

∞ 113. Narcissus ∞

The illusion of a "seperate self" (or "individuality ") from "unified" nature. Narcissus is a good symbol for suffering. He has separated himself from all relationships, especially the primary relationships of mother, father, loved-one, and environment. He confronts only his own image, which he does not re-cognize as such. Obviously, Narcissus doesn't know that the face in the water is his own image. He does not recognize his own image or quality as such. And suffering is in the failure of a man to re-cognize, to know again, his own distraction, which is his own state, his own quality, his own modification. When he re-cognizes it, he ceases to be enamored, fascinated and distracted. His drama is undone by simple and yet radical knowledge.

If Narcissus understands his fundamental activity, his insane condition will come to an end.

So all that a man is suffering is fascination with the force of his own activity and experience, which represents to him the "separate self sense" (identification or "ego"), the field of differentiation (the conceptualized world), and the endless adventure of seeking (mysterious motivation or desire). The things flashing and moving before him, the "objects" of consciousness, imply the separate perceiver over against the field of perception. And where this implication becomes the point of view, the true and prior nature of the world ceases to be obvious. This structure goes on and on, magnified through all forms, all the types of experience, all the worlds of experience, all the conditions, gross, subtle and causal, that arise. Every thing that arises is fitted within this structure.

So it makes no difference where Narcissus moves, what experience occurs, what technique or search he applies to this dilemma. No matter what occurs, he fails to know it directly. Even the Divine Vision fails to be conclusive, because he knows it in terms of this structure of fascination and separation. A man is always being Narcissus until there is the recognition of this primary activity, assumption and root of cognition. But when this re-cognition ("Remembrance")occurs, he is like a man discovering that he has been pinching himself. His pain was always his own event, the theatre of his own action. When he finally sees, it is a simple matter. He no longer needs to go through any sort of complicated affair to get free of pain. He doesn't have to go through any kind of therapy, special diet, yoga, or mantra in order to be free.

Therefore, it is not by the elimination of conditions or the destruction of your responsibilities that you are served. You are served by the communication of your responsibilities in the ordinary way. It is not by distracting you while you remain irresponsible and in trouble that you are served. It is by the forceful demand for responsibility that you are served.