

The Extended Self Program

A Whole Person Approach to Life Transitions

Introducing Your Extended Self

Stand in front a “decent-sized” mirror. Remember our value system *serves* as a mirror of what the culture has made important to us in our lives. As you verbally fill in the blanks below, notice what happens inside you as you speak.

- My name is _____ (use any title you normally use to identify yourself to strangers)
My best friends call me _____ (nicknames, Bill for William, that kind of thing here)
I am _____ (notice how you answer this one – what role bubbles up first for you?)
I have _____ (notice how you choose to answer as you express a prized possession)
I really like _____ (this one begins to tell the other person your positive preferences)
I really hate _____ (once this surfaces, close your eyes and feel where the tension is inside)
I am here now _____ (a great blank to repeat 2-3x/day to notice how your “purpose” shifts)

Now get a piece of paper. On it, draw a circle in the center and write the answer to the first question. But instead of using words, use a symbol that *stands* for you. Then draw branches from the center in a spider web pattern you don't really plan – just have six lines coming off that circle and write the answers to the other questions in a short hand you can understand –again, using symbols, not words. Some people find it easier to use colors or shapes or musical notes. It doesn't matter. What's valuable is that you are unveiling a map that exists deep within you. This little coded exercise is great way to get a sense of how we lose awareness of the agreement within our disagreements with ourselves and other people. Make it playful game. Use this 'introduction' as a social weather vane to ride the storm. When you get the nerve, try it with a family member or significant other. It often leads to incredible insight for both.

Touch Experiment by Steve Munroe

Extend your index finger. Now take your finger and touch any object or surface that's close at hand. It can be anything - the chair, the carpet, your clothes, anything.

Now what is it that can be sensed here? Is it a case of feeling the tip of your finger and the object being touched? Or rather, is there only one sensation present, that of the object at hand? The texture of the cloth, the smoothness of the wood. In fact isn't it true to say that the tip of your finger has magically transformed itself into the object you are touching? Your finger tip is that object! Your finger tip has to be empty of itself so it can take on the texture of the object. In fact the same is true of all your skin over all your body, and of course all your senses. So, just another way of showing ourselves our real and true nature, that is, emptiness for the world to happen in.

Here's a few ways to develop some flexibility in dealing with the bumps life's road has to offer us.

- 1) **Go Past It** - If whatever you are facing was resolved in the next moment, do you feel a sigh of relief (it was drama) or a jolt of energy (it was trauma) come over you. Drama is a self-inflicted wound (sorry Kerry supporters) and trauma is what we're designed to overcome naturally.
- 2) **The Forever Rule** - Take a long-standing issue in your life and imagine it never gets worse, but it never gets any better - effectively it's a 'life sentence'. Stay with that for a few moments and then sense if your body feels heavier (it was drama) or lighter (it was trauma) inside. Catch-phrases like 'lighten up' and 'that's heavy' are just shorthand ways of saying the same thing. Try it.
- 3) **Never Happened** - If you are dealing with a difficult experience that's been hard to let go of, even if it genuinely involves someone's death you are grieving over, or some life-altering event, you can face it with your absence, rather than your presence. In the tradition of the movie "It's a Wonderful Life", you simply erase your entire existence up to this moment. So the event still happened, no denying that. But you weren't there. It helps to use props for this one. Get a pen or the nearest solid object around. Hold it at arm's length. Feel its 'pull' to the ground in your hand. Slowly loosen your grip as you erase yourself. After it is released, if you feel your palm tingle (it was trauma). If you feel tingles on the back of your hand (that's drama) .

The Effects of a Secure Attachment Relationship on Right Brain Development, Affect Regulation, and Infant Mental Health

Allan N. Schore

<http://www.trauma-pages.com/schore-2001a.htm>

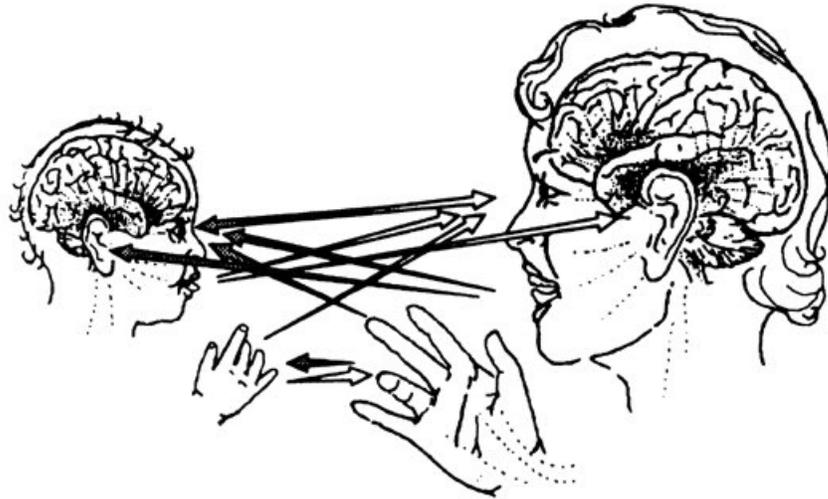
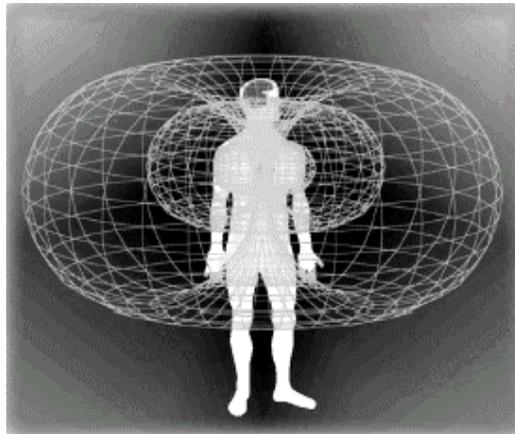


FIGURE 1. Brain–brain interactions during face-to-face communications of proto-conversation, mediated by eye-to-eye orientations, vocalizations, hand gestures, and movements of the arms and head, all acting in coordination to express interpersonal awareness and emotions. Adapted from Aitken & Trevarthen (1993) and used with permission of Cambridge University Press.

Head-Heart Interactions



The heart's electromagnetic field--by far the most powerful rhythmic field produced by the human body--not only envelops every cell of the body but also extends out in all directions into the space around us. The cardiac field can be measured several feet away from the body by sensitive devices. Research conducted at IHM suggests that the heart's field is an important carrier of information.

http://www.heartmath.org/research/science-of-the-heart/soh_20.html

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