

## **The Wholeness of You** **by Swamini Saralananda**

*This is the second part of the serial article, continuation from June 2021 newsletter.*

### **The Innate Longing for Wholeness**

#### **Alienation And The Birth Trauma**

The sense of alienation does not come from not being loved by others; it has its roots so deep, all the way back to the womb. At a deep subconscious level, unrecognized, unacknowledged and unexamined, everyone wants to get back that sense of absolute safety when mother and child were one and all our needs were fulfilled without any effort. Alienation started the day we were born when we first entered this world and the umbilical cord was cut...no more the passive, relaxed, safe oneness with the mother.....the pain and crying begins with our first breath. Of course the infant cannot think in words such as "Now I have to breathe on my own", "Please don't hurt me.", "I'm cold...keep me warm.", "I need this, bring it.", "I'm afraid, please don't let me be alone". But a definite felt sense of these pre-verbal feelings are there. And since tangible memories are, for the most part, woven with words, those pre-verbal impressions, which get far more deeply embedded than we think, are not easily recognized, examined and analyzed. But these earliest, primal fears and pains did get registered, got imbedded, we can say as kinesthetic, body memories. These are the most difficult to access. There are times we experience painful feelings of alienation and they seem to have no explanation. It is very possible that they trace back to the preverbal birth trauma. Yet only when we begin to understand this can we begin to get relief from that buried pain.

Many people have a vague notion and take for granted that since an infant is so undeveloped and can't know anything, that it won't know what is happening to it. Since it cannot voice any protests or concerns, it's as though it's not quite fully 'there'. This is why it is so easy to neglect and abuse, infants. We have to include all the degrees and varieties of trauma and neglect that are typically inflicted by the parents, family and community, all throughout the growing up of a young

life.

Just picture a doctor holding up and hanging a tiny fragile infant upside down, maybe slapping it, (thankfully those days are gone) then handing it off to a nurse who sticks things in its mouth to suction and give a rough scrub to dry the body and all whatever else they do in a cold sterile room. No one will call this abuse because it's considered necessary, maybe so, but it still doesn't change the fact that this little bundle of nothing-but-feeling-sensations, experiences all this as a terrifying shock. It's called birth trauma. First, the newborn had been in a frightening way, squeezed and pushed through the birth canal, out of the warmth, safety and comfort of the womb and then instead of being soothed, it was subjected to those other invasive sensations. In Western psychology some well recognized modalities of therapy like "Rebirthing" and "Primal Scream Therapy" give full credence and attention to the birth trauma.

Thus, as the child grows, the pain and crying continue because no parent can ever be perfect in meeting all the needs for this totally helpless and totally dependent child. Often times, the mother doesn't even know what the child is crying for and gives the wrong thing. Since the child is born with total helplessness there will innately be a total natural and absolute trust in its mother figure. This trust is again something wordless, a basic instinctive necessity for survival. The fact that no parent can ever be ready to fulfill the child's needs well enough to match that total and absolute trust, is not out of a lack of love and all good intentions. It is just a fact of life...no human can be a perfect anything. Thus, when the child's every need is not met, to greater or lesser degree, the mothers' ineptness leads to a gradual erosion of the child's natural basic trust. This is true for all of us. There is no way any parent can be infallibly trustworthy.

The infant begins to figure out, "I will not always be fed when I'm hungry and I might starve; I will not always be taken care of when I am cold, wet, hurting, sick, lonely, frightened." Again, even when for the child these feelings have no words, they still get registered, absorbed, and programmed in as fear and insecurity. Thus, the child slips farther and farther away from having that original total trust in the mother figure and the world it helplessly finds itself in. Yet, the total de-

pendency will be there for a long time.

Birth trauma is the earliest and natural setup for feelings of distrust and insecurity. No one escapes this and everyone carries in relative degrees, some insecurity-anxiety into later years. Sometimes people blame themselves and feel ashamed of being weak just because this sense of insecurity is there. It can cause us to look at others and think that they are more confident and together than we are. But all we're doing is comparing our insides to their outsides. Then we feel alone with this, which causes again a sense of alienation.

### **Can Alienation Ever Be Resolved?**

Bo Lozoff, who did a lot of volunteer work with prisoners, wrote a book: *"We're All Doing Time"*. He pointed out that everyone is imprisoned in a wrong self-identity. The purpose of this book, is to present the possibility that we can *make a shift in understanding our identity and discover a wholeness that can free us from the pain of alienation*. It is an identity in *wholeness* we all long for, acknowledged or not. It is to be discovered, as our very nature, an already accomplished fact. It is available to be known as the profoundest center of our being. It is the Ultimate Self. We all long for that and it is gained via a clarity of understanding. This understanding will be revealed in the chapters to come. It is the understanding of subtle pure awareness which is our Being, wherein there is no separation from anyone or anything else.

