

ENDINGS & BEGINNINGS – an Easter contemplation

By Yehuda Tagar

"In my beginning is my end"

TS Eliot, 'The Four Quartets'

"Only what is lost to me / is mine forever"

Rachel (an Israeli poetess)

"That which is only living – can only die"

T.S. Elliot, 'The Four Quartets'

Beginnings are popular, endings are not. We celebrate weddings, no one celebrates divorces. We rejoice in the new birth of a child. We mark funerals, but with a sense of tragedy. We celebrate the glory and beauty and power of youth – but we grieve getting older and ageing is considered a form of sickness. We celebrate and declare our successes – but loss is considered a personal failure even though we learn from them more. Ends and beginnings are equal in importance – but not in appreciation.

Ends and beginning are two parts of one cycle, the lightened and the dark sides of the same moon.

From classic materialism point of view human life is a one-time coincidental complicated death row signifying nothing. Endings, epitomising and inevitably representing the one big ending, death – are a source of chronic depression. They are tragedies waiting to happen, warned in advance like a classic Sophoclean Greek tragedy: if nothing is left of yesterday – then nothing will be left of today, which will become yesterday tomorrow. But this is the nature and the purpose of materialism: to break the human spirit. It is doing pretty well at that in recent centuries.

But from a perspective that regards birth and death as two threshold points of crossing in one great human cycle – endings are not a tragedy. Endings liberate human realities from their subjugation to time and space and flesh and from a life cycle that is subject to the death process from its inception. It liberates human reality back to its true origin above time and space and flesh into the essential reality of human existence: the eternal human spirit.

All this could sound very philosophical and abstract speculation – until tragedy strikes, and we are faced with a decision: is the life that just ended to be evaluated by the spectre of the vacant decaying body in front of us which we are going to bury or cremated – or by the soul and spiritual and relationship reality that was lived here and that was just concluded? This is not, at such a moment, an abstract philosophical-theological question, but a choice to be made about the personal significance and meaning attributed to human life – by human beings, sophisticated or simple minded alike.

There is a choice to be made not only on the threshold of death but long before that, in the way we choose to live our lives. The inward answer to the unavoidable question about what is going to be left of us once our life on earth is ended dictates the quality of people's lives, consciously or not. It is a question of one's self image as a human being and the foundation of the real, rather than the theoretical code of ethics which guides human action, biography and legacy. Gottlieb Fichte, the founder of German/Continental Idealism concluded this fundamental ethical question like this: "If you want to prove to yourself that you are an immortal soul – live like one". This could be the end of speculative philosophical ethics and the beginning of an actual ethical life.

For the counsellor who, in his/her best represents 'The Friend of Humanity' this is a practical therapeutic/developmental, professional question to answer. I really don't know what a materialistic-minded counsellor has to offer a client in grief, loss and despair at any ending of a life cycle, failure, painful separation and loss. Luckily it is not my task in this life to advise counsellors on that challenge. I am a long time international trainer of counsellors, psychotherapists, psycho-development and psycho-somatic Participatory Medicine practitioners on the basis of Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy, Psychosophy and on the basis of Psychophonetics, the first practical application of Psychosophy. For us, Psychophonetics counsellors and practitioners, the idea of the immortality of the human soul is the actual foundation of our work.

It is the essence of our work to take endings and transform them into new beginnings. That is what we are here for.

In my old home town, Jerusalem, about 2,000 years ago, an innocent man was killed by his own people who had no idea who he really was, what they were doing and why, what was really going on, what was the true meaning of that event. He knew, and he accepted it all with forgiveness. He knew that this end was the beginning of a completely new beginning, and that it had to be. That new beginning is itself still in its very early beginning. All that was done since that pivotal moment, commemorated around the world today, in his name - will come to pass with only a few traces left. That historic end and that new beginning will still be a new beginning in many different ways a long time from now. I am sure of that.

You are standing at the very end of a whole chapter in your life: your marriage, your family, your mother's death, your work, your home, your own life coming to its end – looking at the abyss beyond it in time and space, seeing nothing. Nothing forward to step into, to look forward to, to hang on to. Nothing new can come from in front of you. Dead end. Where will the next step come from?

Look at it all, look at the ruins of your life or any part of it. The new step can only come from you looking at it. From you, from the inside of you that was not available for you before this threshold presented itself. You stand on your own threshold.

Every loss, every ending – is potentially a threshold to the other side of you, to the *you* that you never knew before. The seed for the new beginning is always inside the one who is facing the threshold at the end of the previous cycle. But you will never know this – until you cross it.

What does crossing the threshold of ending mean?

An intellectual answer to this question cannot be satisfying. Crossing thresholds is a deed, a chosen act. You cross it or you don't. The ending itself is not necessarily a crossing of a threshold and the ending in itself is not automatically a new beginning. The ending can be transformed into a new beginning by your action, by what you choose to do with yourself at the threshold of the end. But first the ending has to be fully faced with its inherent pain, and loss, and grief, disappointment, anger, despair and fear. There is no way around the soul to reach the spirit. The only way out of it – is through it. "The only way out is through"¹. You have to do it in your own life to be able to encourage another human being to cross the threshold of ending which their life will present them with, sooner or later. They can see it in your eyes and hear it in your voice: do you *really* mean it?

