

Richard Rohr „Adam's return. The five promises of male initiation.“

p.17 The general assumption underlying all initiatory rites is that unless a young male is shown real power through a community of wise elders, *he will always seek false power and likely will spend much of his life seeking prestige, perks and possessions.*

p.22 A neurotic could be defined as one who has failed altogether in crossing the critical treshold of his adult second birth. Joseph Campbell.

p.24 True born-againness normally leads to *ego dispossession and immense charity for all.*

Our own personal holiness project must always diminish and our humility must profoundly increase in order for the Spirit to blow where it will.

The older phrase was, “I was seized by the power of great affection”.

p.25 True initiation does indeed wash away the original wound, our endless capacity for self-rejection and self-hatred.

p.27 I suspect that the body wound or scar that a boy always carried after initiation was his indelible reminder of this tragic flaw that is at the heart of everything.

p.29 Union with God, union with *what is*, that is to say, union with everything, has always been the experiential goal of initiation.

p.30 What superficially might look like exercises in determination, long-suffering, obedience, and moral heroics, in practice meant observing and surrendering your small self, your fears, your inadequate ideas, and your illusions about what matters.

p.31 Initiation stages:

- separation from business as usual, old roles, feminine affirmation, etc.
- this moves the initiate, hopefully, into a “treshold space”
- here a numinous encounter is possible, desired, and required
- now the initiate returns to his community with a new identity and a gift for the community, although his primary gift is the man he has become

p.32 A boy was initiated into manhood after he found his source, his validation, his reason for being, his foundation *in being*. We would say his place in the universe. Up to that point he was considered a boy, a nonbeing, a ghost, and a hungry ghost at that.

The initiation correctly aligned the man, so he would not just survive in reality, but thrive. The process reflected the most foundational meaning of “salvation”.

p.35 You have to be sick and tired of being sick and tired before recovery can begin. Twelve-step wisdom.

p.36 Initiation is not about being a warrior as much as it is about being conscious, awake and alert.

**Nature's grandeur awakened him to mystery, and its silence silenced him. If a young man does not learn this respect early, he will spend his life demanding that everyone and everything listen to *him*, which creates a tragic deafness and narcissism.**

p.37 If we do not transform our pain, we will transmit it in some form:

- we will become inflexible, blaming and petty as we grow older
- we will need other people to hate in order to expel our inner negativity
- we will play the victim in some form as a means of false power
- we will spend much of our life seeking security and status as a cover-up for lack of a substantial sense of self
- we will pass on our deadness to our family, children and friends.

p.38 We are clearly into ascent, achievement and accumulation.

p.43 Our false self is who we think we are. It is our mental self-image and social agreement, which most people spend their whole lives living up to – or down to.

The false self is inherently fragile and needy because it has no metaphysical substance whatsoever.

p.44 What all religion is saying, in one way or another, is that human beings seem to be living with a tragic case of mistaken identity.

The true self is indestructible and characterized by an inner abundance. It is not needy, easily offended, or hurt. The true self is characterized by contentment, an abiding low-level peace and happiness, although now and then it becomes pure joy. It knows that *all* is okay – despite it all.

p.50 Our wound is our blessing. Handicapped people have this potential head start over the rest of us, and many of them take advantage of it.

p.52 It is relationships that change us much more than ideas.

p.53 The way a master teaches is different than the way an educator does. Not only does a master teach by his very person but by moving quickly and directly to the essence of a lesson, as opposed to mere passing on of information or technique.

p.54 It takes a master to teach you that you are not that important; otherwise, painful life situations have to dismantle you brick by brick, decade by decade.

p.55 We can no longer properly humiliate our small self because we no longer believe in the great self.

p.58 From people of whom so little is expected, little can and will be expected for the rest of their lives.

p.59 Powerlessness is the beginning of wisdom, as the Twelve-Steppers say.

p.61 True spirituality is not taught; it is caught.

p.64 Gandhi “One's life is one's message”

p.69 I have often said that the virtues in the first half of life are quite rightly about self-control, and in the second half they are about giving up control.

p.74 Ken Wilber (actualization and domination hierarchies)

Actualization hierarchies are parents in relationship to children, bodies in relationship to cells, hosts in relationship to parasites. The smaller needs the larger for its very existence. Nothing in the universe survives without such a protective hierarchy, according to Wilber, and in fact, it is the only way to protect growth and create wholes.

