

This writing consists of parts of two emails that I sent to the group after a meeting in March 2019. The main part of a meeting is when a person dialogs with me about what is in their way of being more free. (We call this dialog sharing).

This meeting had four different shares that were particularly poignant in what came through and what we can learn from them. This writing isn't in the form of the usual formal article focusing on a specific topic. The purpose of posting these emails is so the reader can gain insight into the topics discussed and some feel for what a dialog can bring out. The names of the people have been changed to keep the safety of anonymity.

## First Email

### Criticism

#### Part One

Tina's work with criticism was very good. She was correct in that I was commenting/criticizing her multiple times before her share began. I remember two times during the opening part where I commented on her reaching too far.

Here is some of my journey when someone is commenting to me. I can't say that I feel that someone is criticizing me when I'm sitting before a person in group. I did used to feel that they were criticizing me.

Early on with the work with Charles, Jack told me how he handled it when Charles said something to him and inside him he got defensive or reactive to what Charles said. Jack said he knew it was always his ego, fear or woundedness that was reacting to what Charles said. He told me that any time he engaged Charles from this defensiveness or reactivity, he wouldn't be doing any real work.

Here is an example: Jack could get reactive/triggered by what Charles said. Rather than defending or arguing, Jack would go into the feeling. He felt belittled by Charles or judged by Charles. Jack could feel attacked or felt like he was made wrong. Instead of going into what triggered him, he'd go into the feeling that was up in him. It didn't matter to Jack if he thought Charles was right or wrong in what Charles said. Charles had triggered a wound in him and it was the wound, the held feelings and emotions, that needed to be worked with and released.

This was a very important lesson for me. I was only working with Charles for about four months when Jack told me this. (Jack and I started working with Charles at the same time). After Jack told me that, from my memory, I was always able to go into the feelings that came up when Charles said something to me that I felt defensive about. I never remember going into whether what he said was right or wrong. I didn't care if what he said was right or wrong. I cared about the woundedness in me that was brought up in that moment.

For years I watched people justify or explain themselves to Charles when they were triggered. There was no work being done then; ever. I got to see from others when they were being freed up and when they were reinforcing or defending what was inside themselves.

Tina switched well from her not liking me criticizing her to how she didn't like her father criticizing her. She got to then work more with that old wound; which is a big part of the reason that she was triggered/irritated from me criticizing her. This is when work can be done.

Then there is another depth of work that can be done. This level of work is working primarily with the energy rather than the story. When Tony was on the floor he was working 100% with the energy. He didn't have to not pay attention to a story; there was no story there.

Tina got to another level of work. She felt inside herself and worked with the feelings. Working with the feelings is closer to working with the energy.

Then there is working with the energy. As I've mentioned, many times Charles would be working with me and I'd be writhing and loud sounds coming out and there was no emotion going on. This was the way that the energy was moving through me and releasing. These were the times of deeper release and deeper connection. These were the times when I was returned more to my true self.

### **Part Two: My Personal Journey With Criticism**

I remember when I felt criticized while sharing in group. I was both offended and defensive. It was more difficult to hear this criticism from my peers than from Charles. It took a short number of months (with the great help from what Jack told me) before I could go almost directly to not "taking it hook, line and sinker" when Charles triggered me/criticized me.

By the time I started sitting before my peers (the people who were in the retreats with me), I was free from going with my reactivity of "who do they think they are to say this to me." I knew they were sitting up front to help me. If that help triggers a wound in me, then let's start working on the wound. I've sat before Bill Clum and Patricia in group. I've sat before Sherry and Amy. And of course, I've sat before Anne.

If a person feels criticized, it's always the ego/fear/mind/anger that is running the show at that time. I learned that no work can be done when I come from that part of me while I share in group. And very good work comes when I can go into the feelings that are there from the trigger. And even deeper work comes when the energy that generates the feelings can be released.

Katie has a key question: "Who would you be without that thought?"

My question is: "If there is no energy in you to keep the emotion or thought going, what happens to that emotion or thought?"

The emotion and thought can still be there, but without the energy charge, the emotion and/or thought has no power to fuel dysfunction.

We can forgive, even though we may not forget what happened. We don't have to forget the event to be healed. The energy fueling our wound from the event does need to be lowered a lot for the event to no longer produce dysfunction in us.

