your own pain and disability, but having an eye and ear for the suffering of others and offering help there. That highly fulfils the soul and nourishes the life forces. It is ultimately the sense that we are giving to our lives and that we gradually discover how to do that, that makes the described difference for our journey of life. Sense and inspiration are connected.

The human being having a choice is related to our image of the human being. Is man only a physical being in which the cells and genes determine the story? Or is man also a being in which etheric and astral forces work that are controlled by the "I"? It is precisely these forces that are connected with our soul being.

Finding our way as a biographical assignment is largely driven by our search with questions and by our willingness to take steps. In it we discover doors through which we can step into a new space and give meaning to our lives through what awaits us there. That is how the event of death can be seen. After a transition, going through a door, resurrection can follow.



Week 48: Creating judgments in dialogue versus living with prejudice

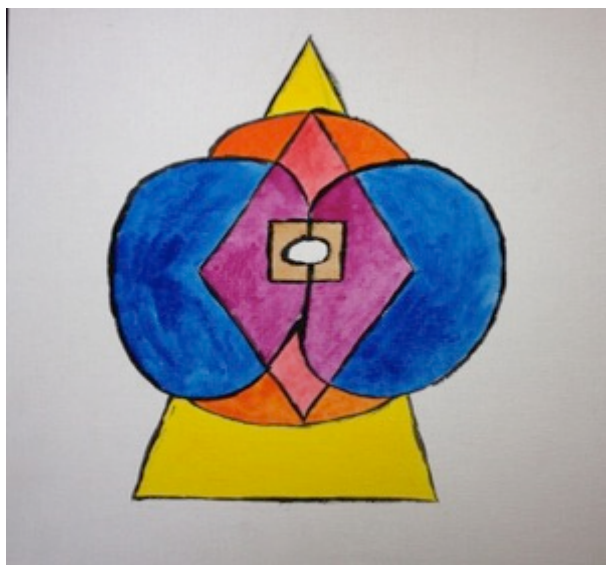
In her latest book "About the Spirit", Hannah Arendt describes how we, as human beings, have developed freedom of thought and freedom of will in the course of an age-old process. Freedom of thought manifests itself in breaking through boundaries of thought through which new language, memory and conscience can arise. We become more individual in our thinking and can now form and express our own thoughts as individuals.

Freedom of will shows itself in the uniqueness of our biography and the way we go. We are no longer fully predestined, with our destiny predetermined, but we can develop into a conscious being based on steps of will in an unknown world.

She sees the current human being as alive in a process in which he learns to reach free judgments in dialogue with others. We no longer have to develop our judgments based on beliefs and ideologies. We can develop our judgments ourselves with each other. This requires an I - dialogue with others about issues that we share. That capacity for dialogical judgment is now potentially laid out in every person's soul. We can develop this ability through practice. That gives us an ever-increasing responsibility for the lives of ourselves, the other, the world and the earth.

Dialogical judgment becomes possible if we are willing to face the facts, develop awareness of our guiding principles, keep our goals in mind and develop the next steps together. That provides a deep connection with the others through which this process of judgment is done and it provides a firm basis for the choices and decisions we make.

This helps us to get rid of our prejudices that are linked to fixed beliefs that we must hold, but also linked to the urgent reactions that arise in us and that can lead to irresponsible action. It creates a space of freedom for the community.



Week 49: Making a choice versus staying in doubt

Organizations have been created for all life processes today. We can translate all our needs into organized responses and satisfaction. We can place all wishes elsewhere. We live an organized and differentiated life. That requires us to make choices every day. It can lead us to a fairly chaotic existence. We live day by day and lack a structure in our lives. It seems as if we are turning in a circle and not getting any further.

