

I Try To Go IT Alone- Without The Latihan Or Testing--- *-Foolishly!*

As I was to be given so much from the Inner later I am as sure as I can be now, that had I tested then I would have been clearly told NOT to go ahead with the wedding. Alas, I did not do this.

I did try instead to convince my wife-to-be that the wedding should not go ahead BUT she was so distressed by this and so mindful of the “public humiliation” this would mean for her that I allowed myself to be swayed into it *for her sake*. I see now that this was an incredibly weak and foolish thing to do. And, of course, it did not make things easier later when I was to leave my “wife” anyway. It merely delayed the hurt and the humiliation and it meant I got involved in, at best, a travesty of a “wedding”. I shall never forget the look on my “wife’s” face when, several weeks after the wedding, I told her “there was someone else”: “Oh no,” she sobbed, “It’s too hard, John, it’s too hard for me!” I knew that feeling: I had suffered exactly the same when my first marriage broke down. I could not bear inflicting this same suffering on someone who simply did not deserve it and (how could I forget?) who had helped me so much. If only I could find a way of avoiding this hurt I would do it...

Afterwards, it got worse as I lied through my teeth in my misguided attempts not to “hurt anyone”. At every available minute I was dashing off to the person whom I now saw as “the love of my life” and, of course, this meant lying to my “wife” or hurting her immeasurably. I was with my “wife” in name only and it had been so since I first met my new partner. And for a long time my new partner did not have an inkling that I was married either! It was both a ridiculous position to be in and a completely unfair one. Eventually, of course, the situation became public knowledge. People who had known me for years simply could not believe what was happening. They had seen me as a conventional, reliable person with too much integrity to get involved in something which looked so “seedy”, immoral and weak in personality as this. “Friends” deserted me and refused to meet my new partner or even have more to do with me than they absolutely had to. My son phoned me

from Australia to tell me to “get a grip” and stop being so “stupid”. The general view was that I was a “pathetic, middle-aged man going after a younger woman for all the wrong reasons- for sex and to recapture my long-lost youth”. Many viewed my new partner in a no less unflattering light: she was “obviously after my money and the security it would bring to her and to her two young girls at a time when she was in real need of these things”. I understood what was being said and I was truly worried about it. “Well, she can’t be after your body,” said a brutal friend, “it must be your money!” Rationally, I could see all this and I thought that, probably, if I were in their shoes I would see it in exactly the same ways. But I simply did not have the control that many people seemed to think I had... Whatever the rational might say there was something else at work here which was strong, delightful and, even, transcendent. It would just not be dismissed in the way many people seemed to think it should.

I began to sympathise with those characters in so many films and stories who had their lives turned upside down by feelings like the very ones that we were now experiencing. Sometimes, in spite of all the odds, the readers’ or film-goers’ sympathies are clearly for the lovers and the tensions and conflicts in the story have the audience firmly on the side of the lovers against all the odds and against all the conventions of the society of the time. In real life that does not often seem to be the case! For me, it was too easy to read the situation I was in, in a totally immoral and unhappy light. The worst of it was I could all too easily agree with the rational arguments about what was going on but my deepest feelings refused to let them have any sort of final control. So, not for the first time in my life I was completely and utterly torn between my rational and my feeling side. I did not really trust either, so I was really up against it!

A friend gave me a copy of “The Psychology Of Romantic Love” by Johnson and thus made his position completely clear. It all looked to be a “classic” case of “Anima projection” and I should, without a doubt, take myself off to some remote place “until the projection was withdrawn and I had re-united with my inner woman”! My new partner and I thoroughly enjoyed reading the book but it did not change things one iota for us. I did worry about the idea of this being “a simple case of romantic love” just as I worried about all the other rational explanations that were being given to me. If it was “romantic love”, then time would tell but, of course, only after a lot of destruction and unhappiness all round.

It was true that I experienced lots of wonderful feelings when I was with my new partner but I was sure I was not seeing her as some perfect, faultless woman because even from the beginning I was not blind to what might be considered her not- so- appealing traits! I felt she could be as self-absorbed as I could be; I knew she was untidy, sometimes very disorganised; and she was not too bothered about housework or planning ahead...I could go on!!! None of those things bothered me: I felt that the most important thing I wanted was a relationship where we could each be ourselves as fully as possible and have no pressure from the other to be what we were not. I felt I had long ago given up the illusion that any one person could be perfect and be, and do, everything that any one other person would want! No, I wanted a flesh and blood person who could accept me fully as I was – a clear mixture of qualities, some of which would be far less appealing than others! And I wanted to give the same back. We both felt the same way about this and, of course, later we were to add more details to it: for example, we would not just do what we wanted in the relationship, not if it was hurtful, for example, to the other. We agreed on far more than we disagreed on – about relationships and most else, in fact – so it was easy for us to be together as the people we were – without pretence. We both aimed for a relationship where we would each get to know each other really well and would both be committed to helping the other to achieve what each most wanted in life, whatever that might be! We could be different and we found that we could support each other in those differences where they were important to either one of us. In other words, we both wanted to help each other grow, learn, and share as much as possible of life, in all its aspects.

We also shared an interest in life's possible meaning and purpose, in religion and so on. Of course, we talked about Subud and my partner had her own experience of the latihan (while on holiday in Turkey in a room on her own!) and she, then, joined the Association. So, we shared that as well and to have a partner who shared my Subud interest was an unexpected bonus for me. There were many times when we seemed to be unnaturally close in an almost psychic way: we sometimes experienced things like one of us saying exactly what the other was about to, or was just thinking about. This happened enough for us to comment on it every so often! The first time anything like this happened was when we lay together and I had this strong image of myself being an American Indian out on the plains. It was

so strong that I mentioned it and, to my surprise, my partner pulled out an American “dream catcher” which she had got for me that day!

However, in spite of all this, the pressure on me to end this inspiring, wonderful, happy relationship was enormous. I worried and worried about it. My “wife”, I knew, did not deserve what was happening. She obviously cared for me and I was putting her through hell. Many people were shocked at what had happened and were convinced I had got it all wrong and needed saving from myself! And there was a strong inner pressure as well as I felt I was breaking an accepted code of behaviour for our society, no less. There were times when this pressure was so great that I did try to end the relationship! Then I put my new partner through hell. Yet, she stuck with it all and, as I later realised, she, also, had to compromise her “morality” and some of her friendships for our relationship. It turned out that just before we met she had also prayed for a relationship in which there was “true love” and, she said, she would put up with “any hurt for it”. Well, that was surely to be tested with me! I was also surprised when it became clear that she had said this at about the same time that I had made my bath-time wish! It was as if we had *both* been listened to!