

# The Psychology-of-selves in Breathing Sessions

By Peter Kane

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**Abstract.** *It is valuable to make a paradigm shift away from “pushing through resistance” into a “being” based model where resistance is viewed as a protection and control issue and is gently discovered, embraced, and released when the client is ready to do so. A key thesis here is that to do deep and lasting work the client needs to create agreement from their inner protection selves.*

## INTRODUCTION TO THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SELVES

I have found a psychology-of-selves perspective to be very helpful in working with a wide variety of breathwork and facilitator/client issues. Specifically, I have added the process of Voice Dialogue to my practice. Voice Dialogue is the only tool other than breathwork that I have valued enough to pursue ongoing training in.

Voice Dialogue, is a communication tool created by Hal and Sidra Stone and used by many counselors and psychotherapists to accomplish a wide variety of personal growth results. The Stone’s background includes extensive private practice including Jungian analysis and dreamwork. “It is impossible to separate Voice Dialogue from an understanding of dream work, symbolic visualization, a knowledge of energetics, training in interpersonal process, or a multitude of other approaches to understanding the evolution of consciousness. The richer the background of the facilitator in all of these approaches, the richer will be the quality of facilitation.” (*Embracing Ourselves*, p. ix)

In the end, Voice Dialogue is a specific tool of its own that is best understood independently of other subpersonality work.

In Voice Dialogue, issues are distilled down to the parts or sub-personalities that are operating or not operating in our lives or relationships. Sessions include various sub-personalities in turn taking up the position in the room where they feel most comfortable. The facilitator talks to them one at a time. The result is a clear and profound connection to the purpose and perfection of each part. Voice Dialogue does not seek to get rid of or change our parts. By listening to them one at a time, the strength of their role becomes clear and we become able to use the parts in an optimum fashion without resistance. Voice Dialogue helps people realize that all of their

personality traits or energies have a good purpose and by embracing their good purpose people are more able to use their parts consciously and beneficially. The process of Voice Dialogue also gives deeper energetic contact with each self, which enables people to be more able to choose beyond their parts if they feel that a particular part’s role has become less necessary or habitual.

## VOICE DIALOGUE AND RELATIONSHIPS

Voice Dialogue offers deep answers to the difficult question of what makes our life and relationships the way they are? Which sub-personalities are dominant within us? Which are underdeveloped? What results does this create? From a Voice Dialogue position relationships can be understood from the perspective of which parts of you are likely to attract what parts in another person? To examine these questions, Voice Dialogue first looks at an individual as being composed of primary-selves and disowned-selves.

### The System of Primary- and Disowned-Selves

Primary-selves are those that we developed for the purpose of protecting our vulnerable inner child. This is a normal part of development. As we grow we develop ways of ensuring that we are successful in order to increase our feelings of security in the world. We may get our sense of security by being responsible and working hard, by being nurturing and caring for others, or by getting out of the way and learning not to need in order to avoid being a burden. As we grow, these ways of functioning become primary-selves: i.e., our primary way of being and expressing ourselves. They are also formed by our conforming to, or rebelling against, our parents’ and society’s primary-selves. Primary-selves shape us much the same way that family roles do. They become our inner value system and we view the world through their prejudices. One problem with this is that when one aspect of being becomes primary or favored, we create a resistance to the energies that are its opposite. This is what a disowned-self is: the energies that are the opposite of the primary-selves. They are the energies that we had to suppress to accomplish our primary way of being. So, if one were primarily responsible one would fear and disown one’s irresponsible side and disown the qualities that go with it, like rest, leisure, selfishness, ignorance, or laziness. A person who was primarily nurturing would probably disown the same qualities but with an even greater

concern against selfishness, greed, thoughtlessness, or meanness. A person who was primarily withdrawn so as to not be a burden would disown issues having to do with needing, asking for what they want, being expressive or dominant, or being visible.

### **Voice Dialogue, Multiple Personality Disorder and the Aware Ego**

It is valuable to distinguish this perspective from multiple personality disorder. An individual with multiple personality disorder lacks the awareness that s/he is being controlled by a sub-personality and the sub-personalities do not have awareness of each other. In Voice Dialogue theory, awareness is described as originating from the Aware Ego and the purpose of Voice Dialogue is to develop the aware ego. The aware ego is the consciousness that orchestrates the selves: it's the conductor that picks which selves get to play; it's the driver of the car that contains the selves; it's the juggler that juggles the selves. In multiple personality disorder, neither awareness nor choice is present. The vast majority of the population needs not to concern itself with this, but it is a helpful distinction given that the fear of "being crazy" is so common. People who do not have multiple personality disorder may quite often experience the inability to consciously orchestrate their selves but they would also be able to understand what happened later and incorporate that awareness into future interactions. As they evolve in life and their work with this technique they would gain increased ability to use their selves consciously. This is a sign that they have an awareness of their selves and a developing aware ego. Counselors and therapists who use Voice Dialogue rarely use it with people who have multiple personality disorder. To benefit from Voice Dialogue a client must have at least some aware ego.