Yes I really mean it. And that is why I am able and willing to be there with you at a moment of the death of an important part of your life, or at your deathbed, facing imminent death, and encourage you to face it all, your actual human experience as it is, not as it *should* be, and

¹ *** "the only way out is through".

hold it in the context of your greater being, with support, until your own greater being, not someone else's great being, provides you with a surprising new beginning, on which you build the next step in your life, or the conscious preparation for your own earthly death. I can do it because I have done it to myself. My Psychophonetics graduates can do it for their clients because they did it and are doing it to themselves. All our training is based on that: cross your own thresholds consciously, and, on that basis, you will be able to encourage others to cross their own thresholds when they come to you for support. In Psychophonetics we call it 'Methodical Empathy': what you do with yourself is the foundation for what you will be able to do for others. We teach 'Parallel Processing' as the major component of Methodical Empathy. In the position of a counsellor you cannot afford to avoid facing your own feelings, crises, thresholds, emotional pains and endings – and help other people to face their own. This cannot work because it is not helpful and it is not honest. In that position you can ask many questions and give many advises (poradenstvo in Slovak), but not be a counsellor, not the way we define it. In Psychophonetics *Counsellor* is defined as 'A Skilled Friend on the Threshold'. This is what we teach and cultivate in Skola Empatie in Slovakia, based on Psychophonetics methodology.

I would like to introduce to you as an Easter gift a healing process created through Psychophonetics work that we call 'Resourcefulness'.

On the foundation assumption that the human 'I' is an individual spiritual being, a source of renewal in itself and not a product of biology and biography – a whole range of new possibilities of personal renewal can be introduced to people seeking personal change. If the 'I' is a source in itself, and, at the same time is planted at the centre of the normal psychological dynamics – new resources originated in the creative human spirit through the 'I' into the normal struggling psychological dynamics.

The group of Psychophonetics Resourcefulness processes is designed to activate that generating capacity of the individual 'I': to invoke, mobilise, create, activate and manifest new resources which are essential for one's well being and further development; to bring into personal reality something that is missing in it.

But in order to activate new resources within the 'I' – a threshold must be first faced by the individual in which one can say to oneself: "me as I am now cannot find within myself the resources to do what I set to myself to do, to be what I know is in my potential to be".

Invoking inner resource :the place in the soul where one is most close to one's internal potential resources is, paradoxically, the same place where a particular resource is missing. The Invocation sequence enables the person to make this turn-around from missing a potential human quality that is needed – to invoking it from their spiritual potential into reality.

There are five major kinds of new processes of Resourcefulness in Psychophonetics – and many more additional ones - that can be invoked within the 'I' once this threshold is reached:

- 1) **Invoking the Nurturer** - From the place of deprivation of nurturing – using the combination of desire and imagination, mobilising, invoking within oneself the missing nurturer into reality. It could be the mother that you needed and never had, the nurturing environment you never had, the certainty in your inner potential that people around you could not give you. Out of the experience of missing that nurturing, indeed out of the acute exposure to the need of it – that resource can be born out of the person's potential – into reality, even if it had never been there before.
- 2) **Invoking the Protector** - From the place of experiencing acutely vulnerability and exposure to outside threats from the outer world, out of the acute suffering of that internal position, using a combination of suffering and imagination – it is possible to invoke the missing protector, the one that you never had, into reality. Typically that brings up an

encounter with your actual father, the one you did have but who could not create for you the safety that you needed, and still need. That memory has to be overcome: this man could not do what was needed from him at that early time, and he surely cannot do it now. He has to leave. This process we call 'Firing the Father': stand inside the new sense of your own inner authority which you now have, which you did not have before, which your original father could not provide you with. From this position, as an adult, ask the image of your original father to leave. He leaves. In his place an empty, open, available space is being created. Into this new space – step in yourself, fill yourself with the power that you now have, bring it from your imagination into your body, posture, movement, character – and become for yourself the father that you never had. Sometimes a new internal presence becomes available, not a father but another inner spiritual being, a reassuring presence from your earlier life, or from nature. It has to come spontaneously into one's imagination, but it can be encouraged by a 'Skilled Friend on the Threshold', like a skilled counsellor.

- 3) **Invoking More of Me** – the third major kind of Resourcefulness invocation is more of the essence, presence, power, strength of oneself. There at the activated inner position of 'not having enough of myself for my own life', from the middle of suffering the absence of your real strength of being – a new power can be invoked from its potential into direct experience in the here and now; From the place of missing one's fuller 'I' being in life reality, using the energy of the intensified deep frustrated will to be further born from potential into reality – a further dimension of oneself, never experienced before in this life – can be born through direct expression. Become it, bring it into your body now. Gesture it and move out of it and try to act out of it. Imagine a future interactive situation that is coming – and practice being this 'new self' in that situation. As fantasy it will be too weak. A new inner reality – it can become a real life reality.
- 4) **Upliftment** - lifting oneself from your ordinary state of being, through your imagination, into a special inner space where to be restored, refreshed, cleansed and replenished by a benevolent nurturing environment you create for yourself. You created for yourself the nurturing, uplifting inner environment that otherwise is only available in deep sleep, but now you have done it while being awake. You entered it inwardly, you let it replenish you, you received its deep support, you returned back to your own wholeness, through meditation, contemplation, prayer, nature, an inner retreat. And then, when the time comes to return to your normal life – you return, with a refreshed and enlivened inner being. That is the 'Upliftment' kind of Psychophonetics Resourcefulness.
- 5) **Creating Heart Safety** - The heart is not capable of protecting itself. An inner power must be found with which to protect the heart from inner and outer pressures which damage it. In sleep the heart is protected. The natural protection from anxieties that is present during sleep is to be restored in the day, consciously.

These are some of the major Resourcefulness processes of Psychophonetics. There are many more. Another time.

This is what a skilled friend can do to someone in need on the threshold.

But only you can make the choice to be there, at your own personal threshold.

In order to be able to do it – something must come to an end, so that something new can start.

Ending and beginning.

Yehuda