Imagination – Soul-Personality Dialogues
(One of four imagination techniques)

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1. Introduction

In one way or another, the soul energies must be consciously contacted and expressed through the personality and its bodies if there is going to be any kind of consciousness development. In other words, the two selves (soul and personality) must communicate with each other if they are to eventually merge, which is a result of consciousness development. The Soul-personality Dialogue is one useful and practical way to facilitate this development.

In soul-personality dialogues we learn the parameters of each (soul and personality) as they “speak” differently about the same realities. And through these different styles and tones of expression we come to experience the difference between the personality (human soul) and the spiritual soul.

I sought my soul – but my soul I could not see.
I sought my God – but my God eluded me.
I sought my brother - and found all three.
– Anonymous

2. Unity and Duality

Before a person develops soul consciousness there is, in the personality, a fear of fragmentation. The ego – as the lowest, most concrete, level of the individual’s identity structure – tries to strongly protect against this feared, possible dissipation of self, and therefore normally builds a strong boundary around itself.

In the personality there is the experience of a wide range of tendencies, forces, sub-personalities, etc. There is a feeling that some of these could take over, or at the very least, one could lose control of oneself. The ego senses these various aspects as threats to its existence, or at least to its integrity.

Once a person starts developing soul consciousness, soul influence surprisingly first causes the ego to defend itself. This personality reaction is usually not recognized for what it really is. For example, soul urges the personality to recognize the value of the negative, but the personality resists it. Little by little ego opens to experiences of unity – unity of opposites and a coherent, unified self – and there develops a felt security in which one can experience the opposing forces within the personality without being controlled by them, seeing them as varied expressions of a oneness underlying them and as potentials that contribute to individual wholeness when they are known and embraced.

All subconscious realities have a soul connection and must be consciously related to soul in the process of integration or expansion of consciousness.

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Historically, religion had the task of presenting to humanity the underlying unity of all things in order to make sense of, and give meaning to, the everyday world of duality, the daily life of conflict and choices. Spirit-based religions, such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism, did this essentially through monotheism – the belief in one God. In its essence, this belief really teaches that underlying all conflict and diversity there is a fundamental oneness or unity (the one God). Eastern religions – which are more soul-based than Spirit-based – were able to accommodate the opposite forces within the concept of oneness. Christianity, Judaism and Islam did not do that, and therefore set up constructs to repress and fight against that which contradicts or challenges the positive, the acceptable, the chosen. In this context it is understandable that there would be a prejudice against the imagination since it is a doorway to the unconscious and frequently shows us things we do not want to look at.

In fundamentalist, literal belief systems the ego is very much in control. It believes that it knows what is real and what is not. In this mentality the whole realm of the unconscious becomes a sea of demonic forces that must be kept in check.

In our evolution of consciousness we begin in unconscious unity and progress to self-consciousness through making conscious choices that benefit ourselves, which requires us to come face to face with the realm of conflicting dualities that need to be resolved. This is portrayed in the myth of the Garden of Eden. The resolution of opposites occurs in the development of soul consciousness. Through this development the full awareness and acceptance of the opposites creates transformation, which is the experience of unity, sometimes called enlightenment. This is a progressive and gradual realization, rather than a sudden occurrence. It results from the awareness and experience of the Real, including the spiritual soul as real.

The experience of soul consciousness, or the intuitive sensing about the nature of life, helps us to realize that everything that is experienced is an expression of the underlying oneness or unity of life, and of the individual as well. And therefore to discover and experience that unity, you must find your way through the multiplicity of expressions that life and the self portray. To try to avoid the conflicts of multiplicity and the responsibility that goes with it, you may try to experience unity through regressing to unconsciousness, or through identifying with only the positive or familiar side of a reality. This is the stage of pre-conscious unity, perhaps better described as an unconscious simplicity rather than a unity. We do this in many ways by all kinds of avoidance methods and defence mechanisms. Avoidance, however, does not take us any closer to unity, but only sets us up for later problems and challenges of a conflicting nature.

To do inner work without a belief system that recognizes a higher reality than the personality is fraught with serious problems of meaning and of identity. Most work done without a reference to the spiritual soul, or to a higher self, must inevitably result in strengthening the ego, for without a higher self to identify with only the ego remains as the center of one’s identity. The inner work then becomes a struggle between inner and
outer forces of life and the ego, with the necessary conclusion that the ego must be strengthened for well-being, security and balance. Otherwise fragmentation would occur.