### **The voice dialogue relationship model**

The Voice Dialogue model simplifies relationships by looking at how the primary and disowned-selves in one person tend to relate to the primary and disowned-selves in the other. It explains relationships by identifying our reactions to people who hold our opposites, and it also explains how we attract people in our lives, who hold our opposites for us. In this model, a primary-self attracts its opposite.

"Holding our opposites" refers to how people are attracted to others who have something they lack. For example, someone with a strong responsible primary-self may be more cut off from their playful, spontaneous side, so they unconsciously crave someone who is more in touch with those qualities. Similarly, nurturers are cut off from their own needs and respond strongly to people who are more connected with their own needs; a withdrawn person craves the ability to come out and be seen,

so s/he is more likely to be attracted to extroverted people. This same explanation can be expressed in more spiritual terms. Spirit or God links us up with people who have the energy we have disowned within ourselves because God wants us to be whole. For me, this explanation parallels the view that the purpose of life is to grow and evolve. I like to notice that whether we focus on the spiritual aspect or the more psychological aspect of these principals, both are essentially saying that we attract relationships that bring us qualities that we have suppressed or with which we are unresolved. Voice Dialogue has given me a greater experience of the purpose of relationships, which I believe, is to learn and to receive personal healing.

### **Bonding Patterns**

In Voice Dialogue theory, the Stones have used the term Bonding Patterns to describe the interaction between the primary and disowned-selves in one person and the primary and disowned-selves in another. Generally speaking, bonding patterns exist between the primary-selves in one person and the disowned-selves in the other. This serves to further illustrate the issues I've explained above and it also gives a very concrete way of working through relationship conflicts. By identifying what our primary and disowned-selves are, we can begin to let go of our attachment to our primary-selves and embrace our disowned-selves. This will naturally lead to more harmony in our relationships because conflicts come from being attached to one way of being over another. By resisting and disowning an aspect of our personality we attract it in others and act out our resistance in relationship conflicts.

The term bonding highlights how the purpose of patterns is to create the experience of being connected, and it also reminds us that these patterns are natural and inevitable. For example, parent/child relationships are the most basic and general opposites that mutually fit each other. It is therefore natural for your child parts to connect with and seek nurturing from another's parent parts and vice versa.

Here are more examples to further illustrate these points:

Harry, who has a strong adult part that could be explained as controller/protector might tend to attract a relationship with a Mary who is strongly connected to her vulnerable inner child. In this case, the person who is more aware of their vulnerability is attracted to the well-controlled person who helps them feel safe and secure. The more controlled person is attracted to the softness and the feeling nature of the more vulnerable person, as they then actually feel safer too because they feel the vulnerable person gives them relief from their rigidity. Well-controlled people actually feel more secure around

people who are more spontaneous. It's as if their inner child feels more hope that it will get attention.

Another classic example is that the person with a strong pleasing part is likely to attract relationships with someone who is more impersonal or distant. Here, the pleasing person is attracted to someone opposite because they need a rest from being so nice all the time. Their inner child feels more taken care of when they stop working so hard to please the outside world. The person with more impersonal energy is attracted to the pleaser in the other person because it gives them a pathway for coming out and being more intimate. Their inner child feels more secure because they feel there is increased hope of letting go of isolation and having intimate relationships.

One more example: Someone with a strong drive to succeed will tend to have relationships with someone who is more relaxed, and less motivated. In Voice Dialogue this drive is often called the pusher. Here, the pusher in one person feels attracted to a more relaxed person because they're tired and crave a rest. It's as if the pusher isn't giving them a rest so they'll get one vicariously through another. Here again, their vulnerable side feels more secure when they integrate their opposite and can rest. The relaxed person is equally attracted to the pusher's drive. Vulnerable inner children need rest but they also like the money, food and security that the drive of the pusher creates.

