

A QUICK FIX OR DEEP GROWTH

WHY DEEP GROWTH NEEDS COMMITMENT AND TIME

TILKE PLATTEEL-DEUR

Many people ask themselves why the world has become so different from the world they knew, why they can't figure out, why they often feel confused and not content and peaceful. One of the causes is that men as well as woman do not really live in the present moment anymore, and therefore have forgotten the art of slowness. They live to survive. They live their male energy, running, thinking, acting and forcing themselves. They neglect their female energy and forget to slow down and live and enjoy the moment in the here and now as fully as possible. They forget that we all carry male and female energy inside of us, energies that both need to be felt and acted upon to be balanced human beings.

How we perceive time

Time seems to be a constant element in life, and time *seems* to be moving forward in one direction. In fact, there is just this moment; this here and now. We can stay obsessed with the past or fear the future, but the past is gone and the future not there yet. And nevertheless, the time seems to be racing away, as if life is as fast as a high-speed train. This often causes a conflict in us.

On the one hand, it is good to be completely in this here and now, to enjoy the moment and feel that everything is as it must be.

On the other hand, it is necessary to have plans and set goals. Setting goals makes us move forward, supports us to take decisions, and lets us make the mistakes we need to learn from.

Life seems to be moving faster

We are living in an extremely fast time. Communication is faster than ever before; today we are immediately informed about what is happening on the other side of the globe. Relationships and business connections break up more easily than ever.

We can travel great distances in a few hours, thinking that our bodies can take that lightly. Children grow up faster; at least, they think they do. We keep looking for quick fixes, immediate successes. We do not repair the things we own; we throw away whatever we think is outdated and buy the newer model.

The physical body needs time

However; a baby still needs nine months to be born. And above all, it needs people who will take care of it for many years, keeping and loving it, so the child can grow and thrive.

A body is still 'confused' and out of rhythm after a long flight, even when we give it extra melatonin, trying to hide the consequences of the long trip.

People still need time to get to know and love and trust each other. And a body still needs -just as bad as ever- a slow hand and an easy touch instead of fast sex.

Could it be true, that the important things in life still need time, slowness, attention and commitment?

Do we need this more female energy to bring more love and attention in our lives, for ourselves and for the people around us and for what we are doing here on this planet?

Integration takes time

Since 1979, I am leading, together with my colleague, a three-year training program for Breathwork Therapists. This program grew organically from a three-month course into the three-year training we had been aiming for. People sometimes ask us why this training is taking three years. The answer is simple.

- Since many years, there are courses and trainings that promise to achieve in a very short period of time, more creativity, strength, power, success, happiness and spiritual growth. In our opinion there is no highway to enlightenment. The human psyche is so complex, and our belief systems and fears are so deeply hidden, that a long-term training is needed, to develop a truly balanced personality. -¹

We have very consciously decided to create a longer training program. In the seventies, we saw a trainer who offered short seminars of two to five days, which often turned out to be dangerous in certain aspects for the participants as well as for the trainers themselves.

These trainers came and brought their participants to a high level of energy and then they simply left again. They never had the chance to see how some of the people they had worked with, fell into a deep emotional hole. This could happen, because the insights they had gained were not well integrated into their daily lives. Integration needs time!

For trainers, to really deepen their own spiritual growth, and be able to build their professionalism, it is just as important that participants get the chance to get to know them as deeply as they get to know their participants. This is a prerequisite to get honest feedback from people. That also takes time.

Accomplishment takes time.

A student in a conservatorium has to study about 2000 hours per year. A concert pianist has to study even more, to become really good. A cook tries and tries till he finds the right combination of ingredients for a certain dish. Surgeons study 6 years in medical school and then need another 6 years to specialise. A normal professional training, i.e. for a hairdresser, takes at least 3 years.

All these people need to be committed, motivated and persistent to reach their goal.

Why would a school for life not take at least three years? How can we think that our deepest convictions and deep old fears, that have been settled in us over many years, could be released in a short time? Why would we expect that real life consists only of quick successes and can be lived in a hurry?

We all learned how to walk through falling and getting up again. Two key factors played a role in this process: obviously, we were truly committed to learn, and Mum was cheering us at every step we took.

Are we just as committed at what we are trying to accomplish today? Are we, on a deeper level, just as dependent on the small and sometime big acknowledgements we receive when we work, do something new, and accomplish something? And do we want these acknowledgements right away? Today however, we are not small children anymore, and our Mama is most probably far away. We will have to learn to trust and acknowledge ourselves, stay focussed and committed to be successful.

