



Presencing Issue 41

Asking for Help Part IV ~ Elements of an Inner Life

Dear Ones: Jack here in Tokyo. It has been awhile since I have written a *Presencing* newsletter. This issue may seem more abstruse than most. Perhaps it is so because sometimes we just have to let our hearts bleed; sometimes we have to reveal who we really are inside. I choose my profession because I felt that if I could connect with clients on a deep level, I could discover what has kept us shrouded from the light, and possessed by hidden fears. As a young boy I was beset almost nightly by dreams of nuclear warfare. I believe that those dreams launched me on an internal quest into spiritual understanding. I could not believe that humans could be so willful as to destroy all of life, out of personal disputes. In my daily life I could find no one who was not numb and helpless to this possibility. I now believe that human fear and ignorance are one and the same. I certainly am aware of that combination at work in myself. So later in life after my children were grown, I choose bodywork as a profession so that I could find ways to join others in moving beyond numbness, helplessness, and fear. Presencing came into my awareness after years of spiritual seeking. I have written about the very personal experience of living a day of presence as a gift from a friend who had died the night before: follow link [Presencing Issue 7](#)

Shared presence: When we experience the sharing of presence with another person, we become mutually aware that something has shifted. There is a feeling of mutuality that includes something like entering a cocoon of silence. Our words seem to arise from within, without the usual "shaping" for effect. We can feel a movement of anticipation in our heart centers, a kind of fluttering that confirms that we have entered a sacred space. Also visually our perception changes into a gaze of recognition, as though we have experienced this connection many many times, and here we are again reviving an ancient friendship. And something else is occurring... We are being witnessed by a third presence, a Beingness that is embracing us as well as contributing to our interaction. "I feel as if we are being accompanied, and confirmed, and joined together... and transformed. I feel the same."

Meeting in presence is familiar, but not because it happens over and over. Something else is occurring... perhaps an ancient memory is being stirred. Jesus said "whenever two or more are gathered, there I am." The collective unity consciousness is showing up as we practice presence. I have said many times that this "ancient memory" can occur as we switch our mental focus to bodily sensations, because they are always occurring in the moment. And in the moment we enter eternal now with no past or future. They bring the dimension of feeling **now** into our words and actions. We can ask that our minds be changed so that we grow into constant awareness of the present moment... we ask that our hearts be opened so that we can share those ancient memories and recognitions.

Interaction with silence, stillness, no time, no thought, mu: These moments of presence are accompanied by a shift of awareness of our environment. There is an arising of silence, like the silence of the desert at night, a silence like snow falling on snow. We ask for presence to share and all of a sudden the silence arises inside of us and around us, like the silence that accompanies sacred music, when the performance ends. Though we may be moving our client on the table, underneath all movement, at the core of our presencing interaction, we feel a sacred stillness, an invitation into our own beingness, and a homage to rest and transformation.

All livingness requires periods of stillness and at the core of ourselves a deep awe of appreciation for this moment. In these moments we start to realize that we are totally outside of time. We ask for these timeless encounters, because they convey so much depth of meaning. When the relentless passage of time stops, we become aware that we are continually sheltered by eternity, which is always available as part of our being. And our deep self says: "Come to me and I will give you shelter from your fears. It is always available; it is your choice to enter." **No thought** is probably one of our deepest fears. What will happen if I lose the capacity to think about this life I am living; surely it is a preview of my own death. And yet **no thought** is an accompaniment to the most profound moments of our lives. We ask for an openness to pure curiosity, an openness to greeting life without overshadowing with our mental conjectures and past conditioning. Finally we ask for the gift of **mu**, emptiness, the absolute confirmation of eternal life. "Emptiness is form, form is emptiness," said Shakyamuni Buddha. Until we experience absolute nothingness, the mother of all being, we cannot fully partake of creation, or interaction, or the sacredness of unity. Our inner being says: accompany me into emptiness; you have nothing to fear because your beingness is eternal. Once we experience the emptiness, we crave the emptiness.