As I said earlier, parent parts and child parts are one of the most basic pairs of opposites. It can also be helpful to see how all parts have some root connection to either our inner parent or power side of our being, or to our inner child or vulnerable side of our being. In the above examples, the controller/protector and the pusher are parental parts, and the vulnerable inner child and the relaxed person are considered child parts. In the example with the pleaser and the impersonal sub-personalities, both parts are likely to be parental/protective selves but they are still opposites. It is likely that the impersonal energy will take the parental role in that relationship.

These bonding patterns are just one slice of any relationship. In actuality, relationships switch back and forth very frequently, even in fractions of a second. It is important to be clear that in the examples above, the person I described as strongly connected to their vulnerability also has an inner parent who may be nurturing the other's vulnerable inner child just as frequently. In fact, it is inevitable that your parent or child parts will relate to the people in your life. What can be a problem is if your parts lead you to a role that is overly polarized toward one extreme. The key to successful relationships is to have a free flow between your parts so you are responding from both parent and child positions. This model is also extremely valuable for analyzing conflict patterns in relationships.

If relationships become polarized with one individual taking on the parent role more of the time and the other being more the child, the relationship is less likely to have intimacy and is more likely to have conflict.

Often when people hear of bonding patterns they get confused that the interactions are always between a parent part and a child part. There is a similar teaching that originates from Transactional Analysis (TA) that implies or states that the key to healthy relationships is to relate to each other from adult to adult. (See, e.g. I'm Okay, You're Okay, and Born To Win) For those of you who have been exposed to this vocabulary, I would like to make a valuable clarification. From a Voice Dialogue or bonding pattern perspective, we have our vulnerable child at our core and parental selves that protect it. Relationships are always going to have a flow between the child and parent parts, and to be in an adult part all of the time would be a control mechanism, like trying to balance your feelings on the head of a pin. Adult behavior can be defined as being in touch with all your parts and having a good flow between them. Adult energy does come from being in touch with the more relaxed, less defensive parental selves, but it would still technically be a parental energy.

Understanding bonding patterns gives a very clear and simple model to answer the essential questions of how, what, and why, am I in the relationships I'm in? If I am relating to you and I take a vulnerable, "I don't know" position, I almost force you to take the position of having the answer. If I take a strong, dominant, or parental position, I drive you into your vulnerable side. This explains how we bring out the best and worst in people. The energies we are primarily putting out induct the opposite energies in the other person. With this knowledge we can take a relationship conflict and distill it down to, "Are you upset at the other person because they're being too parental or too childlike?" If they're being too childlike, is it because you're being too parental? If they're being too parental, is it because you're being too childlike?

By becoming conscious of how our energy pushes others to our opposite we can then move our energy and embrace the selves that others are expressing and that we were "disowning". This will make it easier for them to do the same and accept our position. Relationships will be less polarized and there will be more flow to them.

Notice that all of this is similar to how a caretaker tries to stop taking care of people so s/he can open up the space to receive. Or, how a control freak tries to learn how to delegate. Or, how the lazy person tries to work harder so their partner won't be upset at their lack of productivity.

I enjoy Voice Dialogue because it leads to personal clarity and integration of all aspects of myself. Viewing relationships from this perspective gives clear answers to

the questions: What am I creating in my life and relationships? Or, Why are my relationships the way they are? By taking a position, we are also pushing the world to relate to us from the opposite position. Our parental energy can be strong enough to induct people in the world to be helpless around us. Our fear or vulnerability can be strong enough to induct others to take control around us or invalidate us. This perspective has increased my flexibility and openness to all aspects of spirit.

## INTRODUCTION TO BREATHWORK SESSIONS

I practice and teach breathwork which I consider to be the most original form of breathwork other than Reichian therapy. Rebirthing is similar to most breathwork because most breathwork has been informed by, or adapted from rebirthing. While there are other kinds of breathwork and not all of them credit rebirthing as a source of their work it is my experience and opinion that most breathwork originated from or were adapted from rebirthing. Reichian Therapy and other yoga breathing techniques have also informed rebirthing.

Rebirthing/breathwork involves breathing in a full, free manner (as guided by a trained breathworker); the result is an increase in the level of physical and spiritual energy in our body, thus cleansing the many tensions held there. The result of the physical cleansing is that the mental and emotional origins of tension come back into consciousness and can then be healed. By learning to breathe consciously and fully, we discover and release the core issues now held in our mind and emotions. It was named Rebirthing because when Leonard Orr developed it in the early 70s both he and his first clients relived their births, discovering the tremendous impact birth had had on them. Rebirthing has since undergone many changes to become a more holistic process, addressing our entire childhood and life experience; some Rebirthers have not changed the name because understanding the birth experience is one of the valuable results of Rebirthing.

