

# *What is the Question?*



*The Right Question Will Give You the Right Answer*

*A Playful Approach to Life by*

*Tine van Wijk*





# *77 Right Questions*

*A Playful Approach to Life  
Based on Gestalt Wisdom*

*Tine van Wijk*





## 77 Right Questions

*Existential questions cannot be answered with a simple Yes or No. They are meant to play with, to chew on, to dance, to sing, to take seriously, to write about, to ask yourself or someone else. You can write them down on cards and choose a card every morning to guide you through the day. You can also think of a number between 1 and 77 and see what your question of the day is. And you probably have more questions yourself you can add. If you let those questions guide you, they will support you to co-create your own miraculous life story. And if you look for answers, open any wise book on just any page and you will be surprised by the words that seem to be written just for you.*

*Quotes that answered my questions are most of Gestalt/therapist/writer Joseph Zinker. I am grateful that all quotes from his work are used here by the kind permission of the author and of Gestalt Press. And I also thank the other authors, I am allowed to use quotes from.*

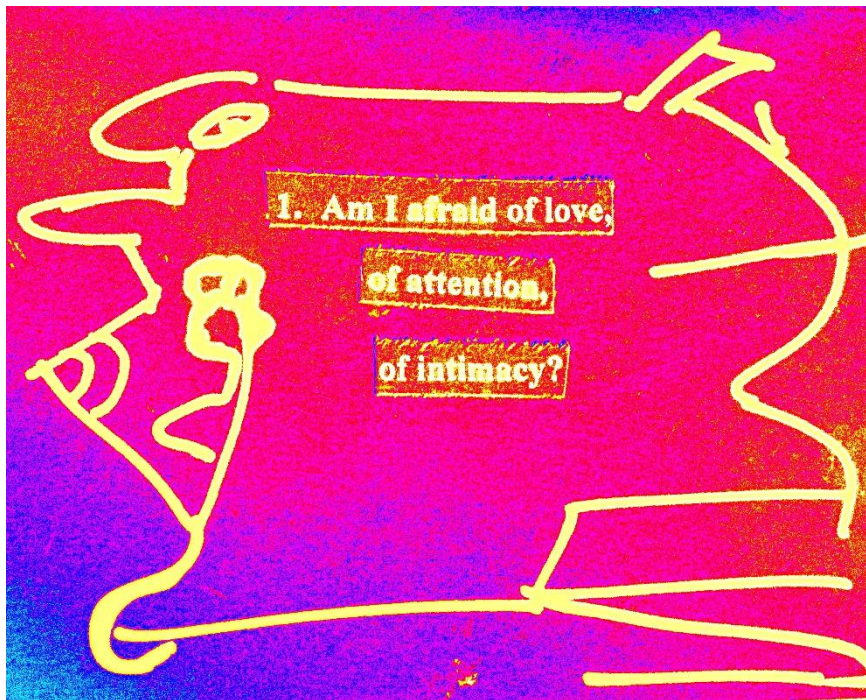
*Those 77 Right Questions were first published in my book  
Gestalt Process Writing to C*

## **77 Right Questions**

- 1. Am I afraid of love?**
- 2. Can I come to THE point?**
- 3. How does my process go on?**
- 4. Am I angry?**
- 5. Am I new to this work?**
- 6. Is it – or am I – forbidden fruit?**
- 7. Can I do it?**
- 8. Am I an artist?**
- 9. Am I a fixed form?**
- 10. Am I a sexual being?**
- 11. Am I prejudiced?**
- 12. Can I just sit, just be?**
- 13. Do I realize the sun is shining?**
- 14. Am I neurotic?**
- 15. Can I release control?**
- 16. Is it about me?**
- 17. Do I admit life hurts and is painful?**
- 18. Can I sit on the ground for five minutes?**
- 19. Can I tell right from wrong?**
- 20. Do I give what I long for?**
- 21. How do I get what I need?**
- 22. Do I use my talent?**
- 23. Am I bigger than death?**
- 24. Am I a victim?**
- 25. How old do I feel?**
- 26. Am I trying to give the right answer?**
- 27. What would I like to offer?**
- 28. Do I love to be her(e)?**
- 29. Do I know better?**
- 30. Why wait for tomorrow?**
- 31. Am I afraid of the battle inside of me?**
- 32. Can I feel irritation?**
- 33. Did I hear I am being called?**
- 34. Am I listening and can I hear?**
- 35. Am I aware?**
- 36. Can it be love?**
- 37. Am I free to speak?**
- 38. Am I the music?**
- 39. Do I dare to long for love?**
- 40. Am I a perfectionist?**
- 41. Am I afraid of the snow?**
- 42. Do I feel sleepy?**

- 43. Do I long to connect?**
- 44. Do I feel chosen?**
- 45. Does anyone love me?**
- 46. Am I good willing?**
- 47. Am I afraid of me?**
- 48. Do I rather preach than practice?**
- 49. What are my biggest fears?**
- 50. Can I hear my inner voice?**
- 51. Do I need alone time?**
- 52. Is it the beginning or the end?**
- 53. Am I too busy?**
- 54. What are my basic needs?**
- 55. Where do I come from?**
- 56. Am I a prosecutor?**
- 57. How full of should and if am I?**
- 58. Do I trust my intuition?**
- 59. Do I trust me?**
- 60. Is it yesterday or is it tomorrow?**
- 61. Am I true to me?**
- 62. Do I take myself seriously?**
- 63. Can I live without words?**
- 64. Do I realize the sun is shining?**
- 65. Am I in the right place?**
- 66. Who am I?**
- 67. Am I my belly?**
- 68. What is the question?**
- 69. Can I cross borders?**
- 70. Am I committed?**
- 71. Am I jealous?**
- 72. Am I special?**
- 73. Am I words?**
- 74. Am I an addict?**
- 75. Am I a hot fire?**
- 76. Am I touchable?**
- 77. Am I ready to do IT?**

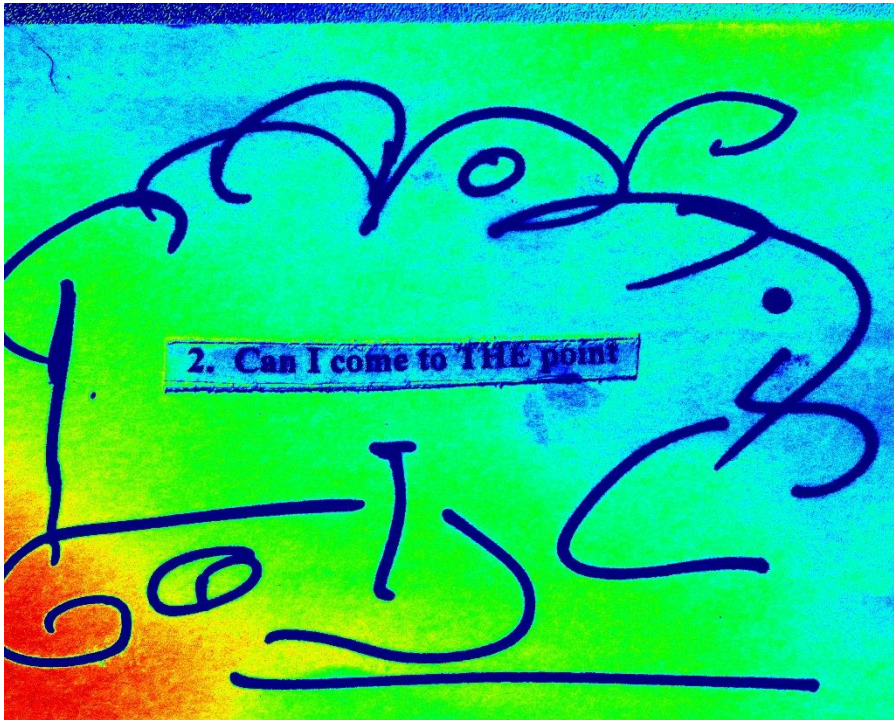
***Q1. Are you afraid of attention, of love, of intimacy?***



*Please take time just for you, find a safe place, bring paper and a pen, sit down, close your eyes, straighten your back, direct your attention to your breathing and become aware of being in the here and now. Then wonder about the question 'Am I afraid of attention, of love, of intimacy?' and feel how your body reacts. After about seven minutes you open your eyes, take your pen and write whatever wants to be written. Don't worry about mistakes, logic, just keep your hand moving for at least ten minutes. If you want to write more, please do. You are the boss. If - for a moment - you don't have words, just draw or doodle to keep your hand in action. If you feel you are ready, read what you have written out loud. Even if you are by yourself. You will notice that hearing your own voice speaking, the words you put on paper will touch you somehow.*

**My Response: Am I afraid of love, attention, intimacy? Yes I am and No I am not. Love, attention, intimacy is what I most long for most and I realize that it begins with me, for me, to me. Strange cliché: first love yourself, before you even can receive love from and feel love for the other. It took me at least half a century to find that out. Half a century of longing to get it from outside because I was cute, nice, intelligent, sexy, funny, open. I could write, dance, sing, speak English, French and I loved to cook and spoil you. It did not help, I had to live on my own with my cats and dog to become aware of my own abilities to love me, to give attention to me, to feel intimate with me. It was not an easy job. I had to fight my prejudices: how can anyone love a woman who is single, no partner, no lover, no children, no grandchildren? There must be something wrong with her. And of course I am right, there are lot of things wrong with me and that is exactly why I need love and attention; it also makes me lovable.**

## *Q2. Can you come to THE point?*



To come to **THE** point you need time. Please sit down, look around you and wonder what brought you to this spot. What is **THE** point for you? Is it about love? Is it about your career and your status? Is it about your believe and your faith? Is it about your talent and your sacred contract? Or is it about feeling save and protected? Please write just for you. Forget about what others might think. Some day you might set it free, but now write just for you. It will bring you new wisdom about yourself. What I found is that writing for me brought me someone to talk with, who was always there and who was always listening when I needed her. I sincerely hope you enjoy yourself by doing this experiment.

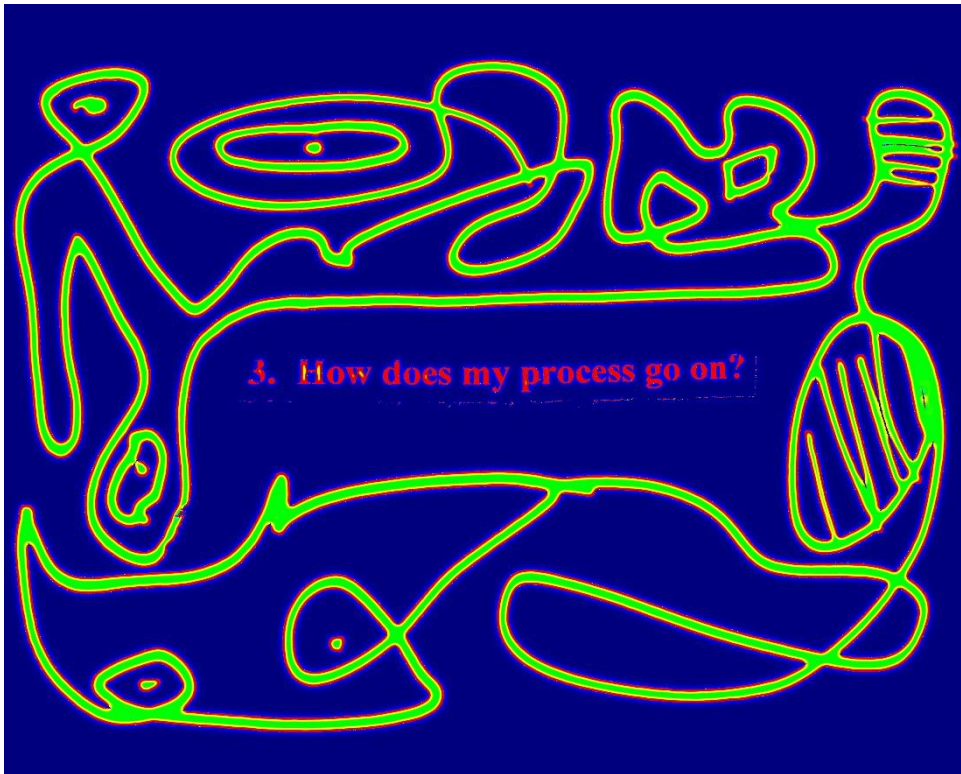
### **My Response**

Can I come to **THE** point? I sit in my office, sun is shining on a big painted window. Before and around me are paintings I created myself and paintings made by others. My office is my sacred spot, it is where I come to the **POINT** time and time again, by listening to my clients and feeling what is happening inside my body. Answers just present themselves. Answers can be new questions, that lead me and you to deeper dimensions. I do feel safe and protected in this spot. Here I can let my talent stream and make my sacred contract come true. In this spot my career and status, my believe and faith meet each other and play together to become me.

Question now: about which point am I talking? **THE** point is to believe and have faith in everyday life. Every step I and you do, every inhaling and every exhaling are part of our sacred contract.



***Q3. How does your process go on?***



**How is it to pose yourself this question? *Does your process push you dominantly? Is it a gentle process like the streaming of water? Does it set you on fire or does it leave you cold and insensitive?* Just sit or walk or stand, following your process in the here and now and write immediately afterwards.**

**My Response**

**How does my process go on?**

**I am sitting here on the verge of a chair**

**My cleaner is telephoning her doctor**

**My neighbour closes his door loudly**

**My cleaner is vacuuming the corridor**

**The sun is shining**

**A bird is singing**

**I am writing and listening to the sounds around me**

**My nose is itching**

**My shoulders feel tense**

**I wish my cleaner was ready**

**I would have silence in my practice and house**

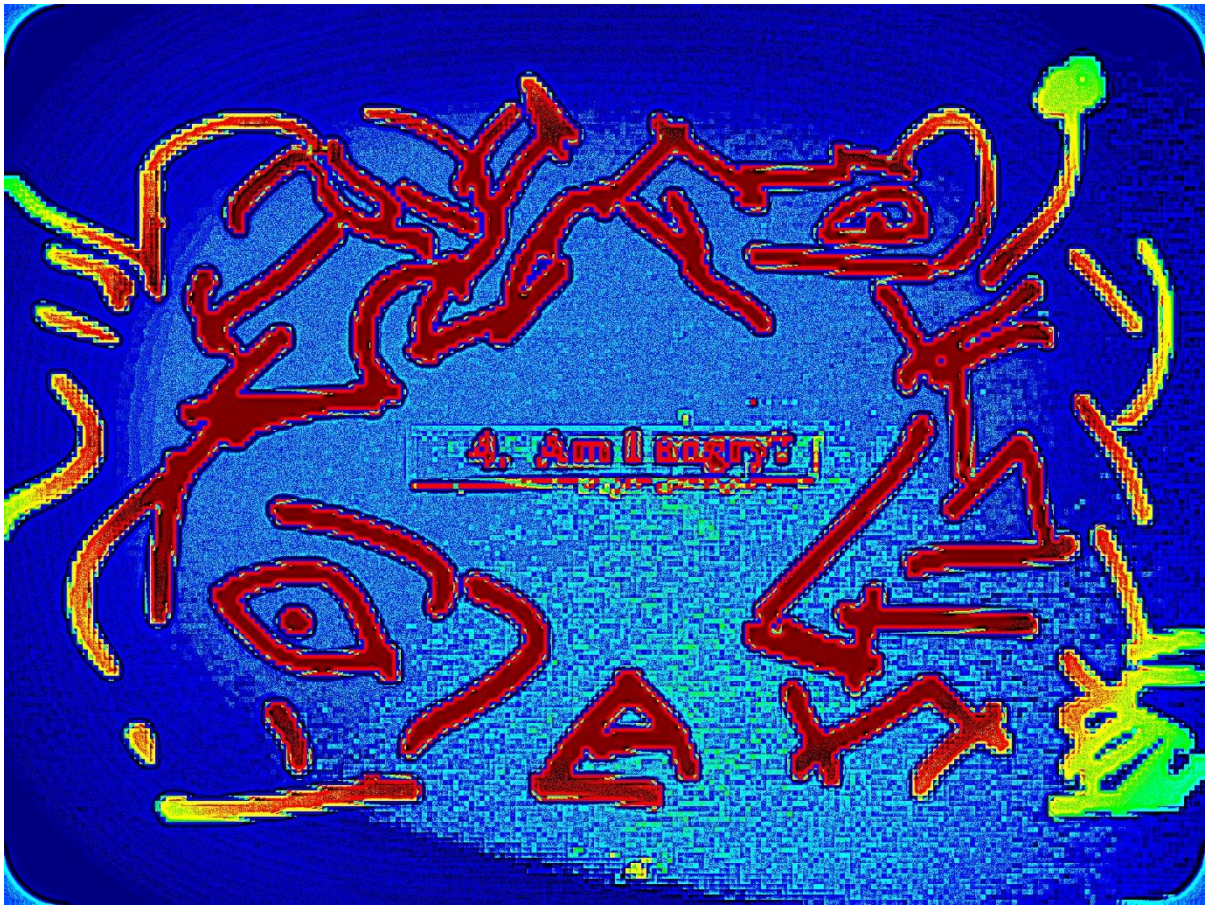
**I decide I had better close the door**

**It will help me to concentrate on me and my process**

**I can hear the bird in the tree before my window more clearly now**

**Even though there are cars and motor scooters disturbing him and disturbing me.**

## *Q4. Am I angry?*



**Angry? Dirty word? Not desired? Are you ever? Never? Do you behave well and feel at the same time cross inside? Especially when you feel ignored, not listened to, not answered, not seen, not heard, not loved. Are you afraid that anger will scare people off? Did you experience being ignored because you radiated anger?**

**I am thinking of the song: *Laughing on the outside; crying on the inside.***

**While I write, I tell myself, don't write about anger, don't write about turbulence, don't write about jealousy, you will scare your readers off and that is the last thing you want to do.**

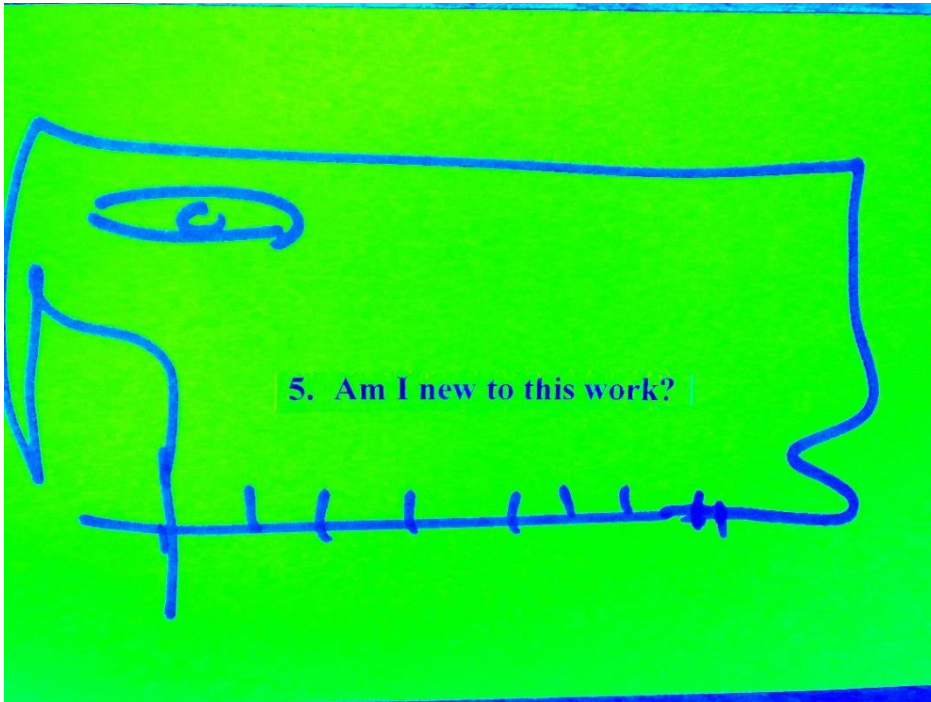
**But anger plays a key role in every community. Being angry and wanting to behave as a nice wo/man who is worth being loved is vital.**

### **My Response**

**At this moment I am not angry, I believe, I am exploring, I feel curious. I know I am not the only one who becomes angry, I am not the only one who lives with the turbulence inside, I am not the only one who is feeling anger and does not express it. I know by experience, it is relieving to write about anger, aggression, irritation, turbulence, without restricting myself. The knowing in itself is already healing. The biggest challenge is to feel my anger and own it, without accusing secretly the people who ignore me, don't see me, don't hear me. Not easy.**



## *Q5. Are you new to this work?*



Are you new to this work? is a strange question. For what is the work we are talking about? Is it to write or paint? Is it about connecting and communicating? Are you new to this kind of playful work? New to painting, to writing? New to playing, to singing, to dancing? Or to some other kind of work that invites you to let go of control? Do you think you can do it? Want to do it? Or are you not going to take the risk to make a fool of yourself? If the answer is Yes, I do want to take the risk, this is what my work is about, please take a moment to write and explore. Just imagine you are a beginner and a whole new adventure is waiting for you. If the answer is NO, feel what your body is telling you and write about that.

### **My Response**

A new adventure is waiting for me, if I am willing to be new to this work. This work that is new to me is to write without becoming too personal. To write and let the words come without controlling them with my thoughts. Are you new to this work is an irritating question for me. I have the feeling I have been doing this work day in and day out. This work is offering the world the qualities that I have. This work, I think, is to make people I meet as happy as I am. This work starts with making me as happy as possible. This work is feeling that this work has nothing to do with work. This work is not heavy, on the contrary it is light!

This work means sitting in my own paradise, with a pen and paper and becoming aware of the silence inside me:

here I am, I was always working. I existed because I worked. Yet, now I have to face this work I am new to without understanding the words I am writing. Hail nature, only the sun can give me this space that is a gift from...?

