

Why I Write, A Brief History

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My writing has been a 30-year bouncy ride before arriving, for now at least, at a comfortable form: that of blogging on my website, an activity that has gone on for ten months now. Its focus is narrow, dealing with my reflections on my life as it arises and as I become increasingly aware of new layers of my psychological and spiritual make-up and journey.

Writing this blog begins with the thrill of insight, some new dimension to my life that floats up during meditation, while reading, or in conversation with friends. The insight can be a light or dark aspect of my life. It can be a wrestling that does or does not resolve itself. Usually some sketchy notes are taken along the gestation period. Often morning coffee with partner Pat deepens or expands the topic. I smile as often Pat's insights are more profound than my own, but I freely borrow from her wisdom as the ideas crystallize a bit.

Then, Pat gone and trusty white MacBook in hand, I sit comfortably in a cozy chair in the living room or, during warmer months, in a comfortable chair on our screened-in deck off the back of our Miami Woods condo. Over the next hour or so the words just flow out in a kind of stream of consciousness. Some insights are expanded, others dropped, whatever the moment brings. When the first draft is complete, I reread it a couple of times, add some bolding that seems to highlight important words, and finally hit the "Post" button.

At the end, I feel very satisfied and complete. Some points of wisdom arose in me during this experience, wisdom for me and applied to me, and I find myself grateful and celebrating on the inside. Exhilarated!

However over the next hours and days, concerns often come up. Did I share too much? Was I too negative? Did I reveal some hidden piece of unrecognized psychological pathology or spiritual naivety? Did I betray Pat or another friend? Or the guilt, "Is this just an exercise of self-indulgence and self-centeredness?" Or the fear that someone much wiser than I shall judge me a fool from what I've shared. Or the disappointment that no one, or not many, in fact ever read the blog, as if that should somehow matter. I vow to give up this self-betraying practice. Only a few days later to be thrilled by still another insight inspiring me once again to create and post another blog entry.

So why do I do this? Is it a compulsion or is it a calling? Or a little of each? Well let's dig into a little history. Journal writing has been a part of my life for over 30 years. In the beginning I remember sitting in my office reading my bible, something I took up in more earnest it seems after my folks were killed in a car accident when I was just turning 30. I remember reading the bible and then reflecting on the meaning of the verse for my life. Not much on feelings, more on ideas, but satisfying at the time. Prayers were

sprinkled into the journal. And unanswered questions. But never too gutsy or untraditional.

This root of journal writing expanded dramatically during an intense emotional relationship I had in my fifties and then followed me through my divorce and other relationships. Then at 58 I was introduced to what would become my spiritual path, Pathwork. Here the journal left the direct external influences and came more from my soul.

Pathwork included an 8-year period of regular trips to the Sevenoaks Pathwork Center in Charlottesville, Virginia. Here, in class, every class, I was the student attached to his journal. Class notes, self-observations, observations from others, all of it went into my handwritten journal, often to the mockery of the other students. Why write so much? Over a thousand pages a year, probably. And why so much more than what others were moved to write down? Their paucity of writing was as amazing to me as my prolificacy of writing was to them. Then in February of 2009 abruptly this form of journal writing stopped. The event ending this long practice was a new form of journal writing for me, a system developed by Ira Progoff and taught skillfully by a teacher in Dayton. In a way giving up my older journal writing was freeing, but the need to write daily thoughts and feelings and reactions and insights continued.

And then in April of 2009, picking up on some sharing I did earlier in 2003, I took to blogging on my new website. I have been hooked to this process ever since. What is this need? A need to be seen? A need for a certain level of intimacy? A need to connect? Or merely a compulsion in need of therapy?

In a way it feels like a calling. While trained to be a Pathwork teacher, I struggle to manifest a class to teach. Somehow teaching spiritual concepts does not seem to be my calling, at least not yet. While trained to be a Pathwork spiritual counselor (or helper as this role is titled), I have not manifested a body of workers or counselees. I do not feel developed enough to assist others on their journey, at least not yet. No, what is up for me is, in fact, my own journey, working on my own development, psychologically and spiritually. I am a work in progress. And somehow I am drawn to share what I discover along the construction path. It is a kind of first-grade show-and-tell energy. While I am not into counseling others, for whatever reason I am motivated to invite others into my shop and watch what unfolds in the depths of my life and soul. And doing this feels like my calling, this sharing rather than teaching or counseling.

And as I sit with all of this, I am once again taken to a place of questioning myself, challenging my motives, and feeling self-centered and guilty. It is familiar territory, so I find myself smiling at myself, not taking myself too seriously in all this blogging. In the end, why do I write? Because I like to! Is there a need for more logic than that?