



# A Student's Theosophical approach to DEPRESSION

*shared at the Berlin ITC Conference of 2018*

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*During this lecture I often refer to parts of this diagram. The numbers in the text between [ ] correspond to the numbers in the diagram.*

What you are about to see is a piece of my mind, that is a result of theosophical thinking over the years. I have been working in psychiatry for more than thirty plus years with individuals from age 3-4 up to 80-90 years old. For me the approach to treatment and care has changed and has evolved and has been more influenced by Theosophy than by the typical teachings of psychiatry. What you will see here is a picture of what I carry around with me all the time: the framework, or filter through which I look at people.

The numbers you see here on the chart are not there to indicate a linear progression of treatment, because this picture is a reflection of a dynamic process that is always going on, that is always shifting, that is always changing, that is always transforming depending upon who is in front of me. Depending upon what they want, what they need and where they are for that particular moment.

Much of the way that I conceptualize things in terms of treatment has been reflected in some of the snippets you have

already seen earlier today during time spent in the workshops. And because as a group you have been able to put them together and you have seen them as well on the mindmap.

### *Building a therapist – client relationship*

One of the things that you have probably recognized is that I ask a lot of questions. Some folks would probably say: that is the Socratic method. One of the first questions that I ask anyone when they come into the office or when they are interacting with me in the hallway is: ‘who are you?’ When they try to answer that question I tell them: ‘we are already playing a game of chess, be careful with your answer.’ Why do I do that? Because we are shifting ground. I like to *play* with the mind. If it is fun then it is not work, then it is not effort to change. If we can laugh, if we can share, and sometimes cry together — that is a good thing. They don’t want you to do that therapeutically, because the boundaries may get blurred. But if you are working from the theosophical process, you know your boundaries and so you are not so much worried about that.

When they finally find out they can’t answer the question who they are – because whatever they tell me I am demonstrating to them that is not what I want to know and the answer that they gave me is insufficient – my next question then is: ‘*what* is coming to therapy?’ Then they want to tell me who is coming to therapy. And when they struggle with the idea of ‘who’, that is another chess-game that we play, because right away we are working with the idea of identity — and it is the identity that is attached to the issues. So if we can modify the sense of identity even without them knowing, the attachment to the issues are gradually becoming modified as well.

If for instance we have a situation where we are talking about depression and suicide my question is: ‘if you cannot tell me *who* you are, if you cannot share with me *what* you are, how can you share with me the idea that you want to kill what you don’t know, what you cannot find?’ Because then my questions are

also ‘*where* are you?’ and ‘*where* is your mind,’ and further, ‘is there a difference between these two things?’

Perhaps then they are getting frustrated and they are getting mad, but because we can play and we can share, we can diffuse the anger. And then I can ask them to share with *me* or ask *me* questions. I tell them they can ask me anything in the world, anything they want to know about me. It’s okay. Because then I am sharing and as we are sharing we are eventually entering into T-C — a *therapist-client* relationship [8]. That relationship I think of as a chemical bond. It is like a molecule. We are sharing now energy between us. That sharing without blurring boundaries becomes important, because in the sharing there is an empathy, there is a resonance and there is a taking on of what they are and what ‘music they play.’

So, when I can establish the *who* and the *what* – that don’t exist – and we can generate flexibility and a little bit of play, regarding where mind is, and what’s in front of me, which is way at the top of the diagram [1].

This is what you guys already have been spoken about in terms of identifying the higher power in or working through the personal element. Where I am focused is here [1]. Where the Ātma-Buddhic part of them is pretty much present, but dormant to the awareness of the personality. If it were active they would have the Light within them and they would be able to transform the experience they had already. But they have not been able to do that.

The next piece for me that becomes very important to try to share with them, without using words and without labeling things that they can argue with, is this ‘ray’ [2, *step 1*]. This ray is the incarnating Light, ‘the learning ego’. It is the Light that is in connection with the Spiritual Ego — the Spiritual Ego during that therapeutic process I am looking at as the reservoir of the collective being, ‘the accumulations of actions’ life after life after life. As Madame Blavatsky says: ‘It sends out a ray and that ray becomes involved in matter.’

So, what is the matter? That is part of the question for me inside, and also ‘what is the matter that dresses the ray on the outside?’ [2, *step 2*] This is essentially the diagram on page 200 of *The Secret Doctrine, Vol. I*, where she gives the four lower planes and the three higher planes. That is a model that is present in every interaction that we have — whether it is in therapy, whether it is person to person, whether it is going to the store. For myself, this is just setting the groundwork. This is what is in my head, even before we are engaging in the therapeutic process.