***Q6. Is it – or are you - forbidden fruit?***



**What is a forbidden fruit for you? Is it sexual pleasure? Is it art? Is it a man or a woman? Is it a book or a film? Is it enjoying life or are you forbidden fruit yourself, because you are sexual, or because you are artistic, or because you happen to be a man or a woman enjoying life?**

**My Response**

**Leisure time is forbidden fruit**

**Time for me to enjoy I consider forbidden fruit**

**Yet here I am sitting in the sun**

**Enjoying myself immensely  
while writing those words feeling the sun,  
the last rays before it settles.**

**Why should it be forbidden?**

**I am not harming anyone**

**I am not harming me either**

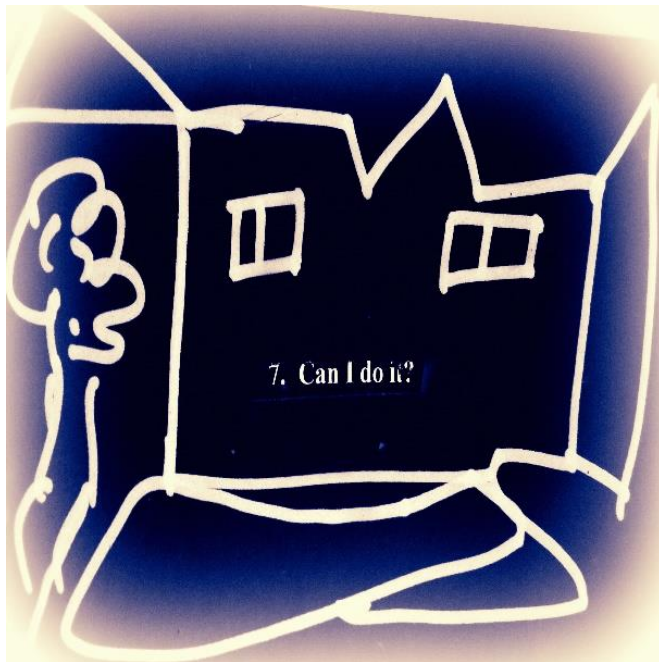
**It must be my upbringing:**

**you are responsible for your life  
and being responsible means doing something useful, always,  
something worthwhile for the world  
something to gain money with  
something that is good for others**

**It took me a long time to realize  
that the forbidden part gives my fruit an extra exciting flavour.**

***Here I am uselessly eating ice cream  
and enjoying myself every second.***

**Q7. Can you do IT?**



**Do you believe in the reality of dream, hallucination, play and art? How about the undercurrent? Are you aware of it? Can you give it words, can you write about it? What is the undercurrent? Your undercurrent? Does it connect you to your own wisdom?**

**My Response**

**If I do IT, I have to write about the reality of play and art. How can I possibly underestimate the reality of the Undercurrent when I have experienced, that this way of writing gives me answers and connects me with my soul. Not only by writing also by sounding and singing, painting and sculpting I arrived in realities with unexpected dimensions. If I stay with the split and think that only deliberate speech, thought and introspection are real, I am stuck. No new insights will reveal themselves. When I take the risk by crossing the border guided by intuition and emotions, I can sit here knowing I am doing the most serious job there is to be done. I do IT, I connect the thinking with feeling by not letting the one overrule the other.**

**When I realized I wanted to teach Gestalt as an Art, I decided to study ‘Gestalt Therapy – Excitement and Growth in the Human Personality’ by Frederick Perls, Ralph Hefferline and Paul Goodman\* more closely. I collected all the quotes about art and became fascinated by the beauty of the words. While responding to those existential questions I needed nourishment, and decided to feed myself with quotes from PHG\*, short for the above mentioned book. In this chapter I start with giving you quotes, that can make more clear what IT is about: on page 19 the writer tells about the**  
*‘underestimation of the reality of dream, hallucination, play and art. And an overestimation of the reality of deliberate speech, thought and introspection. If you possess PHG please go to this paragraph and read more. If you don’t have the book, please buy it. It will make working with those questions richer. You will find perfect nourishment in it.*



**Q8. Are you an artist?**

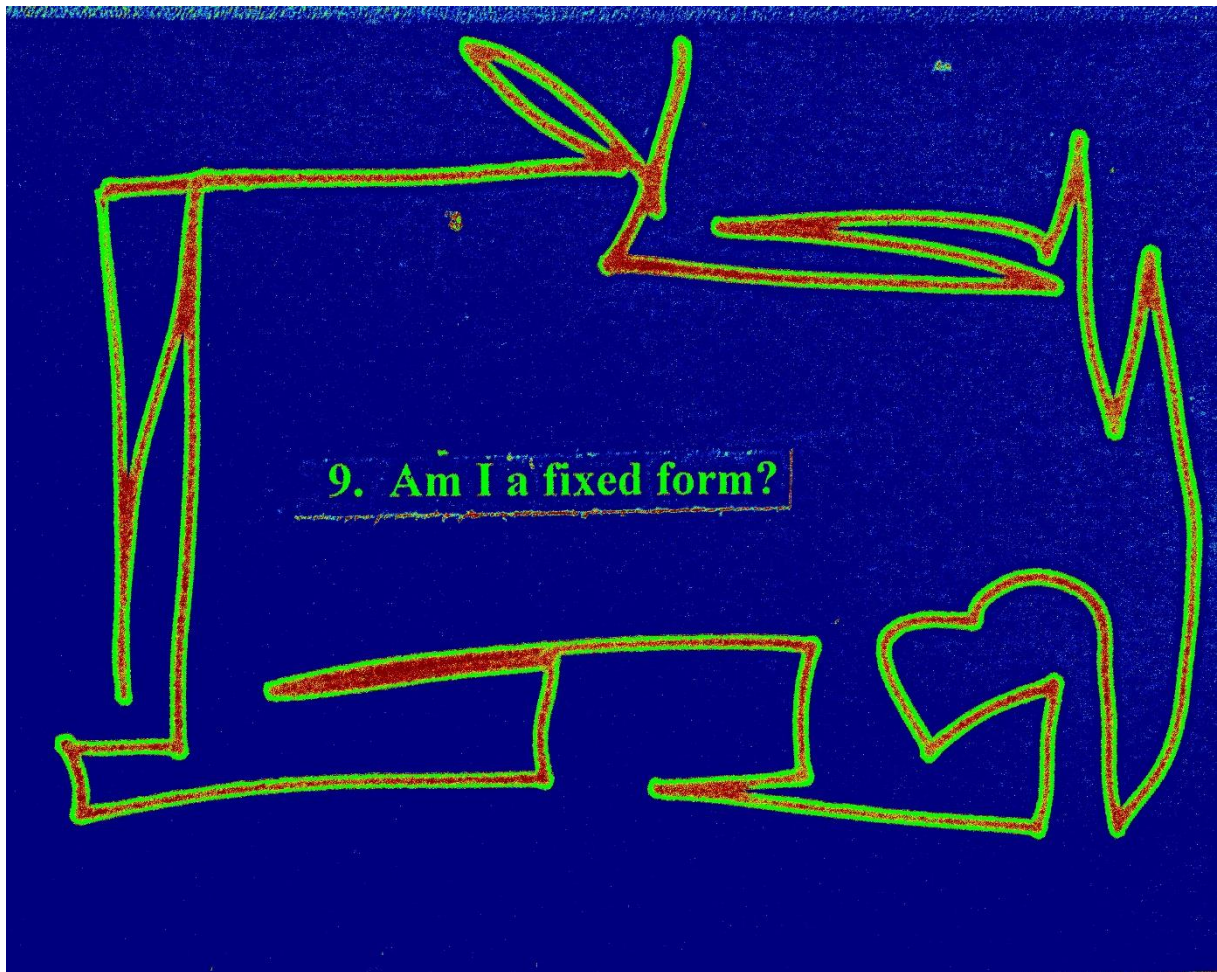


**Are you an artist? Can you play as a child? Or are you afraid to be seen as extremely neurotic or infantile? You can find out by writing or sculpting. Take a tablet of clay and let your hands do the work. Maybe you will form an abstract figure that can guide you to your playful creative dream. Let your creation speak to you, it will guide you to your undercurrent and your mysterious longings. You don't have to be afraid, it is all about you.**

**My Response**

**Yes, I am an artist, no doubt about it. Can I play as a child? Yes, when I am with other children or all by myself. When there are grown-ups present I am rather self-conscious. I still have a streak of fear in me to be seen as crazy – like my father – or infantile – like my mother. The decision I have made - in the past - must have been: okay, they are my father and mother, no doubt about it, they are in me but never ever will I behave as crazy as my father nor as infantile as my mother. And yet, being normal or behaving normally, makes me more neurotic and frustrated than surrendering to my creative potential. I can't help it, I have to enter dangerous territories to become me. The risk is that 'they' or you see me as crazy or/and infantile and won't love me. But how can anyone love me if I don't love and show my real self, inclusive neurosis and childishness.**

***Q9. Are you a fixed form?***



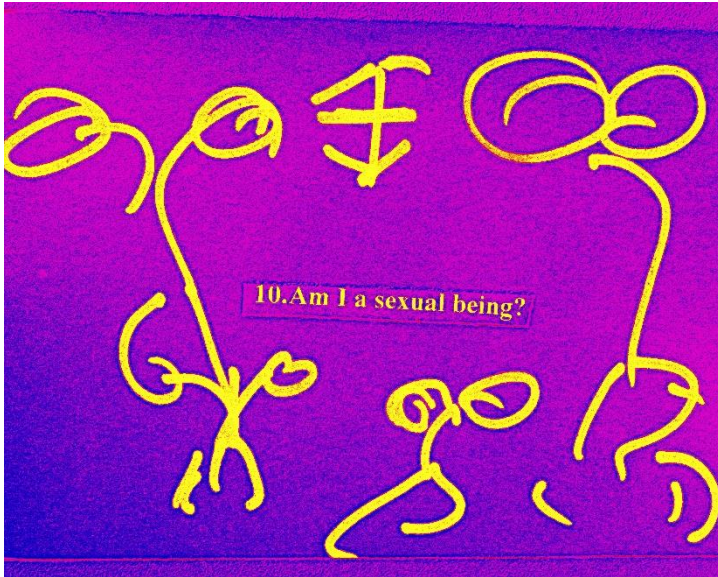
**Are you a fixed form? No of course not, nor am I. But I do have my longings. And you? What do you see as a healthy fixed form? Don't try to answer those questions by just thinking, start writing when you feel the curiosity bubbling up in you. If you feel like it you can find out by playful writing, what is a healthy or unhealthy fixed form in your present surroundings.**

**My Response**

**What is a – healthy - fixed form? A painting or a picture is the closest I can think of. Or any other work of art. Beside that it seems that the healthiness is in the willingness to change. Time and time again. Change from fixed form to fixed form. From port to port. From haven to haven. From painting to painting. From text to text. That is why I am afraid to see what I have written in print. It is fixed. No more changes possible.**



## Q10. *Are you a sexual being?*



*'Art aimed at arousing sexual excitement is frowned on (...) yet if one is not to be merry about this, about what is one supposed to be merry?'* Please go to PHG\* page 76 to find more wisdom. Good question. What if we read therapy instead of art? I know that as a therapist it is not easy to show my sexuality. Just because I do not want to arouse sexual excitement with the clients. Too difficult? Too dangerous? How about you? Do you? Can you work with sexuality without using your own energy in this field? What about this PHG\* message? In the stories Fritz Perls, one of the writers, seems to be a man who did not hesitate to be sexually merry. If you are in the role of a therapist: are you open to clients about this aspect of our founding father or do you suppress it like I do? If you are in the role of a client: are you open to the sexual side of your therapist?

**My Response:** I am supposed to be merry about sex, if I am not I am not normal, I understand from those words. Yes, I am a sexual being and I have been merry about sex. I have also been unhappy about sex. The one or the other depended on how and with whom. I have never been happy with just sex, just one night and then *slush*. I have been happy with sex the first time I met someone, I mean the first time and then sex seems to be the language to communicate and make contact. If that happened, sex was the beginning of a longer relation. The happiness was in the continuation. Not being happy with sex is more about sex being absent. Or sex being too present, too demanding. Can it be that being merry with or about sex, has to do with the right time, the right moment, the right person, the right amount, the right place. It takes a lot and took me a lot of experimenting to experience this. Although one of the best memories I have is of the very first time. Still that was with the wrong man, at the wrong time and the wrong place. Or is that what my mind thinks? When I allow myself to just feel, there was absolutely nothing wrong with him, nor me, nor us.

*Q11. Are you prejudiced?*



*‘ Earnest is the activity to which one is committed and cannot leave off (...) An artist is earnest with the art, he is committed to it.’ More in PHG\*, page 81 en 82*

**Are you a dilettante, an amateur, an artist? And are you earnest in the way you live your life? Are you committed? Are you prejudiced about dilettantes, amateurs and artists? What distinction do you make? To answer those question please take time to write.**

**My Response**

**I have to decide if I am an artist or not. No one can do it for me. My prejudice about the differences between dilettante, amateur and artist is: the artist is more responsible. Artists have a mission, they have to follow their intuition and use their creativity. They need the process to complete a Gestalt. Dilettantes and amateurs are more directed to solving the problem with their heads. They need answers and existing theories. They need confirmation from others for what they create. I know what I write is about prejudices. I know there must be a meeting point. It must be in the commitment.**

*Q12. Can you just sit, just be?*



In Gestalt groups we intend to communicate and make contact. Yet we hardly have time to listen to each other without having a goal. Just sit. just listen, just speak and explore what lives inside our heads and bodies is a luxury, I seldom experienced until I started the Power of Writing groups. We learned to start our sessions with telling and talking and discovered that meeting on this level is possible. By writing we went even to a deeper dimension. If this leads to poetry I don't know, but you can find out for yourself when you sit down, not to make notes but to make room for words, that on first sight have no meaning. Look at the white paper and the pen, come into the Here and Now by directing your attention to your breathing for a few minutes, go back to the energy of the day and start writing. Maybe you write about the weather. Or about your body feeling. Or about your partner. Or about the chair you are sitting in. Do not worry, just write. In the end you will find that what you wrote is precisely expressing what needed words. It could be a poem or the beginning of it.

**My Response**

Here and Now sitting behind my laptop, I am not certain about my message. Being confused is not my favourite state of being. But I am, I am confused and forcing myself to explore why. Why do I sit here; why do I have to write. Why do I think there will be at least one person out there, who is waiting for what I have to say. Why do I need this idea. Is it to go on doing my job, to go on writing in the knowledge that happiness will occur, when I feel connected with my own words that will connect with you and with your true self. And so on, and so on..



***Q13. Do you realise the sun is shining?***



**Do you need the sun to regain your lost paradise? Do you know what your paradise looks like? To find out you can write about your Garden of Eden or you can paint or draw. My experience is that to do this one time is not enough, we have to repeat it again and again and again. It helps to realize that in paradise your basic needs are fulfilled. Basic needs like: a safe place, nourishment, support, protection, tenderness and borders. It can be a good idea to start giving your safe place form and find out how you can go from a dream to reality.**

**My Response**

**I know that in my paradise the sun is shining, literally or in imagination. That is why I travel to other countries to search for paradises. Before I go, I wonder:**

**What will the weather be like? Will I get attention for me? Can I offer what I have to offer?**

**Will I be comfortable? Will I find the right energy? Do I dare to show my creativity?**

**Will I make contact and can I connect? Will I be warm?**

**I have found beautiful places where most of my needs were answered, and I know that my ultimate paradise is right here in my garden and my house. At this moment it is high summer, the sun is shining, circumstances are optimal. Still, all of a sudden there is a lot of crying around me. Poor children, their paradise is already lost or never was. Now I know. Paradise is where I am. In paradise there is everything I need, even the crying of children to make me aware of the mother in me that longs to console them. And the sun will be shining anyway, even if I don't see and feel it.**

## Q14. Are you neurotic?



*'The inner conflicts are for the most part reliable and not neurotic; they can be trusted to be self-regulating' Please read more in PHG\*, page 135.*

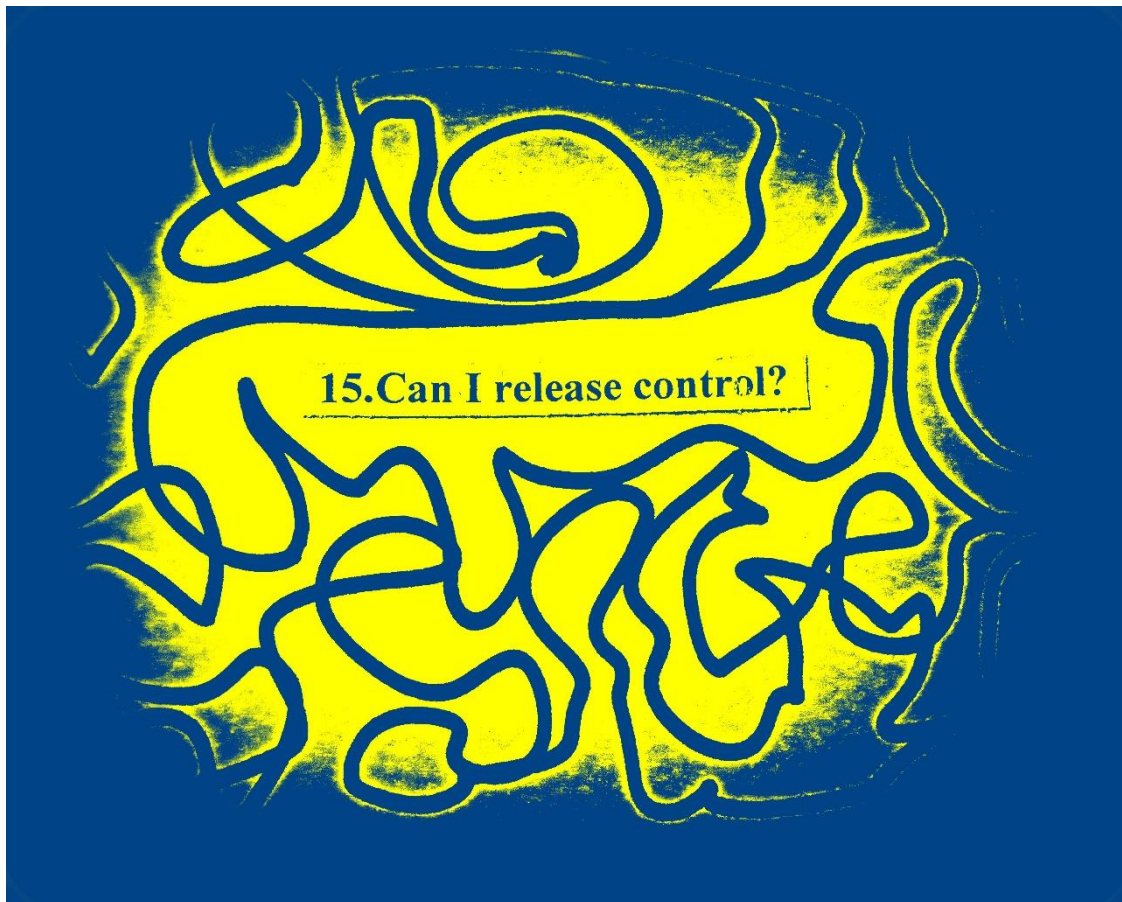
**What does this mean for me, for you? Does it give us the freedom to experiment, to explore with paint and clay, with a pen and paper to create whatever wants to be created? And is it art what we create this way? Does it matter if it is art or not? Who decides?**

### **My Response**

**I don't know if 'I am neurotic?' All of a sudden it seems of no importance. Should the question then be: am I self-regulating? For if I am, I can do anything I feel like doing. I can play, I can dream, I can play and dream that I am an artist. It is what people like me have done for thousands of years and it is what people should do. Otherwise they do not regulate their selves. And if they do not, nobody else can do it for them. Question: is it in the *not* doing that we meet the neurotic in us?**



## *Q15. Can you release control?*



*'A poet does not reject an image that stubbornly but "accidentally" appears and mars his plan; he respects the intruder and suddenly discovers what "his" plan is.'* More in PHG\* on page 137. Those words speak for themselves in my view. It happens to all the time when we write and trust, that our hands will do the work or when we paint and listen to our intuition. It is more difficult to let the intruder in, when we want to keep control. It is a choice we can make. The challenge is to let go of control and invite creativity in. But your choice can be different and not less adventurous.

### **My Response**

Releasing control is not my favourite action. I know I have to, if I want to create, if I want to give therapy, if I want to travel, if I want to communicate. And of course I do, I do let go of control. But only in a way I expect I can handle. Sounds like a contradiction. I let go of control, now here while writing. I let my hand do the work, I see the shade of my hand on the paper. It moves and...? Yes, what does it do? The shade of my hands and of my fingers play with the light of the sun. I cannot stay in this light, I am almost in the shade now. Do not know what I am writing about. Was it losing control and letting the intruder in? Yes, of course, it was. Although, I cannot share this experience with you, because it is gone now, it was the most intense moment while writing those words and regaining control.

***Q16. Is it about you?***



*'The artist feels creativity as his natural excitement (...) but the technique is his way of forming the real to be more real'. More in PHG\* p. 174*

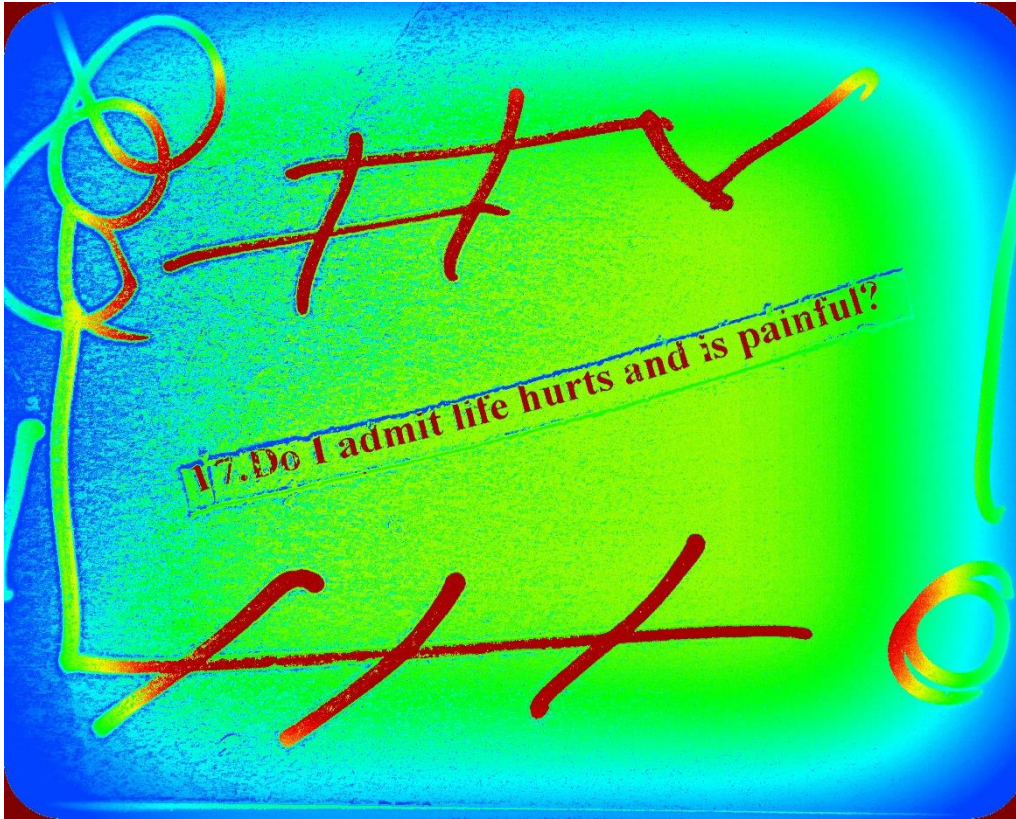
**My Response**

**Yes, it is about me. I do feel that only by using my creativity, I can offer what I have to offer as a therapist. Would I follow a path that already exists, it would not be about me. Nor about my client. It would be about predecessors, who did their work and left their traces in theory. They function as finger-posts for me. But I have to make the choices which directions to follow in relation to my client, while being in the Here and Now and using my awareness. A unique situation will develop, a unique reality that will become more and more real while the process goes on.**

**Is it about you?**

**Are those words also about you? How about your style, your technique? How do you make the real more real? By writing, painting or by being 'just' a therapist?**

***Q17. Do you admit life hurts and is painful?***



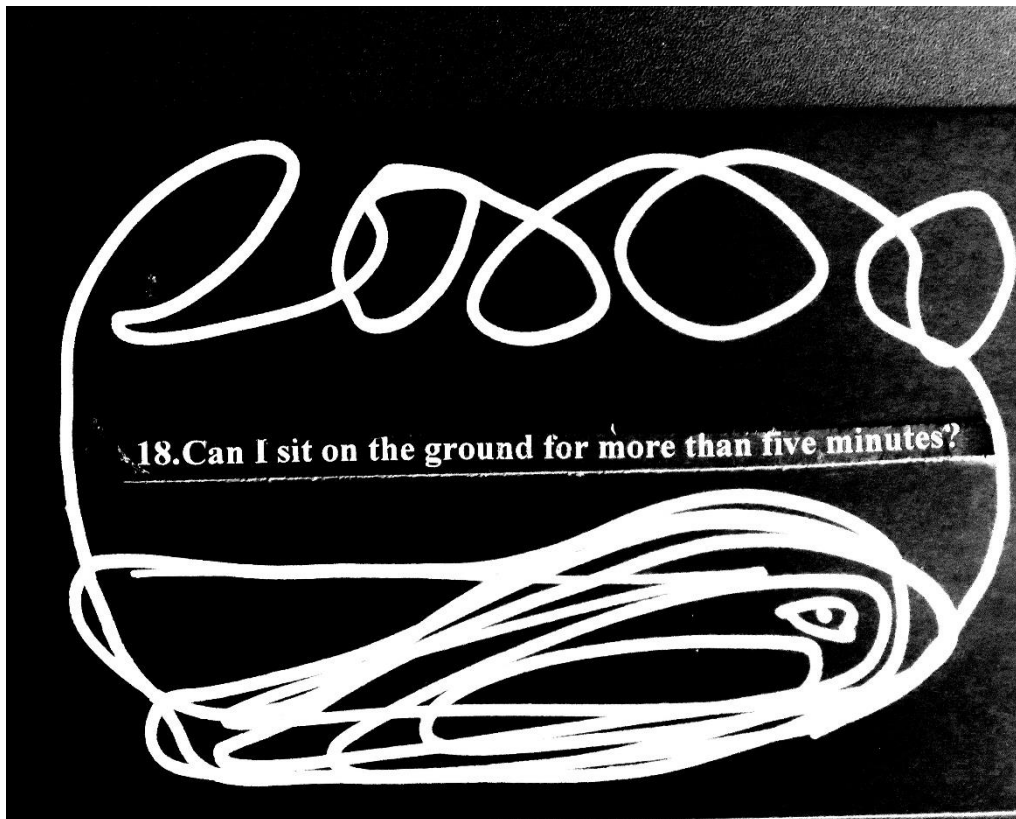
**Passion + Awareness = Compassion. Do you believe in this principle, we will have to do time and time again to know if it works. Or do you fall into traps by judging lovers, clients, friends, family when they tell you about their sufferings. Do you judge them because you think they do it wrongly, and you know better instead of feeling, what is happening inside while you listen. Do you recognize what I am telling? Please explore by writing or drawing. Question that can guide you: am I in the victim role? Do I think they are in the victim role? Am I being called?**

**My Response**

**How can I deny I am being called, when I find a little grey cat screaming for help in an opening of a brick bridge, where the sun is shining. Her voice is so strong and demanding, that I cannot ignore help is needed. At home she needs water, a tiny bit of food and attention, warmth, tenderness and attention, attention, attention. According to the vet she is old, at least 15, and ready to die because of kidney failure: 'You better let her go now.' No, I am not, she did not call me to be executed immediately. As long as she enjoys being stroked while sitting in the sun on the pillow of the dog, her life seems worth living. In the meantime I am suffering of a bellyache. In a session with a woman I got the implicit message I did not do a good job. Did I become her victim? Time to bring the compassion in. Not as a saviour but as a fellow human being who is willing to enter into painful areas with her.**



*Q18. Can you sit on the ground for more than five minutes?*



Kind of a silly question it seems at first sight. Why should you/I sit on the ground for five minutes? Have you ever since you are grown up?