There is no problem with any emotion or any thought. It's what we say or do with the emotion or thought that creates a problem.

### **Summing Up About Feeling Criticism While Sharing**

When you feel criticized, it's your ego/fear/old wounds that are now in charge or what you say or do. Anything that you say or do to justify yourself or defend yourself or attack the other person (in group, that would be me) is coming from the ego/fear/old wounds and this will reinforce the ego/fear/old wounds.

You can begin working if you go back into your past and find out when criticism previously brought up so much feeling. Once you're more connected to the roots of why you're reacting, you can begin to work on healing what was already inside you before I said something that you took as criticism.

When the energy of the feelings, the emotions and the story release around the criticism, then the energy driving that particular reaction is being healed. There may be many (and sometimes many, many) times where the trigger happens again, and more

energy is being released. There's a time when enough work has been done where we're healed and being triggered doesn't happen.

I welcome a time when I'm triggered while being a participant in group. I have no desire to defend, attack, justify or explain myself. I'm not even drawn to going inside to what events in my past are fueling this reaction. I'm ready to work with the energy that is there. This makes my work simple. There's an uncomfortable energy in me (it can be emotion and/or thought). My work, at that moment, is to be with that energy. To listen to the help from within and to listen to the help of the person leading the group. There's no strategy in how to become more free other than to listen within and to listen to the person, and follow what comes up for the energy to release.

Thank you for your great work on Friday and for your desire to help each other.

Love,  
Phil

### Second Email

Dear Every One,

I'd like to continue to write about our last meeting. There were four classic shares that each have great teaching points. I love how Anne imparted to me "teaching points;" those poignant exchanges that are so rich and so much can be learned from them.

#### Tina's Share

I wrote about Tina's share in the previous email. She had times of being in resistance and reaction. When this happens, the amygdala part of our brain takes the lead. The amygdala is the fear center of the brain and goes into one, or more, of three modes – fight, flight or freeze.

Tina experienced all three of these amygdala responses. She talked of how she wanted to leave the meeting (even though she wasn't going to do it). That is flight. She was noticeably irritated/mad/angry at me for my repeated criticism. That is fight. She also had times of increased resistance/stuckness. That is freeze.

Tina did well to continue to have her share be productive by not getting too sucked into the amygdala's fight, flight and freeze responses.

## Louise's Share

There was a lot of good in Louise's share. She didn't resist. She wanted good to come from her time of sharing.

There were also two ways where she was in her own way, and this influenced her time of sharing. Many times Charles would say: "You just need to get out of your own way."

Louise was in her own way in two important aspects and this limited how deep she could go. She started with an agenda. She wanted energy to release. She wanted relief of the feelings that she's been carrying. This is legitimate to want. Though any agenda we bring into our time of sharing is us being in our own way. She had an agenda which was to release energy inside her. This can be okay to start the share with. We need to start from where we are. If we have an agenda when we start, then it's very good to let the agenda go and be more in the moment of what is happening with us. Louise kept her wanting to release the held energy as an agenda during her share. This did not leave full space to let come up whatever was there to come up.

The second way that she was in her own way was that she had a planned and primary method for that energy to release. She was planning on the energy releasing through screaming. This has been a past pattern and she was set on screaming being a key aspect for the energy releasing.

These two aspects of having an agenda about her share (wanting as much energy to release as could happen and screaming as a primary way for the energy to release) were both in the way of her more fully responding to the present moment.

Energy was released. Progress did happen.

## Being Taken Over

There were two shares where people were taken over; where there was no thought (or very, very little thought) and no emotion (or very, very little emotion). Being taken over is when the energy moving through us moves and moves and moves without thought or emotion.

When we're taken over, the most energy can release. *I do not ever remember a time when I "saw it coming." I never remember a time of sharing with Charles where I thought "I can feel that I'm going to be taken over" or "I want to be taken over."* If there is any agenda or thought that I want to be taken over, then it will not happen.

## Thought ⇔ Feeling/Emotion ⇔ Energy

In the previous email I wrote that no thought or emotion can exist without energy. To undo the deepest root of what is holding our thoughts and emotions in place is to release the energy that is keeping the thought and/or emotion in existence.