My questions to myself about this ‘Light’ that is in front of me — not the *person* that is in front of me because I have already confused that being in front of me, to some degree, to question themselves in terms of personality. ‘What is it that they are?’ versus ‘who they *think* they are?’ Because who we *think* we are is not *what* we are.

And I have to recognize that that ray becomes and has been obscured. What is it that it becomes obscured with? As Madame Blavatsky says, there are two things: (a) the samskaras [*lower circle in 1*], which are the imprints in the reincarnating egoic spiritual being, holding collectively the results of every life that we have lived, and (b) the portion of that pool that this ray takes on at the time of incarnation for an individual life [2, *step 2*]. So out of this entire pool they may only be dressing up in 2% of their entire karmic inheritance. The karmic inheritance is simply the accumulation of what they have done, life after life after life, what they have laid down, and what they have in store for themselves as rewards or punishments, when they become incarnated. I want to know that, I want to understand that. They can’t explain that to me. But when we dance therapeutically, we can share that without them even knowing it because it’s beyond words. But that requires me, as shrink, psychiatrist, to be in tune with them — which is why we dance, why we share empathy, why we share stories.

So, if they are talking about the burden of depression, I am sharing the experience of annihilation of the ego that I have been through in terms of depression or whatever else it is. The knowledge of a living death, the knowledge of suffering and pain. Why? Because it is part of life, it is normal, it is okay, it is what we learn from. It is the meal that we have just eaten — and this is what I use to describe to them what life is: life is breakfast, lunch and dinner. You eat your breakfast. Do you get indigestion? Do you hate the food that you are eating? It doesn't matter because hopefully — if it is not a candy bar — there is nutrition there. The same thing with the lunch, the same thing with the dinner. The lunch may be a traumatic experience. You want to throw it up, you develop anorexia and you are throwing up and throwing up. But if you are not getting rid of the indigestion that you have embraced and embodied, you can never be free of the trauma.

So, I explain to them: life (in metaphoric fashion) is a dinner. You eat it. You may not like it. Don't resist it, there is health there, there is nutrition there, there are positive things that are going to help you grow. And I share with them: 'if I do what I am supposed to do correctly, you will *thank* me for having gone through the trauma. Because now you *understand*, the trauma is not the trauma. Why? Because we have already begun to re-define life experience and its understanding.'

As it was mentioned in some of the snippets: we do not experience reality. We live mainly in our head. We generate concepts, we *think* things are happening. We create the future before we have experienced the present. We are not living here and now. When we are talking to each other, our minds are somewhere else, influencing what we say so that we cannot embrace what is happening here and now.

I need to help individuals redirect their attention to the here and now. For if we are purposefully and fully here and now, we are not remembering the past, we are not anticipating with

fear the future. And if I can help them be *here* and extend the sense of awareness of *now* and help them understand that if they meet each moment *as it unfolds to them*, they can deal with it. If we are constantly worried about what is coming, we cannot deal with what is here. We get indigestion from everything that we have been through and we go round and round and round.

So in thinking of samskaras, and recognizing that they dictate skandhas, and that the skandhas then dictate the astral form – or the morphological field, whatever expression you want to use – and the tantric elementals themselves hold the energy, the force and the power that drives those skandhas, and those skandhas then modify the DNA of your being [2 - 6]. Then it's not your parents that are giving you a set of DNA. It is the egoic Light [2] that has clothed itself and descended to the point of the DNA. And its magnetic field of samskaras and skandhas then organizes the DNA within the womb to express the form that is necessary based on prior choices and actions.

For me the question is: why did the ego modify the DNA in such a way that this form and consciousness is here? And *then* we have to recognize the system [*circle in 8*] into which the baby is born. It is born into a family. The family is within the community, the community may be a positive one, may be a negative one. The community is within a state. The state has its laws. All of this is connected. The ego is now imbedded in a nest, or what I share with the clients: 'you are in a garden.' And I have to ask them: 'what is the nature of your garden? Is the soil rich? Do you get water? Is the sun bright?' All metaphorically because they can understand and feel the poetry of that language.

Forget about 'let's talk about the trauma' — *that* comes later. We have to prepare the field, we have to regenerate the trust, we have to establish the rapport and they have to know that I feel what they cannot express. I will share with them: 'this is what I'm thinking.' And then I get the aha-moment: the recognition, the 'yes, but that's what we were talking about before (we came

in).’ And I say: ‘I guess we had a connection, huh?’ And they like that because now they don’t feel alone or misunderstood.

So just in these few minutes — as I explained I have about twenty minutes to work with clients for medication reviews. The first time I meet them I have got an hour and twenty minutes to gather all of their life-history, to establish rapport, to tell jokes and to connect *and* to convince them that there is a possibility that they can change. And that’s okay, because Theosophy, year after year after year with its particular kind of thinking, does that, makes such a thing possible. That’s why I’m saying this diagram is not followed by number.