p.75 True love differentiates and individuates; it does not create slavish conformity. When you are loved rightly, you are more yourself, your true self, than ever.

p.76 disaster – dis-astra (disconnected from the stars)

p.77 Class was not jut about making money, as it is largely is today, but about personal depth and breadth, skill, training, exposure to life, faith and even manners.

p.79 In the first half of life, the psyche demands structure before it can possibly deal with antistructure.

p.83 There is an ego-structuring nature to male love. It is tough love, but still love in a way that a male respects and honors – as long as it is not cruel or demeaning. In later years, men largely recall and remember their tough teachers and their demanding coaches, those who pushed them to their best and their limits. In some way, a male knows that his teachers did not take him seriously – and he did not take them seriously either. They needed his love more than he needed theirs, and he knew it. Such love loses its power for male redemption. Many women, soft men, and present humanistic culture do not understand this. *Males need to need and work for male love*. Love does not work for the male whet it is given away too cheaply, too quickly, or too easily. It turns him into a lazy manipulator instead of a strong man.

p.84 Father love is not outside my control as mother love usually is.

p.85 The male, for some reason, does not respect anything that he gets for nothing.

p.86 The elders know that “from whom little is demanded, nothing can be expected”.

p.117 The way to transmute the pain of life is to reveal the wounded side of all things, and then place the wound inside sacred space.

p.119 We must live with the wound and learn from the wound, until it becomes our sacred wound.

Couples begin to love only after their first fight and reconciliation. A man who owns his limitations and weeps over his sin is much more effective than one who thinks he has neither.

p.122 Like Jesus, we must absorb and transform the negative rather than replicate it through imitation. It is the only true ressurection and our only future.

p.125 The young male takes pride in being taught discipline, focus, respect, boundaries and self-denial.

The male has to enact his aggressiveness and recognize how far it can lead him. He has to know the difference between good anger and egocentric rage.

p.127 Francis told us that we could do any work or study “as long as it did not extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotion”.

p.128 V.Frankl “Sell you cleverness and purchase bewilderment instead!”

Even after all this time, the sun never says to the earth, “You owe me”. Look what happens with a love like that; it lights up the whole sky. Hafiz, Sufi master and poet.

p.129 When I consciously seek a certain amount of creature comfort in my life, I find that it satisfies me, and also will never satisfy me.

p.142 If at least one-seventh of life is somehow Sabbath and sabbatical, the rest will take care of itself.

p.144 I would sooner have my dad's direct hits any day than the indirect way that my mom dealt with me.

p.150 We have to be prepared and practiced in saying yes because it is always much harder to say than no. Yes is always a surrendering of ego boundaries, and that answer makes us feel weak and vulnerable afterward.

p.156 Material gifts and ego gifts decrease with usage, whereas spiritual gifts actually increase with each usage, in ourselves and in those around us.

If you have no foundational significance, you must constantly attempt to self-signify and self-validate. Everyone is then a competitor and rival.

Futility and meaninglessness are directly correlated to addiction, in my opinion.

p.158 Their life is not their own, yet at some level they know that it has been given to them as a sacred trust. Someone has taken them seriously. They feel deeply respected, which I always say is all that men really want.

It is probably the most courageous thing you will ever do to accept that you are just yourself.

p.160 Remember always that God and being are the same thing.

p.161 Can any of you, for all your worrying, add a single moment to your span of life? (Luke 12:26)

p.162 When so many people have been given such a sense of entitlement and deservedness, when taking control of your life has been made into a national mantra, quite contrary to the whole spiritual tradition, we are setting ourselves up for hurt and for hurting one another more than ever before. Not just because of wars and violence, but because our daily lives will just stop being much fun.

**When you set yourself up to think you deserve, expect, or need something to happen, you are setting yourself up for constant unhappiness and a final inability to enjoy or at least allow what is going to happen anyway. After a while, you find yourself resisting almost everything at some level. It is a terrible way to live. After a while, you live your life with one foot on the brake, and you wonder why your accelerator does not work very well. My experience has been that people who burn out are more often than not just halfhearted about what they are doing. Seldom are they really that overworked. Ironically, when you give up your control mechanisms, you are able to live with both feet gently on the accelerator and move with the divine flow. Without all the inner voices of resistance, it is amazing how much you can get**

**done and not get tired.**