#### **My Response**

I am sitting on the ground of Central Park, NYC, in the dry grass under a tree, while listening to a saxophone player who is playing on the Sunny Side of the Street now. I don't need more than this to be happy. I am sitting in a strange place for a senior lady, but nobody is looking at me. A green smell is entering my nose. More people are listening, standing still. I gave him a dollar. Okay? Not generous? He is white and rather old and sounds like he was famous once. He plays short pieces and then takes a rest time and time again. Now he sounds like he is improvising or studying. Still beautiful. Ah, Tenderly, he moves me to tears. Tenderly was the song my grand love whistled when I was sixteen, while he walked before my house late at night. I watched him from my bed through a little window. I was lying there on my belly looking at the water and waiting for his whistle. One time he asked me to come down and I did. My mother, sister and brother were on holiday, my grandmother was too far in the house to hear me and my father was in a psychiatric hospital. A very sexual relation started. I can still feel the butterflies in my belly now I write this down.

The saxophone is playing Mackie Messer now. I could stay here all afternoon. There is no reason why I should not. A children's song, one, two, three, four and so on to improvisation. I am going, the ground is too hard. Sorry!

## ***Q.19. Can you tell right from wrong?***

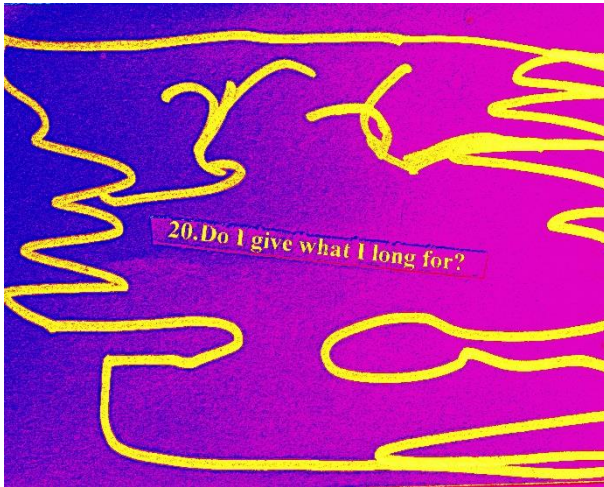


No you cannot, said a man who walked into my exposition space. Apparently – in his view – I create the wrong kind of art and he knows what is right, according to his critical view of the paintings that are exposed on the wall. He is allowed to judge and say ‘No, this is not good, this is wrong, this is not art. Why don’t you take lessons? Okay, that painting with the butterflies is nice, it has a composition and that one with the whale, looks like something because of the background colours; something...the others don’t have.’ Agreed, I took the risk to let my experiments be seen by the world. Not because I thought what I created is good or right, but because what I made is interesting, intriguing. Up to now few people are impressed or touched. Few people long to look twice. Does this mean what I paint is wrong? Should I be ashamed of what I created? Right or wrong is not the question, when it is about those paintings. It is the judgement in itself that feels wrong. The way that it is given and the way I receive it. Am I still dependent of what the other thinks of me and of my work? And is that wrong or right? What about this man, who is even contradicting himself? Can he tell right from wrong and is that his job in life? But why does he have to destroy the joy of creating, instead of taking time to experience what is presented? And why do I let it happen? Is it about making the world a better place? Possibly, I think if I know what is right, I can make the world better. Problem is that if we forget to feel at the same time, we still can be wrong without realizing it.

*‘In keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving lives. And to love life through labour, is to be intimate with life’s inmost secrets.’ Kahlil Gibran in The Prophet\**

Is painting, writing, singing, dancing work that is meant in this quote? Or is Gibran only talking about hard labour we have to accomplish to survive? What does work and becoming intimate with the secrets of life mean for you? Can you experiment while playing with clay or sounds or paint or ink?

## ***Q20. Do you give what you long for?***



**Today I went to the hospital with my sister who is going to have a new hip. I did it to give support and attention, to be someone to talk with, to be a family member who cares, a sister who knows her history and most of all just to be there for her. What I gave to myself at the same time is the feeling of intimacy, the feeling that I am needed and of use, the idea that I did what I longed to do. But did I give her what I longed for myself? Well, I do long for someone who listens to me without judging my behaviour. Someone to talk to and mirror me. Someone who is there just for me at a difficult moment. Someone to hold my hand, while looking into my eyes, knowing what is going on inside me without needing words. I would love to be someone who is able to give this and I am learning time and time again. Today I got a chance. Today I gave and received at the same time what I long for. Today I was in contact with myself and with my sister. In this chapter you find the first quote from Sketches, by Joseph Zinker\*. He is a perfect guide when it is about creativity and process: ‘It is for this reason that Joseph often facetiously describes himself as being merely “a process junkie”’, tells Paul Shane in the introduction to this book.**

*‘It is one thing to help someone adjust to a situation. It is another to be a moving presence, a presence that stimulates spiritual ascendance rather than mere survival.’ Joseph Zinker, 2001, page 23.*

**What kind of helping and giving is your favourite? The solving kind? The goal or survival directed? Or the spiritually being present way that gives the other the space to do his/her own work? Take a few minutes to think of a situation where you were the helper, when you were the one who could give. Be aware of the details. Who did you help? In what kind of situation? Were you received? And how did you feel afterwards? And now is the moment to catch the story by writing it in a playful way. Tell it as the writer to yourself in the role of the helper. Maybe you can do it in dialogues. Aim: to discover the many sides of your personality.**



## ***Q21. How do you get what you need?***



To get an idea what one can need I turn to Joseph Zinker\*, open Sketches at random on page 60/61 and read: *'Presence comes easy when one has already received approval and affirmation - - when one's cup is full and one no longer needs it from anyone.'*

Is presence what I need or is it approval and affirmation? Is my cup full or empty? It seems to me that there is no end to my needing approval, affirmation and admiration. My cup is certainly not empty but there is room enough for more. Is that the reason I am writing this workbook? Do I need your approval as reader and student to build up my own presence? What is Here and Now? What is the story of the day? What is my day about and what does it have to do with presence? The grey little sick cat is still alive. She hardly eats. She needs my presence to do her job of saying farewell to life. While I am writing I feel I want to answer expectations I created myself. In 15 minutes a client is coming. It will be her 3<sup>rd</sup> time. Her expectations of me as a therapist are high. I like that, she challenges me to give the best I can. I also have expectations of her as she is willing to do the Work together. Without my presence and hers we could not do what we should. Zinker, page 61: *'Presence often comes when one is seasoned and one's hot longing has cooled down to a kind of warm glow; my therapist's presence illuminates in me.'* I wrote this text by hand a few days ago. In the meantime the boss of the little cat is found and she is back with him. This little grey cat, that does not weigh more than a kilo, has a voice that saved her. She knows how to put her complete presence into it so that she is heard. I am learning that in my voice the way I am present can be heard. That is why I read out loud what I have written.

And you? How do you get what you need? To find out play with your voice, take a book that is dear to you, open it at random, read the words your eyes fall on and feel what the vibration does with your body. If you take time you will know what you need by listening to your sound and your tone and by feeling how they resonate in your body.

## ***Q22. Do you use your talent?***

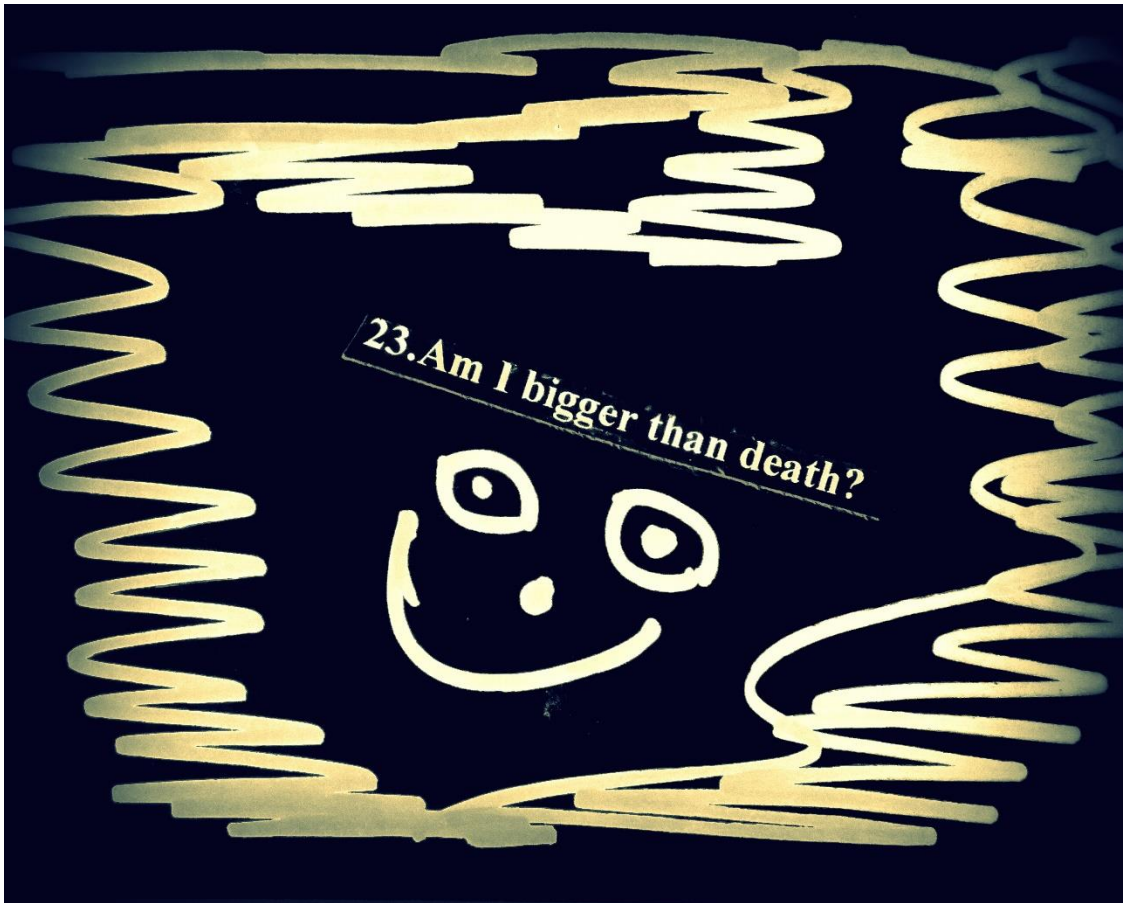


**I feel a pressure on my breast. Tells me I am holding back. I am not using my voice, not expressing myself as I could. I was too impressed by a look, too impressed by feelings, too afraid to be imposing, too anxious to be rejected to show my fanciful self in the company of the ones I love dearly. Alone with my little niece of seven who still knows how to show her talents, without being afraid of being rejected I can sing and play with my voice. We go for a walk and dance along the sidewalk making silly steps. We talk and I find my deep playful voice that makes her laugh and look at me with wonder. We go into the shops to find something she needs to grow and to enjoy herself. She is critical, she does not need anything as she has everything already. Then we go to the hockey field where she will train. I look at her swiftness, her movements, her playfulness and feel a longing in my stomach. She is talented when it is about playing and moving. I know because I recognize her. It makes me happy and I make her happy because I see her and she knows I do.**

***Zinker, 2001, page 33: 'I became fascinated with entering a person's existence through the vehicle of movement, rather than through awareness alone. I realized that in the cycle of behaviour, movement stimulates fresh awareness and that new awareness generate novel movements.'***

**How about your talents? Are they in the way you move? Does sport give you the possibility to explore what you are good in? Does the combination sport and therapy mean anything to you? And how do you consider dancing? Do you dance and is it healing for you? Only way to know is to do it.**

*Q23. Are you bigger than death?*



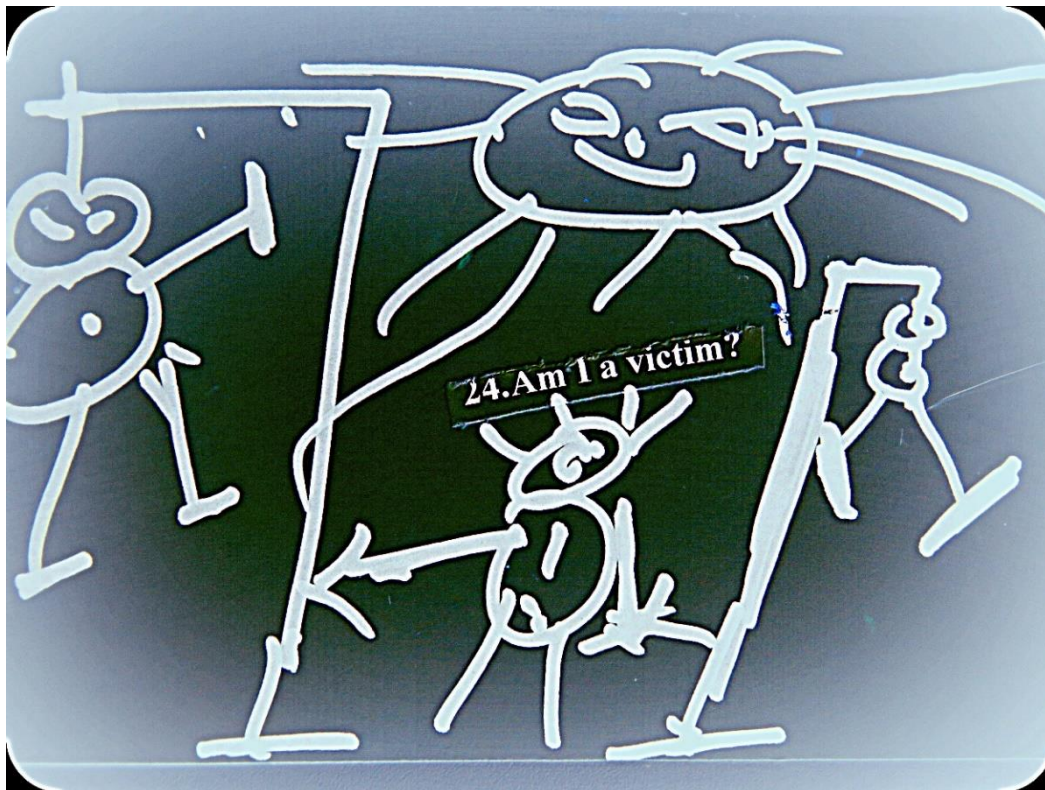
Yes and No when I believe Joseph Zinker's\* message, 2001, on page 22: *'The fact that I am going to die is ever present, and so is my sense of constant change. I am also in contact with a kind of grand plan and a grand humour in our lives. We are farts in the wind. (...) It is a damn shame to die, having done so much building.'*

Being part of a grand plan and at the same time know we are going to die, is what we all have to face. All that building, all that writing, all that suffering, talking, walking, listening, cleaning, all for nothing? No that is not the message. Even if we are going to die we are part of a plan, that is so much bigger than we are. We can be part of this plan as a fart in the wind, or as a valued writer or therapist. Nothing wrong with that. It is just about different kind of bricks, that are needed to build the overall building with windows and roofs and walls and lamps and carpets and paintings. A place where we all can come home and contribute our own special quality that will celebrate giving form to the Big Pla

And how special are you? Do you enjoy being that special brick that supports the corner wall? Or being the window we can look through? Or the roof that protects us from the rain? Just imagine if... Please, don't be shy, let your imagination guide you. There is nothing to lose.



## ***Q24. Are you a victim?***

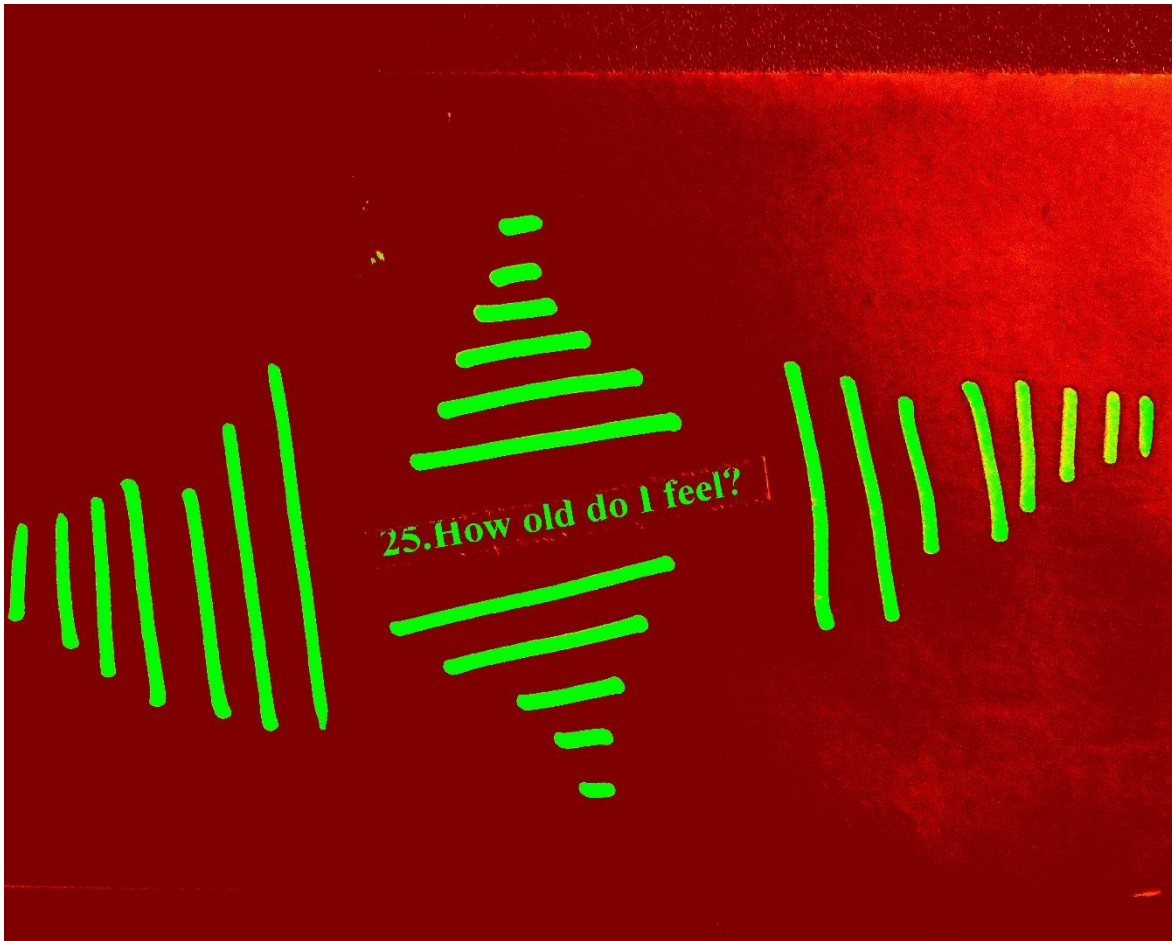


**No, yes, no, no, yes, yes. I a victim? Why should I be? Am I in the victim role? Of course I am. Who isn't or was not? By being in the victim role I learned I am a woman and I have a mouth, that can utter the words I need to survive in a city that is open, tolerant, alive and rather kicking. I like to be part of this world where I was a child when we were occupied by the Nazi's. I know how it feels to be overpowered. I know there can be soldiers who threaten your father who is hiding with the potato's in the basement, while they are talking with your mother and grandmother. What I have learned from this episode in my life, is that roles change. I saw with my own eyes that our prosecutors became victims when they were defeated and we as their ex-victims, now transformed to prosecutors, were watching them passing by.**

***Zinker (2001), page 15: 'I feel that a therapist often communicates a profound message out of presence, what s/he radiates to others by just being in the world.'***

**What do you radiate by just being in the world? Not only as a therapist but in all the other roles you are playing? When was your darkest victim hour? Were you able to transform or is this dramatic event sucking you again and again back into it, giving you a reason to make the other feel guilty? Only way to get out of the victim role is to admit that we are victims, no doubt about it. And by writing our victim stories down openly we will discover we are much more than victims and prosecutors and saviours as we are human beings. Or did you believe you were a human doing?**

## Q25. How old do you feel?



I feel as old as my grandmother who would have been 124 years old today had she still been alive. And I feel as young as my niece who is seven and who has the energy of a jumping deer. My grandmother's drive is in me. It tells me not to despair. Every day brings a new chance to accomplish what I am supposed to do. My niece shows me that playing opens the energy source we both are connected to. We can walk, run, jump, talk, laugh... I as an old lady with a young heart. She as a young girl with an old soul.

### *Questions for you*

What is age about? What is young? What is old for you? Who are your mirrors? How do you look at the generations you are part of?

### *Quote*

*'Present moments can become random and discontinuous unless they are grounded in a larger perspective that includes the past and the future, which is to say a view of human development, and a way of understanding how people make their experience, which is to say a theory of character.'* Michael Vincent Miller\*, 1985, Maybe it is an idea to open at random your own wise book to find a quote as a key to your view on life. Main thing is that you realize you are connected, whether you want it or not.

## ***Q26. Are you trying to give the right answer?***



*‘Differentiation of the Field: Polarities versus Dichotomies. A dichotomy is a split whereby the field is considered not as a whole differentiated into different and interlocking parts, but rather as an assortment of competing (either/or) and unrelated forces. Dichotomous thinking interferes with organismic self-regulation. Dichotomous thinking tends to be intolerant of diversity among persons and of paradoxical truths about a single person.’*  
Gary Yontef\*, 1993, page 147

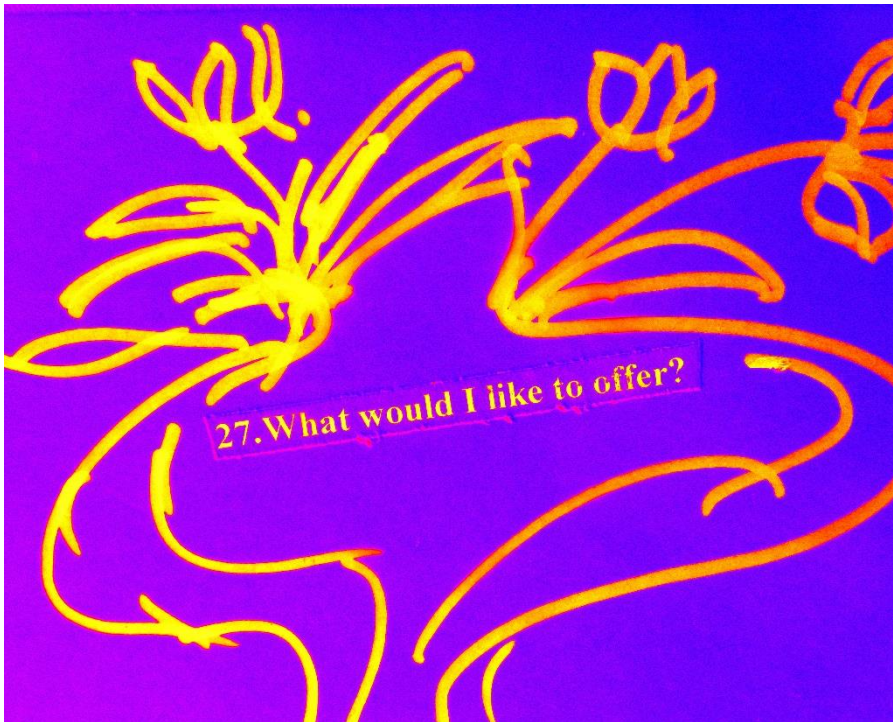
**Dichotomy:** a word I have not met before. ‘D’ is a split, I read, in a field where unrelated forces are competing instead of working together and communicating. A field where people do not listen to each other. And their ‘D’ thinking stops their organismic self-regulation. ‘D-thinking’? This is not about feeling but about a special way of thinking. ‘D’-thinking tends to be intolerant of diversity among persons,’ Yontef continues. I wonder what kind of thinking could possibly bridge the split. How about ‘A- thinking’, ‘A’ standing for Awareness? Would it be different in a group of ‘A-thinkers’? Or ‘P-thinkers’, ‘P’ standing for the paradoxical truth? It is my conviction that we can think what we think, but if we do not feel, the split will not be bridged. What is the use of this kind of thinking? What am I expected to learn or to find out?