Once we get to the point that we are here [*circle in 8*], we now talk about what has happened to you since you have been born. We look at the experiences that they share. We look at the parents that they have had. Were the parents domestically involved in violence? Were they subjected to unfortunate sexual abuse that they don’t want to talk about? And then I tell them: ‘it’s okay, we don’t have to talk about it. If you acknowledge with a head-shake I can fill in the details. But it’s okay.’ Always reassuring: ‘even when we walk in dark places, we walk *together*, and the darkness, the more we stay in it becomes light.’

So again, all of these metaphors are being used, laid down and the seeds are being planted for the mindset that we have to work with in order to change.

If we are looking at the model\* that we were given to work with, we have now looked at the ego coming into incarnation, being born, having a series of experiences and now walking into the office for help. We have gone from the universal to the individual, and particular because, as *they* are doing this in sharing,

\* Here is meant the model used during the ITC Conference, how to understand and solve problems. First, using the *deductive* method, going from universal to particulars (from higher to lower), and then using the *inductive* method, going from particulars to universal (from lower to higher). In the diagram it is the triangle in the left upper corner.

I am doing *this [from 1 to 8]*, processing in my mind steps 1 through 8.

When I am feeling, I am *asking*, and they have to confirm that what I am feeling is what they had experienced. So we are establishing a dialogue and that dialogue is becoming intimate. There is a danger there, but the danger is okay if you're okay. Because then again in this *therapist-client* dance [8] we are sharing energy, we are sharing consciousness, we are sharing awareness. It is nothing that as a doctor I am intending to do. I just want to be present, and I want them to feel the fact that I am present. I want them to understand that I am not afraid of anything that they are going to share with me. I want them to know that I am okay walking through hell with them. It's okay, I have got my own hell, I understand it, I accept it, and I am going to help you accept yours. Because when you accept it, you can transform it.

So, at the same time that we are doing this [1-6], we are realizing that there is a person with a cognitive set of thoughts, ideas, biases, believes [3], that obscure the Light [2, step 1].

We have now had experiences that impact how we feel: our emotions, our desires [4], which ones are up, which ones are down, what makes us hate, what makes us love, what makes us not trust. So we are touching emotionally.

I am looking at how the cognition and the emotion are constantly feeding the astral [5]. As HPB tells us, when we are born the astral is the model for the body [6], but as we experience life the body begins to modify the astral. I want to be aware of those changes and those modifications that are incurring emotionally [4], cognitively [3], and existentially [3].

The existential part is 'my life has no meaning.' So part of the way of addressing that, especially when the kids come in that want to commit suicide, that are ten years old — because I get some children in, they are geniuses, nine years old, eight years old. They already know what depression is, they know what hell

is. They don't want to do therapy, because they are too smart. They are smarter than the therapist. When I am talking to them they will tell me: 'the therapist is dumb, they cannot do anything for me. They (the therapist) talk to me about how I feel. How do they know about how I feel?' And so *now* we can play. Because what I do is – without labelling – I ask them theosophical questions. They cannot answer those. Once in a while I will get a ten-year old that will tell me: 'my brain made me do it, but my soul is in charge.' And I didn't even ask. Then I tell them, 'we can have a real conversation.'

Their parents are standing there and I say: 'it's an old soul, don't worry about it, we will figure it out.' Because *they* are lost.

Yet we're playing the game. And I will test them, because they are very, very smart. But I have to test them in order to show that they don't know the answers, because that further disarms them. And if it further disarms them they have to say: 'well, you asked me these questions. Do you have the answer?' I say: 'yes I have the answers, but I want to help you figure them out.' So, now again we are tighter. We can play. It is now a *game* to come into the doctor's office, as opposed to a hated act.

### *Moving upward: from tamas and rajas to sattva*

From that point we can now begin to move upward. Now, as we are beginning to move upward, there are three or four grids that I use, that are also constantly in my mind. You all are familiar with the 49 fires: seven principles (horizontal), seven principles (vertical).

	Ātma	Buddhi	Manas	Kāma	Prāna	Astral Body	Physical Body
Ātma							
Buddhi							
Manas							
Kāma							
Prāna							
Astral Body							
Physical Body							

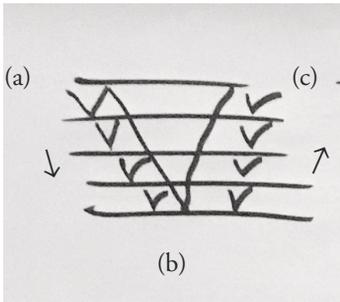
The ātmic of the ātmic, the ātmic of the buddhic, and so on. The buddhic of the manasic, the buddhic of the kāma-manasic, and so on. So we have 49 squares where a person can be.