¹ Brochure Instituut voor Integratieve ademtherapie.

However, being completely committed to achieve something does not seem to be so cool today. And so, we often do only what is necessary and seem contented with a quick fix and often with mediocrity.

Longing for true achievement

At the same time, somewhere deep inside of us a longing is hidden, a longing to truly achieve something of value in this life, something that is permanent and meaningful. We want our life to have a purpose. To discover this deeper purpose, we need direction. How could it happen that so many people don't have the slightest idea about their purpose in life and lost the sense of direction their lives should take?

As children, we have been often disappointed in our expectation to be loved unconditionally. Therefore, we carry many emotional wounds and scars, which manifest in the form of fear, anger or sadness, impeding our going forward. These feelings are for the most part deeply hidden, and mainly unconscious. They need an atmosphere of respect, love, and safety to come to the surface and finally be felt completely and integrated. This takes time, attention, and commitment.

Instead, being quite unconscious of our old wounds, we keep ourselves busy, living in a surviving mode. We try to get rid of what we experience as painful, as soon as possible, by suppressing our feelings even deeper. We try through a lot of thinking and talking not to experience what is going on (thinking and talking *about* it, instead of feeling *into* it). We project our uncomfortable feelings onto other people, making them responsible for our discomfort, feeling very often caught in our judgements. All of this lets us forget, why we are truly here.

Very often, we don't feel we contributed something meaningful, when what we did didn't take some time and effort. In nature, everything reminds us that something meaningful takes time; trees need a long time to grow tall and strong, animals need time to learn to survive and hunt for their food.

When we reach a quick fix -when we achieve something very fast- as if we are racing forward only to a temporarily success, something in us feels not really satisfied. Maybe there is a brief moment of joy, but the feeling of satisfaction is not lasting. It seems cheap and not well earned; because in the deeper fibres of our being we know that this racing forward is not natural.

Deep inside us we have a longing to act with real commitment, with attention and intention, so that something worthwhile will come into existence.

Quick fixes can be like drugs; a short high and then a low again, because we realise that we expected more from ourselves. Nevertheless, we often act in the same way coming from a wrong way of thinking that is contraire to what we originally intended. ²

This fast way of thinking, this attempt to not *feel* what we experience, as well as the quick and superficial seeking of solutions, is a way of living life coming from our masculine energy.

We all, man just as much as women, need to live our lives coming from a more feminine energy. This means that we take time to breathe in and out, to relax, and to listen more to our bodies. It means to train ourselves to be in this here and now, fully physically present. It means to no longer project our emotions onto others or re-act them out. It

² From a talk with Lauren Dobson, my granddaughter who was then 17.

means to *experience* our feelings and emotions completely and totally. There is no better place than inside our bodies to do just that.

The importance of consciously being in the body

The conscious connected breath is able to make contact with our body and feelings in a very safe way. When we pay attention to our breathing, it forces our attention into the body. Then we are awake and present in a mindful way. The more we connect with our bodies, the better we experience life in the here and now.

In the body we can trustingly integrate our unpleasant feelings, and so gain insight in how our old wounds have influenced and 'coloured' our life. Thus, a growing consciousness is created, and we can take responsibility for the way we create our own emotions and the circumstances in our life, through our thoughts and convictions.

If we integrate our limiting thoughts and emotions, we return to our original selves. We learn to listen to the voice of our soul that is showing us the direction and the purpose in life.

If we are truly present and conscious in the body -where we belong- if we really live inside the body, then we experience reality instead of thinking about reality. Then we are fully present and in contact with who we are, and with the people around us. We perceive the world in a feeling way.

Our felt sense, which allows us to feel our power as well as our vulnerability, makes it nearly impossible to hurt other people.

Then we are rooted in the present moment and our natural perception of timing will be restored.

It is wonderful that the conscious connected breath also gives us an immediate and tangible result. It fills us with energy! We need this immediate and fast result like a direct reward for our commitment. It gives us the courage and the endurance to move on. Because just like the successful piano player, we must endure and continue till we experience in our daily lives the moment that we really enjoy our breath. The moment where we are more and more present in the body, living in this moment in this moment and now.

Then we learn to listen to our heart again. We learn to listen to our vulnerability. We learn to listen to the love and the wisdom that rests in our heart.

We allow ourselves to trust the heart instead of the mind. The mind mostly lives in the past, which is based on memories. The heart is present, and the heart only beats in the now.

We can experience the wisdom of the heart, the ancient wisdom that connects us all together.

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