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Intro

I have been trying to indicate
the elements (some)
that would have to be part of a solution
to the problem of evil
in the human situation.

Qu: What would characterize converted living?

I indicated that,

if the 1st affirmation we can make
concerning evil

is that we are all its victims,

then compassion for self and for others
would be the first element
in a solution to the problem of evil.

I spoke in some detail ~~about~~

in the last class

about compassion for self,
and indicated what I believe

Jungian psychology

can teach us about it.

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Compassion for others:

This kind of vision of the human situation
is productive also

of an attitude to others
that will provide the first step
in healing the evil
in the social situation:

the attitude of compassion for others,
for they too are victims of sin.

→
Compassion for others

is, in a sense,

even more difficult

than compassion for self,

even though it is related:

a) in Jung's vision of things,

it depends upon compassion for self,

i.e., upon the recognition of our own shadow.

b) in Christianity, both flow from recog. that we are victims of sin.

For Jung,

Compassion for others

will almost inevitably involve

withdrawing the projection of the shadow

that we foist upon others by trying to blame them for evil

because, in our ambition,

we are not able to

acknowledge our own implication

in evil.

We do want a scapegoat for evil,

and we generally want the scapegoat to be
someone other than ourselves -- unless we are masochists.

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Compassion for others, negatively,

means refusing to give in to their desire
because, positively,

we see others as every bit as much
victims of sin as we are.

For Humility, Compassion for others

is directly opposed
to the one vice

that, in the NT,

is the target of Jesus' denunciations:

self-righteousness.

Self-righteousness

is the refusal to recognize

that we are all implicated in sin,

and firstly because we are all its victims.

None of us is freed

from the effects of the sin of the world.

None of us can boast

of being untaunted by sin.

Self-righteousness, in brief,

is the position

that that sees nobody as victimized by sin,
and others as sinners.

Self-righteousness

sometimes

actually reveals itself

in perfectionism and legalism.

It sees the following of certain legal prescriptions
as the way to be good,
and it places demands upon others

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and upon self

that are ~~the~~ further instruments
of victimization,

demands that harden one's own heart

because one is not compassionate toward oneself
and that harden the hearts of others
or cause a despair in them,
or, in the extreme,

demands that regard others as hopeless.

The Pharisees,

I said in the notes,

had a shadow problem.

They failed to see the beam in their own eyes,
and were unable to take any other approach
to the problem of evil

than the approach of stamping it out
by laws, prescriptions, legalisms.

The worst manifestations, however, in our day

of failing or refusing to acknowledge one's own shadow,
are found in racism:

the Germans against the Jews,
the whites against the native Americans
and blacks,

the Americans against the Vietnamese,

and, as Jung points out in The Undiscovered Self,

the Americans and the Russians

against one another:

a potentially world-devastating situation.

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Compassion for others, then,

is again not a sentimental romanticism.
It depends on a vision
that understands that
our first and most radical implication
in the problem of evil
is that we are its victims.

It is a switch away from an approach
to the problem of evil
that would seek to find its cause
and to lay the blame some where
and, having found its cause,
to stamp it out.

[Our country, I believe,
is in the position where
this kind of approach (proj. of shadow)
could catch on rather quickly & easily -
cf. Jung's "It can't happen here"

It did happen in one of the most educated
and civilized and well-disciplined
nations in history].

Instead of blame,
compassion for
others involves
forgiveness. Blame
only adds to
victimizing,
forgiveness
to healing.

b. Love of self and of others

is the second element
that would have to be present
in any solution,
however partial,
to the problem of evil.

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By love,

I mean an effective orientation
rooted in compassion.

Love is manifested in deeds.

Love is action or it ~~is~~ is nothing.

The action includes words,

but the words are empty without the deeds.

Love of self

is obviously not egoism,

for egoism ^{is} our own contribution
to the problem of evil.

Egoism is the root of ambitions,

of the ambition that victimizes self and others.

Love of self

is just the opposite of such egoistic ambition.

It is a very objective attitude

that frequently involves curbing one's egoistic ambitions

because it is ~~is~~ victimizing the life in oneself,

one's vital spontaneity.

Love of self

is wanting what is truly good for oneself,

for one's total being,

for one's whole self: and actively seeking that.

Love of self

is wanting the wholeness

that is placed in jeopardy

by overweening ~~the~~ ambition: and actively seeking that.

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Love of self is promoting
the inner ecology of one's own energies, of diff'n & integration,
as a frictionless possession
w/o wh. one can do nothing else
one may want to do.

Love of self is surrendering the ambition
to be every thing,
and accepting to be just what one is:
whether that be viewed as a success
in the eyes of the world or not.

Love of self is
a radical self-acceptance,
an affirmation of one's own talents (be they 10 or 5 or 1)
and weaknesses,
a sense of humor about one's weaknesses
and a joy in the simple life
of being "just this" --
whether ~~it~~ "just this"
is great genius
or artistic ability, or simple ordinariness.

(cf. Becker on the problems of
the genius & the artist :

to pour all one's energies
into a work that may be truly great,
only to surrender it
to be done with as it may).