Years ago I repeatedly referred to Pema Chödrön's advice to give ourselves a piece of chocolate as a reward if we can not listen to our thoughts for even a quarter of a second. She went on to say that there can be longer and longer periods of time (than a quarter second) where we won't be hooked by our thoughts. When we're hooked by our thoughts, we're "gone." We're separated from our true nature.

The most important aspect during your share is that you're connected to the present moment; you're as fully in the present moment as you can be. This is done with a gentle awareness; not by trying hard. The harder we try, the more that we can get in our own way.

If we're taken by our thoughts, we're in a mental fantasy. I wrote that being connected to our feelings and emotions is a step closer to being more present than to be in mental thought.

I then wrote that to be in connection with the energy of what is happening in our body is even closer to being more fully present than to have our attention primarily with the emotions of anger, fear, pity, depression, etc.

*Now comes a potential problem – wanting to manipulate our way to “the deepest place to work” – to the energy at the root of thought and emotion.*

### A Session With Anne

Anne had a session with me. We worked together for two and a half hours. After the first ten minutes, my hands were always on her and energy was releasing throughout that time. Anne didn't have a time of resistance or freeze to slow down the releasing flow. She also was in touch with shame the entire time. This was a very specific shame.

Anne didn't try to manipulate away the feeling (shame) to get to the deeper level of energy without thought or emotion. *Anne was present to what was there.*

It was a beautiful and continuous releasing of energy throughout the two and a half hours. Anne has been at this a long time. This has helped her develop a stamina to stay present and to keep going for long after it would have been too much for a new person.

There were no big outbursts; no big dumpings of energy. It was great and steady work for two a half hours with the feeling of shame being there throughout. Every time we strategize during a share, we get in our own way. There was no strategy by Anne or me, and the results were great.

### **Being Taken Over**

Both Thelma and Tony were taken over in the meeting. Great amounts of energy poured out of them. They were not involved in (or very, very little involved in) thought and emotion.

I talked with Thelma on Tuesday. She said she's still feeling altered from the meeting and that she's also been feeling more of her true self since the meeting. Thelma and I have been working on a specific energy pattern that she has been continually holding in her body since childhood. One way this specific energy pattern manifests is as a lot of tension across the top of her shoulders, a curling in of her shoulders, a lot of tension in her neck and a lot of tension in her chest area.

We have worked with this specific holding pattern many, many times throughout the years. There was a big letting go that happened during her share in the last meeting. When I saw her on Tuesday, I have never seen her so relaxed in her shoulders and chest area. The habitual energy of holding, guarding and holding back from attacking was so much less.

I've been in touch with Tony during the days after the meeting. Energy is flowing better through him. He's not on the floor anymore. Before the meeting he said that there was a big glob of energy that was stuck in him, and pretty much all he could do was lie on the floor in a ball, breathe and the flow of energy releasing was very small. He also said that he was depressed in a way that he had never been before.

Tony doesn't feel depression now in that way. There's still a lot of energy that needs to release. He's not feeling great and he's going in the direction of feeling great. In the last three meetings, Tony has been taken over. Each meeting there has been a deeper being taken over.

Most everyone wants enlightenment to happen without disturbing their life too much. They don't want enlightenment to be very inconvenient for them. It doesn't work that way. A person needs to be willing to lose their mind and to have happen what will happen. This can be very inconvenient and very uncomfortable.

Tony has waited and worked for decades for this opening to happen. It's been extremely disruptive and uncomfortable; including times of vomiting and being sick. It's been brutal at times as what is in the way is releasing.

It doesn't have to be this dramatic for everyone, though everyone needs to be willing for whatever chaos to happen that needs to happen. Tony is willing for chaos to be there. Our willingness for whatever needs to happen to happen is one way for us to not be in our own way.

We never know when the times of our big breakthroughs will happen. The times of big breakthroughs and connection for me have always happened spontaneously and surprisingly.

When I've been taken over, I've always had some awareness that I was in my body. I also was aware that Charles had his hands on me (usually he had his hands on me, though not always) and I was aware of his voice. I was also sporadically aware of my breathing. There was not any awareness of anything else that I remember.

### **Conclusion**

This concludes going further into the four shares. We can learn so much from each other's experience. The meeting was rich with teaching experiences.

Thank you for your willingness and for showing up so consistently.

Love,  
Phil