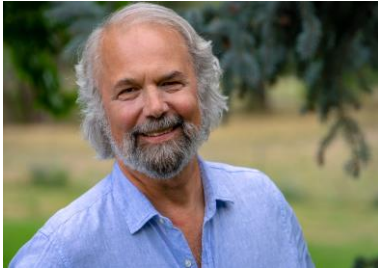


Agents of Forgiveness

Pulse of Spirit

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There is an academic origin of the phrase *human drama*. As it has come to be used as a description of an endlessly degenerating pattern of human interaction, it comes from the work of Stephen Karpman, who was a student of Eric Berne, the father of Transactional Analysis. Karpman described what came to be called the Karpman Drama Triangle. He published an article on it in 1968, and then he received the Eric Berne Memorial Scientific Award in 1972 for his work.

The three roles of the triangle are the victim, the persecutor and the rescuer. Karpman's study addressed the dynamic between these three facets of the human experience.

In the human drama, the victim is the human heart. The human heart senses things; it feels things, obviously. It feels what's happening around it and has a feeling engagement with other people and circumstances. When it's isolated it doesn't know what to do with those experiences. It has no context in which

to understand them. There is a feeling of being impacted, and therefore a sense of victimhood.

The human heart does not do well when it is isolated. When the heart is left all alone—not only abandoned by other people but by a mind and a sense of self that has deserted it—the heart feels vulnerable. It doesn't belong all by itself, and when it is, it has the feeling experience of being victimized. If you think of a young child left all alone, it *is* being victimized, is it not? Of course, it can get worse than that for children. In some cases, they are not only deserted. They are preyed upon by adults. This phenomenon is all too common, as anyone in the helping professions quickly finds out. This is symbolic of what happens inside the human being. The childhood experience can be internalized and then reproduced in the living of life.

If the victim is the human heart, the two other characters in this little human drama are functions of the mind. It is the human mind

who is the persecutor. Its persecution can be carried out through some physical act—and sometimes, horribly, it is. That physical act may be carried out against another person or it may be part of an act of self-sabotage. But even if they aren't acted out, the thoughts of the mind can perpetrate violence against the heart.

The persecution can occur between two people, one of whom is feeling something deeply when the other one asks, *Why are you feeling that? You must be chicken, or You must be a crybaby.* The person is persecuted for feeling something. But it happens inside a person too, does it not? A person feels something and then thinks, *I shouldn't be feeling that.* And what does the heart say? *I am feeling that! Don't tell me I shouldn't be—I am.* The human mind judging the heart and repudiating it is the persecutor.

The rescuer, too, is also a function of the mind: *Oh, you're feeling that? Oh, you poor thing. Oh, you had a terrible, terrible childhood. Oh, I'm sorry how bad it is for you. I'm so sorry. Let me help.* The pitying mind is *not* helping. The pitying mind is seeing the mud puddle that the heart has gotten into, and jumps in too, and then poses as the heart's defender against the world. *You poor thing! Let me fend off the world for you. Let me make everyone else wrong and you right.*

Stephen Karpman had lines for each of these functions. The victim's stance is characterized by the line, *Poor me!* The persecutor's line is,

It's all your fault. The persecutor is controlling, blaming, critical, oppressive, angry, authoritarian, rigid, and superior. The rescuer's line is, *Let me help.* This is the classic enabler. The rescuer feels guilty if they don't go to the rescue, yet their rescuing has negative effects. It keeps the victim dependent and gives the victim permission to fail.

So here is this little human drama between mind and heart playing out inside people and among people. And what's the big problem in this human drama triangle? It ignores the One within that is the Sovereign Being of the person. The human heart wasn't meant to live all isolated on its own. It was meant to have the understanding of an enlightened mind and the love of Sovereign Being flooding into it.

The enlightened mind refuses to judge the feelings of the heart. It also refuses to jump into whatever mud puddle the heart might find itself in. The enlightened mind is the guardian angel of the human psyche. It not only offers understanding to the heart but it also orchestrates the human experience so that the heart has a chance to open to the very nature of the human soul, which is love. And no matter what you do for the human heart, if it doesn't open up to Sovereign Being and the love that pours out from it, the heart is lost.

