



Essential Energy

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Features Not Flaws

I remember the minute I decided that there was something really wrong with me—not just kind of, but *really*.

My family had just moved from Alabama to Minnesota. I already knew I was odd. I saw energy emanating from people. I talked to fairies. I remembered past lives. These things I could keep to myself, however.

Once the Northerners heard my southern accent, I was cooked. “Why do you talk wrong?” one little girl asked. “We say ‘the’ not ‘thee,’” the teacher admonished me. Stubbornly, I pointed out that the Quakers used both “thee” and “thou.” I was sent to the office to practice my pronunciation with the secretary. Kids would press their face against the glass and make monkey faces at me.

That is when I decided I was seriously flawed.

As an energy practitioner, perhaps the most common challenge facing my clients is an inner sense of wrongness. There are several labels they slap themselves with: unworthy, undeserving, inadequate, disliked. What they are really saying is that somewhere along the line, they were made to believe they are flawed.

Sometimes a person is shamed into self-recrimination. One of my clients was told she would never amount to anything. She had a straight “A” average. Yet another had several abortions during a hard time in her life and “well meaning” members of a Bible study group damned her to hell. Still another client was born with one leg shorter than the other. His Hindu family assumed it was karma and he deserved the punishment. After all, all his brothers were “normal” and were not an “embarrassment” to the family.

How many consequences result from being convinced that a unique, unusual, quirky or even endearing characteristic is a fundamental flaw? My shamed client has not ever had a loving romantic relationship. The woman “damned to hell” can not sense the presence of a loving God. The man with the shorter leg hides in his apartment. He holds only virtually accessible jobs. He has no friends. He is constantly ill because he does not exercise.

Quite simply, individuals cannot open fully to grace, abundance, friendship, guidance, opportunities or healing if they think there is something inherently wrong with them. (And then think of what happens with human mistakes!) Depression, anxiety, poverty, addictions, loneliness and even pain and illness are the frequent results. If we cannot accept ourselves, who will? If we cannot embrace ourselves, who might? If we cannot laugh at ourselves, we will feel like others are laughing at us.

In the world of gemstones, few colored gems are perfect. Several types of gemstones are actually more valuable with blemishes. These are the varieties that have “defects” or “flaws” called inclusions.

Inclusions are foreign materials found inside a crystal. In many cases, these increase the value of the stone. They provide vital information about the history of the stone and are a proof of authenticity. Natural gemstones, which frequently include inclusions, are treasured over artificial ones, which are sterile.

An inclusion can be made of minerals, but also water, gas or petroleum. Even insects and plants can be trapped within a stone. Frequently the fragment is even older than the host rock and might look like a cloud, needle, pinpoint, crystal, vapor, feathers, fingerprints or streak.



Amber is one gemstone that is more valuable when organic matter is trapped within it. The fossilized resin of the pine tree, amber was formed about 50 million years ago. When specimens are trapped within, the amber is especially precious. Rutulated quartz is another gem that is more cherished when filled with golden “needles.”

Every experience we go through leaves an impression upon us or an inclusion within us. And certain characteristics are within us when we are born. Some of these must be shaped or redefined so they benefit rather than harm us. This very process transforms wounds into badges of honor which are to be worn proudly. Our innate traits are by their nature treasures to be unlocked, polished and shone into the world.

As healers, our task is to help our clients accurately frame or reframe their self-judgments from dark to light, unhealthy to healthy. This reconfiguring requires us to recognize that their “flaws” are actually “features” that make them amazingly interesting.

A feature is a trait or characteristic that qualifies something or someone. It is an attribute. I like to think of it as a trademark. Why not promote what is distinct about us? Celebrate it? Frame it in a commentary that shows it for what it is—a hallmark of uniqueness?

As Confucius so wisely said centuries ago, “Better a diamond with a flaw than a pebble without.” Within each of our clients is a diamond with features of greatness, just waiting to be recognized. €



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