

## **DIALOGUE AS SERVICE**

Facilitating the flow of revealed and unrevealed spiritual wisdom into human consciousness can be accomplished through positive group interaction and dialogue that is surprisingly easy and natural to learn and utilize.

### **Intentional Groups**

The natural setting for this service is a group. Whether the group meets once or many times, it is shared intention that attracts the group together, gives it coherence, and determines its power. Group rapport is established through the instant recognition of common purpose, love for each other, and love for humanity.

### **Alignment**

Alignment is the creation of a commonly shared focus among the group members prior to discussion, which provides a path for the flow of inspirational energies contained within spiritual wisdom into the consciousness of humanity. This alignment carries the sense that “groupness” is as much the core of our identity as is our individuality – and it is this extended identity that gives the group its ability to be an agency of spiritual service to humanity.

### **Conscious Invocation**

Invocation is an appeal voiced on behalf of true need. Such an intentional group acts as a microcosm of humanity, an icon, invoking on behalf of all humanity, and in turn acting as a distributing agent for the resulting flow of spiritual wisdom.

### **Theme**

Spiritual wisdom is broad and comprehensive, and it seems helpful to focus on a theme. Relevant text which is agreeable to the participants aids the group focus. The group focus acts as a burning glass to generate the energy needed to impress the consciousness of the group. Before gathering, participants can read, study, meditate, contemplate, and above all pose questions (essentially pointed invocations) about the theme of the gathering. We do so not to become experts, but rather to open up the flow of insight and inspiration between the chosen theme and the brains of the group members.

### **Projection**

After the alignment, one participant will read the entire text aloud while aligned with:

- the purpose at the root of the theme;
- the fullness of the wisdom of the theme;
- the group itself; and
- the manifestation of the theme within humanity.

The rest of the group is in a state of sincere receptivity and deep listening. This is meditative listening that bypasses agreement or disagreement with the text. It is very similar to listening to

a great piece of music without worrying about what it means. Projection is a time to get the overview of the whole piece without being distracted by engaging in evaluation of it.

## Dialogue

After the projection, the group members read the text together once again, usually taking turns, reading a few paragraphs aloud, and then pausing for reflection. During this reading, the participants engage their minds, feeling natures, brains, and hearts.

Invariably, participants are moved to put voice to an insight or a question. A way to think of the resulting dialogue is **collaborative conversation**, and it is a bit different from what most people are used to in a group discussion. Much human conversation concerning substantive subjects tends to be competitive, and characterized by stating and defending one's position, as in debate and argument. Argument is based on the assumptions that one already knows the subject, that what one knows is right, and that all other positions must be wrong. One listens primarily to devise an argument against what one hears, discounting and devaluing the words of others.

Dialogue as service starts from a different frame of reference. Each participant realizes that the group as a whole holds the potential for a vastly expanded understanding. This potential can be activated by realizing:

- each individual viewpoint is both a limitation and a valuable part of a greater understanding when taken together with all the rest;
- the group is a far better agent of invocation and evocation than any of its individual participants are when acting alone; and
- that this requires a collaborative effort among the participants.

In collaboration, the words of others are regarded as holding kernels of truth concerning the theme – kernels that we can connect with only by truly listening. A collaborative effort requires listening to the words of others with the intent and interest equal to that we place on our own internal voice. Collaboration unleashes a spirit of *adding to* in place of *contending for*.

Maintaining collaboration requires the effort to hold one's consciousness as the group. Holding this collaborative tension can many times break open the unexpected. We might begin a dialogue by sharing thoughts we already have concerning the theme. Such thoughts might very well stimulate the consciousness of others in the group into a new realization. When that new realization is voiced, it may stimulate further realization in still others, and so it goes in a kind of chain reaction of realization. We may start with what we know, but the dialogue could present an avenue for what *we do not know* to find expression. Releasing any preconceptions or desired outcomes for the gathering opens the way for the unexpected.

## Group Refraction and Resonance

Insights we gain, as well as the words we use to express them, exert an influence far beyond the time and space of the gathering. Insight can be thought of as a subtle light that refracts throughout human consciousness, while mental and physical words resound throughout the

mental, emotional, and physical vehicles of human consciousness. The insights and words are recognized as coming from and through the group on behalf of humanity.