Breathwork sessions are about two hours in length and consist of counseling and the breathing process. The breathing process usually takes between an hour and an hour-and-a-half. The experience during the breathing portion varies from session to session, and from client to client. The most basic experience is usually described as tingling or vibrating. Breathworkers refer to this as an energy release, a cellular cleansing of tension stored in the body. This is a result of the breathing process increasing the level of physical and spiritual energy in the body, which washes away old tensions. This can feel like a subtle and peaceful cleansing, or it can be powerful and include tetany, which is stiffness in the rebirthers hands. This likelihood of the rebirther having physical sensations during sessions is central to issues I will be address later in this article: Although Rebirthing is blissful and

empowering it can be physically intense. Historically, many breathworkers have labeled a client's difficulty in relaxing into the energy release or the physical process as resistance. Later in this article I will be discussing how the label "resistance" is unnecessarily shaming and I will be offering the term "protection" as a replacement.

Most simply, rebirthing or breathwork begins by working with the physical body and as a result it cleanses the emotional and spiritual bodies. This almost always leaves the client in a state somewhere between peace and ecstasy.

Another key experience in breathwork which is central to this article is that sometimes breathwork makes a client drift away as if they were falling asleep. Breathworkers call this "going unconscious" and trace this phenomenon to unresolved chemical and emotional anesthesia. Chemical anesthesia refers to the reliving and release of trace elements of anesthesia that may be stored in the client's body. Emotional anesthesia refers to the fear of feeling that is associated with the fear of pain. These are complex issues, which are connected because chemical anesthesia gives the recipient the notion that the pain is real (and it is) and emotional anesthesia also creates numbness in the body, which can be viewed as a form of anesthesia. Because of the link that "going unconscious" has to emotional anesthesia breathworkers have a history of viewing a large aspect of going unconscious as the client being in a state of fear or "resistance" to the issues that the breathwork is stimulating. Here again a major purpose of this article is to offer the term protection as a replacement to the term resistance. If we view the issues of body sensations and unconsciousness as understandable methods of protection then we have a more respectful way of helping the client work through the associated issues.

## Integrating breathwork and voice dialogue

The first step in Voice Dialogue is to work with the primary-self system. The purpose here is to connect with the clients' primary way of being and protecting their vulnerability. A term that many clients use to describe their primary parent-self is the controller/protector. By talking to the controller/protector we usually discover that its job is to keep us in control and doing the right thing for the purpose of protection. A person who had a chaotic or scary childhood or family, usually has a controller/protector with a sophisticated psychic sensitivity that is often problematized in abuse recovery or codependency theories as being hyper vigilant. If you had the healthiest of childhoods you still needed a controller/protector for learning how to function safely in the physical universe.

By talking to the controller/protector and learning about how it protects us and what it is concerned about as potential threats, we can shift your awareness of virtu-

ally all resistance, defense, denial, or suppression issues and see them instead as appropriate methods of self-protection. By talking to the protection self/s directly we hear from them how protection was once needed and how they may or may not still feel the need to protect. This helps open the issue and it reveals the current protection mechanisms are warranted or if they are unnecessary, excessive, or operating habitually. By embracing their importance we gain the ability to use them consciously and almost always develop the ability to choose less control when we feel it is appropriate. Since I have studied Voice Dialogue, whenever I am tempted to use a word like “resistance,” I replace it with the term “protection.” I find this much more respectful to the selves involved. Negative labels can cause more resistance. Respect creates an opening and the possibility of becoming less protected if appropriate.

### **Getting Permission to do breathwork**

Using this approach one would technically not facilitate a process as deep as breathwork until one had permission from the client’s controller/protector. Sometimes I do Voice Dialogue with the controller/protector before the first breathwork session if I feel protection is a big issue. Other times I do breathwork first and add Voice Dialogue if I feel control or protection are getting in the way of the clients overall goals. There are of course, many other counseling goals that would lead me to suggest Voice Dialogue. In general, this awareness enables me to help clients discover how they might be conflicted between the part of them that wants to push toward emotional release and the part of them that would prefer not to be doing anything that would bring up any vulnerability.