Love of others

is promoting this same self-acceptance in others,
promoting their own recognition of their own selves
in a simple, joyful, humorous manner,
letting them know
that they are "just this," too,
and that we're all "just this,"
and that that's enough.

Love of others, however,

is also based on compassion.

It is rooted in a vision of others
as victimized by sin,

and so it is not a silly kind of egalitarianism
that refuses high ideals
and lofty accomplishments --

but it recognizes that the highest ideal
and most lofty accomplishment of all,

is the compassion for self + others

and the love of self + others

that mark the principal ^{and necessary} contributions

to any solution of the problem of evil.

Being rooted in compassion,

love of others will identify especially

with the poorest, most victimized, loneliest,

with the most alienated of all,

with the outcasts,

with the oppressed.

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It will ^{also} be especially sensitive
to the victimised fragments
of anybody else's being,
even of those who are relatively healthy
& of those who pretend to be on top of it all.
Love of others will identify
with the victims of sin.
Love of others, finally, and once again,
will be forgiveness of others,
a forgiveness rendered all the more easy
because of compassion
for the victims of sin.

d. Being in love in an unrestricted fashion.

Compassion for self and for others,
and love of self and of others,

are not qualities we can "work up" in ourselves, and this is
The beginning of it all is self-acceptance, ^{where conversion}
^{becomes needed.}

w/o which none of the other qualities is possible.

And self-acceptance is always something that is given.

It is given proximately by others,
by those who love us,

and it is given ^{radically} ~~remotely~~ by God,
in and through the words, deeds, actions & love
of others.

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all of the major religions of the world speak of and promote what, in Christian language, is an experience of the love of God. The conditional acceptance, so that one can self-acceptance is always something that goes beyond the occasion that gives rise to it, it is the experience of ^{accept self.} being radically accepted, and unconditionally so.

Sometimes, when someone loves me,

I am conscious not only of being loved by this person, but of being loved -- period.

Sometimes, when a word of life is spoken to me,

I am conscious of coming alive not only in this person's presence, but of coming alive -- period.

The experience that enables ^{unconditional} self-acceptance, however it comes to me, (and it differs for every person) is an experience of being accepted, of being loved, ^{unconditionally,} in a radical way, in an unrestricted way, independently of the circumstances through which the experience was communicated to me.

It is an experience of being in love, of falling in love, even though the object of my love is not an intellectually perceived object.

It is an experience of being at peace with the universe, even though the ground of that peace is not identifiable.

As long as that being in love
and that being at peace last,

I am capable of compassion for self and for others,

of love of self & love of others.

Bring accepted =
being seen.
Buddha, Jesus.

I am freed from self-absorption
and for self-transcendence.

I am enabled ^{and compassionate} to stand forth from myself
in compassion and love,

I am part of the solution, however partial,

to the problem of evil rather than ~~part of the problem.~~

Only then am I part of the solution.

And only when I am in love in this unrestricted fashion
are ~~is~~ compassion and love possible

in any consistent fashion, along w. other forms of self-
trans. in questioning.

For without this unrestricted being in love

I am absorbed in myself,

and to that extent incapable

of compassion and love, & of questioning.

→ In the tradition of Christianity

and of the other world religions,

what I am in love with is God,

who is both the source and the object of ^{this experience of} ~~my love.~~ being loved
& loving.

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positively viewed,
Conversionⁿ is this falling in love with God,
even when I don't know God as such,
for I can be in love with God w/o
knowing who it is I am in love with.

Conversion is the source of self-transcendence,
of compassion and love,
of the willingness to face questions that is character,
of my participation in the solution to the problem of evil.

Conversion is to be located at this moment:

not in compassion for self and for others,
nor in love of self and of others,
for these both flow from conversion.

Conversion is this unrestricted, unconditional experience
of being loved and of loving
that has no intellectually apprehended object
but that does have a content:

Expressed in many ways,
e.g., love, peace, happiness at the roots of one's being.

This unconditional love

is the radical solution to the problem of evil.

Faith and hope arise from it,
along with compassion and love.

Faith is the knowledge that has its evidence

in the experience of being in love,

hope is the expectation of the fulfillment of that love
in direct vision of the lover & beloved.

The experience cuts deep,

it is religion No. 3,

neither the shallow religion of the ego,

nor the mature religion of an indiscriminate No. 2,
but the religion that has its origins in the experience

St. Paul was speaking of

when he wrote,

"God's love has been poured forth into our hearts
by the Holy Spirit who is given to us." (Rom 5.5)

Friedrich Heiler evidences that this kind of experience is at

the center, not only of authentic Christianity,

but of all the major religions of the world: Judaism, Islam,
Buddhism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism.

He lists the following 7 characteristics common to these 7 religions:

1) there is a transcendent reality

2) this t. r. is immanent in human hearts

3) " " " is supreme beauty, truth, justice, goodness

4) " " " is love, mercy, compassion

5) the way to this t. r. is repentance, self-denial, prayer

6) the way is love of one's neighbor, even of one's enemies

7) the way is love of this t. r., and the end is union with this t. r.
in some form.