We also have sattva, rajas and tamas [*\*circle S/R/T*]. And we know that every life-atom, as HPB tells us in ‘Psychic and Noetic Action,’ can resonate in one of those fields. It has the capacity for all of those. If we really want to break it down and fit it on the grid, then sattva is ātma-buddhi, rajas is higher manas, lower manas, general manas, and tamas is the four lower qualities.

Now we can really focus in on what nature of the being is present: what is up on the horizon, if we think of it astrologically, what is in opposition to that, what is being eclipsed, what has been submerged? And now we can begin to play.

We play with the words *ór*, unfortunately, we play with the emotions. By using the word play we must realize this is not with the typical abandonment usually implied. Play here means to enjoy a process, to examine, explore, change, imagine, create what if scenario’s, and what if it does not mean that scenario’s. Play means laughter and respect, but above all, play is work! Playing with the emotions is more risky than playing with the words, because the emotions go deeper into the feelings, into the astral, which then is involving the energy-levels. If you are thinking about energy-healing, or chakra-healing, or the psychic aspect of the being, those are different tools and formats whereby you structure your interactions with the being, depending on where they are. The different levels of healing should not be mixed up or confused.

When I understand sattva, raja, tamas, when I understand where they are — if they are stuck in *tamas*: deep dark depression. They are in the lowest field of the principles, in the darkest space, physical–physical. They are in hell. How do I move them from physical-physical to ātmic-ātmic? Metaphorically that movement may simply be in terms of this diagram:



This diagram represents the sevenfold involution and evolution, the forty-nine developments that occur on every plane, concerning the awakening of all the principles, races and qualities, per each round. When I think of these therapeutically, they represent the development or incarnation of the being into a family, environment or situation, the developing problems, at each level or plane of their being, affecting their sheaths, whether it pertains to the physical, physiological, vital energy aspects, emotional, cognitive thoughts and distortions, existential life issues, or spiritual dilemmas. They all have a beginning, get complicated as they incarnate into the domain of a persons life experience and interpersonal relations, and become concrete and crystalize, locked in, at the lowest point. The rising line represents the solving of the problem, the evolution of the being, the disincarnating or rising above the problem as in its mastery. This is the same path followed evolutionarily.

(a) The recognition that I have a problem and its ramifications, (b) how we are dealing with the problem, (c) how we have solved, transformed and risen above the problem.

Using this formula of types, I try to remember, my client's mind is the ray, the real being that is incarnating [2], this ray as mind has become obstructed by its own karmic impressions. It is wearing, as it says in the *Pistis Sophia*, the karmic cloak of destiny made by itself, which is its entire being and environment. If these skandhas and energies [3-5] are very strong and very

tight, there is no Light [2] that comes through. If there is no Light that comes through, they live in darkness.

If they are living in darkness and the *rajasic* element is spinning around, my other grid used is the grid of Jacob Böhme. Jacob Böhme talks about the seven properties of nature, and HPB validates those seven properties as aspects of the seven principles. He talks about the first one which is analogous to gravity. It pulls things in, makes them hard, cold and obstructive — very, very physical.

He talks about the second one that he labels bitterness, which is a pulsation, an attraction and a repulsion. The way I visualize that is using the bar magnet with its positive and negative poles. The positives and the negatives when applied to themselves *push away or repel each other*. The positive and negative *attract*. The pulsations of the same or repulsing ends as forces, are dynamic aspects of the breath of life. Because they cannot escape from the circle of their influences, they begin to turn in a circle. If the gravity or attractive force is strong, the circle becomes so intense that the back-and-forth movements create friction, heat and fire. The fire is the *kāmic* fiery principle of our nature that either destroys us because it is burning so fiercely or warms us as the gentle heat of life. So when you have got someone on that grid in the darkness of the darkness, with the *rajasic* principle creating the fire — that is suicide. They cannot handle that. They are *not* going to live. There are clients that walk into the office that will tell you: ‘I am going to kill myself.’ So *before* they tell me that, I ask them: ‘if I have a gun, if it is loaded, and five bullets are in it, would you take this gun, put it to your head and kill yourself right now if I gave it to you?’ And they look at me like I am crazy. I can say: ‘work with me.’ Because I am not waiting for *them* to tell me about suicide I am pushing the envelope. But I am comfortable pushing the envelope, because now they have to really think: are they willing to kill themselves? There are some that simply say ‘yes,’ and I might say: ‘well then, what plans do you have for next month, when your mother is having

her birthday?’ If they have got no plans, it is a done deal: they’ve got to go to the hospital. If they have got plans, then I know they want me to feel for them, they want me to understand they are in pain — but they don’t want to die, not *yet*.

