

## PART III NARCISSISM & AGGRESSION

These classes, the movement and the Video Holo-Therapy help you discover the mythologies, the self-objectification and the object relationships that perpetuate your suffering and self loathing. You have an opportunity to just stop the suffering and connect with your innate nature, which is conscious, happy, free and unlimited.

Narcissism is a survival strategy and as such is the creation of an Objectified-Self. It is a cutting off from inner knowing, feeling, and of the inner expression of the authentic-self. Instead a false self image is created from the reflection of objects, people and experiences that surround one. This false-self stifles healthy individuation from the parent and development of a functional ego. Narcissism is a direct result of the aggression the narcissist experienced from his surroundings, in early life. To better understand the narcissist's intimate relationships, we must first understand the genesis of one aspect of narcissism: aggression.

Emotions are instincts. They form part of human behavior. Interactions with other people provide a framework, an organizational structure into which emotions fit nicely. Libido is the sexual instinct or sexual drive. Emotions are organized by object relationships to the libido, the positive pole associated with safety or the negative pole aggression, which is associated with hurt.

Anger is the basic emotion underlying aggression. As it fluctuates, it is transformed. Anger has two aspects or two faces: hatred and envy. The libido has sexual excitation as its basic emotion. This emotional object relationship is an ancient tactile remembrance of the safety of the mother's skin and the wholesome feeling and smell of her breasts that provoke this excitement.

So important are these early emotional experiences, that an early age pathology of object relationships can develop from traumatic experience – physical or psychological abuse, abandonment – or these traumatic experiences can move aggression into a dominant position over the libido. Whenever aggression rules over libidinal drives, we have a psychopathology.

The emotional twins – libido and aggression – are inseparable. They characterize all references of the self to an object rather than to the true inner nature, which is the authentic self. A false world of emotionally-invested object relationships is formed with each emotional wound and each subsequent objectified-self reference to the outer world.

The dynamic unconscious-self is made of basic mental experiences, which are really dyadic relations between self-representations and object representations in either of two contexts: elation or rage. A subconscious fantasy of merging or unification of the self and the object prevails in symbiotic relationships – both in euphoric moods and in

aggressive and wrathful ones.

Anger has evolutionary and adaptive functions. It is intended to alert the individual to a source of pain and irritation and to motivate him to eliminate it. It is the beneficial outcome of frustration and pain. It is also instrumental in the removal of barriers to the satisfaction of needs.

As most sources of bad feelings appear to be human, aggression in the form of rage is directed at human, "bad" objects – people around us who are perceived by us to be deliberately frustrating our wishes to satisfy our needs. At the furthest end of this range we find the will and wish to make such a frustrating object suffer. However, such desire to make one suffer is a different game: it combines aggression and pleasure, therefore it is sadistic.

Rage can easily convert to hatred. There is a wish to control the bad object in order to avoid persecution or fear. This control is achieved by the development of obsessive control mechanisms, which regulate the repression of aggression in such an individual.

Aggression can assume many forms. Biting humor, excessive candor, the search for autonomy and personal enhancement, a compulsive effort to secure the absence of any kind of outside intervention – are all sublimations of aggression.

Hatred is a derivative of anger which is intended to facilitate the destruction of the bad object, to make it suffer and to control it. Rage is acute, passing and disruptive – hatred is chronic, stable and connected to character. Hatred seems justified on the grounds of revenge against the frustrating object. The wish to avenge is very typical of hatred. Paranoid fears of retaliation accompany hatred. Hatred thus has paranoid, sadistic and vengeful characteristics.

Another transformation of aggression is envy. This is a greedy wish to incorporate the object, even to destroy it. Yet, this very object which the envious mind seeks to eliminate by incorporation or by destruction is also an object of love, the object of love without which life itself will not have existed or will have lost its taste and impetus.

The narcissist's mind is pervaded by conscious and unconscious transformations of enormous amounts of aggression into envy. The magnitude of hatred in such individuals is so great, that they deny both the emotion and any awareness of it. Alternatively, aggression is converted to action or to acting out.

This denial affects normal cognitive functioning as well. Such an individual has intermittent bouts of arrogance, curiosity and pseudo-stupidity, all transformations of aggression taken to the extreme. It is difficult to tell envy from hatred in these cases.

The narcissist is constantly envious of people. He begrudges others their success, or brilliance, or happiness, or good fortune. He is driven to excesses of paranoia, guilt, and fear that subside only after he "acts out" or punishes himself. It is a vicious cycle in which he is entrapped.