Psychology’s task for the past 50 years or so has been to understand and strengthen the ego. Its future task is quite different – more along the lines of what we are speaking of here in the Soul Journey or soul-centred identification. However, like most institutional realities conventional psychology likely will remain stuck in the past far beyond its usefulness. Mainstream psychology, like mainstream medicine, is very much part of the modern materialistic and mechanistic paradigm about life. Soul-centered psychology is inseparable from true spirituality, and therefore fundamental attitudes about the nature of life need to change to accommodate a new psychology.

On the part of many people there is a relentless pursuit of the positive reality, which is often mistaken for the experience of unity or inner oneness. Many even confuse enlightenment with a heightened positive emotional experience. A simple test of whether one is experiencing the positive side of a duality or is experiencing true unity, is to face the negative side of whatever the reality is. And if, in the presence of the negative, there is upset, avoidance or disturbance then the negative has been suppressed and the positive, rather than unity, is what is being experienced. If there is no disturbance in the face of the negative, and one is truly at peace with both the positive and negative, then one is authentically experiencing the state of unity with regard to that particular reality. This would enable such a person to encounter the negative in the future and still be at peace with it. So often after one has experienced something of a very positive nature, and believed to have mastered the issue (often expressed with emotional enthusiasm), an exposure to the negative produces a negative reaction. This reveals quite clearly the degree of true integration that has or has not occurred.

Spirituality that is not also psychological (which includes dealing with one’s feelings and thoughts, and facing one’s shadow side, etc.) can easily leave one feeling that he/she has made a whole lot of progress through the positive identification with the spiritual realms or teachings.

We must not forget that the goal of wholeness or oneness is that which gives meaning to the process of striving for it. We must not delude ourselves in thinking that at any time we actually achieve the goal, except in special moments and in specific areas of life. The goal, the Whole, exists as the energy which motivates us to experience the process or journey of becoming whole.
3. Giving Voice

One of our greatest challenges is to discriminate between the personality and the spiritual soul, and then to integrate their energies. Integration cannot occur without discrimination. That which is brought together is predicated on the understanding of each in its own nature. Separation needs to be made before unity can occur. Each component must be known in sufficient detail. This lack of knowledge usually causes conflicts.

There are many personality impulses which we suppress because we do not like or want them. Whenever we are unconscious, lacking soul awareness, we also suppress soul impulses. Integration requires awareness and openness at both personality and soul levels of the self.

Through dialogues between personality and soul we are giving both these “selves” a voice. As these voices become more authentic we increasingly become aware of the qualitative differences that exist at these two distinct, but complimentary, levels of who we are. This enables us to relate more consciously, and therefore more appropriately, to their influences within our psyche. The result is greater integration.

In building the bridge between personality and soul, the initiative must be on the part of the personality to move toward soul. Behind the soul-making process, the expansion of consciousness, there is a constant radiation of Spirit toward personality. This can be understood as an ‘effort’ (although it is no effort) on the part of Spirit to manifest itself in the form of personality, thereby creating soul. The personality effort (and it is a real effort) is essentially a response to the indwelling, radiating presence of Spirit. That response must be conscious and must be appropriate. It is always predicated on the choices we make.

4. Need-based Dialogue

Appropriateness is always determined by right response to whatever the need is, which is recognized by the personality, influenced of course by the presence of Spirit. The need, when fulfilled, always empowers the individual or situation to fulfill purpose, thereby serving the greater reality. It is because of the fact that need determines what is appropriate, that we must be aware of need when attempting soul communication. It would be inappropriate for the personality to dialogue with soul out of curiosity, or to fulfill personality desires or as a game.

If you were not motivated to fulfill some conscious need through soul dialogue, and yet attempted communication with soul, a dialogue would probably still take place but it likely would not involve soul. The ego would be dialogueing with some aspects or sub-personalities of the subconscious. In other words, you would be caught in illusion, without even knowing it. This is a very frequent occurrence among the spiritually ambitious who have not developed discrimination.
What is perceived as need, which would initially motivate you to do such a dialogue, might be a lesser need than another one that is more pressing. It is wise to be open to this possibility when entering the dialogue. You might ask soul if there is something of greater urgency that you ought to be attending to than what you are aware of and want to deal with.