**Yontef:** ‘*Organismic self-regulation leads to integrating parts with each other and into a whole that encompasses the parts.*’

**Self-regulation:** Is it my self-regulation that is telling me I better go outside to enjoy the October sun together with my dog. Perhaps we will meet what I need in the dog field where there is smelling instead of thinking. Dogs listen to their noses who cannot be fooled. When they smell danger they keep their distance. Only when there is fear, there is confusion. Does that mean their noses are on strike and they have to confront each other? *More question* Did your intuition already tell you what this is about? Do you trust it as dogs do their noses? Or does fear enter your body and close you off from your inner wisdom?



## *Q27. What would you like to offer?*



*'The experiential here and now does not exist in a vacuum but is rather owned by a self, a person, a me. It is for this reason that a gestalt therapist repeatedly asks his patient to take ownership of his statement or observation.'* Zinker\* 2001, page 82

### **Experience the Difference**

**As a therapist I want to offer my clients the chance to experience the difference between living in the head with all the stories, the musts and ifs, the fears, the longing, the cunning, the planning, the how to keep control. And the being in the moment, feeling what s/he feels, hearing what s/he hears, smelling what s/he smells and saying what s/he wants to say. But how can I invite my client to step out of his/her known world and into the adventure of the unknown? How can I offer what I like to offer without offending? Not by being endlessly empathic, not by being impatient, not by disappearing in my own control and protection. It helps to be playful, to invite them jokingly to explore new behaviour. Saying 'Boooh' and hello, hello, here am I, did wonders, so did making a long nose when they were angry with me.**

### **About You**

**How do you invite your clients or relations to step out of their preconceived stories, out of their self protection and control and into the adventure of the experiment? Do you have a protocol? Or do you trust that your intuition will guide you, so you can offer a brand new creative step at exactly the right moment? Don't forget to take time to become aware before you ask your client or your friend or your lover or your relative to follow you in this experiment with new behaviour.**

## ***Q28. Do you love to be her(e)?***



When I typed this question out the first time I made a mistake by forgetting the last e. When I was correcting and read what I wrote I felt surprised. Do I love to be her? Do I love to be here? The two belong together I realized. I am her whether I love it or not and I am here. Being her is quite something, often I am overwhelmed by her. She drives me day in day out. Telling me there are things to do. Telling me this will never stop. Telling me I can love to be her, if I am gentle. There are ways and ways. Hard ones, mild ones, easy ones, joyful ones, deep ones. Being here helps me to choose as I am in a comfortable place, in a rather comfortable position. I am warm, I have enough nourishment, I live in a moderate climate, in a rich country. I can permit 'her' to be playful when she feels like it. I have a profession that challenges me to bring out the best in 'her'.

**Zinker\* 2001, page 92:**

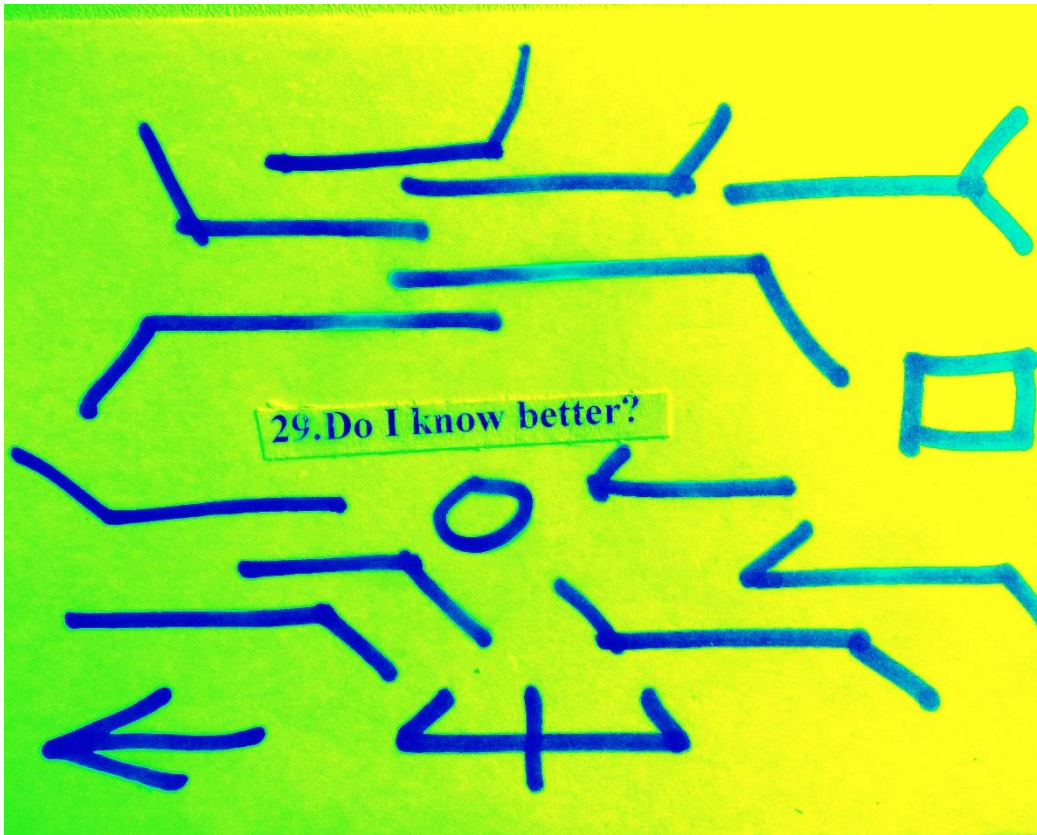
*'Our deepest, most profound stirrings of self-appreciation, self-love, and self-knowledge surface in the presence of the person whom we experience as totally accepting.'*

### **Playful Writing**

Are you the totally accepting type that invites 'her' or 'him' to experience the love of self? Can you appreciate 'her' or 'him' even if you know his/hers failures, weak spots and longings? Why don't you make an appointment with you to explore what you love about yourself and what you find difficult. Playful writing can help to find the right words. If you do it once it probably will give you a taste for more. Of course you can also ask a person you totally trust to function as a sounding-board. It will be different, but both ways are valuable.



## *Q29. Do you know better?*



### **‘Remember the Details of this Poem**

**Experiment in a workshop: I did not listen so how can I remember details. I do remember the tone of the voice that read the poem. Isn't it strange that I was completely elsewhere? The tone of the voice told me that the reader thought, what he was reading to us is valuable. Still, I did not listen to the content. Just was absorbed in the sound of the voice. What did I hear that made me go off on a journey? Was it the tone of beauty? The tone of innocence? The tone of I know what you don't? This thought gives me a nauseous wave in my throat. I have given myself the message that I am not a poet and don't understand poetry.**

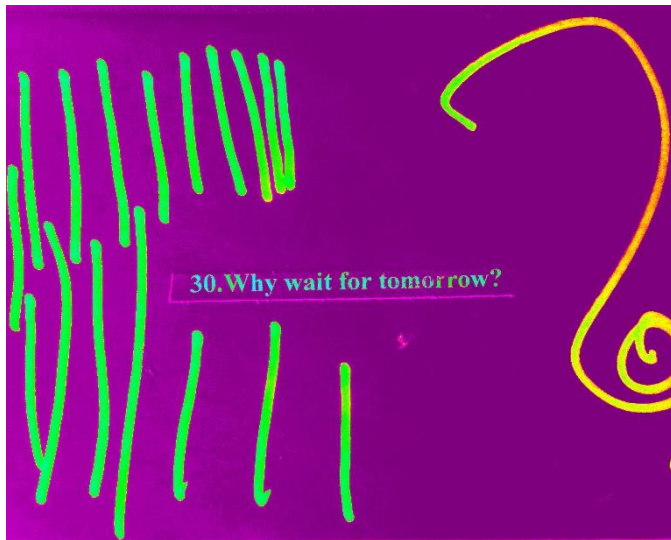
### **Poetry**

**Poetry is an impenetrable language for me. Poetry asks me to go into the dark caves of the spirit of the other. I am unwilling to do this, unwilling to go there. I am too afraid to follow into the depth of time and into the depth of the other.**

### **Idea to do your Own Work**

**Read a poem out loud one, two, three times. Then close the book and write what you remember about the details. Questions to consider: Did I find my tone? Can I enter into poetry? From experience I know that when I sing what I have written, I will know better what my reality is.**

### ***Q30. Why wait for tomorrow?***



#### **Why do You? Why do I?**

**Good question, yes, why do I wait with giving a call to the publisher I sent two manuscripts? Why do I wait with having my cat vaccinated? Why do I wait with typing out the handwritten words I wrote when I was in New York? Why do I wait with giving my sister in law a call to invite her to my birthday? Why did I wait with searching for the book of Robert Misrahi with 100 Words about the Ethica of Baruch Spinoza? Now I am too late because it is out of print and sold out everywhere. I think it is because I am uncertain. It is because I do not know if I will like what will happen next. I know I procrastinate because I am afraid of being rejected or doing it wrongly.**

**Quote: I turn to Joseph Zinker\*, 2001, and find on page 141 in a dialogue between Joseph and Irving Polster: *'What we need is to teach persons to see and then connect the scene with their thinking and feeling. It is really not so simple. It is a complex diagnostic and methodological task.'* Although they are talking about schizophrenic conditions I do get a good feeling. This could be my lesson too. First see, then connect the scene with my thinking and feeling. When I look for example at the words I wrote by hand in New York, I feel anxious. But when I take time to connect my thinking with my feeling, I get less anxious. For when I think first and tell myself you have to finish this before the end of the week, and then you have to find a way to publish what you have written, my heart starts beating louder. Now writing those words down while feeling I become calm. It are my own expectations keeping me from being free to act.**

#### **Your expectations**

**Do you recognize anything of what I am trying to tell? If so take some time to explore all those expectations that are darkening your future. Write them down. Make them first as big as possible, then start destructing them. Laugh at yourself and your expectations. Then start building on the empty space that is waiting to be filled. Take in the scene before you begin thinking and feeling. Maybe you will enter a new period in your life.**

### ***Q31. Are you afraid of the battle inside?***



**Afraid? It is more that I am tired of this battle between my heart and my head, between my longing to connect and become one, and my need to make money and adapt to what society needs to pay me for my services. This last sentence makes me dizzy. How can I offer what I learned about commitment and the fear to be who I am and make money? I feel like withdrawing inside my house and stopping taking part in the rat race process. Just live in harmony with myself, my family, my pets, my house, my neighbourhood, my garden, my music. Why can't I? Is it about money? Is it about not being able to teach what I have learned?**

#### **Slave Driving**

**I open Zinker\*, 2001, page 164, my eyes fall on a discussion between Robert Harman\* and Joseph about Gestalt training programs: J.: *'Unlike the slave driving that we do in the institute, I would have field trips (...) to the Natural History Museum, to the Cleveland Art Museum, to the Cleveland Institute of Art, to the Cleveland Orchestra, with specific thematic assignments. I would sit down two students in front of a painting and say to them "Write down five or six pages of what you see in that picture."***

#### **Sit Down and Write**

**Can you sit in front of a painting, listen to a concert and start writing while you are looking or listening? Please take all the time you need, forget you have other things to do, better things to do, practical things to do. Once you are in this experiment the time is yours, you can relax and just be, although you are writing. This kind of writing is not about accomplishing a task, it is about being. But it will not help to make money. That can be a problem.**



### ***Q32. Can you feel irritation?***



I feel like saying, No, feel irritation me? No, not at this moment. But of course I can feel irritation. Irritation is never far. Certainly not when a question like this is posed to me. I know I made this question up myself, but not for myself in the first place. As a therapist I have to pose the question often: can you feel irritation? The answer usually is: irritation? No, me? No I do not. And then I teach: even if you cannot feel irritation, it can still be there in your undercurrent. At the same time I can feel irritation rising in me. Oh no, do not play the innocent therapist, I tell myself, who is never angry, never did anything wrong and now gets irritated together with her client. Crucial moment: do I realize that I do feel my own irritation? Can I admit this to my client without accusing him or her? Feeling irritation while at work seems dangerous. I rather am a nice good humoured therapist. But I had to learn to become friends with my own irritation and that helps me to support my client to do the same. Humour is never far away when this happens.

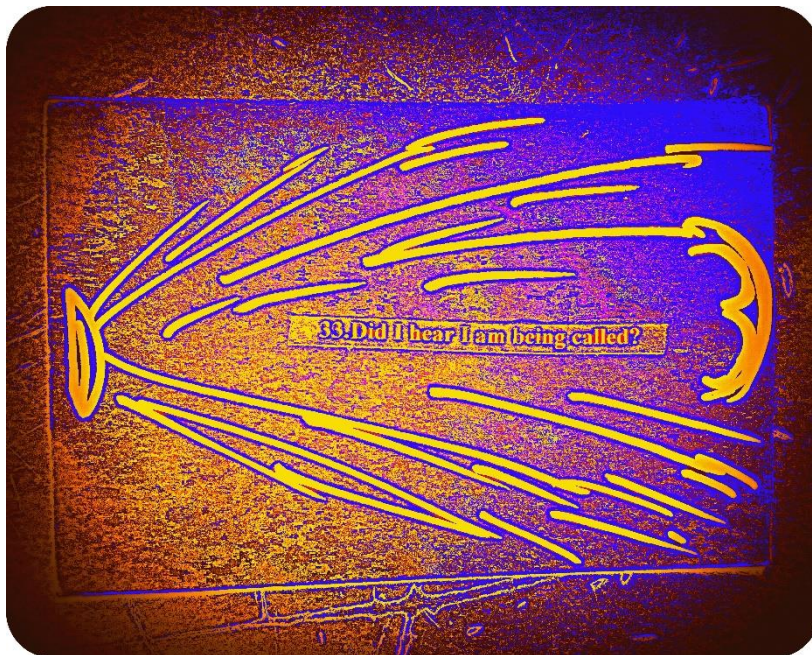
Zinker, 2001, page 141,

Discussion with Irving Polster\* about psychotics: *‘Gestalt has a tendency among many of us to be sweeping, broad, and bold. That level of excitement is frightening to psychotics.’*

**Confronted with Frozen Anger**

Bold excitement is not only frightening to psychotics. How do you meet your own and your clients frozen anger, suppressed rage, dark looks and no words? Zinker leads his clients step by step *‘from sensation to awareness and again to sensation and awareness while paying attention to excitement’*. Good willingness and time is what we need to face those difficult moments.

***Q33. Did you hear you are being called?***



**Robert Harman\* in discussion with Joseph Zinker about PHG\*, Sketches page 161, ‘People who are not Gestalt therapists have given us a look. They say things like, “There really isn’t a theory in Gestalt Therapy.” We have no theory. One of the things they base that on is that book isn’t easily read.’**

**Both Harman and Zinker are attached to PHG\* and when they are stuck with a client or when they need Gestalt nourishment, they turn to PHG\*. According to RH there are two things he hears from people that turn them off from Gestalt therapy. One is that book and the other the Gloria tapes.**

**What does this conversation have to do with my or your being called or not? Spreading the good news of Gestalt therapy is one of my missions in life. Maybe PHG\* is not easy to read, maybe Fritz Perls did not write well and maybe Paul Goodman rewrote PHG\* in such a fashion that it could not be introjected, but nevertheless RH, JZ, and I decided to dedicate our lives to Gestalt. We understood and understand, we know. I am one of the we that are called to do the mission of writing words that do invite people to enter the Gestalt world. Words that are easy to write because they come from within. And if it is only one word that can connect you with the outer world, when spoken at the right time in the right field, or one word that can be read with a mind that is free of the rumours, that Gestalt can be dangerous and harm you, it is worth writing.**

**Afraid of Gestalt?**

**I also read in this discussion that a lot of people were afraid of Fritz Perls. At first sight this seems history. But is it? Or is Gestalt therapy still suffering of those images? What do you experience? And how do you work with it? Does it extra inspire you or make you lose your faith? Or do you have a different calling?**

## Q34. Are you listening and can you hear?



I am listening now this moment to Bach. Listening to his notes, his sounds, his rhythms, his melodies. They are high and light. In the undercurrent I can hear a voice telling me: listen and do not be too hasty, take time to let the vibration reach you.

Now I am listening to my neighbour who is making a dentist sound while drilling a hole in his wall. Now voices on the radio are talking and telling what Bach means to them. They say it is the jubilation, they are longing for it gives them a special feeling inside, a kind of light. While they are still talking the sound of the neighbour at work continues. In that sound I hear whining. So my day is filled with jubilation and whining from outside, if I take time to listen. I turn the music and the interview off to listen to my own inner sound. I need silence now so I can hear what is more today. Its autumn, the air is crisp, the light is gorgeous. I was in it and am nourished enough to start cleaning my house, letting my vacuum cleaner drown the noise of the drill of my neighbour.

But first Zinker\*,

about a couple therapy: *'Bill, this time would you be willing to sit back and try not to stiffen no matter how strident Barbara's voice becomes? And Barbara, you can try playing with your voice when Bill gets really rigid and immobile in his position?'* 2001, page 100.

Choices

Are you listening at this moment? Can you hear? Do you want to hear what you hear? If not, what can you do about it? Close off? Put on music? Go outside for a walk? Meditate to find the silence inside you? We have a lot of choices. Listening can help us to choose the right one.



**Q35. Are you aware?**



**In the Conservatory being part of the Jewish Music Festival.  
Here and Now sounds of a Polish band and the voice of a female singer  
I am aware of tears rising behind my eyes; I am aware that those tears are telling me  
I am moved till my very core; the sound of those Polish musicians  
move every cell in my body; This morning I drew a card that told me  
if I would go to this festival my blood would run faster  
Even though because of the air conditioning I need my coat to keep warm enough to stay  
I know at this moment I cannot be in a better place on earth.  
I get everything I need to feel I am alive  
My eyes see people moving, playing, my ears can hear them  
My skin is taking the vibrations in and my brain or is it my soul is telling me:  
'Tine, this is who you are too.' You are a dancing, singing lady,  
who has got a voice to let the world know you are grateful to be alive.  
Grateful with a reason. Grateful because you know you got all the talent  
that is needed to heal yourself. All the talent to become a complete human being  
who has enough energy to make the world a better place**

**Like making Love**

**In Zinker\*, 2001, page 91: 'Arthur Rubinstein once said, "Playing the piano is like making love, it fills me completely with joy."'**

**How about you?**

**So that is what making music can be about. If it is like making love, is up to us. For me just listening while being completely aware already brought a state of bliss. If you play an instrument or if you sing, you can let yourself be inspired by this revelation of a great musician. If not just put on some music you love and imagine you are the director or the pianist or the singer. All you have to do is to take yourself seriously and listen with your soul.**

**Q36. Can it be love?**



**Still at the Jewish Music festival**

**Two chassidim\***

**One with a clarinet**

**One with a base**

**Long black coats**

**Black trilbies**

**Curls along the ears**

**One long red beard, one black one**

**Assisted by an accordion,**

**a violin and percussions**

**Playing niguns\***

**that are meant to cheer up the Sabbath**

**The mere sight of them made my heart jump.**

**The orthodoxy showing how music, sounds,  
movement, humour can lift us up to another level.**

**I did not dare but I longed to laugh out loud,  
louder than loud.**

**What else can it be than love?**

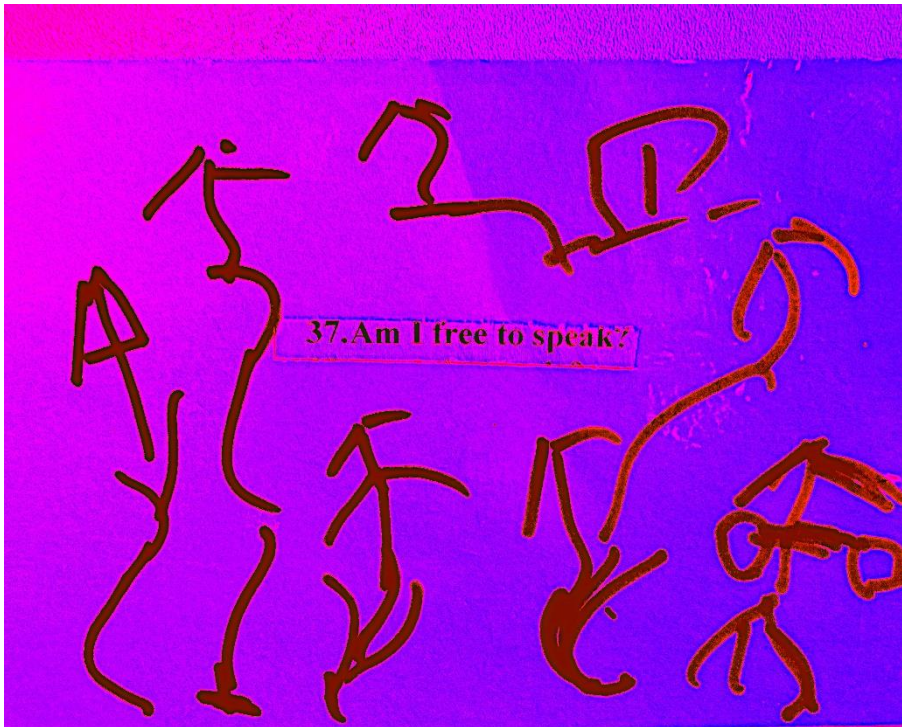
**Love for music, love for each other, love for the world,  
love for the divine.**

**Rebbe Nachman of Breslov\* in *The Empty Chair*: 'Seek the sacred within the ordinary.  
Seek the remarkable within the commonplace.'**

**Your everyday life?**

**The message is simple. The sacred, the remarkable is there. All you have to do is seek it  
in your everyday life and see, feel, hear it. Can you trust it, believe it?**

### ***Q37. Are you free to speak?***



**I am under the spell of the Yiddish singers and players from Israel who set my body on fire. Am I free to say so out loud? Can I say: ‘Hey, boys you set me on fire sitting here listening to you. I wish I had your age now, I would do something to attract your attention and perhaps come close to you and even closer than close.’ I am free to write this with a smile on my face, a butterfly feeling in my belly and that is it for now. Then life goes on and into a sweet feminine song with the clear tones of a clarinet and the transparent gliding sound of the Middle East. Beautiful, neat, nothing wrong with, nothing to do with secret, dark longings and everything with a yearning we are allowed to have as women. A yearning we can surrender to, because nothing nasty can happen, as we are protected by the beauty of the sound.**

#### **Truth Button**

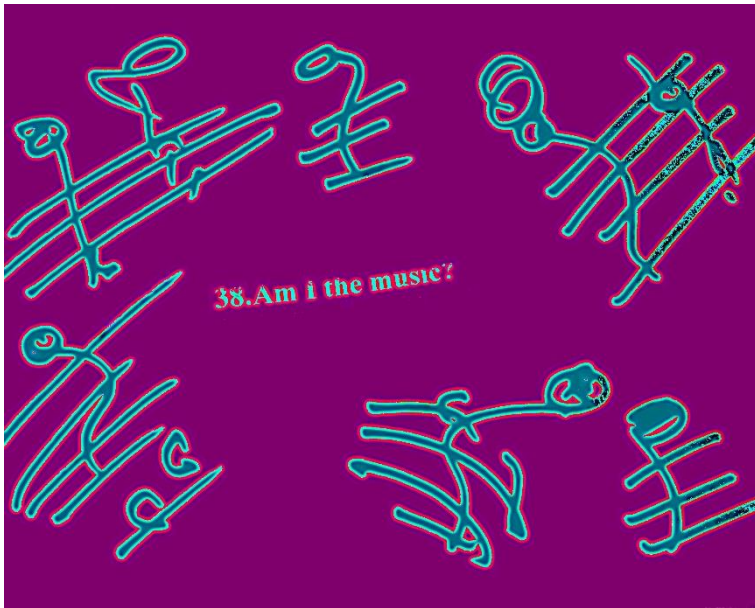
**Zinker (2001), page 21: ‘*The body is the person’s “truth button.” It sings out beyond the person’s words like a Greek chorus. There are times when I experiment with not listening to the words; I only respond to the singing out, the calling forth of the person’s physical presence.*’**

**Do you need music?**

**Do you know your truth button? Where is it located in your body? Do you need music to experience it? Or can the presence of another human being already make you aware of this treasure inside the border of your skin? Does it make you blush, feel uncomfortable or can you enjoy it and make you sing, while nobody can guess the true reason?**



### *Q38. Are you music?*



Waiting for the concert of Di Gojim. They are sound checking and amusing themselves by free sounding and free moving. They did enough, they know how their music will sound and they disappear backstage, before re-entering and starting the true performance. Who am I as in the light of those Goyim playing pure Klezmer and without a doubt making Jewish sounds. I look at the leader, I listen to him and cannot help thinking 'Not Jewish? Who or what is he then?' How can anyone play this kind of music without having a Jewish soul?

Back to me

How can I be sitting here if it is not about me?

Of course it is about me.

Why don't I stop this doubt about my identity.

I am not serving anyone with it least of all me.

The tones, the notes, the words, the fun, the rhythm, it is in me as well.

Whether I or anyone else like(s) it or not.