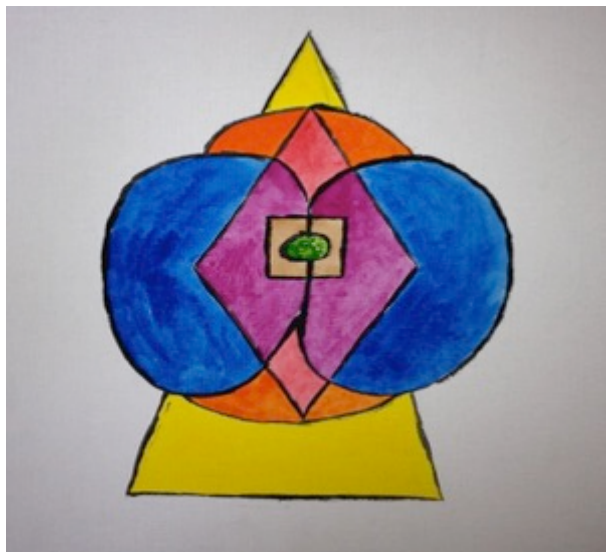
The challenge is to make conscious choices that can be an answer to questions we have. A helping perspective is working with life scenarios. A first scenario is to imagine how life will go if it stays as it is and is only influenced by what has changed around us.

A second scenario is to imagine that we realize a calling dream in our lives. We give in to a deep desire and take a step, turn our course, let go of something, accept something new.

A third scenario is the "impossible scenario". We imagine something that at first sight is unattainable and yet such a thought lives within us. With these scenarios we scan a possible future as it lives in our soul. It leads us to develop awareness for the choice to make in our lives.

For example, there are not only daily small choices, but there are also biographical choices that lead us to paths where we have neither walked before. We walk with others and experience new perspectives. That gives us a space in our souls in which true, good and beautiful can enter and exist.

In our lives detached from nature and the cosmos, permanent doubt is our part. We have no natural certainty, are not absolutely embedded, have not a given sense of life. Turning that doubt into choices is a fundamental task in which we can help each other. The other express his doubts and you say: "I will go with you". You express your doubt and the other person says: "I will go with you". Then we can experience in our dialogue and cooperation that a third invisible force will guide us to achieve the good together.



8. Cultivate the true human values in your own life

There is much we share with other living beings like plants and animals. We not only have a physical body, but also we share life forces and soul qualities.

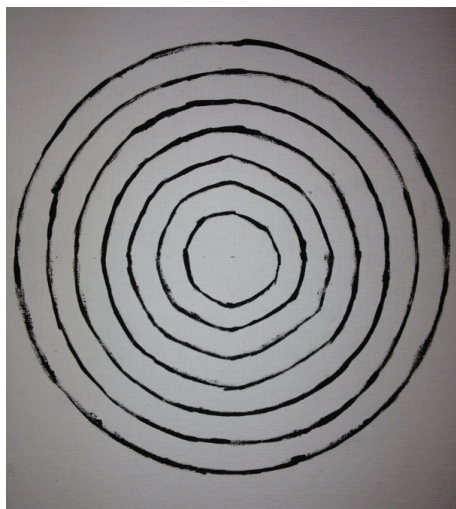
However there are three fundamental human values that are unique and that make the true difference between us and the other beings.

We are on a path that enables us to become free individual human beings that takes us beyond being a natural group being.

We can respect all other living creatures by not making ourselves superior or inferior to them.

We can love the other person because of his unique individual being and we can love all we do as human beings that bring our soul development further.

It is the human soul that has the opportunity to develop these three values that will make in time possible that we give a unique contribution to the spiritual world, a world that we come from before birth and where we go to after leaving this earth.



Week 50: Freedom in your thinking, feeling and willing

We are a multiple being, being part of a natural and a cosmic world, but also being part of a human created world. In our body and in our spirit we can experience the being part of this natural and this cosmic world. In the soul however we are not only part of these two worlds but we are also part of a pure human world that we create ourselves.

The body is, the spirit is but the soul is not. The soul appears.