And my second question is: ‘what would make you kill yourself? I’d like to know, I need to know.’ And then my third question is: ‘if you are telling me you won’t kill yourself, why not? What do you have to live for? Who are you that you should be alive?’ And this really surprises and disorients their thinking. But when it disorients their thinking the element of surprise opens up their darkness and it changes the mind-set, and a little point of light comes through. And we can grab that light. And I tell them in the moment of surprise: ‘oh, you hesitated. So if you are hesitating, then you are really, really not sure. So how can I help you take that uncertainty and make it certain that you are not going to do this? Let’s play – not work – let’s play. I’ve got you, I’m with you, please understand that.’

And then, as we begin to go back up [*from 6 to 1*], I can hopefully begin to transform that rajasic burning fire into *sattvic light*, a gentle mild burning sun. In Jacob Böhme’s term that is the sound that becomes harmonious, which gives rise to a light that is peaceful. We talk about this as the Buddhic Light.

Now we can have moments of that: up and down, up and down [*from 1 to 6; from 6 to 1*] concerning all the aspects, each of the problems individually and together. While we are having moments of that surprise and disorientation, we are already changing thoughts [*3*], we are changing reflexions [*3*], we are changing feelings [*4*], we are confronting and transforming emotions, and perceived problems [*4*]. Yet feelings are really really deep. Sometimes there are no words for what people feel, so then we use other means of entry. Whether it’s: ‘do you like to dance,’ ‘what dance do you like,’ ‘what expresses the way you feel best,’ ‘do you like poetry,’ ‘what kind of music do you listen to, is it dark, is it classical or whatever’ — all of that is information.

It is information about where the principles are. It is information about how much light is coming through, how much light is *not* coming through, and what we have to do in order to remove the obscurations in order to let the light come through. Because the light then becomes the metaphor for the sun, that nourishes the seeds that allow the plant to grow to bear the fruit. These are the metaphors that we are using to help awaken to the inner spiritual being and its light, as one finds their way through life's landscape. We should add, that there are many different therapeutic modalities available in modern practice to clarify the obstructions of mind. When they are used theosophically, with the principles of both science and theosophy, in the light of Karma, wonderful transformations may occur.

### *Medicines*

Now there are times that we have to talk about medicines, because sometimes the Karmic nature and environment is so dark and so tight that the words, mantric sayings, or other approaches may not be effective. At such a time medication may have to be considered. When used properly and carefully, medications may open up the material and psycho-vital elements of the body to the point that we can engage the mind of the being. If we are talking about someone for instance – worst case scenario – with schizophrenia: they cannot have a coherent conversation at all times, often they have no ability to exercise correct insights or make proper judgment. Then we have to do something to slow down the rajasic whirling and the darkness in their mind, the chaos that is affecting cognition [3] as well as emotion [4] and the way their bodies feel [6].

So we have to take an inventory of that, of the physical, chemical, hormonal, and interpersonal being, and then begin to systematically address each one, finally integrating the entire system back into a functional unit: looking at the medications, looking at the family-supportsystem, looking at the environment that they are in, looking at the skills that they have, looking

at the psychological defences that they are using and also looking at the level of development that they are at. I cannot talk to a 4-year old the same way that I talk to a 21-year old. Their cognitive awareness, their emotional state of development, their needs are all different.

So when I am working with individuals I am working minute by minute, moment by moment, assessing: ‘where are we? what are we talking about? how are we dancing? what do we need?’ That is just in the therapeutic one to one. The medications can then do something else, because this is all twenty minutes. I have got twenty minutes to reach this level or stage [2] in order to make a difference and awaken a degree of hope while we await the impact of the medication over time. And whether we are talking about anger, whether we are talking about hatred, whether we are talking about depression, whether we are talking about anxiety — all of this fits in here [1-6]. All of this is understandable. All of this is about managing time as we wait for the medication to set in, working all the while with the tools we have to make any degree of difference at any stage we are at, along the way to change. Thus we are working, changing their view, changing their situation and hopefully changing their Being.

Then I can help them understand that and help them understand that the way they think about things is not the way things are. One of the simplest analogies I use is the event of 911. I just ask them: ‘was 911 a good day or a bad day?’ Obviously most say it was a bad day. Then my question is: ‘for whom?’ Because for Osama bin Laden it was a great day. For the people in Iran – they hated the Americans – it was a great day. For the people that had been abused every day by someone that worked in that building, who died that day, they were now free and it was a good day. For the people that lost someone they loved in that building, that day was a bad day.