Feeling sentience: What is it inside of you that gives you the assurance that you are alive? We take our livingness for granted much of the time. We perform our actions, speak our words, eat our meals, and sleep our bodies without a conscious feeling awareness. The body is always accompanying these parts of our lives with sensations that reflect our inner state of being. There may indeed be a part of ourselves inside that plays a part in these orchestrations; a part that compares inner reality with outer reality; a part that we can call consciousness. This part of us dwells in continual presence, and becomes available when we choose to explore our inner awareness while performing outer activities.

The signs of presence in the previous paragraph can occur at any time we choose to join into our own presence. I became aware a few years ago that what the Buddha meant by sentience is that part that lives in presence. We may be sapient beings because we think, but we are capable of leaving sentience behind when our thinking captivates our attention with fear and made up stories from the past. Perhaps we enter the world of no separation only when we learn to become present; and as it says in the Course in Miracles, that is the real world which is synonymous with heaven. Could it be that the world of presence is awaiting our reawakening from dreams of fear and death? In presence there is a quiet connection with eternity and a recognition of what carries life forward when the body dies.

Shifting to kokoro: Perhaps there is not much difference between feeling sentience and entering kokoro, a Japanese word which combines elements of heart, mind, and center of being or spirit. We can ask to consciously move our center of awareness from our thinking mind to our feeling heart. The early Christian hermits, sometimes called the Desert Fathers, prayed to move their awareness into Christ Consciousness by opening their hearts in this way... sometimes described as a very painful process. In Chinese and Japanese Buddhism this awareness of being could be called the growth of consciousness or sentience. It is about shifting into presence which requires anchoring our mental activity on a dependable referent so that we start to move from chronological time into continual **now**.

This dependable referent is the body sensorium, which is accompanying every experience inside and outside. When we choose **now**, we become independent of our thinking mind. This independence allows us to **feel** thoughts emerging from a different center, kokoro. These feeling thoughts emerge out of conscious

being, and are clearly different from our regular ego-centered, fear laden, thinking. Like the Desert Fathers and early Buddhists, we can ask or pray for this conversion to occur. And we can also ask that the potential for this conversion become available through our work with clients. I firmly believe that feeling awareness is the easiest way to enter the state of presence. Bodywork allows us to join together with our clients in sharing this awareness and entering kokoro together.

Feeling the presence of Deep Self: Sometimes called the Holy Spirit, sometimes called the Deep Self, Christ Mind, Buddha Mind, and sometimes called our Inner Guide, we have all heard that there is help available inside if we ask. Here is a quote from [A Course in Miracles](#):

If you have made it a habit to ask for help when and where you can, you can be confident that wisdom will be given you when you need it. Prepare for this each morning, remember God when you can throughout the day, ask the Holy Spirit's help when it is feasible to do so, and thank Him for His guidance at night. And your confidence will be well founded indeed.

Never forget that the Holy Spirit does not depend on your words. He understands the requests of your heart, and answers them. Teacher's Manual §29, ¶ 5, 6

We begin this inner relationship by asking for it. We pray inside for wisdom that guides us through our days. After living years of listening to our ego's continual doubts and conjectures somehow we become aware that we are accompanied by One inside whose purpose is to bring us into a deeper understanding of life, and our own individual purpose is in the world. We become aware of this One in small ways at first. Perhaps we hear words inside that definitely do not come in the usual way. Perhaps we experience "teaching dreams" in which we are shown ways of doing things that become part of our work repertoire. Perhaps we are guided to special places or to persons who become very meaningful in our lives. Finally, we are led into very difficult situations which we would normally avoid and yet we are able to perform a miracle because of our guidance. As we become closer to this inner One, we become deeply appreciative of the unique opportunities we are experiencing. There is a growing awareness that this One inside exists in everyone and is actually bringing us closer and closer to our collective identity. We start to feel moments when we are collectively guided by the same One with no break in our individual consciousness. Our work with bodies is ideal in creating opportunities to share this One with others. Our moments of asking, receiving, and appreciating, form stronger and stronger connections with this One inside. It is our choice always when and where to invoke our very personal guidance. We are never alone, or without help!

Blessings from Jack