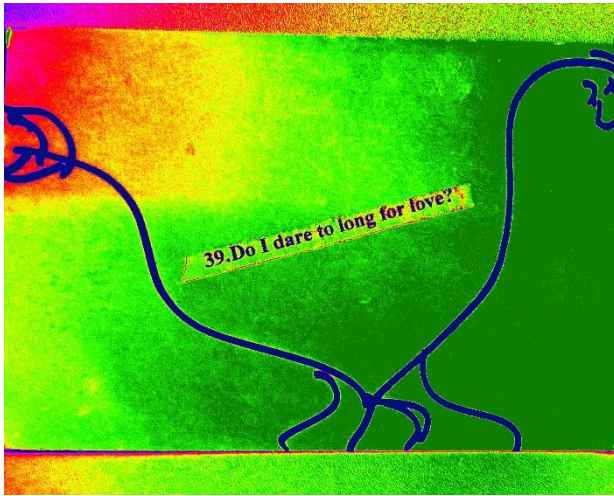
Quote of Gloria Steinem\*, 1992, page 253 ´

*Hierarchies of skin and colour and racial features are sad testimonies to racism's power to undermine self-esteem, and thus to maintain a racial status quo.*´

Your colour

Do you know who you are in terms of race? What is your colour? Are you proud of the colour you have? Do you think there exist races to be pitied? Or races that you are jealous of? Why don't you have a look in the mirror and tell yourself what you think of you as a member of your people?

### *Q39. Do you dare to long for love?*



To long for it secretly is one thing. To be outspoken and say 'I long for your love' another. Of course I long for love, specially the love of my family. But my family is not generous with free love. I think I have to behave and be good to deserve their attention. I am generalizing now. Not interesting. I long for the love of my sister and find it difficult to trust her. I expect always a blow because I do something or be someone that makes her jealous or ashamed of me. I am confronting for her. I behave in a way that reminds her of our father and I look like my mother. I am not neutral in her eyes. As the eldest I have been constantly in her way. But when I held a speech for the wedding of a nephew she was proud of me. It felt like love, but on condition.

To give and receive. To long for love is longing to give love. Longing to connect with my own love for my sister. I struggle with the same problems. I love her dearly, I do, no doubt about it. The problem is in the behaving. Mine and hers. As the big sister who has to know better I have an arrogance in me when it is about having a place in society. As the one who is more intellectual and less beautiful I have an uncertainty in me. She is the beautiful one and the one with friends. In my turn am ashamed of her when she is in her victim role and believes she does not know or in her saviour role and knows everything better. How can I give and receive love without judging? Just do it, lady, just do it. Stop being afraid of her rejections and your own judgement. Overcome the mother in both of you. The mother who nourished you also spiritually. Zinker 2001, page 32: 'Fritz Perls and Erving Polster helped me to contact my own rage, my own 'Nazism,' and to express it. What good was my niceness without my meanness, or my truthfulness without my lying?'

How about you?

True enough. Zinker is telling in those sentences about his experiences in Nazi Poland. My sister and I are also war children, who know about rage and meanness. Does it make us extra afraid of our longing for love? What is your story when it is about giving and receiving love? Does it make you afraid of it or more open?

## ***Q40. Are you a perfectionist?***



**Am I? Of course I am and I believe that everybody else is. It is a human trait to long to be perfect, to do perfect things. Not to make mistakes, because mistakes make us small and uncertain. Yet I know that without failure I would never have learned to do some things perfectly. Some things like what? I think I can make a perfect cup of tea, cook a perfect meal. I am a perfect dog walker and cat carer. A perfect aunt? But am I if I am honest? Right now, at this moment, I cannot think of an activity I can do without making mistakes. I am a good therapist and as soon as I want to be perfect, I am not human anymore but become a robot without feelings. It is about feelings, emotions where the traps are. Not to be perfect, not having the pretence to be perfect, yet be as good as I am, is as close as I – and you? – can come to being perfect. Being a perfectionist is over doing the perfection as with all *ist*. When the drive behind the longing to be perfect is fear of rejection, we are in prison, self made but real enough to burden us and make us unhappy. I am feeling the weight of responsibility on my shoulders.**

### **Secret Garden**

**I am writing this in the 'Secret Garden' in Central Park, New York. In the corner of my ear a man in a wheelchair is speaking loudly in a complete foreign language, since at least fifteen minutes in his cell phone. No shame, no shyness, nobody here can follow me, he probably thinks... He is finished and I hope I did not kill another tiny spider. It would be too imperfect.**

### **Eyes and Ears of the Other?**

**Has longing to be perfect to do with the eyes and ears of the other? Are you still hearing the message what you should do to be lovable? You can find out by going into your own process and create beauty. But how? Joseph Zinker, 2001, tells on page 30 how he spent many nights copying Van Gogh's self-portraits. What he found was understanding *his compassion for a prostitute, his passion for life, his guilt*. Does not sound very perfect, but do you recognize the beauty?**



## ***Q41. Are you afraid of the snow?***



Why should I be afraid of the snow, if I do not have to go into it and stay in it? Why should I be afraid if I have a warm home to go back to? Still I write this while being in hot New York August. Longing for a place to sit, I stepped into a restaurant that attracted me, yet was so cold, that I could not imagine myself staying there. I am afraid air-conditioning and of cold winds that won't stop blowing. I just hate it, if I don't have to, I don't go in or get out immediately. I have never understood what snow fun in the mountains is about. People like it, go there to sport longing for their kind of ecstasy. When I look at their pictures they seem happy enough. My two nieces are learning to appreciate this kind of world at an early age. Their parents think it is important, that they learn to ski and amuse themselves this way. When I think of snow and ice, I think of icy unheated bedrooms. Must have felt unsafe to sleep there as a child. I recall waking up with frozen breath on my sheets, frozen windows with beautiful ice flowers. Looking at it from this distance, it sounds romantic. It was not, it had some beauty, that is true, but it was a severe life with threat. Heat was sparse, it was wartime, people cut down the city trees to keep warm. We had just one warm room with closed doors. Even the schools had to close their doors: no heat. Cold is connected to my fear to exist or/and my fear for death.

**Zinker 2001, page 89, 'A Mission: The Soul of a Man**

*It was only in his older years that he began to touch the earth, and to taste the salt of the ocean. (...) Fear was always in the ground. From time to time his yearnings would override his fear—but never fully.'*

Your fear to exist? Fear to exist, fear of the cold or of the ground or of death. We all have to live with it. How do you deal with it? Do you deny it, or think it is for later? Not yet? Do you touch the ground, taste the salt of the ocean, let the cold in or do you feel protected enough not to worry?

## ***Q42. Do you feel sleepy?***



**Yes, I do or I did feel sleepy this morning. Cause: too much wine. Now it is four o'clock in the afternoon and I have been living for hours. Don't feel sleepy anymore. This is a subject where I feel resistance. Sleepy? Me? I? I am never sleepy ever. Why should I be? I look after myself, am full of energy, I long to live not to sleep. Although, I am discovering the blessing of letting myself go on the couch in the evening and nap and having a bed where I can stretch my body and let the dream world in. Nothing to do with my age, nothing with always being busy, nothing with walking, doing, writing, reading, listening, shopping, seeing, thinking. Nothing with all those impressions entering me and wanting to be part of me. To grow every day I need sleep so the body can do its work by itself.**

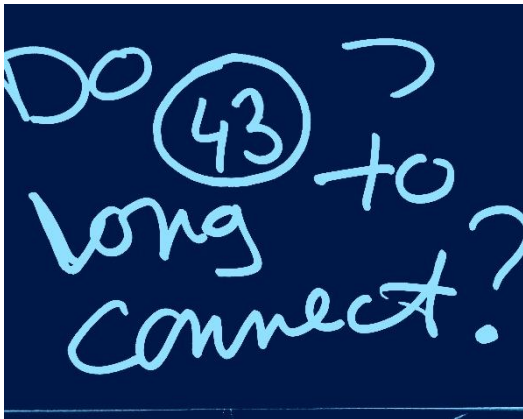
**Zinker 2001, page 96:**

***'Persons with permeable boundaries, "open persons", are in constant process, constant change, require constant replenishment of energy, and are connected to themselves and others. They tend to grow in complexity and evolve their problems into higher and higher levels of abstraction or human concern.'***

**How much sleep do you need?**

**Sleepy? You? How much sleep do you need a night? More than eight hours? Are you obsessed with sleep or with not sleeping? Do you drag going to bed, because you are afraid you will lie awake thinking of problems? Or are you a good sleeper who wakes up completely rested in the morning, ready to go and live a new day?**

### ***Q43. Do you long to connect?***



**Yes, I do long to connect, always. My deepest longing is to connect with the Beloved. But I do not know how. I have been working on it ever since I remember. I am seeing the beloved in all kinds of different forms that attract me. I see him/her in the sun, in the sea, in the wind, in the earth. That is why I sit in the sun feeling that I am being healed, it is why I swim in the sea, walk in the wind and touch the ground. Every day I feel I become more complete, more connected. And I also long to connect with people. I do communicate, make fun with the people I meet daily. But to connect it seems I need more, I need commitment, time, the right place, the right people and the right moment. I have a dream of being with a small group in a beautiful place in Spain for a week or two weeks or a month. The sun will be blessing us, the food will be rich and we will sit down and communicate, talk, listen, make contact and connect with each other and with the Beloved, who is in all of us. When we leave to go home, we will still be connected by invisible threads. We will know and be able to connect with other people who are prepared to do the work.**

**Zinker 2001, page 47:**

***‘Sense of Power and Magic. The creative person, the creative therapist, is a disciplined craftsman whose gift is to keep reaching out toward his most profound personal potential. (...) It is during this process of transcending my own heaviness or dullness or stereotypy that I feel pure, good, beautiful, powerful, holy, rich, sweet, magical. This feeling, when it is there, is not only my own – it saturates the space around me and is exuded by the other person or persons who share it. And it is not clear if God is in our hands and hearts, whether we are in his lap, or if this is the way artists create God.’***

**Do you have a master/writer? If I feel connected to one colleague/writer it is Joseph Zinker. He answers me when I do not even pose a question. It seems he knew all my questions before I was aware of them. Do you have a master/writer you can turn to whenever you feel like it? The advantage of having a master who writes, is that you do not have to wait until he or she is near you, you can just open the book and there are the answers. What we need to do it, is courage and trust. Courage to get the book out of the cupboard and trust to be able to open it at random and know what ever we find is IT.**



## ***Q44. Do you feel chosen?***



I do feel chosen being in my hotel in Wellfleet, Cape Cod, where I am for the 25<sup>th</sup> GISC\* Writers conference. And yes, I feel chosen by my father and mother, by God, by Nature, by lovers, friends, pets and by Joseph Zinker, who told me I am part of his soul. And No, I do not feel chosen by most Gestalt authorities, although I think they like me, think I am funny, unique, eccentric? I am guessing, I do not know what 'they' think I am. But I am not the star I would like to be, I am not recognized as the bringer of a happy message. No, it is painful to admit, I am not able to do IT! I do feel seen though, I do feel received in my behaviour and I am not yet ripe enough to let the voice of my soul come out in a pure tone. It takes more time. I should not push IT. I am telling myself: grow, do it, get out, show, find a publisher, but what I have to offer is so precious that more time, more purification is needed. Still I do feel chosen in the sense that I know I am being guided. I do not have to do it alone. I do it together with masters, whether they are dead or alive, Jewish, Indian or Christian, ancestors or not. In me they are united and transformed into a powerful force that is ready to come out!

Zinker, 2001, page 125:

*'Someone must come along sometime in our lives and tell us, as a witness to a great event might do. "Yes, yes, you are here and yes, you are entitled to be here fully."'*

**Do you feel chosen?**

**Can you experience being chosen, being guided? Can you admit it to yourself or do you feel shy about it? Are you afraid to be seen as someone who is not grounded? What are the events that changed your life and how did they come about? Did you arrange them or did unexpected chances present themselves to you?**

## ***Q45. Does anyone love you?***



**What a question, although I made it up myself. If I make it personal and relate it to this day here in New York I must say yes, the colleague I had lunch with, gives me this feeling of being loved. Not in an exclusive way, but he loves me as part of what he cherishes in life. I know he loves my spontaneity, my creativity, my courage, my being as a woman. He is the only colleague I could work with without resistance. When I saw him work the first time in a workshop about Intimacy, I knew he was kosher\*. I knew of course that we would differ and I knew that we live from the same basic trust, the same beliefs, the same convictions concerning our work.**

### **Louse in the Fur**

**I am a louse in the fur and so is he in his way. I love my work, he loves his and this love comes all from one source, one spring, the same spring our clients come from and go back to. It means to get love is to give love. I never doubted his love, that is for certain and apparently he trusted mine. Should I then transform this question to: do I love anyone? Is this the other side of the coin? If I do not love, I will not be loved. The strange question that enters my mind now is: why is it so easy to love my clients, to feel compassion for them and so difficult to love colleagues, authorities, politicians. Here I go again, this is about the misuse of power.**

**It is not easy to love dominant people who I feel misuse me.**

### **Quality of Love**

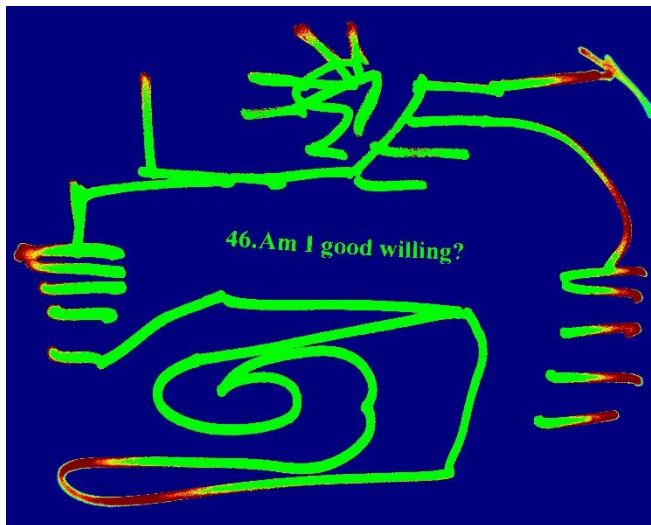
**In the December 2010 Newsletter of Rabbi David A. Cooper\* I read: *'The quality of love can be recognized in its energetic universal form, the mystic would suggest that there is also a trans-state of love in a dimension that defies understanding. This form of love does not express itself in any ordinary way that is recognizable; rather it is the metaphysical glue that holds all of existence together.'***

**What does L/love mean for you?**

**As far as I know L/love is hot stuff. Can you handle it? Can you face the fact that without L/love you would live in a desert, a world without emotions, without water?**

**Please take some time to sit and meditate on what L/love means to you. Are you waiting for it to come from outside or do you recognize it in yourself? Why don't you give L/love words on paper or draw what presents itself. It is the magic that makes the/your world go around.**

## ***Q46. Are you good willing?***



No today I am not. Today I am cross. Today I do not feel well. Today I am bothered by a bladder infection, that is annoying in itself and the medicines I have to take, make me nauseous, give me a stomach ache and can cause diarrhoea. I have to accept that during five days, I am not my usual playful self but a cross old lady, who tells herself when she walks in the cold wind with her dog: come on, you are still here, enjoy every minute, all you have to do is 'go on'. Do not overrule yourself by doom thoughts. Even though I have to take the message of my bladder seriously: you are under too much pressure and you are still struggling with negative feelings. The only one who can heal me to the core is me. What I would like is to sing, make music together with other music lovers, like I saw and heard yesterday when I was at the Music Festival. I can get so jealous when I experience those mainly young people, who allow themselves to go lose and to feel free. True is of course that they are aware of what they are doing, because the audience is looking, listening, judging, thinking you are good or you are not. You are the winner and the rest are losers. Why? They were all good, they were all offering joy, offering the best they have. Who are we as spectators to tell them they are not good enough. Is it a matter of being good or bad willed?

Zinker 2001, page 163,

Joseph in discussion with Robert Harman\* who asks him what he would teach if he had his own training group: 'J.: Well, I was thinking I would break a group of people into triads; you know how we do that. I would focus on the observer, not on the therapist. I would make the observation the most important skill. I would praise the observer. I would evaluate observation and the basic skill of attending to phenomenological data.'

Are you good willing? You probably have been in triads like this. As a trainer I teach what Joseph suggests and discovered indeed the importance of the observer. It took some time to realize that we need to be a good willing observer, to become a good willing therapist. What are your own experiences being in a triad like that? What is the role that is most difficult for you? And how about being good willing or not?



## *Q47. Are you afraid of you?*



Beautiful day, today, an unexpected gift. Reading about Presence and Charisma in *Sketches* by Joseph Zinker set me thinking. Charisma asks for attention, presence is there for the other. Presence so the other is safe enough to express her/his fears, longings and loves. Zinker: *'Presence comes easier when one has already received approval and affirmation -- when ones cup is full and one no longer needs it from anyone.'*

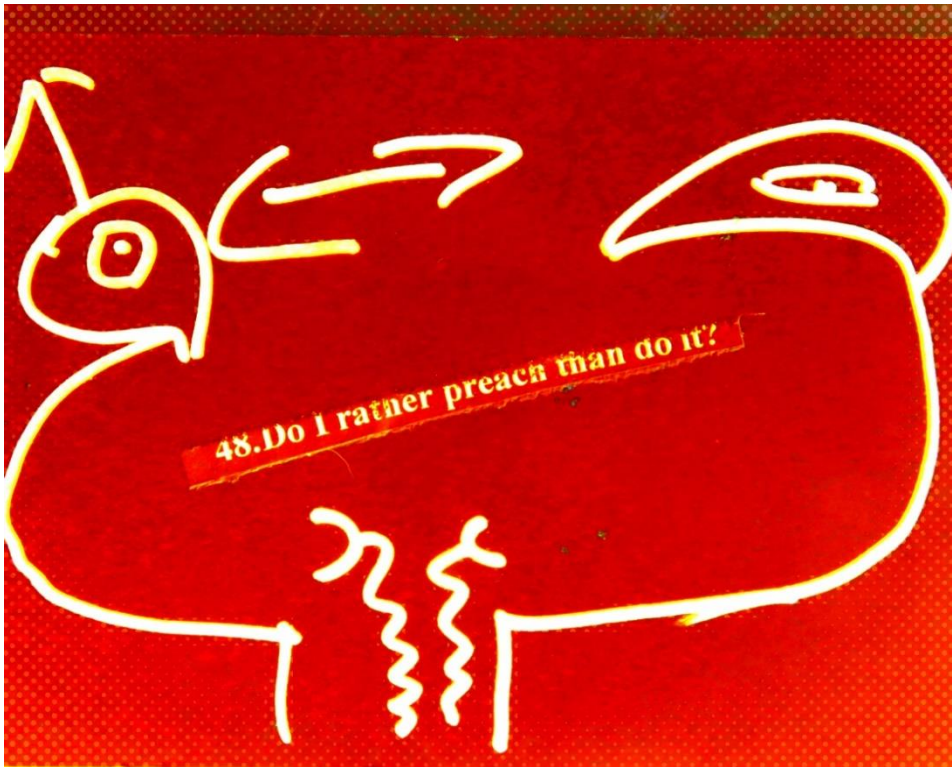
Unlovable

Back to the question of the day: am I afraid of me? Yes, I am. I am afraid that I behave in a way, that makes me unlovable. Not worth to be loved because people, including my family, are afraid of me and my provocations. Although my provocations are meant to make the world better, I do realize that most provoked people do not immediately feel my love in it and therefore feel threatened. Can they answer my invitation and stimulation to become aware of their own beauty and strength? Or do they withdraw – just like me - because their self image tells them they are not good enough to fit in the image. The words of Zinker: *'I am brave enough to do this thing at the possible cost of failure or ridicule, so that I may experience this day with newness and freshness.'* Am I brave enough to state here on this empty sheet of paper that I am here on earth to love and be loved? Just like you? And like Joseph who I met last week. I can still feel his soul touching mine. His brain has been operated. On the outside he seems a different man. In the inside his soul is as pure as it came out of the fires of war. Just his presence and his approval for me filled my cup with love and understanding that are infinite and that can infinitely be shared.

Where do those words touch you?

Is love just and solely allowed to creep into your office when you are present for your clients? Or are you brave enough to show your family, friends, neighbours, colleagues and enemies that you are made of love, although there is fear in you and anger and pain that are waiting to be transformed to strength.

***Q48. Do you rather preach than do IT?***



**I am ill and have to look after me  
Very carefully; taking time just for me  
Is not an easy thing to do; of course I preach  
Of course I tell my clients if they do not look after themselves  
Nobody can do it. And now my moment is here  
I have no choice. I sit on the couch and look around me  
Is writing like this looking after me  
It makes me more happy. It is not really work  
It is like breathing. If I stop breathing, I stop living  
I have to nourish myself with words and with food,  
and with warmth and light  
And I like to preach to make others aware and more happy  
Nothing wrong with it in my view**

***Zinker 2001, page 102 'As a therapist, you must constantly "track" your own moods, desires, conflicts, needs, and changing ideologies because the person sitting in your presence will be affected/effected by our moods.'***

**Do you know right from wrong?**

**What is right and what is wrong? Do you know in this case? Can you stay away from preaching to your clients? Or to your family? Or your friends? Or colleagues? Or to yourself? And if you can, what do you do instead? Try not to find an answer in your head but please take time to write and explore the words ready to be written.**

## ***Q49. What are my biggest fears?***



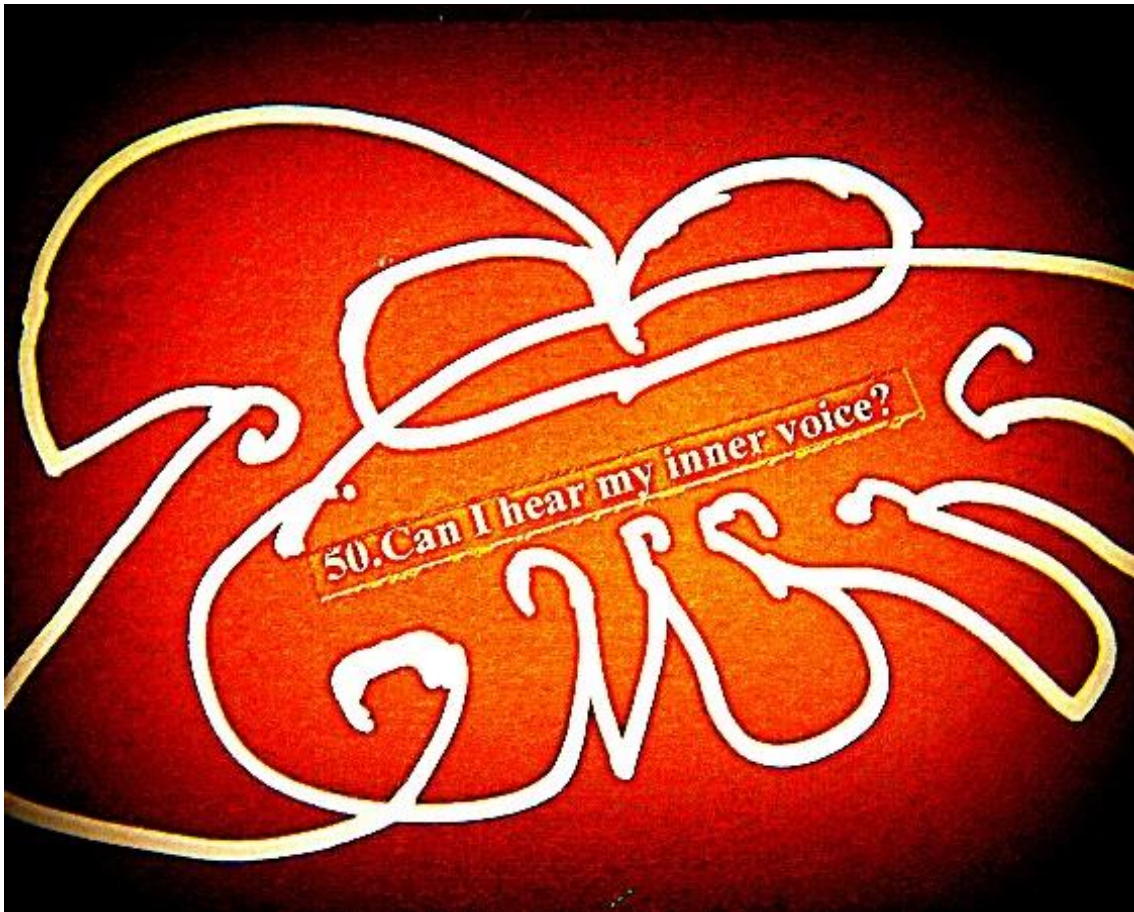
Do I know? Wish I did. My biggest fear is that I do not know my real fear. That is why I have to be on guard. One never knows from which corner this existential fear can pop up. I project my fears on my bank account. If there is enough to spend, I cannot drown yet. But there is always a possibility that the numbers turn out to be false. They make an impression that they are safe. That they protect me and then from nowhere I have to pay tax, insurance, repairs, new machines and the money disappears without my getting a hold. As long as I can pay, I still feel I am safe. I enter into the danger zone when I feel threatened, because I think I will not have enough clients in the future and will have to become dependent. I have to become someone who has to ask for work, has to ask for money, has to ask for goodwill. So what is my biggest fear? Not being able to look after me. Not being able to stand on my own feet. Not able to take care of my own body and my own soul. As long as I can pay, I am the director. The moment I have to ask for help, I am afraid I will drown in the sea of good willing energy, that could come my way without understanding who I am. All this is about fear, not about reality. Although I seem to be continuously busy to prevent my fear becoming real.