That non-exclusive identity means that we would love others as we love ourselves. That non-exclusive identity means we love others and ourselves in One Whole Beingness.

To begin this journey of discovery of that Beingness, which is the self-evident self, does not imply that we should give up any of our other relationships. The more we are clear about ourselves, it will only enhance our ability to enjoy more genuine relations with others. It does not require us to drop out and give up anything we have. This quest leads us to first discover that all we want and need ultimately, can be found within ourselves. From that secure posture of self-fulfillment and wholeness we can give so much more.

## **The Futility Of The Rat Race**

There is a universal, natural longing to find this 'love in unity'. Our natural beingness just wants to be itself. We don't choose this longing. It wants to get home to its original state, the oneness that we have 'tasted' both in the womb and in 'peak experiences'. The more we are alive and present to ourselves, the more pronounced is that longing. Opposed to being gracefully present to ourselves, it is typical to find the vast majority engaged in an endless list of activities, appearing to be constructively achieving something. It seems so real and valuable, all that we do. But most of these activities are ways to distract ourselves in order to not feel the chronic dull ache of discontent. "I want...gotta get...I want.... gotta get...I want....I want.....I want ". It's endless.

The sense of insecurity and alienation can express itself through an addiction. An addiction is a compulsive driven activity wherein a person is helplessly compelled to engage in an activity in order to distract from the background pain and discomfort. Of course, addictions to substances are of course more obvious and tragic, yet driven-ness to over-achieve can also be an escape from addressing the issue. The truth is that all addictions are covering up the pain.

## **Discovering My True Self**

Is it really possible to discover a Whole and Complete Self? Ancient teachings and mystics are there in every culture, all saying the same thing, telling us about a sacred Self and its nature as Unconditional Love. They tell us that it is meant to be discovered and "owned", in fact that this is the whole purpose of our lives. The ego is always longing and struggling to just be what the true Self is, full, complete, safe and whole. What else is there to want after that? You wouldn't be reading this, unless somewhere in the deepest part of you, you know there is at least some truth in this. Very few people are seekers because it requires one to be awake enough to the realities of life. To have figured out that no matter how we gain and attain in life, of things, relationships, money, fame and power, there is never a satiation point. Spiritual seeking remains superficial, until we realize that everything we have done so far has not worked to give us freedom from lack and want. It is said that the only obstruction between me and my True Self, which is the

wholeness we are speaking of, is ignorance of it. If ignorance is the problem, then knowledge has to be the remedy. This knowledge completes itself through self-inquiry in a prepared mind.

### **You Are Your Life**

There's nothing more important in your life than you because the fact is: You are your life. Most of us have a quaint notion that life is something 'out there' happening to us. But the truth is, it is not what happens to me that makes my life but rather how I respond to it. Take for example a woman who, as a child, heard only scolding and put-downs from her father. Now as an adult she may get stuck living out a pattern that any man who speaks to her with respect or any kind of tenderness can easily take advantage of her. And suppose a man had a mother who was promiscuous with numerous men, he would probably live out his life irresponsibly indiscriminate with women, never finding happiness in a satisfying, lasting relationship. For either one of them, it is not their fault, they are not to blame for their issues, but it is only within themselves that they can discover the solution. And only unconditional love can be the resolution for the pain that they experience from these issues. Everything we want, do and suffer can only be resolved in the Self, in ME..... the source of Unconditional Love.

This Sounds Selfish?

*".... but this all sounds so selfish?"* We may as well start with that objection right up front. 'Self-love' is an expression used here for: Self-acceptance, self-worth, self-respect, self-validation, self-care, all in all, unconditional self-love. It is a huge claim to make that to have this within one's self is even possible. There are those who have gone before us who teach that it is. If we can come to discover that Unconditional Self- Love is an already accomplished fact, it means that it is not a matter of my effortful doing. To commit to discover self-love is not 'selfish' but rather 'Selfish'. The 'self' refers to my small, egocentric personality while 'Self' refers to my innate, essential nature. That essence, the Unconditional Love is the true and real meaning of the word 'I'. And that is a fact, which is possible for any of us to discover. To discover that truth means I will be fully fulfilled.

*To be continued...*