This means that there is not a predefined connection between myself and the world. There is a paradox between me and the world. We live in polarities as we live in space and time. The ideas we have are not by definition equal to the things we do. Past and future are not automatically connected. Our inner world and the external world are in tension with each other.

The soul world is manifested in the works we do and in what we create inside ourselves in terms of thoughts, feelings and actions. All that we create we have to care for and have to give it a sense.

On the path of the human being we go through this process of freeing our thoughts, feelings and actions of the predefined impulses that are still living in our body and give them a moral quality, so that we can do the good for the other person, the world and ourselves.



Week 51: Respect for all what is alive

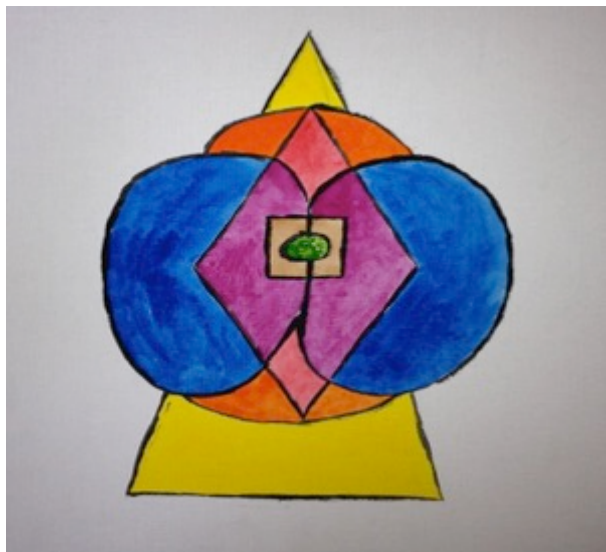
We are alive in a beautiful world in which we can enjoy the beauty of the nature, the beauty of the spiritual world and the beauty of all the people we meet in our life journey. We can experience that we are challenged to balance ourselves with these other worlds we meet. There we can find ourselves making ourselves smaller or bigger than those we meet. However it is an art of the human living not to be up or down but to be in balance with what we meet. As we are on the path of becoming free human beings we have become the responsibility to take care of the worlds we meet. We can easily destroy them by misusing them. We see how nature suffers under the ill treatment by the human being. We see species disappear because of our egoistic and sometimes brutal misuse. Can we meet the other being as a soul being and show respect for that being as it is in its own gesture? As human beings we have the opportunity to live in a horizontal connection to the worlds we meet. We can look the flower, the stone, the animal in the eyes and see this being as a natural/cosmic creation that is also on a path and has its own soul and spirit, being part of a species that predefines its existence. Human beings between each other also learn how to act together in a horizontal way. Although we are different in all aspects we can live together in a respectful way. It is a path of schooling the soul to exercise this every moment in every day towards all the creatures we meet.



Week 52: Love for the other person and for all you want to bring forward

Is it not the greatest of all virtues that we can love the other person as we can love ourselves. Is it not the highest quality of life when we are living this life out of love. Love means for me being in touch with the essential. Loving a person means that we see this person in its unique being and we connect to what this person really could be. We see of course all the unfinished elements a person carry around but we are able to connect to the “I” of this person and support this person to deal in a good way with all what is unfinished.

When we do a job and do it with love then the result of our work will carry this love into the world. Serving the other person with love means to be in touch to what this person needs and what you can give to this person. Love is a dialogical quality of being human. We receive the unconditional love of all other beings then the human being. They are there and they are good in themselves as they have been created. We can meet them with love and we can experience how our love will nourish the soul of these other beings.



Finally

In this "small guide to a fulfilled life" we explored in different ways how we can develop our lives and how we can achieve good things and experience a fulfilled life together with others.

It provides us with food for the soul that we can digest and that can give us inspiration and energy to live our life fully.

It can help us to take control of our lives and thereby become an animated being. What matters can be given priority and our search for the right next step can be done on a solid basis.