It is diversity that makes the group useful. Many qualities, astrological natures, ages, functions, rays, and points in evolution are represented. Each of us is harmonically connected to humanity through characteristics we hold in common with others. Because humanity is so varied, what each of us sees and says is of great value to the group service; thus each participant is vitally important. Even so, sometimes an insight voiced in a certain way may or may not be harmonic with your persona in this time and place, but it will affect at least a certain subset of humanity. Seeing and voicing add the power to move existent forms of thought, feeling, and physical activity into new patterns that the insight inspires and humanity needs.

## **Opposition**

It is helpful to realize that despite our best intentions, it is all too easy to lose our conscious intent and revert to competitive, oppositional debate. Holding on to and defending what we *have* known prevents us from the fresh interpretation we could make as energies flow through the alignment.

Opposition usually comes into awareness in the form of reaction, carrying a strong, emotional charge, a physical sensation, and a temporary inability to be sensitive to the truth in another's words. It is helpful to recall how slippery the slope of reaction can be; many times, before we know it, we are submerged in a pool of reactions, and that seems to be the only way we can communicate.

Working with this opposition means being vigilant for the seeds of competition and debate arising in the dialogue. When a participant observes it in others, there is no need to point it out. If it is seen, anyone can help to move the interchange back to dialogue in very creative, harmless ways. It is perhaps even more important to be cognizant of competitive attitudes arising in oneself, and reframe those attitudes into collaboration.

The purpose of dialogue is not to prevent, subdue or control the appearance of opposition. In fact, bringing opposition to the surface, meeting it, and resolving it through the power, love, and creativity of the energy of synthesis is one aspect of this service. Again, the resolution is resonated on behalf of all humans involved in some harmonic of that conflict.

Reaction and opposition seem to arise from the subconscious, and in a very real sense, the past. On the other hand, *response* seems to arise as the energy that moves through the group alignment stimulates awareness of something new, something very present. It might include a sense of inspiration, an *aha!* moment, a moment of revelation, an urge to share *in addition to*. Response does not seem to come from prior knowledge, but more from a kind of knowing that does not require learning; it is like knowing directly, or knowing as a result of participating (even briefly) in the reality of what is known.

## **Rhythm**

Space between one participant speaking and the next is the natural rhythm of dialogue. We are not used to this rhythm in normal conversation, and it might seem awkward at first. It is common to rush to voice a concept that has just been recognized by the mind, because we too often

believe that if we do not say it immediately, we will forget or the dialogue will move on and we will miss our chance.

Gaining some experience with this technique will reveal that others in the group are receiving the same impulse. It might be your responsibility to voice it, or it might be the responsibility of another. Give it a bit of time to see. If another voices an impression you both share (which is frequent in groups with rapport), feel free to add to what was said with your own coloring and quality.

### **Presence**

In these intentional group sessions, sometimes impressions light up our insight; at other times we are not so lit up. Sometimes we find voicing insights easy; sometimes we do not. Similar to a human being who speaks with eyes, hands, body language, and voice, a group speaks in many ways. The insights voiced in these sessions might very well find further expression echoing, resounding in our lives and relationships, long after the session has ended. What allows this movement of the subtle and Divine into expression, is more than anything, *presence*. Insights and words result from being present in group sessions, and present in our lives.

### **Distribution**

It helps to take a bit of time and space at the close of the dialogue to be conscious of distributing to humanity the insights we gained. Re-viewing them and re-sounding them in the mind reinforces the patterns we sent to humanity through our dialogue. To complete the circuit, we become aware of that impulse generating further invocation from humanity back to the Divine.

### **Alignment**

Become physically relaxed and comfortable.  
Become emotionally calm and serene.  
Become mentally poised and alert.

Establish a deep, easy, rhythmic breath.  
Allow the attention to rise from the body and emotions, and come to a focus in the forehead.

Extend the awareness into the higher self and spiritual energies.

Realize that your own mind, emotions, and body are pathways for insights, thoughts, feelings, and words to resound throughout humanity and the planetary life.

As much as possible, maintain this conscious alignment during our work together.