

NEGOTIATING THE INNER PEACE TREATY™

© 2005-2011 Chelsea Wakefield

OUR INNER CAST OF CHARACTERS

Here are some ways of thinking about your *Inner Cast of Characters*. These sub-personalities appear in various groupings on the stage of our lives at different times and situations.

- All of us have aspects of self that most clearly define us. I like to call these inner characters *Main Players*, because they have starring roles, occupy the stage most of the time, do most of the talking and feeling, and compel the decisions and primary actions of our lives. We have *Main Players* in each of the domains of our lives and they may differ significantly from one another, depending on the situation.
- Our *Supporting Cast and the Not So-Supporting Cast*. These inner characters are not as visible as the Main Players. They operate behind them...behind the scenes. The *Supporting Cast* tends to our needs and well being. They provide nurture, encouragement, protection, remind us values and rules to live by, and help us navigate family and communal life. They also provide the crucial function of setting limits, structuring time, planning, evaluating, and problem solving. The *Not So-Supporting Cast* manifest as interior voices that criticize, pressure, warn, and constrain us.
- We also have a set of inner characters that have to do with identities from the past. I call them *Retired Selves*. They hold important pieces of our personal history that have formed us. Sometimes our relationship with these past selves is positive nostalgic. It can also be painful or shameful, something we keep secret – locked away from the view of others. This past material can take energetic form as *Inner Demons* or *Ghosts from the past*. For some people the past holds “*the best days of my life*” and their life after these earlier events is pale by comparison.
- Locked away in trunks, closets, and the basement of the internal theatre, dwell our banished, disowned, troublesome (or beautiful) *Shadow Selves*. Not integrated and outside of conscious awareness, they pop out in behaviors and slips that are not part of our normal repertoire - uncharacteristic thoughts, feelings, and ways of being, often embarrassing, frightening or disturbing for us. Shadow players appear on the inner stage of our night time dreams. Dreamwork is an important way to become aware of and integrate this material. The gold in our shadows is always seeking entrance into our life. Bringing into awareness and integrating this material into the waking personality is a crucial part of our journey to becoming whole, complete, fulfilled, and empowered.

THE STEPS OF NEGOTIATING THE INNER PEACE TREATY

STEP 1: **NAMING:** “who” is in your *Inner Cast of Characters*.

STEP 2: **KNOWING:** Dialogue with and get to know this *Inner Cast* and what makes them tick.

STEP 3: **NEGOTIATING:** Inevitable conflicts will arise between your differing parts of self.

Round Table Work means gathering these parties around an imaginary table and exploring their operations, assumptions, needs, agendas and hidden vulnerability. Out of this dialogue integration evolves and new potentials emerge, conflicts be transcended, or new resources brought in to provide alternative solutions to life’s problems.

STEP 4: **INTEGRATING:** In the process of Individuation, we are continually expanding our consciousness, archetypal potential, and understanding of life. Dreams give us pictures of - where we are, what is missing or out of balance in our inner system, what needs to be healed in us, unconscious shadow material, where we need to expand

our perspectives and reality so that we can live into our destiny. Life also brings us lots of situations that invite us into living ever more deeply into our Soul Print.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

We have many ways of defining ourselves: Roles and relationships; achievements and reputation; group affiliations; family and cultural history; wounds; gifts and traits; goals, values, longings; health and body; sexuality; spirituality and soul life.

Each of these categories can house different Inner Characters. Differing areas of life evoke different sub-personalities because they have different requirements, expectations, and rules of operation. Each carries a particular energy in the body. We tend to become over-identified with certain roles, experiences and labels and begin to think of them as “who I am”. Our current definitions of “me” is just a piece of what is possible.

DIALOGUING WITH YOUR INNER CAST AND DREAM CHARACTERS

Here is a list of questions you can ask each of your Inner Characters. You do not have to ask all of them. Use a journal to track the evolution. Each night a new cast of characters will present themselves on your inner dream stage. Each will offer important archetypal energies for you to integrate in order to move forward in your journey. You may want to ask some of them to join your Inner Round Table and to participate in the decisions of your life. As foreign as they may seem, each offers a new perspective, and something to shift your current way of being.

- Tell me about yourself. What is it like to be you?
- What is your history? How did you come into being? Who were your teachers and role models?
- How are you trying to help or protect me?
- What do you need?
- What do you want?
- What are the rules, mottos and guidelines you live by?
- When and where do you show up in my life?

NEGOTIATION AT THE INNER ROUND TABLE

Gather the interested parties to inquire about something in your life. Ask each one the following questions. In each of these characters there are agendas, and needs, and various issues will raise underlying concerns. Many times, there is a pivotal need or concern that needs to be addressed and when you do, you can move forward. It is crucial that you look around behind the Main Players to see if there are places of vulnerability or anxiety about this. Vulnerable Inner Children are often hidden and can put the brakes on any life goal! Sometimes you may want to form an Inner Committee and decide who will be the “director” for this “project.” Where is the common ground between your Inner Characters? Where are they willing to compromise: take turns, build on common interests? Who within me is best qualified to “chair” this committee? What energies previously out of awareness (shadow) are seeking emergence at this time? How is my consciousness shifting in this process?

- How do you view this current goal, situation or problem?
- What are your concerns here?
- If you could have what you wanted what would it be?
- How do you view the other parties involved? What are your concerns about them?
- Have I looked consulted everyone who needs to be consulted? For example: Are there Vulnerable Children who have an interest here? How they feel about this? How can I address their wants, needs and concerns?