The important point to convince them of is that the event has no good or bad designation. We bring to the event the

judgment of good and bad, what it means to them, at that time. What we should be doing is understanding the event. Two planes hit two buildings, 3000 people died — do we want that to happen again? No. What do we have to do? You have the power to do, that is, freeing up the will, the volition and the Light that has been obscured to do that which is the best, the best for the most. In our therapeutic setting it is mobilizing the energies of the depressive person that does not want to get out of his bed.

I constantly ask, ‘what do *we* have to do to help you change the situation?’ Not what do *you* have to do — what do *we* have to do. For me, I am taking responsibility for them and I thank them for allowing me to dance with their soul — and they really don’t always understand that, because they are trusting me with something very sacred. And I need them to understand that, because although they look at me like I’m crazy, in time it becomes a topic of discussion that I could value something in them so much.

### *Theosophy*

So, often the talks lead to become Theosophy in therapeutic form, without the theosophic terminology, which then further transforms, perhaps inwardly. And the little beads for instance that I wear around my hands – they always ask ‘what are they, what is it for?’ This opens the door for sharing theosophical and spiritual ideas. I present a theosophical symbolic interpretation or spiritual interpretation that I share with them, which then opens up another window in them, that ‘this crazy or perhaps unconventional person behind the desk that I like talking to, sees things from a different point of view.’ After such conversations then they can begin to believe that there is another window on reality. And if they are young they sometimes ask for books to read which opens up the window even more.

While their parents are there, when the kids walk out the office they say: ‘they might ask where did you get this?’ I say ‘well,

you can pick up this, this, and that in such a place or online, concerning the beads or books.’ Because now we are then changing mentality and being.

Talking about parents, usually I don’t want kids in my office without their parents. I want the parents to know everything I am doing, how confused they get, how pissed off they get, so that they can understand what that process is, and they can also understand what responsibility they have. Because I also hold them responsible for the way that they have been training their child. Not in a bad way, because some of them just don’t know, they don’t understand. But when you can help them share pieces of this diagram, then they have also a different worldview, perhaps a different understanding of both themselves and their child. Then they share with you, with me: ‘well you know, I believe in karma.’ And I say: ‘yes, but what is karma?’ And then we have another discussion during which time we can then clarify ideas even further. And then I can help them understand that the dance that they have got with their kids is karmic. Now they have got a responsibility: to dance karmically and correctly instead perhaps of yelling, screaming, slapping, hitting and putting their nearly grown child on the street. So one thing leads to another and we are looking at a system change. And that is a beautiful thing. And again I thank them for helping me understand Theosophy in a thousand different ways, using a thousand different applications.

So, that is just a snippet of what I do on a day-to-day basis with perhaps 30 people during the day of work.

Are there any questions?

*Q: I am kind of surprised to hear that you have the parents in on most or all of these colloquies with young people.*

A: I don’t believe in the laws of confidentiality when it comes to minds of a child that have not developed in a mature manner.

These are minds that I am seeing because they have problems overwhelming them, how can they make their own choices? I tell the parents I don't believe in Hipaa. Hipaa is a law that says: children over 14 have the right to be in therapy and their parents have no right to know anything that they are talking about. I usually tell the children: 'if you don't sign a Consent of Release that I can talk to your parent, you cannot be here.' A 14-years old has no sense. I don't mean that disrespectfully, but the brain from the research point of view has not even matured at 14, does not mature regarding its decision making abilities, its executive function, till mid-twenties. How can I give a 14-year old responsibility for mature life decisions if their minds have not developed? I cannot do that.

*Q: But is the child at all concerned to open up in front of his parents?*

A: Yes, yes, they are. But I tell them point blank: 'look, if something happens to you and you go to the hospital, who are you going to call? — your parents. If something happens to you and somebody sticks a knife in you, who are they going to call? — your parents. Are your parents going to then know of what you were doing? — yeah. Are they going to like it? No, of course not, you were sneaking, but, who is going to save your behind? — your parents. When you want money, who do you ask? — your parents. And if you are using the money for the drugs, who finds out? — your parents. Because when the cops arrest you for buying the drugs, who are they calling? — your parents.'

Then I tell them: 'if your parents are going to know anyway and if they are ultimately responsible for all the stupid mistakes you make — and I use those words, because kids understand words like poop, pee, greed, stupidity. I have got to talk their language, and I love the poop-jokes because they get it and it

opens them up and they laugh and it's a good time. Talking like that, in their language helps, they finally realize it's not that I want the parents to be in their business, but the parents are responsible for them. And if – and I share with them this – if they do something really wrong and they get arrested because they have hurt someone else, like the shooters, they are going to ask the parents 'how come you did not know?' That is not acceptable. The parents have to know. And I tell the kids: 'the parents should be up your bottom, in your business – that's the way I talk to them – because at the end of the day they are responsible for you. So, if you don't want to sign the Consent you can go.'