**Staying Attuned**

In soul-personality dialogues you must be *constantly* alert and attuned to soul. The dialogue may begin with good soul connection, but through *lack of constant attention* it can very easily shift away from soul to the subconscious or from soul to personality. The soul connection always requires conscious attention. But we are not accustomed to maintaining such alertness over a length of time. We function most often in automatic mode, which takes us to subconscious connections. This attention requires mental presence on the part of the personality.

We must also remember that when the conscious self connects to soul the line of communication passes through the energies of the subconscious. And if there is something said or felt at a soul level that resonates with some blockage, distortion or resistance in the subconscious, then the attention can very easily and inadvertently be pulled away from the soul connection to the subconscious where there is an issue that must be dealt with. This can result from something as simple as being in touch with *soul power* that resonates with unresolved *personality power* issues or *authority* issues. Or, it could be a connection with *soul love* resonating with *sentimentality, intimacy or self-esteem* issues. Whatever the soul energy is, there is always some corresponding reality at a personality level, and sometimes that reality has not been integrated and therefore still exists at a subconscious level.

When this occurs, you would benefit most by staying with these issues and centre the dialogue around them. The challenge would be to keep the personality issues at a personality level and the soul energies at a soul level in terms of awareness, and express from those distinct perspectives. This is when discrimination is crucial.

**Altered State of Consciousness**

The person going through inner processes should always induce an ASC (altered state of consciousness) before proceeding. Therefore, eyes ought to be closed, and the body comfortable and relaxed before beginning. Eyes open is usually a sign to ego to be active – censoring, protecting, controlling.

An ASC is achieved through focusing and narrowing the attention on an object or simple image or word, or it can be achieved through focus on one’s breath for a few moments.
5. Dialogue Variations

There are three different ways that we will consider doing the personality-soul dialogue. In short, they are:

1. **Inner Journey.** A person asks a question, then goes through an inner imaginative journey to the personification of the soul as a wise one where the answer is given in the form of objects, words or an imaginal visual presentation such as a film.

2. **Role Taking.** A person does the dialogue, switching between personality and soul, holding a ‘sacred object’ when speaking as soul.

3. **Written Dialogue.** A person writes a question, then writes the soul response.

Following is a detailed description of the above three ways of doing soul-personality dialogues.

**Inner Journey**

This method is done alone or in a group. It is done in a meditative state, and could be done as a guided process by someone else. The inner journey must involve the following elements:

- a clearly stated *question* related to a perceived need
- an *intention* to connect with the spiritual soul
- an *ASC* or light meditative state
- *imagery* that suggests moving from one level to another higher level
- an *openness* to receive whatever response comes

This process is limited to gaining insight into a specific situation or particular issue or question. In that sense it is not a continuous dialogue. Although at a certain stage in the process a dialogue could occur.

It is good to use natural imagery (outdoors, water, wind, sun, trees, etc.) with associated feelings in the initial stages, giving attention to the sense responses and feeling responses to the imagery. This helps the induction of an ASC as well as preparing you to receive impressions through the imagination for later in the journey.
Going up a mountain, or some other image of *going up*, is excellent imagery because of a natural inclination to see the soul or higher self as *up* in some way.

When you arrive *up there*, then it is good to have imagery of a special, or sacred, place or space, in which the encounter with the soul will take place. Giving attention to the details of this place or space serves the same purpose as the previous attention given to details.

When entering this place there are different options that you can choose:

1. **Objects.**
   a.) See objects (define how many – 3 is a good number) on a table or in a room, that represent the answer to your question.
   b.) Take your objects to another room/space, and there encounter a wise being (the soul personified) and ask for an interpretation of the objects in light of your question. It might be possible to have a mental dialogue here. But stick to the subject.

2. **Audience.**
   Have an audience with a Wise One – the soul personified. And in this audience you ask your question. Here a mental dialogue can ensue. Stay on the subject.

3. **Movie.**
   Ask your question. Enter a theatre in which the answer to your question will appear as a story, play, movie or myth on a screen or stage in front of you. Make yourself comfortable while you watch. Stay focused, as the least distracted you are the better it is, since it is possible that:
   a.) you might move from watching the presentation to then moving into it and becoming part of the story, play, movie or myth.
   b.) you will have feeling reactions to what you observe as you are taking in the energies as well as the information.