The mind itself has the opportunity to open up to the Sovereign Being that resides within

a person's spiritual nature. And when the mind opens up to that, it is opening up to the ordering power of the universe that then comes into the human soul and begins to order the human experience. The ordering power of the universe provides a context in which we can live. We truly live in that context, and outside of that context we do not live. We struggle. That is so true for the human heart. The human heart isn't meant to know the ordering power of the universe all by itself. It has a supremely beautiful function, but isolated and alone, the human heart struggles.

Very simply, we call what emerges out of Sovereign Being and what enlightens the mind as the *truth channel*. The truth channel carries the ordering power of the universe, which orders the human experience. The love channel flows out of the Sovereign Being and feeds the heart. If these channels are open, the mind and the heart become instruments of truth and love, and life is brought to the human experience. We begin to see, know and understand as these channels open up.

Living out of the isolated heart, we have an experience. That experience is very real, as far as it goes. If you've seen somebody drowning in the feelings of the heart, there's no doubt that it's real to them. It's real and it's important and not to be denied. They are feeling it—there's no question. But what happens so often is that a person lost in that experience is now painting all of reality with that experience. Logic and reason go out the

window; facts go out the window. Their world is painted by the feelings of the emotional body. There is an emotional truth—it is what they're feeling—but it is not *the* truth. It's not *the* truth of their soul, and it's not *the* truth of their world. Lost in that experience, a person fails to see the larger ethical and the larger spiritual landscape in which they are living. Everything begins to be seen in terms of the human drama, with the human heart as the victim. All of life becomes about the victim and the persecutor, and who is coming to the rescue.

Our politics play this out all the time. *Put a chicken in every pot*, for every victim. *I am the rescuer and you are the victim, dear voter*. We can see on the public scene how emotional reality has become *the* reality for people. There is blindness because of it. The larger landscape of what is happening in our world can't be seen because it's all seen in terms of victimhood. As this human drama plays out in the world, people trade places. Persecutors pose as victims: *I've been so victimized, and that's why I'm abusing the world the way I am, and oppressing it, and stealing from it*. And so it goes.

We look out on the world scene and perhaps ask, when will it stop? How outrageous does it have to get? The way that emotional reality blots out the ethical and spiritual landscape of the world *is outrageous*. How plain, how obvious does it have to become before the pattern is seen? How much of a buffoon do our world leaders have to become before we

open up our eyes and see that they are living in an emotional reality themselves, and then inciting an emotional reality in the people? Meanwhile, the real persecutors—some small percent of the population behind closed doors—are making huge money off the situation. In our own country, here in America, it has finally come to a point where the emotional reality has so blotted out any sense of righteousness, justice or ethics for some of our leaders, that finally some people have stood up. And so, there is some sense of relief, though no guarantees.

How bad does it have to get? Perhaps you know the old story of the frog and the pot. It starts out with cold water and the frog in the pot. The burner is turned on so the water begins to warm and warm and warm. At no point does the frog realize what's happening. At no point does it respond. Whereas, if you put the frog in hot water, he will jump right out. At what point do we wake up?

There is a creative response to anybody's emotional experience, including our own. The creative response to the feelings of the heart are characterized by these words: *I see and I understand, and I have compassion—and have you considered the larger context in which you are living?*

There is trauma strewn all through the human experience. Some get the brunt of it worse than others, but none are unaffected. In that very real factual sense, there *are* victims, not just because they *feel* victimized but because

something actually did happen. There is the fact of trauma and there are ethics around such things. Unfortunately, trauma is the gift that keeps on giving, because so often, when there has been some kind of trauma in the human experience, the person is internally compromised and they keep doing it to themselves, acting as both the persecutor and the victim. And then the internal rescuer bathes the heart in self-pity. External victimization is so often the gift that keeps on giving, and it's the saddest of things. How sad is it, that someone who actually has endured some kind of trauma, some kind of violence done unto them at whatever level, now begins to do it to themselves?