Further, I need the parents there. Sometimes they (the child) will look at me and ask: 'can mama go?' I said: 'yes, but you have to understand, when she comes back in we are going to talk about what you share. I will explain it, but if it's that important she has got to know.'

So I need the parents there, especially sometimes for the young ladies. I don't want anyone saying anything. That's my protection: you were there, you were the witness, we had therapeutic fun but we were also able to do meaningful work, at many different levels. So it (the parents presence) serves multiple levels of purpose — and that's the way for me it should be.

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*Q: You told us that sometimes when they are into it, you talk about Theosophy?*

A: Yes. I don't always use the terms, unless they ask, but we talk the ideas. And they are amazed, and that is good.

*Q: Were some of them even going further in that?*

A: Some are interested and will, and I will bring them a book and say: 'here, read this.' *The Ocean* or something like that, something light. Or I give it to the *parents* and say: 'look it over,

and if you have any questions feel free to ask, I love to talk.’ And they do too.

*Teaching Ideas to Others, i.e. medical students and interns:*

Sometimes we get the *medical students* during the rotation of the interns, and when they see what I do, they want to know how I do what I do. Then I tell them what I do is Theosophy. And I share with them some of the understanding of these ideas and elements of cognitive distortions, et cetera [3-6], to get to the real underlying element that is carrying the responsibility for a lifetime [2]. A lot of them say: ‘I was looking for meaning,’ and even though they want to be a surgeon or a doctor, they like the ideas. So, it is planting a seed. Sometimes when I am in the office between clients, we are talking about this and they love it.

So, the whole environment for the most part is crazy, fun and theosophic, without talking Theosophy as a title unless it is asked — and that is a wonderful day.

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*Q: A question about point seven, in the second column [7]. You have different types. Could you explain the different types?*

A: The types are more consistent with the principles that are active, that are rising, that are submerging. Again, they are the existential concerns: ‘why am I here, what is my purpose, who am I, I don’t have any meaning.’ So there is nothing typically wrong, but concern and questioning which will not go away, along with its feeling tone, that is causing a depression because they are searching. I am not going to talk to them about emotional disturbance. I am going to talk to them about ‘what is your idea of *meaning*, what is your idea of *purpose*, how do you define those things, so that we can better clarify what it is you are really looking for?’

If they are caught up in a lot of negative ideation and they are feeling depressed as an example, number one I want to show

them that you can think negative 24-7, but you don't have to be depressed. But also: if you are thinking negative and it is obstructing what you want to do, then the negativity has no value. You have to live a life of value. If what you do has no value, it is like spending a million dollars for a piece of bubblegum. Would you do that? Obviously they tell me no. So then I tell them: 'you cannot afford negative thoughts that have no value. How can we work with that?'

Because *now* they have got the idea, they can see the negativity, and it's a matter of: how do we change that? How do we change the tamasic element of the negativity into a positive sattvic element of clear awareness that negative things happen, but I don't have to *identify* with them. I can be aware of them and in the awareness of them I can modify the environment such that they don't have the impact on me they would. Or, I can modify my internal environment so that when I meet them, I can modify them through a different response to them.

And I explain to people and I tell them: 'this is going to sound crazy but stay with me: there is no reality. *You* determine what is valuable. *You* determine what is good or bad. *You* determine what is meaningful for you. Human beings mean food to the tiger. Human beings mean a murder-object to the person that is a serial killer. To a priest human beings mean something else. To a Theosophists human beings mean something else.'

So, understanding the *meaning*, understanding the *purpose*, looking at the cognitions of the negative thoughts so that we can modify them, reinterpret them in another way, again, bring out their sattvic value. And once the sattvic value is there, it's easy to transition to the next level of thinking, which is about *clear thinking*.

One of the examples that I always share with them comes from Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms*, and meditation. It is simply the conjunction of the *idea* with the *word*, with the *object*. These are three different things: the word is not the sound, the sound is not the object, the object in its physical reality is not the

image being presented to the mind, nor understood by the mind. The *sound* means something different, the *object* is something different and the *image and ideation* about object and sound are something different. When we are meditating distinctly, we understand the nature of the sound and that's why when we talk with each other we feel where each other is coming from — at least (when applied) in the office. When we understand the imaging power, we can then understand how the vibration creates an image that they then believe is a reality, but that is not a reality.