If a clients’ primary-self is cautious and controlled (which almost all of us are to a degree) virtually all psychological work has characteristics that the client has disowned. If a client had originally disowned feeling in order to remain safe and in control in the world, processes like breathwork, which the client perceives to be for the purposes of contacting deep feelings, will have mixed results. This would be an issue even if the client has, as a psychospiritual adult, developed a strong psychological-self, which wants to contact deep feelings. Just because a client expresses enthusiasm for deep work doesn’t mean that s/he doesn’t also have a more cautious or protected side. Simply put, it will be beneficial to address the old primary-self issues of not wanting to feel in order to be able proceed with psychological processes that encourage the client to contact deep feeling.

In rebirthing/breathwork we have always sought to resolve “resistance”, release old taboos on feeling, and develop the beliefs that it is safe to feel. Voice Dialogue has taken my understanding of this to a deeper level by helping me understand that when a client is having difficulty

or mixed results it is as if their control-self is in charge of their sessions. This is not bad; it is something the facilitator can help the client become aware of so the client can choose how they want to proceed in sessions.

### **PREVIOUS ATTITUDES TO RESISTANCE IN BREATHWORK**

#### **Resistance and leaving the body**

The simplest, and perhaps the most important example of how resistance or protection effects sessions, is in the area of a client suspending their breath and leaving their body or “going unconscious”. As I said earlier there is a history of some breathworkers shaming their clients for going unconscious because this was viewed as resistance. In my work, in addition to the issues of chemical and emotional anesthesia, I have also remained opened to the possibility that the client needed to go unconscious, either to clear something or just surrender to a being state.

Years ago, when clients would leave their body when breathing if I felt it was chemical anesthesia I would push them to breathe through it to cleanse the anesthesia from their body. If it felt as if it were emotional in nature, I would view it as resistance and seek to encourage them to contact the feelings or issues they were avoiding. I also taught, and I still do, ways that chemical and emotional anesthesia are connected and ways to work through them.

What the psychology-of-selves perspective has added to my practice is that now my first approach is usually to ask the client who is leaving their body what the purpose of leaving their body is. If they are drifting I might first ask, “Where are you?” Or, “what are you feeling?” After they answer, usually something to the effect of “I don’t know, I went away”, I ask them “What is the purpose of going away”. Often they will not have a very definitive response. My next question might be “What is the purpose of not wanting to breathe?” Whether they begin to contact their protection issues or not, my next step would be to ask them to contact the part of them that doesn’t want to breathe. I might then have them exaggerate that part and express the protection or the “I don’t want to” feelings. By doing this the issue will begin to become conscious and often the feelings underneath will come up and will immediately be dealt with.

This gives me increased ability to work deeply and respectfully with clients who have internal conflicts between wanting to go into deep feeling and at the same time wanting to remain safely removed from feeling. The awareness of this being two selves both of which need to be honored and respected has helped me greatly.

#### **Resistance and Body Sensations**

While the anesthesia or unconsciousness issue above is perhaps the most important example of the confusion

between resistance and protection another is with the energy release and body sensations.

With the tingling or vibrating of the energy release or with body sensations like tetany there has been a similar tendency for breathworkers to see this as resistance and shame their clients for having it. I have always been relaxed about tetany and have always seen it as part of clients getting comfortable with high levels of energy in their body. I have also taught ways to support clients in surrendering and letting go, and also encouraged them to contact the issues that they are holding on to.

In the past I have often referred to unconsciousness as “unconscious resistance” and to tetany as “conscious resistance.” I have always felt that tetany was less problematic than unconsciousness unless it is so painful that it creates fear of breathing in the client. So, shifting my view from resistance to protection has helped me relax further about tetany, and given me increased ability to not shame clients with painful tetany. So, the way this paper may influence the facilitation of a client with tetany would be that as you ask the client things like “What are you holding on to?” or “What is the thought that is making your hands hurt?” You could instead ask, “What feeling (or thought) are you protecting yourself from?”

### **The client’s choice**

As with any therapy issue I feel a key is for the facilitator to help the client make a conscious choice. The client is not doomed to be conflicted by these oppositions forever. By working with each self independently the client will gain greater ability to choose which self, need, or goal they wish to manifest. Again the goal in Voice Dialogue is to separate from the selves and develop an aware ego that has the ability to choose which self or energy best serves them in the moment. This is more easily accomplished when the validity of every self has been embraced.