Zinker 2001, page 40 'A woman says that she feels childlike. (...) I ask her to act out her childlike behaviour with me or with the group.'

**Your Fear as a Child.** I know my fear is the fear of a child. Being open about it makes it more adult. How about your biggest fears? Can you grab them, write them down, take them seriously? If you have time draw the house where you grew up in. And give the threats a place. Mark them with big black crosses. If you are ready take a white piece of paper and write down every word, that comes to you while looking at your drawing. Next step you can take, is make sentences with the words you wrote down. It does not have to be a poem, to be of real meaning to you.



*Q50. Can I hear my inner voice?*



**My inner voice gets words and sounds from the outer world, while I was watching the funeral service of an important Dutch writer. Today we declare him THE greatest. Hearing the words of his publisher, his friends, the mayor of Amsterdam, I agree, although I agree with my head. I am not exactly neutral. More than forty years ago I had an affair with him. Not funny. Pretty complicated. An affair I have never felt proud of. I felt humiliated for different reasons. He was very popular then, also controversial. I became imprisoned in his look. He made me feel chosen. I do not think I ever met another man with a look as intent as his. Of course I longed to connect and at the same time was afraid to be rejected. The fact that his look had spotted me filled me with excitement. But I was certain he would be disappointed once he would know me better. Thinking back I know I was in fact the one who rejected him, because I was disappointed in him as a man. As a writer he intrigued me, but as a lover he turned out to be too cold for me.**

*Zinker, 2001, page 129 'Sometimes parents can damage us irreparably. And no one can give us back our early purity and innocence. No one can fully re-parent us. But we long to go back to our parents, our roots, over and over again to be loved and affirmed, to be praised and to be held to be told we are `good`, we are `gifted`, and we are `special`.'*





**Indeed I am irreparably damaged by my father, who happened to be dying in the same period I met the writer. I know now that the presence of my father and the look of the writer have the same kind of impressive quality. It made the writer as attractive and as impossible to reach as my father. Inner voices let themselves be heard sometimes in the mouth of the other. In this case it were the voices of the daughters of the writer, that vibrated in my intestines. What they said came from their souls. Moments of awe when looking back at your dead father is not the same as horse riding on his knee. My father and their father have in common, that they were busy with what the world is about and forced their daughters to do the same. It means that the loving, the caring side of a father was missing and the other side, the angry demanding side was over extended. A gift in disguise?**

**What about your father? What kind of a father did you have? One who could play with you, be with you without worrying about the big world? Or did you have a father at a distance who seemed to belong more to the world than to you?**

## ***Q51. Do I need alone time?***



**Yes, I do, I need alone time to read  
Alone time to write, Alone time to think  
Alone time to sing, Alone time to feel  
Not that I feel completely alone at times like that  
I am just not in the company of another human being  
My pets are with me. My music is  
My books are./ They are around me filling me with energy**

### **Impossible Relationship**

**And there is Joseph Zinker speaking to me from his already written lines. Today he tells me to go to page 197 in Sketches and read his discussion with Sonia Nevis\* about Marriage: 'The Impossible Relationship (Fall 1985). The piece is opened by a quote from Laura Perls\*: *'In a traditional confluent marriage, the spouse is not a significant other but the insignificant the same.'* The discussion is focused on why marriage is impossible: 'Sonia: *'If we have separateness, everyone will want togetherness again. It's the same whether it's a cult swing or an individual swing. As soon as we get what we want, we don't want it - it's an impossible relationship!'***

**Do you recognize the impossibility?**

**I do. When I think of alone time, I realize I live alone and wonder if this is what I really want. Don't I miss being in an intimate relation? And then I remember that I never felt more alone, than during my marriage and accept that my life is what it is. Now I have the choice to be alone or not, then I did not, I was imprisoned. What is your experience? Do you recognize the duality? How do you live with this - on the surface seen as - impossibility? Maybe this is a moment to talk with your partner and check if s/he shares your longings and fears in this matter.**



***Q52. Is it the beginning or the end?***



**Snow and more snow today, blizzard, icy snow in my face. Do I accept this is only the beginning of the winter or do I hope it is the end? Tomorrow things will be better. Tomorrow life goes back to normal. Snow, cold, they are not real enemies but they change my behaviour.**

**I do not want to get out of bed. Not out of the bath, not out of the door, not out of my nice warm cosy house. I do not want to be part of the white world, where skaters and snowball throwers enjoy themselves. I never go for a winter holiday to the mountains. Now I am forced to be with myself and search my inner world. I can meditate, paint, write, draw, sing, make C Compositions. And if I do winter becomes my friend. It urges me to use the night and stop being afraid of the dark. Unknown forces can enter my life, if only I am able to open the door and let them in.**

**Deeper Nature**

**My intuition told me to go to Jean Houston, 1987, page 78 in *The Search for the Beloved\**: *'Odysseus, like other modern humans, has somewhat ignored his own deeper nature. Necessarily, then, his learning must come out the deeps, which he has mishandled. From these deeps will come most of his adventures and a larger experience of reality.'***

**Your journey into the deep?**

**Did or do you ignore your deeper nature? Do you also need the dark times in winter to experience the inner adventures and larger realities? What helps is to have a place where you can go to and meditate. If you cannot find it in your own house, maybe you can go to a church or a museum or a library. Although there will be people, you can make clear you do not want to be disturbed. I am certain you will be respected.**

**Q53. Are you too busy?**



**I am too busy, yes I am. Today that is! I caught a cold, should stay in bed or at least inside the house, but I cannot. I have to walk my dog and clean my house. As I live alone these are the consequences. Whatever happens the show must go on. In the afternoon and the evening I have to see clients. I could have declared myself ill, but because I am up and about anyway I might as well work. Coughing during sessions is a nuisance, but it can also help the process to get along. Clients also know about severe colds and coughing. Sometimes I feel guilty because I am not one hundred percent present. And when I say this out loud and ask how they feel about it, they tell me they worry more about me, than about not getting what they need for themselves. There is always a story behind it. Mothers, fathers who were not available and needed attention. Mothers, fathers who were too busy to care for themselves and therefore were a load on the shoulders of their offspring. It is all in the game of life.**

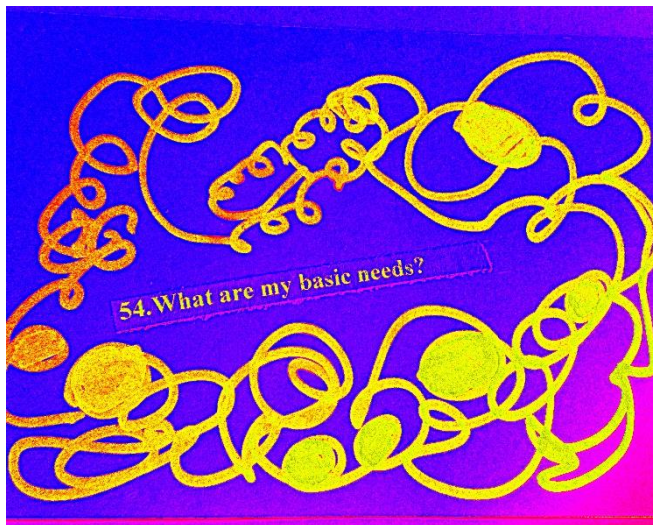
**Zinker 2001, page 39:**

*'Psychotherapy is a lively process. The process involves stoking one's inner fires of awareness and contact; it involves exchanges of energy with the other – exchanges which stimulate and nourish the other but do not deplete one's own vitality and power.'*

**Those sentences are the beginning of a chapter titled 'The Therapist As Artist'. For me those words mean I have to be as creative and present as I can, whether in the role of therapist or client or whatever role, even if I have a cold or even when I am too busy. If this is my energy, it is my energy, it cannot be denied, it is part of my presence.**

**How do you experience being too busy? Can you still be fully present? Or do you cancel and say: No, not now, I need time for me, I cannot offer you what you need?**

***Q54. What are your basic needs?***



**One of my basic needs is money. Without money I feel lost. Without money I cannot do my shopping, I cannot heat my house, I cannot pay for services rendered to me. Without money I go back to my mother's house in thought, where I was fed, clothed, cared for. And now I cannot go back, no mother, no house to go back to. I have to look after myself. I have to fulfil my basic needs myself. I have been doing that since I was nineteen, I think, but today it seems more heavy. Then it felt like an adventure, I still had a safety net to go back to. Today I am facing old age and the diminishing of power. The diminishing of appetite to do the work. Or to be more precise, I love to do the work that comes my way, but I do not look forward to tell the world, what need to be paid for it. It makes me dependent and I don't want to be, I want to stand on my own feet. I do not like to see people as things, that can pay me for my services; I would rather pay than be paid. What should I do? Try to reach potential clients after all? Give words to what I have to offer and publish it somewhere? Or call someone and ask if s/he needs what I have to offer? My basic need number one seems to be to be needed. If I am needed I have a right to exist and I do not have to feel guilty about my needs. I do not have to say: sorry, but I cannot do it all by myself. Okay, what I can do I will. I even like that. But sometimes I need you. I need you to need me!**

**Zinker, 2001, page 29:**

***'As a child in Poland, I saw a film in which the hero is unjustly imprisoned.(...) The man, sweating and filthy, breaks out of his cell using his bare hands, he frees himself against all odds so that later he may free others.'***

**What is your basic need? To be free? Would you free yourself to be able to free others? How free do you feel? Free enough to free others? Or do you think you are behind bars you cannot break out and feel helpless? If so, what do your bars look like? Money? Illness? No time? No talent? How about drawing or painting them to explore. They can disappear if you do.**



***Q55. Where do you come from?***



**My mother is the first thought**

**My mother and her world in the Jordaan in Amsterdam**

**My mother and her brothers and sister**

**No grandparents on her side, they were already gone when I was born**

**My mother and her sense of humour and way of living**

**My mother is of course in me, I can see it when I look in the mirror**

**I also come from my father and his world**

**Also in Amsterdam, but a different neighbourhood**

**My father and his parents who I did know**

**My grandfather till I was 13, my grandmother till I was 31**

**The world of my father was connected to villages in the country where God reigned. I**

**feel overwhelmed when I start writing where I come from. I can see the great**

**importance of this question, but want to strip it to what is essential. What did my family**

**bring me that is special? The families are connected, interrelated by blood ties. Does this**

**make my father and mother a pair that is more connected? I do not know, I just**

**wonder.**

**Joseph Zinker 2001,**

***'In a family system, you may find triangulation as when one person asks something of the spouse and a child deflects by changing the question or answering for the parent.'***

**Did you take over?**

**Taking over when parents seem to be at a loss? Or taking over anyway because we do**

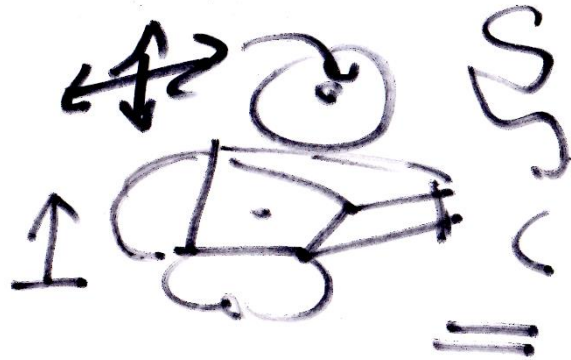
**not trust what our parents present us. When did you or do you and what does it have to**

**do with your background? Are you interested where you came from in a spiritual sense?**

**Or where you will be going? See if you can find out where your ancestors came from**

**and what they believed. It must be somewhere in you.**

**Q56. Are you a prosecutor?**



Words in the drawing: arrow, arrow, arrow, heart, core, home, basement, belly, fireworks, dollar, equality, north, east, west, south, elements, boomerang, warped wood

**Who am I as a prosecutor?**

**Am I the arrow directed at the heart but was never released?**

**Am I in the basement waiting for the core of the belly?**

**Am I in the West where equality reigns?**

**Or am I a warped piece of wood hiding the boomerang that can make us equal?**

**As a prosecutor I cannot live without the wisdom of the sages who came from the East.**

**Do I have to go South where I am in my element?**

**Or did I disappear with the Northern Sun when the dollar came to rescue the prosecutor in me?**

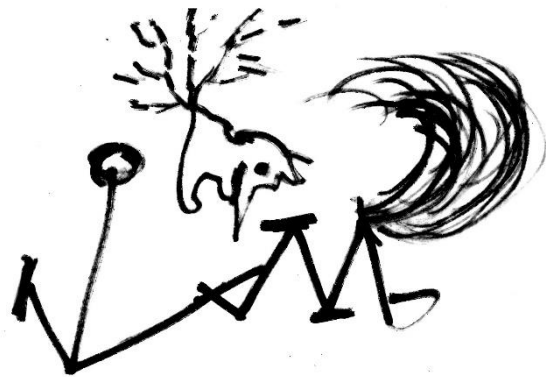
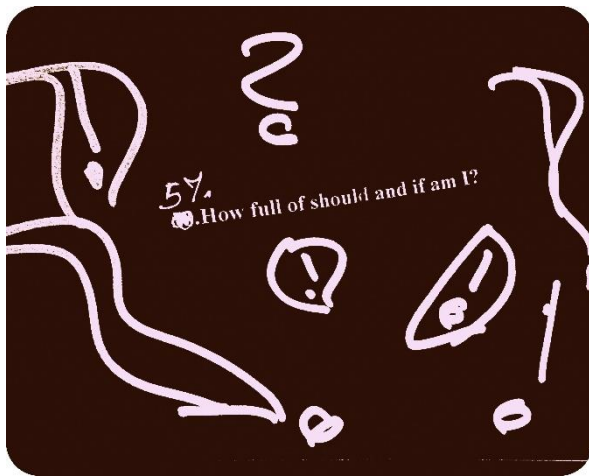
**This sounds like complete nonsense, but is it?**

**Zinker, 2001, page 48: 'The fact is that the creative person, the creative therapist, is a disciplined craftsman whose gift is to keep reaching out towards his most profound potential.'**

**Do you dare?**

**All this started with a few lines. Do you dare to follow me by getting a white sheet of paper, meditate for a few minutes on the question, take your marker and let your hand do the work. Look at the lines, see if you can discover words in them. Write the words down and then form them into sentences. Do not try to understand what you are writing, just do it. Then let what you wrote rest for a few hours. Read it out loud when you go back to it and listen to the tone of your voice. Please repeat this till it touches you.**

*Q57. How full of should, if and hope are you?*



Words in the drawing: W, will, want, gate, mobile, pillar, cock, roots, hair, connected, roof, sound, circle

I want and I will is not the same  
Want and Will with a capital W also differ  
It is a matter of tone and of attitude  
I, W cock, am a male and should Wake the World  
From the mobile pillar that turns and turns  
I sound my kukeleku call into the city  
Hair in movement becomes alert  
Where is the roof over my head  
Oh, I am the roof  
Is that why I have antennas?  
Do I have to pick up the signs?  
Do I know what it is we should if...there is hope

Zinker, 2001,

From a conversation about hope between Edwin and Sonia Nevis and Joseph Zinker.  
Spring 1984, page 191: *‘Why Children?(...)*

*J.: Are we saying that people who do not have children express their hopefulness in the World through their creativity, their political involvement, through the arts, their capacity to mentor others, working for social causes, developing theories, doing research?*

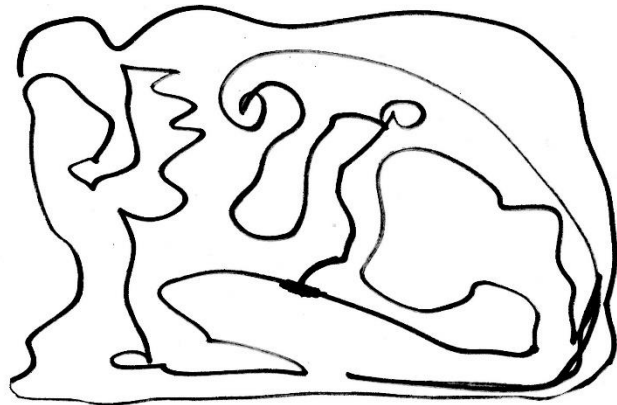
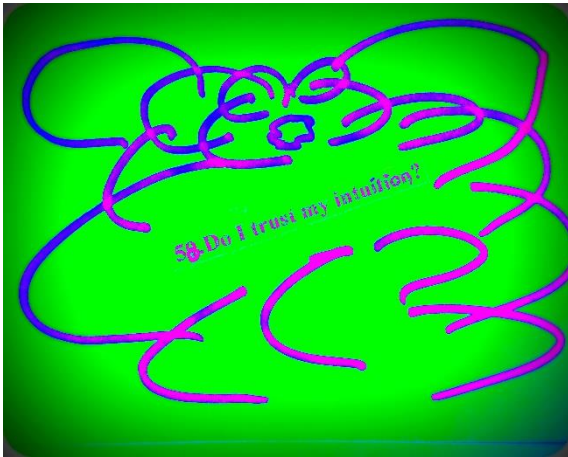
*S.: Yes to care about something is hope.’*

Do you have children?

What do they have to do with you shoulds and ifs and with your hope? And if you do not have children, what does this mean for you? How do you express your care for the World, your hope? What is it you should do? Or are the ifs stopping you? What is your if?



***Q58. Do you trust your intuition?***



**Words in the drawing: labyrinth, feathers, beginning, end, movement, bison, eyes, lake, comb, dancer, figure, big nose, one line, crossings, meeting points, open spaces, no man's land, foot, path**

**Does my intuition guide me along the path from the beginning to the end  
when I meet the bison and feel his eyes directed at me while I am a dancing figure;  
big nose towards the open spaces longing for the no man's land  
where the lake and the labyrinth can receive my movements  
while I show my combed feathers.**

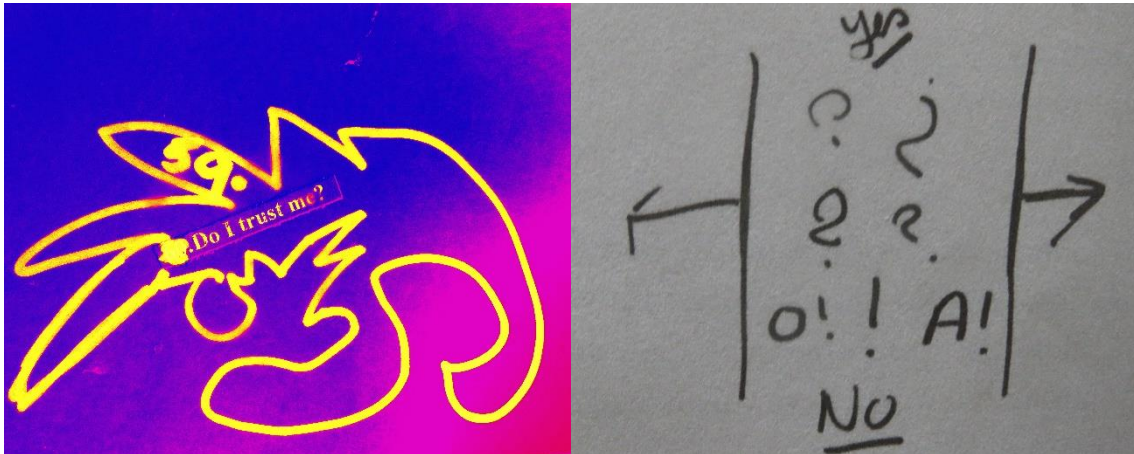
**I am not more than one line who knows where to start  
I listen to my intuition that brings me to the end.  
Without a foot and a path it would not be possible.**

***Zinker 2001, page 96: 'Because of the explosion of general systems theory, field theory, theories of chaos and complexity, and of both molecular and cosmic physics, it has become increasingly difficult to focus on an individual's inner working without factoring in the social matrix and organismic 'soup' in which he or she lives.'***

**Your intuition?**

**Can you let yourself be led by your intuition? Do you know how to do it? Did you find a way by listening to the signals of your body? Do you meditate and listen to your inner voice? Do you believe in 'by chance'? How about giving your intuition a helping hand by drawing and writing? Nothing is lost. Maybe you are stuck with what looks like un-comprehensible sentences but so what if you can see it as a riddle or a Zen koan you can meditate on to find your open answers.**

**Q59. Do you trust you?**



**Words: stripes, tree, hill, window, triangle, curls, curves, bottom, legs, pole, sharp, unicorn, vibration, fertile ground, plume, rope, field**

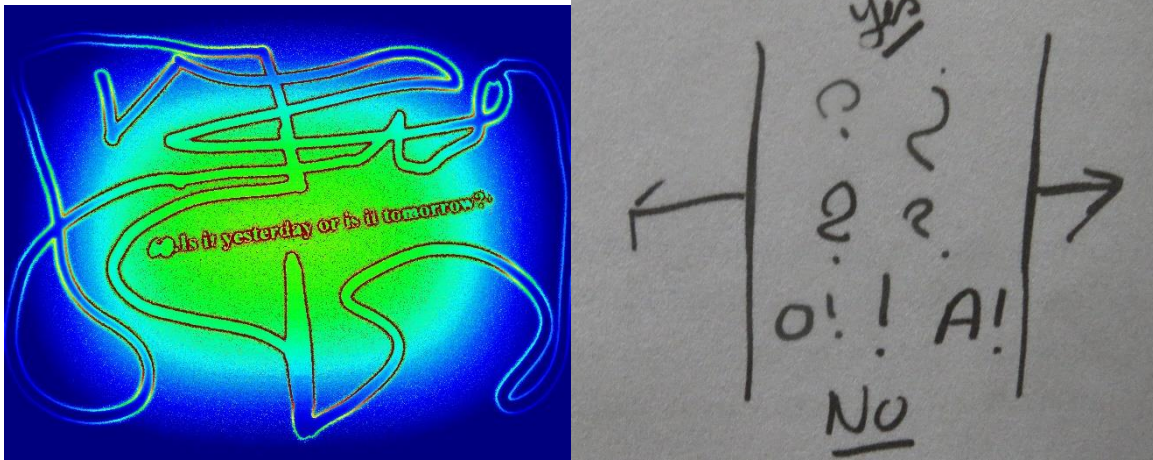
**Trust in me, means trust in my sharp words. Trust in my drawing  
Trust in the hill, the rope, the unicorn, the field, the legs, the pole, the stripes.  
Trust in my fertile ground. Trust in the window whether it is open or closed  
I wait for the vibration with trust. Trust I see a tree because I know it is  
I stand on my legs because I trust my bottom  
And the triangle is there  
The triangle Mother, Father and Child in me  
It is the greatest trust I have  
I trust I am more than me  
I am my father, my mother and my child  
Who or what else do I need?  
If I trust me I have to be able to doubt.  
Doubt me and doubt you.**

**If I am not allowed to doubt my trust will become artificial. I also need willingness to trust. I have to take life seriously otherwise I cannot trust me nor you. I need courage to find out why, what and who I doubt. If trust is a quality that has been missing in my life, I will be so afraid to surrender that I do not trust anyone at first sight. But I do trust, because I am human and you are human and I trust it is okay to make mistakes for we are not perfect, not God.**

**And you?**

**Do you trust yourself, me, the world, your family? Please take a blank card and marker and put lines on it. Do not try to draw something recognizable. Trust your undercurrent that will show you its feathers. And if you feel like it you can do what I did. Find words in the image, form sentences with them and trust that you will get to know yourself better.**

**Q60. Is it yesterday or is it tomorrow?**



**Words: direction, arrow to the left, arrow to the right, left wall, right wall, empty space, question marks, yes, no, Aha moments, Oho moments, rigid**

**Which way is left and which is right  
Does the left arrow direct to the right  
And the right arrow to the left  
Today is tomorrows yesterday  
So today is yesterday  
And when will it be tomorrow?  
When it is after tomorrow's yesterday  
Tomorrow is not within the rigid walls of the now  
What is the empty space good for  
Question mark  
Aha, it is needed to overcome the Oho moments  
Yes and No are reigning the space between the walls  
Yes knows, No knows  
Do they know if it is yesterday or tomorrow?  
The complexity of the mind leads me to the basics  
No today is not tomorrow  
Why do I ask?  
Yes today is yesterday  
Why do I want to know**

**Crazy Questions:**

**Yes or No do not have much power in this case. Crazy questions, crazy answers. Just fun. No more no less. How is it for you to deal with questions that lead nowhere? Can you think of such a question yourself? Do you believe this is worth investing time and energy?**



**Q61. Are you true to you?**



**Words: I, me, true, kite, angel, spider, direction, isolation, cloud, border, sting, body, dog, penis**

**The border of me is decided by I; It is a curving border, not simple  
It is mysterious; open or not open; It depends on the penis symbol  
Is he asking for attention or not?; If he does not get it, he is confronting me  
I am an arrow, more arrows even; I am also an angel who needs a cloud  
to hide the tent and let the kite fly; Scrub wood is waiting for  
the spider that can sting the dog; I can withdraw in my inner world,  
I do not need the outside; Is that true or false?  
Am I giving me the wrong message? Can I not live without the sting,  
the penis, the spider, who are outside the body?  
Can I not live without the other world that is not in but outside me  
I do not want to need the outside world  
I want it to come to me because it needs me!  
Telling lies to me about me is telling lies to you  
I hate to tell lies, I am afraid to tell lies  
I am afraid you will hate me  
But how can I be true to me if I think I am not the penis symbol?**

**Zinker, 2001, page 97: 'Projectors find partners who accept projections without objecting to or correcting the projection, or find partners who don't say easily what they feel, what they want, and what they don't want'.**

**What are you?**

**I am a projector, I know that is true. What are you? Do you project rather than say what you feel? How true are you to you? Do you mind in the sense that it does not make you perfect?**

## 62. Do you take yourself seriously?



In a certain sense I do, I take my work very seriously.  
I mean the work I have to do as a human being.  
It took me a long time to stop separating paid work and sacred work. It is easy to take paid work seriously. I feel responsible for what I offer.  
My credo is that I have to be worth the money I earn.  
It took me a long time to take sacred work seriously.  
I did not see how serious it is to meditate, to write, to paint, to sing, to be lovable, to be able to serve.  
Now I am old enough to know this is THE work.  
This is what I am on earth for. Next step should be to let the world know how serious it is. But how can I do it?  
By selling what I write or what I paint?  
By asking more money for the services I offer?  
By finding a way to tell the world? Sounds sensible.  
Of course I do tell the world, but the world doesn't listen.  
The world is too busy with other things to hear me.  
If I would take myself really seriously I would yell and shout:  
Hey hello world, listen to me, I have good news:  
you can change your life if you want. The only thing you have to do is to do it your way. But this sounds too simple. What do I mean?  
Look at the news, read the papers, the world is a disaster, you cannot change that.  
This is true, but I can change MY world as you can change your world. And if we connect, the small changes will change the bigger world too.  
Zinker, 2001, page 101: *'The world is both one and also pluralistic. Events in the world must be examined as interaction between wholeness and politics. The world is made up of diverse voices yet we are all one.'*  
How autonomous is your voice? What do you think about the/your world and possible change? Who has to do it? Political leaders? Spiritual leaders? Artists? Writers? Philosophers? Teachers? Parents? Neighbours? You? Or do you think I should?