When you have received an answer or insight you express your gratitude and leave by the same route you took earlier. When going into an altered state experience, it is always wise to reverse the process to come back to your ordinary reality, following the entering imagery and procedure, but in reverse.
When this process is completed it is a good idea to immediately either write the insights or verbally share the details with someone. The experience took place in an altered state, and therefore it is easy to forget the details.

**Role Taking.**

You can use this method alone or with a counsellor. It involves taking the part of the personality and of the soul, alternating between the two. The personality must have some need that it feels requires the conscious connection with soul for insight, guidance or energy – perhaps needing a soul quality, perhaps a perspective to help determine the meaning and purpose of an experience.

When doing this role taking process, the following elements should be present:

- a clearly stated **need**
- an **intention** to connect with the spiritual soul
- an ASC or light meditative state

It is helpful to do this process with eyes closed so as to maintain an ASC and to facilitate the focus and concentration required.

There is an alternating identification in this process –

a.) first, identifying with the personality, and from there voicing what is felt or thought
b.) then, identifying with the soul to give its perspective on what the personality has expressed.

The personality initiates the dialogue and the soul responds to the personality. When moving from personality to soul there are two things to observe:

a.) Leave a space between what the personality says and what the soul says in response. This is a moment of silence. In this silence one deliberately and consciously attunes to soul, and as soul one attunes to what the personality has expressed and to what the personality is feeling. If there is no space after the personality expression it is very possible to have the automatic response come not from the soul but from the subconscious.

b.) Use a sacred object, or some object that for you could symbolize the soul. Then when switching to the soul response, pick up this object and hold it in your hand to indicate that it is the soul that is now speaking. Or, if you feel distracted by that, simply put your hands in a different way that will indicate soul or personality. This will make the intention clearer to the subconscious that this is a personality-soul dialogue. After the soul has expressed itself, put
down the object or indicate the change to personality, however you have decided to do that, and let the personality then speak.

End this dialogue when it seems appropriate to do so. There should be some kind of natural resolution or possibly an indication of some future continuance, so that there is no ‘unfinished’ business that keeps intruding after the session is terminated.

The attitude of the personality toward the soul is a very important one for future development of consciousness. The attitude must involve openness, respect and gratitude.

What you do with the energy and information from soul will either facilitate further communications or inhibit such communications. The personality must show a willingness and effort to use and apply whatever the soul response would imply or suggest.

When being the observer or facilitator of this process, keep a watchful eye on the quality of communication from soul. Very often, personality colouring will take place since the soul’s energies are formulated into words by the mental body. A personality’s characteristics and attitudes can easily colour (and thereby distort) the soul’s energy.

If the connection to soul is not clearly established and it sounds like a dialogue between two personalities, it would be helpful to interrupt the process with reminders that the soul is compassionate, understanding, tolerant, accepting, etc. The soul is never imposing, scolding, demanding or argumentative.

If you are doing this process alone, then after it is completed you would do well to review what occurred with the same critical ear. To get a better sense of it you might want to record a personal session. Recording, and playing back the dialogue for another is also an option.

The biggest caution with this process is not to fall into the trap of role playing. This is why I call this method role taking. This is also not acting ‘as if.’ There must be a real identification with soul in order to make this a genuine process. If it is genuine there will be a feeling difference when each is speaking. The quality distinction would also be recognizable.

We are dealing here with two distinct levels of our identity structure, with the purpose of bringing them together for gradual merging into a single identity to enhance soul consciousness.
Written Dialogue

A person writes a question, then writes the soul response. This is exactly the same as #2 above, Role Taking, except for the fact that it is written and done alone, rather than spoken. Being written, it resembles the Active Imagination technique, except that it is a dialogue with soul rather than with the subconscious.

Everything that was said about the Role Taking process applies here, including the caution of avoiding illusion. As in Active Imagination, use some kind of easy symbol system for differentiating between soul and personality as they express themselves.

What is important to recognize is that in the dialogue process, the most important thing to emerge is not the information that is exchanged – although that might be very relevant – but the experience of the two ‘selves’ actually communicating in a way that energies are being exchanged. It is through the experience of energy exchange that the bridge of consciousness is developed and integration proceeds.

Exercise: Soul-personality Dialogues

Practice each of the three ways of doing these dialogues with their variations. You may need to try each one a few times in order to have a good flow in the processes. If the exercise does not require writing make sure to write the highlights in your journal for future reference.