And the reality is that it doesn't change until we realize that life isn't just a noun, that it is a verb, and that if we're having an experience of ongoing trauma, it may be because we are inflicting it upon ourselves. It is something we do, not just something that happens to us. And just as trauma is something that we do, life is something that we do. We have another choice, and that choice is to open up to the sovereignty of our own soul, from which comes all power, all love, all healing, and all wisdom.

That is what seems to be the hard message for anyone who is experiencing ongoing internalized trauma. Of course, the reality is that somebody in that position is not only doing it to themselves but, in their generosity, they are likely doing it to you too. What we do unto ourselves we end up doing

to others, whatever it is. And if we're self-traumatizing, we are sharing the "joy."

There's a certain benefit to that, which is that when faced with such a thing in another person, we have the opportunity to bring the forgiveness of life itself, the forgiveness of love, the forgiveness which is the truth of Being. We didn't invent that forgiveness. We are only agents of it, or at least we can be. Did you just take a breath? You were just forgiven. All your sins for your whole life were just forgiven. You just had another breath. It wasn't withheld. The very flow of love is present for us all from within. Redemption! The joy of being alive is right here. And whatever you were holding against yourself, it didn't matter to life. Life gave itself to you anyway.

We can be agents of that forgiveness simply by reminding other people to accept what is readily available to them—perhaps from us, in some way, but most importantly from life itself. We become agents of forgiveness when we assist people to receive the forgiveness that is so freely offered. We forgive others when we encourage them not to live in the self-sabotaging, self-persecuting state—not to continually fall victim to what is happening to them but to live at a level where they are enjoying the creative fruits of what life is and the forgiving nature of life itself. That's forgiveness. That is real assistance.

Can you force forgiveness on a person? Some of us have tried. Sometimes it is so obvious

that there is some kind of self-persecution going on, and a vicious cycle which the person has entered. Sometimes we can help another person end that cycle. Sometimes the jolt of love through us can break the cycle and awaken a person out of their emotional reality into the larger spiritual landscape of their life. Sometimes we can assist them to see a larger spiritual landscape. And sometimes we can't, no matter how much we wish we could. Sometimes we have to let a person accept the natural consequences of what they themselves are doing. Even if they were traumatized, if they are rejecting forgiveness now, that is something they are doing to themselves now, unfortunately. They're living a life of unforgiveness and perhaps sharing it with you. And that doesn't make you a mean person, it doesn't make you a vindictive person, it doesn't make you an unloving person. In fact, sometimes the most loving thing to do is to allow a person to accept and deal with the natural consequences of the human-drama unreality that they are living.

That becomes easier if we ourselves are accepting whatever is coming to us, without question.

This is my life, and I may not like what's happening, I may not think it's just, but it doesn't matter. It's my life, and I eat it up. All of it. I accept what is happening, and I learn from what's happening, and I grow from what is happening.

I believe that is the bargain we have to strike with life itself.

I will accept what you bring me, and I will learn and grow from it. I will seek to see more, and I will seek to rise to another level of my human experience.

When we do truly rise, we see a landscape that so many do not see. We enter the larger spiritual landscape. We enter the landscape of Reality. And then, bringing that perspective to the world, we are inviting sanity and love from people who have often become lost in their emotional reality and in the human drama of the victim, the persecutor, and the rescuer.

We recently held a one-day event at Sunrise Ranch entitled *An Open Door*. The text for our time was *As of a Trumpet*, by Aumra. We had the opportunity to write a prayer to Sovereign Being. This is from mine. For me, it was an encounter with the landscape of Reality.

O Great Elohim, filled with light and with fire, I know Your glory. My great heart is with You now, receiving You now, loving You now.

May I be a place of comfort and rest, strongly holding Your spirit and all You are giving now.

May I rely on You now.

I let Your Shekinah engulf me now. I am taken up in Your chariot of fire. I am shining with the light of seven suns. The cloud of Your glory surrounds me, Elohim.

I am Yours. Have me. Hold me. I am in Thee, and Thou in me.

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