So when we can separate the event or the object – such as 911, two planes hitting the building – from the cognition and the emotion and the ideation, we can then work with it objectively, more appropriately. We can mourn for those that were hurt. We can say: I'm experiencing anger towards those that have done this, but since I understand that this [*1 and 2*] is the victim because of this [*3-6*], I don't want to kill them, I want to help them. I want to help them become less obscured — and yes, it is going to take time, but it is an easy process. Emotionally it is the same thing. Physiologically, when we have pain it impacts our mind and so we get depressed. That's where then we are working, we are working from the physical or other appropriate level or perspective.

So, those types are simply the doorways of approach for where they are (where a person is psychologically) and what they need at a particular time, and sometimes it is a combination of all of them. As a soul *looking in*, you must be clear about what you are seeing, about what you are working with. As the Alchemists say: 'in the beginning is the chaos.' We must settle the chaos and separate out the elements. When we can do that, we can see clearly where they are: emotionally, existentially, instinctually, biochemically, regarding neurotransmitter status in the brain or whatever, and we know where we have to go, we know what work we have to do.

Still throughout this entire process we must be flexible, we

have to be open and perhaps ready to change our position and approach at any moment. Which is why I say this (the steps, processes, and approaches in the diagram) is not static. Because once we trigger something, it triggers something else. We have to be flexible to see that, to float with it, to change, to make a joke out of it, to challenge it and to allow the Light [2] to shine a little bit brighter on this upward stage and path [*from 6 to 1*]. This upward stage is the evolutionary journey. It is the way we wake up in the morning, it is how we return from our night journey, it is how we become freed from matter, or problems, or spiritual awoken on our path. It is what we are doing when we are growing and developing, it is a lot of things. So, for me, I am looking at the many things, stages, processes, transformations, life and death cycles and more that this diagram poorly represents. My main question is, how can I help the Light [2] (the spiritual aspect of all being) return to its source [1]?

In that process, although we talk about personality, it really means, how do we gently disconnect the focus of energy identifying itself as particular person, helping it to see what it is, in a more general, and perhaps universal way? Just the same way that a mother loves *all* of her children and will do anything at anytime for all of her children, before she does it for herself so we are trying to make the personality pourous to the idea of its truer self, so that it will realize its responsibility to all of the spiritual lives making up its being, as well as relates to a wider circle of humanity, and as well as itself. Because when we can get there [*1 and 2*] to that spiritual understanding and feeling, they are no longer preoccupied with self. And then, as you guys said in some of the interventions, you can redirect them towards service, you can redirect towards helping others, and they are not focused on their self, it's not about them. It's not about self-care; it's about other-care. And usually, in the service of others, forgetting about self, feeling the others pain, ours disappears.

Again, that process is very flexible, always ongoing and a lot of work, but a wonderful thing.

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*Q: Gene, I wonder if you can give us a little insight in what parameter, so to speak, you use when you feel you need to turn to medicines with your patients.*

A: I look into the toolbox all the time. My toolbox is medicines, meditation, simple relaxation, stress reduction, it is ECT sometimes, it is magnetic stimulation, it is change of environment. Depending upon how deeply embedded they are in the biochemical, physiological, body believe-system [6], cognitions [3] and feelings [4]. Because even though each of these [2-6] are on their own plane – the physical, the astral, the prānic-emotional, the kāma-manasic, going up into the incarnating ray – they can all be condensed into one plane [6], acting together in one manner. All of these [2-5], even though they exist as entities, can be activating different aspects of this psycho-physical complex called a being [6]. So, if I see that with the jokes, with the laughter, with the challenges, there is no movement, and if I see that the darkness is increasing, we talk meds.

I set the pace in the beginning because I usually suggest to them that we don't want to jump out the wagon with medications. You are in therapy. Let's give it eight weeks, unless you feel like you are really overwhelmed, then come back any time. But let's give it eight weeks, and if within eight weeks you are no better, then you are going to ask me for meds. When you ask me for meds then I know you are committed. Right now I don't know you are committed, and if I don't know you are committed, I am not giving you something that you are not going to use, because I cannot force you to take it.

Depending on where they are in this matrix, that is going to determine what I am going to recommend at a particular time. Then I also let them know that six months, seven months down the line we can try to reduce that (i.e. the medications). If the symptoms come back after the meds have been reduced, it is not working, so you have got to have it back. In other words, the

symptoms are not karmically modifiable simply by the mind at this time, it needs help, so meds are the best thing to assist with such a change and we must start them back. So, at least then we are all in the same boat, we are all in the same plane, we agree about the same treatment and we are all doing the same work, together.

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*Q: Gene, not that you are doing this work for this reason, but do any of your clients ever — do you ever get a sense of gratitude from them? Not that that's what it is for, but ...*

A: Their laughter is the gratitude. So when we can laugh when they are walking out the door, make a joke about coming back the next time, I am good.

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## REFERENCES

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Transcribed by Wayne Kraus for Jacob Boehme Online

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