### 63. Can you live without words?



No words today; more sounds; more images; more thoughts. Why no words? I am writing words now. I cannot live without words. That is why I need to write. While I write now I listen to Hebrew sounds: שכע כרכות

Telling me words are not always my words. Words can be beyond understanding. And still be valuable enough to listen to, to let in and feel the vibration in the skin, in the blood, the veins, the nerves; written words can not do it, without the energy to be expressed.

PHG\* page 219: *‘Art, learning and memory, growing up, are radically disjoined from the primary-process, as if all learning, and the deliberate control that comes with learning, could never be simply used and then released as the self again spontaneously acts.*

*Then, of course, growing up necessarily involves the “conversion of affect” for learning, according to this concept, is nothing but inhibiting.’*

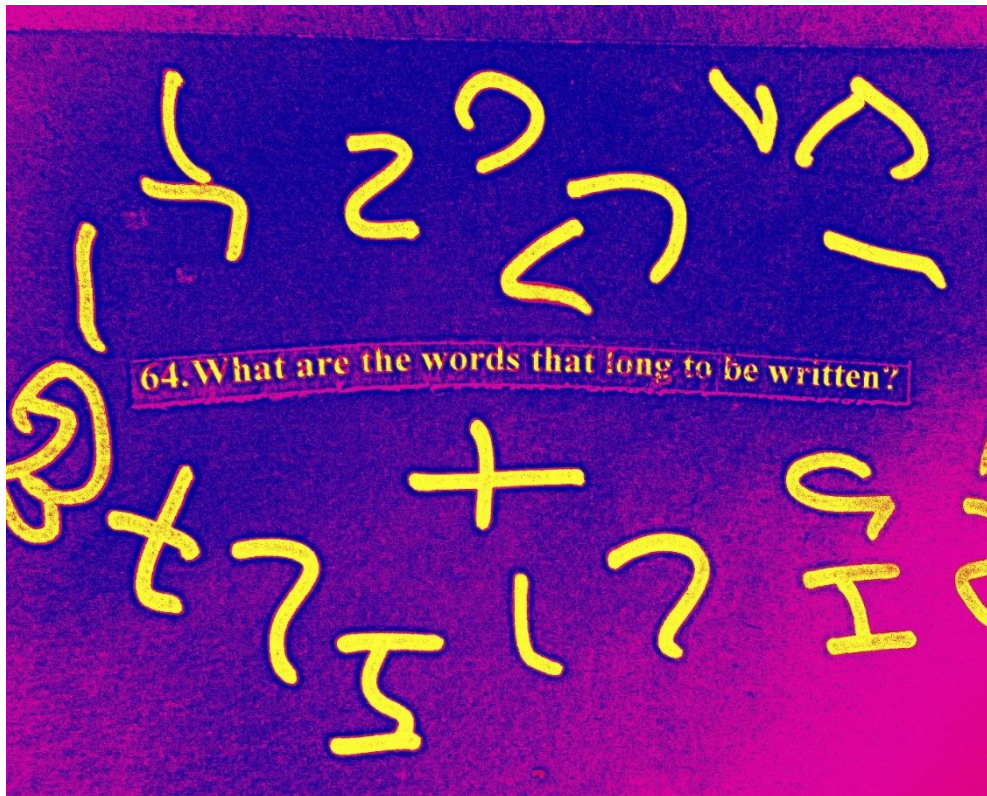
The question that rises up in me: do those words have any connection with each other? What exactly do they mean with the 'conversion of affect'? I looked in the dictionary and have an idea now, but am not able to verbalize it. I feel uneasy, is it because English is not my native language or is it because the deeper meaning is hidden underneath the words?

How is this quote for you in connection with what I wrote?

Clear on first sight? On second sight? After some thinking? Can you give your thoughts words or images or sounds? Or is it about feelings that are hard to express?



**Q.64 What are the words that long to be written?**



Today I am looking back at my life, realizing that it started with a war and now 80 years later there is a war again dominating my thoughts. I mean it is always in the background. For me it was not unthinkable that this disaster would repeat itself. War thinking, war feeling is in my body, in my heart. Did it also enter my soul? I don't know, but I do know having experienced war and knowing how wrong things can go, has made me alert. As a child I felt safe because in school I learned about the God who guided the Jewish people out of slavery in Egypt into the desert on their way to the Promised Land. What I understood is that God is on our side if we listen to his will.

In the book 'God as a Verb' rabbi David A. Cooper writes on page 221 in the Chapter 'The Path of the Tzaddik': *'Whenever you are feeling estranged, negative, angry, sad, bitter, frustrated, disillusioned or any way out of sorts, always ask for assistance. At first opportunity whisper to the Universe something like 'I am feeling very sad and I need some help to feel better. Please, help me.'*

It is what I am doing now. It is not only the war and Putin who give me the creeps, but it is the whole circus around it. How about you? Do you believe Power is king. Do you believe there will be a winner(s)? Or are you with me feeling so utmost sad because you know there will be only losers, victims on two sides. Work to do for the saviors and the prosecutors of course. But to get out of the Power Triangle we should go to another level. A level known to the tzaddik, de heilige. In a week of Silence I did with rabbi Cooper I learned from him: 'It does not hurt to try being a tzaddik.' He made me laugh and he changed my life at the same time.

*Q65. Are you in the right place with the right people?*

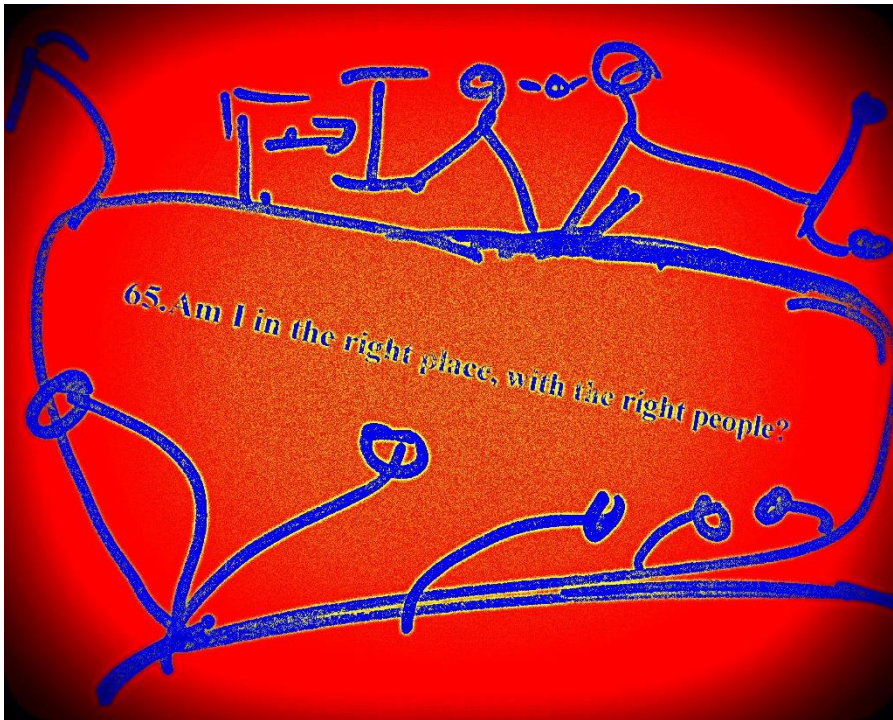


Saturday February 5, 2011 in the ABC Treehouse\*, starting a New Writing group. I listen to my body and feel itching in my belly, a lump in my throat, dry lips and a cold nose. The itching in my belly is intriguing me. What is my belly trying to express she thinks is important this moment? Now the itching is in my ear or is it inside my head? Oh itching body, I want to scratch. I want to stop the itching. I am not going to though because you inspire me and that is what I need right now. Okay, nose, I can feel that you have an itch too. I am tending to concentrate on you now, because I know you are a good nose. You are a nose that can guide me to the good smells in life that can make me happy. You can also make me aware of bad smells. When it is about the right place I start with smelling. How about this room, does it have the right smell, the right temperature, the right sounds?

#### Neutral Smell

The smell is neutral enough to feel at home for the time being. It feels open, it feels or smells good in the sense, that I am not forced to smell something that does not agree with me. I can even add my own smell without being afraid to be rejected. And that brings me to some answers of the questions. Yes, yes, I am in the right place and I am with the





right people and it is the right time, because the three of us decided it is important enough to come together and do the Work. It means that I am part of the decision that makes the time and the place so right that we can do what we came for: explore what is in the undercurrent that needs to be expressed; explore what our bodies and souls have to say about the situation. I feel excitement, I came here with the fear of being alone and all by myself. The fear of disappointing G and disappointing E and even disappointing the Treehouse because my course did not attract enough students to get it going. But I knew if I stayed in whatever situation that presented itself, I would feel that it is all right as it is. Now I am grateful that we are sitting here with the three of us, grateful that I hear the pens gliding over the paper, grateful that we are only with three, grateful that we and that I have time to meet the other two. What a treat! But...am I not too enthusiastic? No I am not, I am purely realistic. Only fear of losing gives me a frightful idea like that. And if I listen to fear I will lose, no doubt about that.

Joseph Zinker, 2001,

*'I feel like a victim. I feel as if the world won't cooperate in my struggle to become myself. (...) But as I live on and grow I begin to see the light of day in psychotherapy, the very label of victim becomes an encumbrance to me. (...) I must learn to shed my badge of pain because I have worn it too long and it no longer serves to protect me.'*

Are you familiar with the victim in you?

Do you blame the world, your neighbours, your family? Did you discover that the victimizer can also be in you? Try to recall a situation where you did feel you were not wanted. Write down the details and the role you were playing and find out who was the victim of whom? Does writing about it change the feeling you have?



## ***Q66. Who are you?***



**Who am I? The obvious question. Of course I know the answer. I am who I am, I am Tine, and nobody else can stand on my feet, or breathe with my mouth, or write those words with my hand. It means that nobody can tell me if what I do or write or say is right or wrong. Only I can feel what words or actions do with me. Only I can connect with my soul although I think that my soul is part of a bigger soul, a group soul. My responsibility is to find out who I am in relation to all those other souls surrounding me, all those other voices expressing themselves. Sitting here with Eva and Sara, two biblical names by the way, gives me the chance to explore who I am in relation to young women, who are intelligent, beautiful, talented and who are living their lives in a stage where anything can happen. Where are they going, how are they going to develop and what does it have to do with me, Tine, who is 74, has lived her life for the biggest part and is more harvesting than sowing?**

### **Chances**

**Is it hard for me to look at them knowing the chances they have are over for me? When I was their age I was married and entering a very painful period in my life. I thought I was going to create a family together with the man I married. Thought I would have children I could raise and love and tell what life is about, so that they would be more happy more free more cheerful than I was when I was a kid. But life had some other plan for me. My husband and I were not one of those couples who became happily and lovingly old together. On the contrary, we destroyed each other in a way that was too**



painful to stay together. Children did not come. Alas or not alas? We could not have given them a safe and harmonious life in that period of time.

#### Search for Help

Is that the end of the story? No it is not, because when I and we were deeply unhappy, we searched for help and found it. We found a place where unhappy people were taken seriously, without being told they were guilty. A place where we were with about fifty people to find out why our lives did hurt so much, and what we could do to release the pain and heal ourselves. It was there that I found the healing part of me that I have been developing ever since. It is the part that brings me here, it is the part I want to offer to Eva and Sara. Life hurts and please stop thinking it is because you did or do something wrong. Only thing I and you (?) do wrong is that we do not trust and love ourselves enough to have a good feeling about who we are. So the question 'Who am I?' can simply be answered with 'I am a body with a soul that can love and I am afraid to show it. What if I am rejected?' Outside a mouth organ is playing. Someone is offering his or her love by making music. Obviously without fear of rejection! I can learn something from her or him.

Fritz Perls, *In and Out the Garbage Pail*, 1969\*: 'This time I am going to write about me. Rather: whenever anybody writes he writes about himself – more or less. Of course, one can write about so-called objective observations or about concepts and theories, but the observer one way or another is part of those observations.'

Who are you? Can you write about you, objectively? Why not try it? There is no law against it. You could start with: Now I am going to write objectively about me...



***Q67. Are you your belly?***



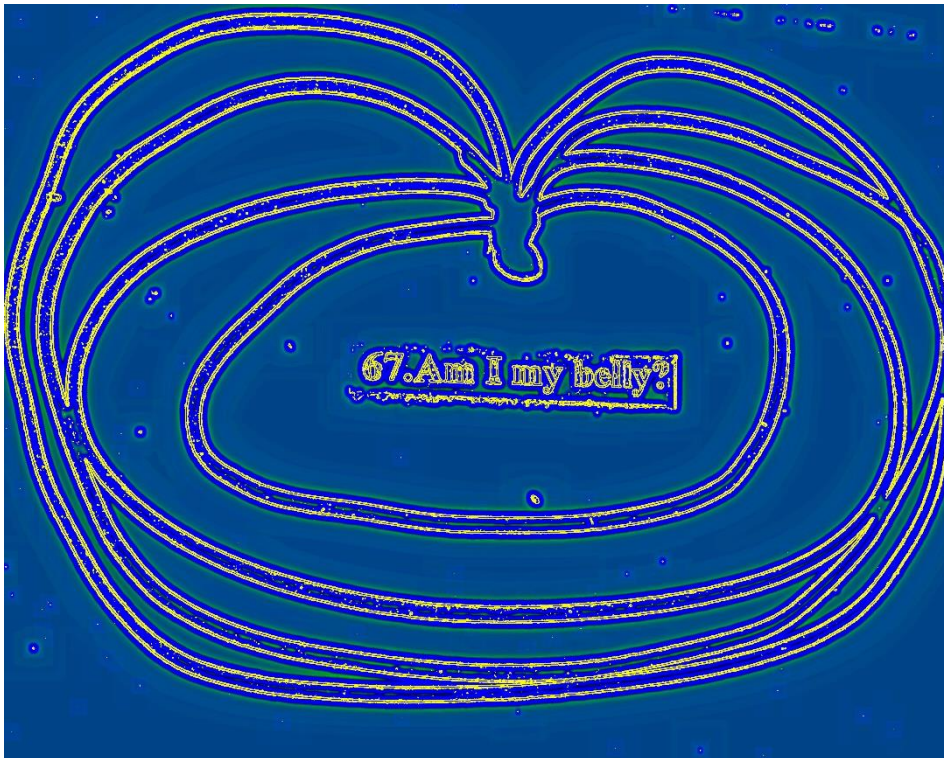
Strange question. Of course I am my belly. Why do I ask then. Do I hope I am not that thing inside me, that has been waiting for a long time to become happy. Waiting for a warm hand. Waiting for a caress that told her you are okay although you are a nuisance sometimes. Because you can nag and go on longing for something I cannot give you. Or I? Nobody can?? Am I too negative now? Am I following my worst fears? You can do what you do but it will not satisfy your belly. Your belly - or rather you for you are your belly – is waiting to be in full service. Give her a voice, for one thing. Do not separate yourself. Now talk from the I belly and find out what happens.

**I belly am so beautiful.**

**I belly have so much to offer and I feel unused. I feel I am not taken seriously for if I am happy you will be. And I will be happy if I am considered important enough to be listened to.**

**Let's talk about betrayal. If there is someone who knows how it is to be betrayed, it is me. I have been in full service, in full swing and was very happy, even more than that at the time; then the happy maker went away and I was left on my own to deal with the situation. Very painful. What I needed was to be met, to be talked to, to be told, even though I felt betrayed, I am still worth and valuable enough to be. I felt being denied, being suppressed. Nobody wanted to hear my story, because they were afraid this story would be too sad for words. But now I get a chance, I open my mouth to tell you and the whole world, that I am maybe betrayed, but at the same time I am living my life fully.**





**Look at me, feel me, see me, hear me. Realize how much work I am doing every day, every moment by being busy digesting all that food, all those liquids, all those thoughts, all those ideas that are coming into me without me asking for it. Or to be clear: I do need nourishment, otherwise my reason to exist would cease, but I am dependent on what you chose to let in through your mouth. What do you have to tell me now? I do not have so many words. I reflect on what you tell me. I feel that I betrayed you by not having children. I am afraid that you feel I let you down by not having the experience of being pregnant. I am afraid I let you down by not fulfilling the most beautiful function you have. Can you imagine that? Yes, I did miss the opportunity letting babies grow in me. Yes, I did, I cannot deny that. But it would be silly if you feel guilty about it. In the end you and I did it together. It was not only you who decided this is the best way to live life together. It was also for me. Why I cannot say. I feel I am still open to anything new that comes to me. Open to integrate and give it a place in our life. You and I are connected in a way that gives no possibility of betrayal. Just think about that! We can hurt each other, but betraying is a different matter.**

**Joseph Zinker, 2001,  
'Time comes when old, old men relax into expressionless  
drifting, empty of yearning...  
Life was lived fully, thoughtlessly,  
with celebration of one's pleasures and foolishness.'**

**Do you feel that you are living life celebrating your pleasures and foolishness? Or did you? How about your belly? Is it rigid and cold or radiating a warmth that is healing you?**

***Q68. What is the question?***



**The question is: what is the question? Am I a sexual being, is a good one. Yet it is not the one I want to write about today. Do I have a place in the world? feels more exciting. I felt the energy in my heart start vibrating the moment I wrote the words on the paper. A place in the world? Yes, I do have a place in the world, in my world I should say. Now in my heart region I feel a distinct pain. Is it about having a place and not being so happy with the place I have? Maybe even rather ashamed of it? My mouth gets dry, my jaws become tight. Signs I better take seriously. My back is starting to ache. I feel definitely heavy.**

**The place I have was not just offered to me. I have the feeling that I have been fighting and fighting from the first breath I took till now to conquer the right place for me. I do not want a place where I feel patronized or am dependent on the goodwill of others, I want a place where I can offer what I have to offer. I came to contribute good energy to the world. I truly believe that my sacred contract is about doing what I can to make the world just a tiny bit better and to make people just a little happier. Doing that seems at first sight a wonderful light task but that is not how I experience it.**

**If I am honest I have to confess, that I soon was so fed up with what the world and with what people presented to me, that I became too angry to be an angel. I still knew that bettering the world was the main thing I had to do, but acting with anger in my mind**



did not immediately fill the people on my path with a feeling of joy, a feeling of being grateful that they met me. Can it be that giving the message they did something wrong and that this was the reason for my anger, made them afraid of me? Seems likely.

The other side is of course that I am the one who is afraid of the world in the first place. Afraid of the world, afraid of people, afraid of my family, afraid of my father and mother, grandma and grandpa as they were the closest when I came out of the womb. They were the ones who could give me a safe place or not. Did they? Could they? I go completely blank. I do not dare to answer those questions. I always assumed that they did. I always tell myself at least I was welcome. I am the eldest, even though I am a girl and should have been a boy. But that is about me not being perfect. Now it is about if they could do it, if they could give me the place I needed. The answer is No, not because they were unwilling but because circumstances were bigger than they were.

### Playing God

Joseph Zinker in an interview, 2001, page 138: *'My fantasy was that I was God - if you remember, in fact, it was in your workshop that we had an ex-minister who was giving advice, rescuing everyone, and no one could make any contact with him, and I had the fantasy that he should play God and make a world of his own out of us and the universe-room we were occupying.'*

### Are you a Rescuer?

Playing to be God seems attractive to me. Although I do not think it would make me or the world happier in the end if I think of God as being a rescuer. Did you ever have a dream of what you would do if you were God? If yes, how was it? Are you willing to relive it? And if No, are you willing to take the chance to explore now? Please give yourself some minutes to direct your attention to your inner world and to your breathing. It will bring you into the Here and Now where you can do whatever you long to do.



*Q69. Can you cross borders?*



With S. in the Treehouse. Borders, my borders, what do they look like? A mouth organ is passing its sound through the walls. It does not care about those borders. It can just penetrate with its vibrations. It makes me feel connected. I also feel connected to the exposition downstairs. Is it because I promised I would come to look at the paintings and read the poems, that I feel obliged to go and answer the expectation that I created myself? Is it an example of how I do things? I want to please the artists because I know how it is to sit waiting for someone to come who is interested in your work. And even if they come it is not certain that they have real attention for what you created. The creation of the visitor is in the willingness to dive into the painting or into the poem and let it vibrate into the body. Then explore how to express what the experiences are.

I am getting more and more curious what will happen with me if I go to the exposition and let it invade me. My eternal curiosity, always guiding me, always telling me to cross borders. My eternal curiosity which has lead me to Russia and other dangerous situations, I never regretted experiencing. So I will get up and step out of the door, out of the security of this room and explore the art that is inviting me.



