

Todres, Les

**The wound that connects: a consideration of 'narcissism'
and the creation of soulful space.**

Content: Here are my overhead slides. The completed paper will be submitted to a journal. I am happy to send a draft copy to you individually on a personal basis prior to publication.

Abstract: This presentation shared some thoughts about an inquiry that I continue to find enriching and developmental---that of the phenomenon that has been called the 'narcissistic wound'. I used a number of thinkers on the subject as 'touchstones' to help me unfold a view in which 'narcissism' is seen as a universal capacity that is potentially the source and depth of human compassion. In the spirit of the 'treasure maps to the soul' workshops developed by Barbara McGavin and Ann Weiser Cornell, this view sees our bodily presence in the world as caring deeply for all the ways that abandonment happens. What has been called the 'narcissistic wound' sings the song of separation and longing.....and the body (whatever that is altogether) re-members both connection and separation: a soulful space where we can deeply meet.

List of slides:

1 **Narcissism: A technical term**

Self-absorption

Style of being-in-the-world

Defence against feeling needy and incomplete

Wound of longing

2 **Caring for the wound**

Treasure maps to the soul

Treasure: soulful space

3 **Overview**

The drama and myth of Narcissus

Psychoanalytic theory

The wound of longing

Possible reactions to the wound

A.H. Almaas

Eugene Gendlin

Soulful Space

4 **The drama and myth of Narcissus**

Quest to possess own image

Living with insatiability

Finding compensations

The mood of isolation

5 **Psychoanalysis: self and other**

Primary narcissism

Healthy narcissism

The ways the longing is mocked by self and other

6 **The wound of longing**

Vulnerability given with being human

Eros: life that is not yet

Psychoanalysis: primary attachment

Body: knows the feeling of connectedness

7 **Some forms of aversion and refusal**

Hating the self that is vulnerable or longing

Strategy of self sufficiency: "I don't need"

Strategy of seeking others as "mirrors" of an ideal self

Strategy of merging with a great or special other

8 **Eugene Gendlin: Process Philosophy**

Life forward: unfinishedness

Wholeness that is open

Nourishment of 'what may come'

9 **The creation of soulful space:
mountains and valleys holding one another**

Treasure maps

The taste of 'manyness'

Living forward means separations and connections

Treasure of the wound of longing: we-feeling in mutual vulnerability

10 **Suggestions:**

What you resonated with

a) Sense into what wants to be there

about all this

b) Find own descriptions

c) Acknowledge its “moreness”

d) Sense into the place where this could be a “we-feeling”

Biographical Note:

I am a clinical psychologist and university teacher interested in Focusing-oriented and Existential Psychotherapy. I also contribute to methodological debates in the area of qualitative research and am particularly interested in the application of Gendlin's philosophy to phenomenological research. You could see a list of my publications at:

<http://myprofile.cos.com/todresab1>

Address:

Institute of Health and Community Studies

Bournemouth University

Royal London House

Christchurch Road

Bournemouth BH1 3LT

United Kingdom

Email: ltodres@bournemouth.ac.uk