Most good facilitators have long been aware of issues similar to this but have often made resistance wrong in a desire to push the client. This is the most important issue I intend to be addressing. It does not work to make resistance wrong. More subtly, it is helpful to realize that even the most emotive clients have older issues of fearing feeling and if these are not worked with they will undermine the process. Protection issues are likely to come up eventually and will need to be addressed. I also find that if protection issues are not worked with early in the process then when they do come up clients will more likely just dismiss counseling as not working for them, or that they are just “clear” and don’t have any issues that counseling could help them with, instead of identifying that they are working through some protection issues.

Ironically, I find by embracing control and protection issues that clients get greater intimate contact with their vulnerability more quickly. This is because by admitting

and accepting the control and protection, they identify there are feelings underneath that which they are protecting. It actually takes them to the vulnerability quicker, but also in a more productive way because having the control and protection selves present is similar to having the inner-parent available to support the inner-child. They also go deeper because they are not unconsciously conflicted between the parts of them that want to surrender control and contact deep feelings and the parts of them that want to avoid feelings by remaining in control.

This brings me to another key issue that Voice Dialogue has helped me understand, which is that it is important to contact the inner-parent before working with the inner-child. By having the inner-parent present the client can connect and begin to care for the child. Without the awareness of a strong capable parent-self, contacting the vulnerable child can lead to despair, depression, or further isolation. I will save a full discussion of this for another time.

### **Integrating the Controller Protector in Group Work**

By incorporating this perspective in their work with groups, facilitators can also avoid what I call “The Weekend High”. By weekend high I mean that the results and personal growth of transformational experiences or workshops often do not last because they are not integrated when the client returns to daily life. I suggest this tends to occur because the controller/protector was not involved in the process of the counseling or workshop and when the client returns to daily life the controller/protector is in charge so the openness is not integrated. It is as if the openness created by the releases of counseling exists only within the culture of the counseling or workshops. If the counseling or workshops incorporate the controller/protector then the benefit of the transformations is linked to the controller/protector and will be available later in other environments where they are in charge.

I include the controller/protector in the beginning of my workshops by doing a guided meditation where I encourage the participants to embrace the controller/protector and let them control the workshop. I encourage them to only participate at a level that is okay with the controller/protector. The result is, as I said above, that people actually go deeper than usual.

### **How to Honor Protection Issues in the Practice of Counseling or Breathwork**

The first step is for facilitators to embrace similar conflicts within themselves and to become friends with their own protection issues.

Next, is to create a respectful counseling space where it is understood that the client has protection issues and that this is a good thing. It is like encouraging the client

to have boundaries.

The third step would be to speak to the control or protection selves when they come up, and to address their needs. I do this with Voice Dialogue but you could get some benefit from this information without using the Voice Dialogue process.

### FACILITATOR/CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

The issues of the controller/protector are by no means the only area in which the psychology-of selves or Voice Dialogue can inform breathworkers and rebirthers. The general relationship work of understanding how selves interact can give facilitators great insight into their relationships with their clients. Most models like the parental disapproval syndrome, the obstetrician syndrome, client/therapist boundaries, and the therapist as a co-dependant, are addressing similar issues.

Simply put, what these models have in common is that if the facilitator is holding too much parental energy then they will be pushing or inducting the client into a child energy. Ideally a facilitator operates only from their aware ego and never form a self, but this is nearly impossible. Even the neutral adult space that many therapists develop is more aptly described as a psychological self or teacher, and it has some agenda. Also depending upon the client and their issues the facilitator will often be triggered into a reaction, which triggers another self of the therapist. Even if the therapist disguises their reaction by trying to remain in their “therapist self” the client will feel the energy and have a reaction or their own. This is basically the same as understanding when a client triggers you, but viewing it as a self-to-self interaction gives some concrete help for letting the relationship patterns go.

For example, if clients don’t work hard enough for your own “inner pusher” seeing this will help you let go and support them in their choices. If you feel you need to “please” your clients to remain employed, seeing how your “pleaser” is operating will help you let go of your co-dependency and stay connected to your authority. And, as mentioned above, if a client’s unconsciousness or tetany are triggering the investment of your “obstetrician” or “critical parent”, then identifying that investment, and

letting go of it and returning to your aware ego, will help the client choose for themselves from their aware ego, instead of going into a self of their own which is a reaction to yours.

It is my feeling that this discussion also explains part of how being a facilitator is so enjoyable. Being a witness to the miracles of breathwork is a gift and a meditation, and the successful navigation of these issues increases the depth of the mediation. It is a relationship dance that is healing for the facilitator. While it is easier to remain in your aware ego with a client than it is with a friend, partner or coworker, it is still a powerful and rewarding experience.

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