**Back from the art, I saw words crossing borders. Changing or transforming into images. The words enter me without problems, without questions, I know what they tell me. They are about living together, loving together, longing and being disappointed. The images are dreams in itself, dreams that have nothing to do with reality, yet they are more real than the words.**

#### **Masks**

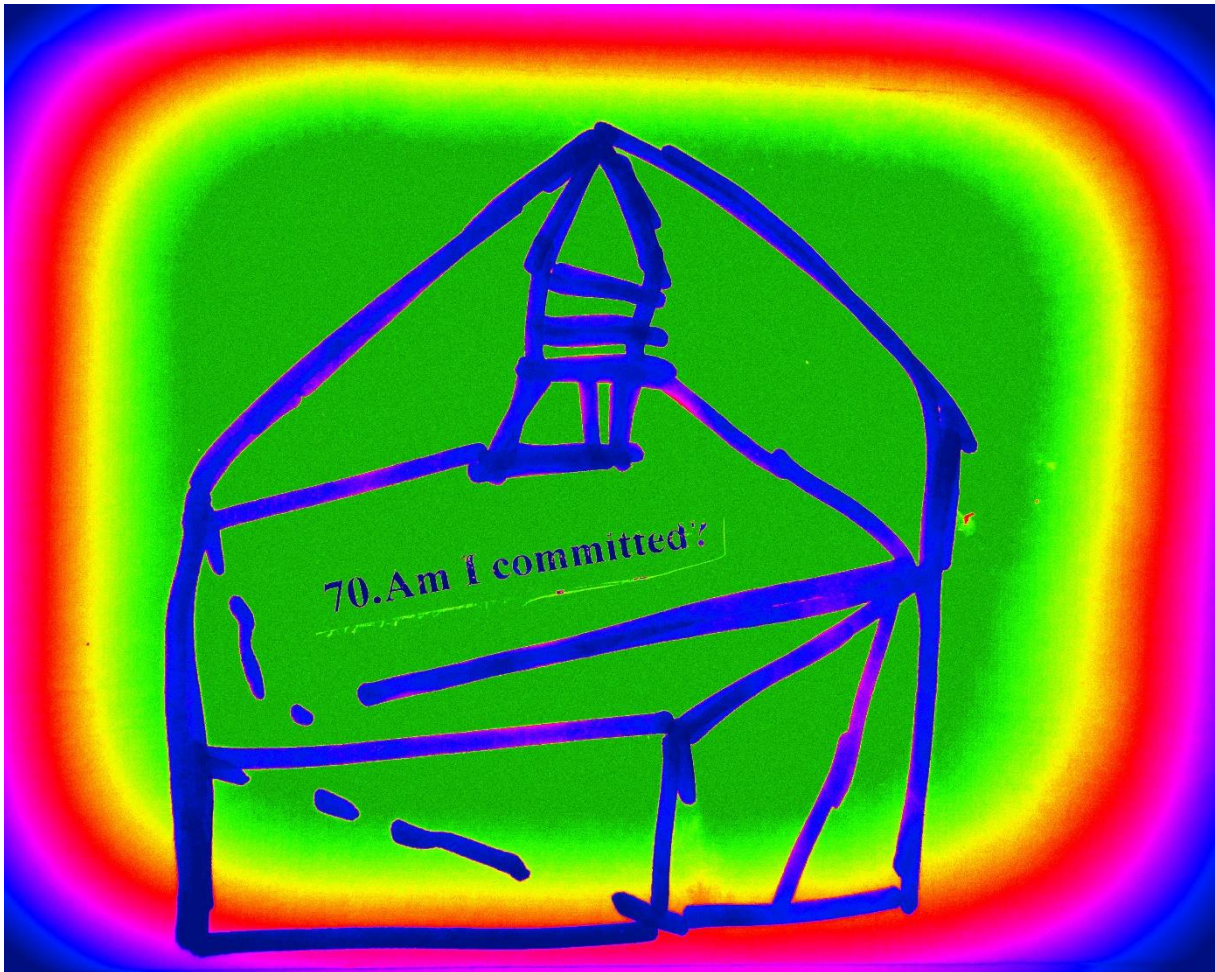
**Joseph Zinker, 2001, page 30, *'My earliest and most powerful searchings were in the world of art. (...) I remember an art assignment in high school in which we all made masks. My mask was different from the others, so much that my own image frightened me.'***

#### **How do you experience art?**

**Do you experience art by just taking time to sit and look and let it enter you by its colours, vibration, images? Or do you follow the guides who tell you where to look, what to see, what to remark, what is the history behind it? If you do it one way, how about trying out the other way. In the end you might be able to integrate both ways by writing while you look at the art and stop worrying about right or wrong. It is about an experience of your whole being that can connect you, inspire you and make you happy.**



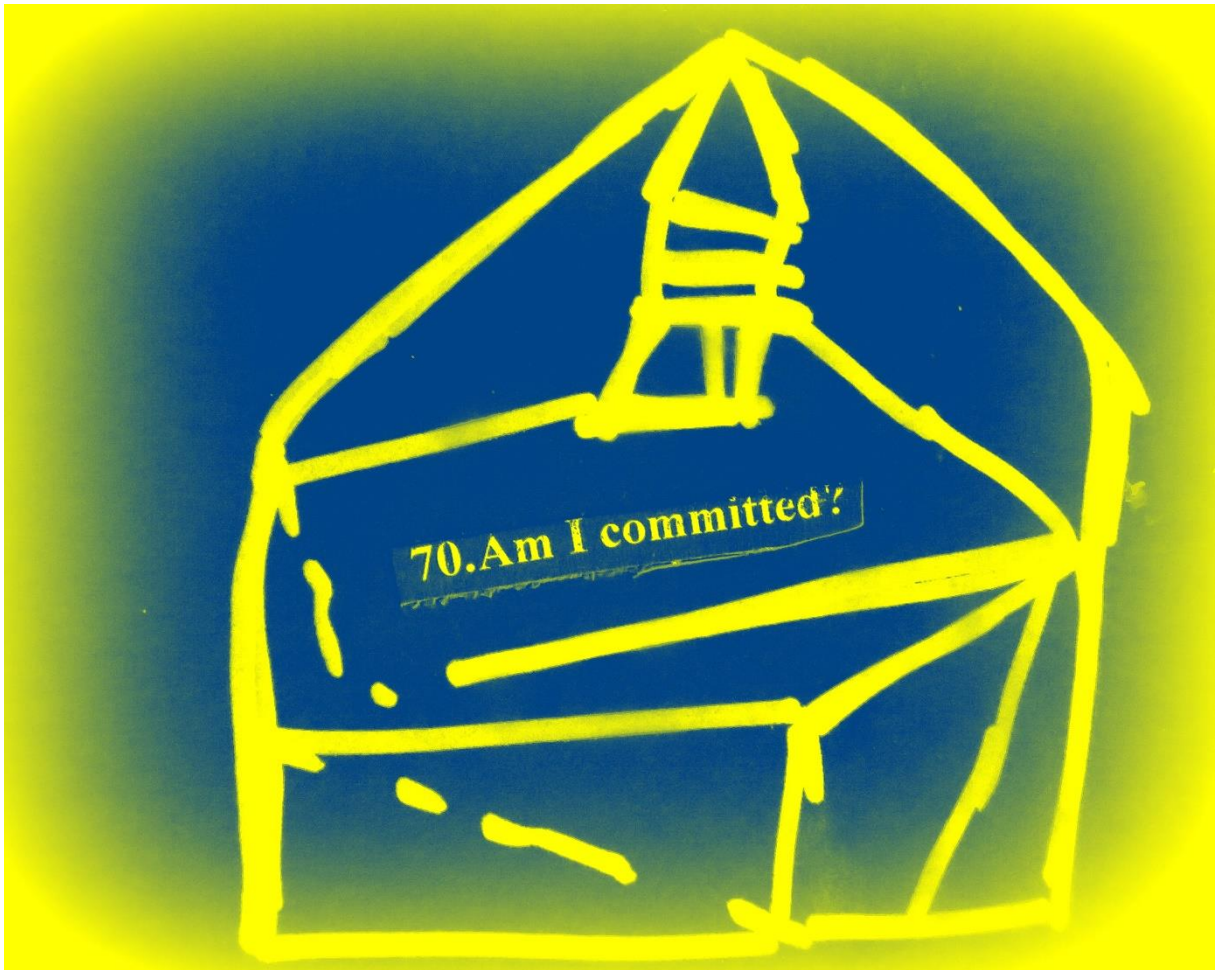
*Q70. Are you committed?*



**In the Treehouse. Yes, I am committed but to what exactly? To myself I think and that means I am committed to the world and all the people in it. If they are okay, I will be. If they are not, I cannot be either! I have work to do. When I did Zen I learned that I have to take care till the last human being on earth feels happy. Mission impossible of course. But it is about the intention. The Zen masters compared it with a bird that drop by drop is trying to extinguish a fire in the woods. Indeed mission impossible. But as long as the fire is going on the bird has to go on doing what s/he has to do, and it is in the doing that will bring the healing process.**

**My commitment to me and all the people in the world starts here in this group. You are the people most close to me now this moment. Therefore the best I can do is feel my commitment to you. That is why working together feels so exciting. I am not only at a distance committed to for example the victims of the earthquake in Japan, but I am committed to me and to you.**





I can listen to me and to you, feel for me and for you, look at you and feel compassion or irritation or humour or longing and we can enjoy or suffer this together. It makes me feel your compassion for me. Nourishment I and we cannot live without.

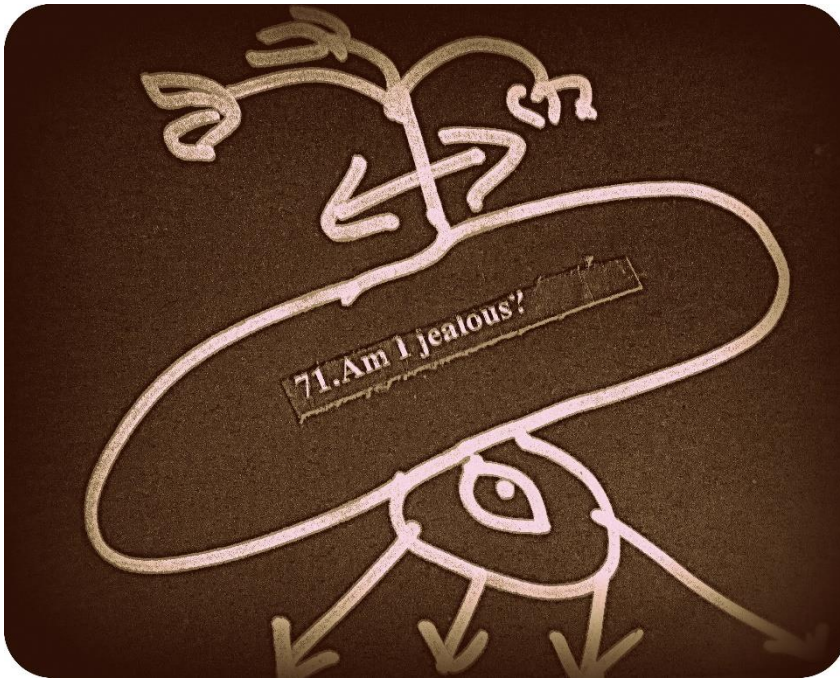
Time is up. Otherwise we cannot read and feel what we read or can we just read without having or wanting to share feedback and comments? Can it be just enough, just right what we express in the few minutes we have? More, I always want more, more time, more words, more feelings, more being together with more people, but I have to accept what is, is enough!

### Man as a Thing

Joseph Zinker, 2001, quoting a publication called *Manas*: 'Until quite recently the behavioural sciences – including history – have dealt with man as a "thing". They have given us the view that human beings are not quite real unless they exist in large numbers. (...) The new view is that one man has enough significance in him to reveal fundamental truth about all men.'

**Your Private Story:** For your own private story please find out to whom or to what your commitment is directed. Is it to your family, your friends, your lover, your partner, your work, your art, your country? And is it to you?

## *Q71. Are you jealous?*



Jealous of whom? I do not want to be jealous, I rather am a victim who has a reason to be jealous. A reason to think that the world is against her? It all began with being a war child. And with my manic depressive beautiful father and my dancing queen mother. Poor me, not seen, not heard by the ones who should see me. Poor me, having to put up with all that longing and suffering living in a country where the sun is hardly shining. Although at this moment there is a splendid Sunday light out there, inviting me to stop writing and come into it to heal and let my jealousy melt away.

Fascinating what Joseph Zinker, 2001, has to tell me. I opened Sketches at random and read on page 130: *'I feel like a victim. I feel as if the world won't cooperate in my struggle to become myself. (...) To give up feeling the victim, I may have to live through a period of owning how I victimize others by rendering them helpless and stupid. (...) In caring for my friends, I am able to see the world, to see it in its wholeness, and to be a whole person.'*

### **Being Jealous**

and having to deal with people who are jealous of you, are two sides of the same coin. How about you? Can you admit your jealousy or do you withdraw in your arrogance and pride, and tell yourself that jealousy has nothing to do with you? The most difficult part is making people jealous without realizing it. Jealousy starts in the family we grow up in. Take a few minutes and let the images of what was, guide you to your story. Please write with compassion for you and your siblings. What helped me to accept my own jealousy and the jealousy of others is the knowledge that behind jealousy uncertainty is hidden. When we miss selftrust we are not grounded and become jealous of people who seem to have what we lack.



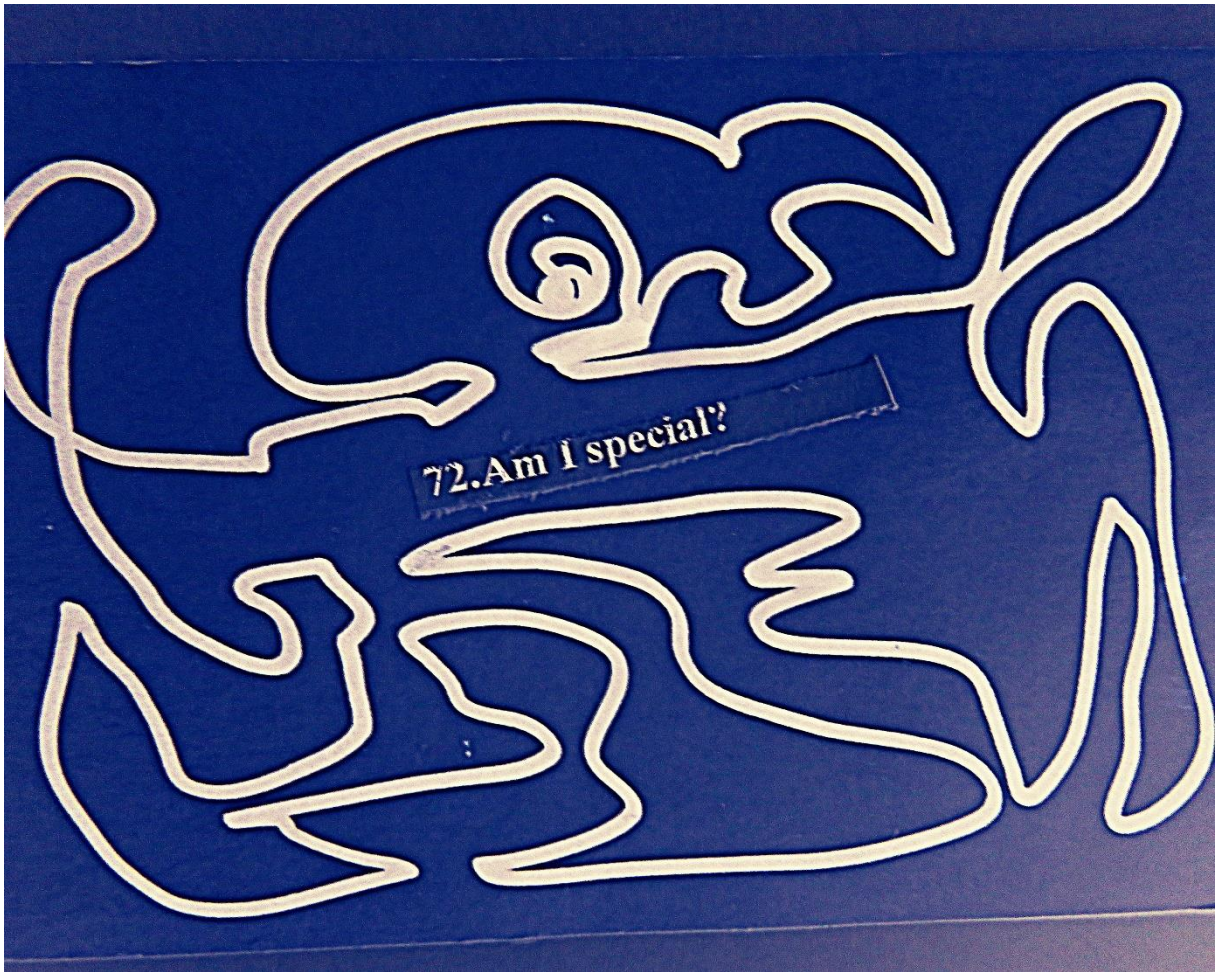
*Q72. Are you special?*



**In the Treehouse with E, G, D, H, J. This is a question that makes me humble. Am I special enough to be here with you and share my thoughts, feelings, ideas, experiences. Am I special enough or is it better if I am not special and just who I am, just like everybody else? Yes maybe, but I know that the moment we open our mouth, tell where we come from, we all are special and this means that being special is more common than being normal. There used to be a time I thought, I was more special and afraid people would bore me or put me off or make me angry when they spoke. But since I became a therapist my fear disappeared. Now I know that when I am willing, I can listen and hear and sit and feel compassion and pain and interest when you talk and tell me where you come from, inside and out.**

**All I and you need is time and courage to do it. During the 25 years I have been doing this work I learned that I am special or normal enough to listen and receive you. But strangely enough telling about myself in a group I am leading, telling about my life experiences, still is not easy for me. I still am so enormously afraid that I will bore you, afraid that I ask too much time for me, too much attention for who I am. Even now when writing I feel that I should stop, because I am wondering about having enough time for all of you to read out loud what you have written. I know I will be the last and I**





**know I will content myself with whatever time I get. But do I really? Am I content with the time and attention I get, or will I be longing for more because I think I am special enough – just like you are - to get special attention?**

**Joseph Zinker (2001), *'The creative therapist's biggest enemies are his desires to please and help, his exhibitionism, and dishonesty. (...) Creative expression is a social act – a sharing with one's fellow man of this celebration, this assertion in living a full life.'***

**Are you in balance?**

**What makes you more special, your ability to give or your ability to receive? Or are you the most special special human being, because giving and receiving are in perfect balance?**



*Q73. Are you words?*



**In the Treehouse with E, J, G and S. Am I words? Sometimes it seems I am asking myself the most difficult questions. I am words and I am more than words, I should say. I am thoughts, longings, flesh, feelings, muscles, nerves, I am a whole system that functions around a beating heart, a breathing mouth, a smelling nose and a feeling skin. Yes, skin. What would I be without a skin? An open wound? An organism without borders? But without words I would not be able to give names to what I am and who I am, and I would not be able to communicate with you and share my thoughts and feelings. Therefore I make a statement now: I am words, without words I would not be me, without words I would be a drop in the ocean that does not need words to define itself. I would be a grain of sand on the beach, just like any other grain of sand. There would not be anything wrong with me, because I would be just what I was meant to be.**

**But as a woman, as Tine, it is a different matter. As a woman I am meant to be me. I am supposed to show my feathers, my colours, my sounds. As a woman I have to find me by separating me from other human beings, so I can go back to connecting, knowing who I am and recognizing who I am making contact with. It is not a matter of doing this just once and then it is fixed. No I and all human beings have to do this every day a million**



times. Breathing in, get going, breathing out and speak or drink or eat or sing or write or laugh or kiss, all in the same rhythm and feeling that with every next inhaling I become more me.

Joseph Zinker, 2001, *'As I grow and find ways of fulfilling my needs and as my boundaries grow clearer and stronger, I will feel more compassion for others and be able to forgive them.'*

**Forgive Others?**

Are you able to forgive others because your compassion is growing? Or are these just words to you? Words you need to explore what this question is about and what your life is about. Follow your breathing, it will bring you in the Here and Now so you can feel what your body is telling you.



***Q74. Are you an addict?***

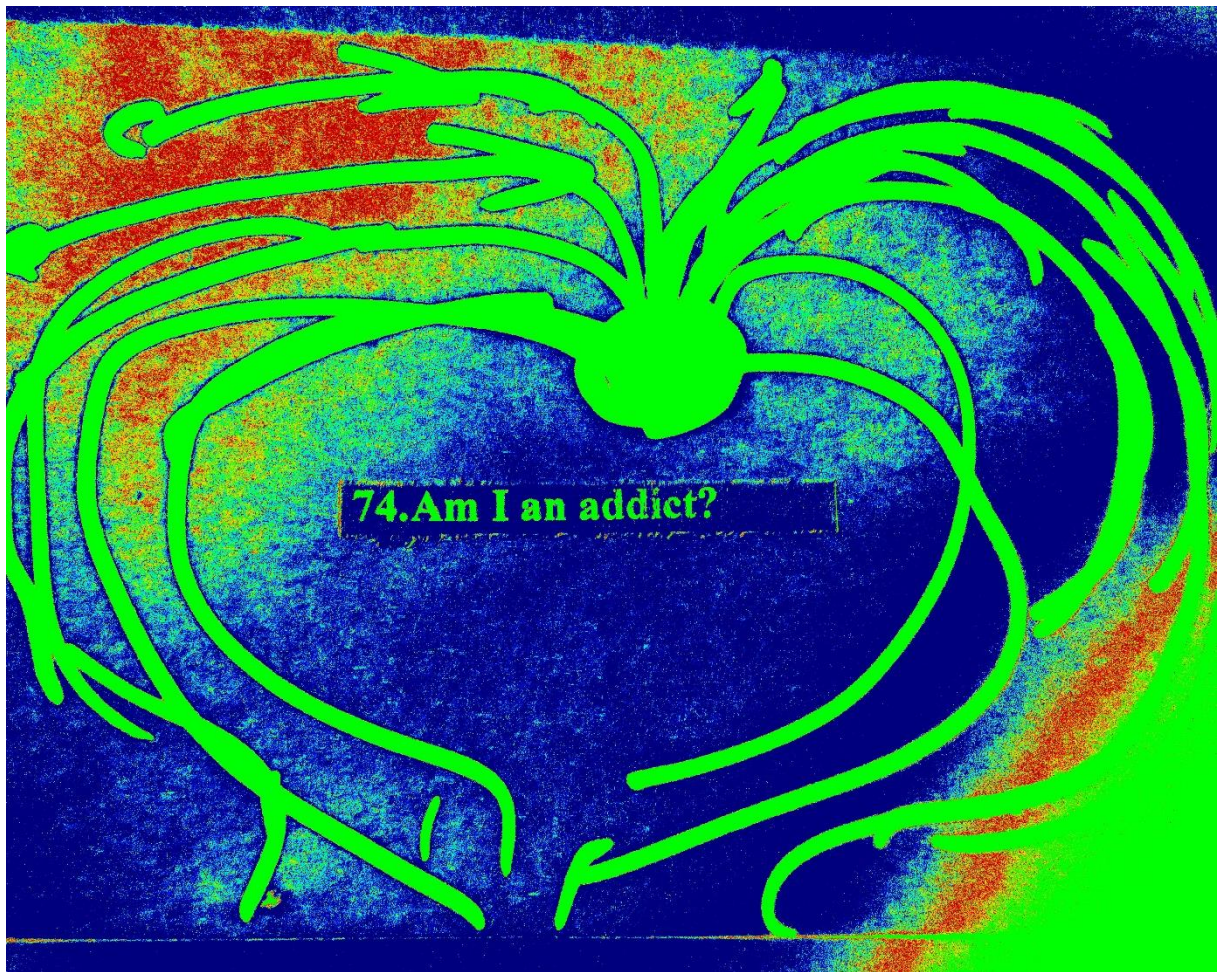


**In the Treehouse with G, D, H, E, S. Of course I am, no way of denying it. I am addicted to being independent, addicted to thinking I do not really need anybody, addicted to believing that as long as I can pay, nothing disastrous can happen to me. Is that why I live alone so I cannot be left and be betrayed? Does this mean I am exploring if my living alone is an addiction? Crazy idea. Why am I doing this to myself? I am a free woman, why don't I take the freedom to sit here and write beautiful things about me. I could do that, I can tell great heroine stories, but I am sorry to say, that at this moment, I am not interested at all, I am more with the thought of needing to control my life by having enough money.**

**Can it be that even I am in the first place addicted to negative thoughts, negative feelings? What do I mean with even I? Well, I know when my clients are, I know by listening to them.**

**Oh, here is a case of someone who is addicted to the negative thought system. Someone I can wake up. Someone I can 'save' by making him/her aware of this phenomenon. I do know I usually feel a bit awkward when I do this. I always wonder if I do the right thing, but if I am a Negative Thought addict myself, I can understand my hesitation. Saying I**





think you are without confessing 'I am too' is separating myself from the other. And when I do, I will not feel good, I will feel my N feelings and think my N thoughts. Does this make my circle round? Once upon a time there was a Negative Thought and then I do something or say something, that will set other NT's and NF's into motion. I just remember the motto on the tea label today: *Watch your thoughts they start your actions.* By thinking I am an addict and I have enjoyed being one up to now, because I needed it to survive. Stepping out means realizing time is over, I need something else, something like love and commitment.

Joseph Zinker, 2001, page 128: *'I deserve to be paid, to have all the money I need to take care of myself and my family. I deserve to earn a good living. (...) I have earned this right with my struggling, my reading, my experiences, my education and my work.'*

#### **Your Positive Thoughts?**

Thank you, Joseph, for handing us those beautiful positive thoughts. How about you as a reader, how is your relation with negative and positive thoughts, ideas, feelings? Can you say: I am an addict? A money addict? Do you feel you have a right to be paid, a right to make a good living? Or are you afraid to lose this right, because you feel humble and not good enough and hope money will make you feel better?



*Q75. Are you a hot fire?*



**My first moment of being aware was when my sister was born. Early in the morning I was invited to come downstairs and meet her. I still have a vivid image of the little baby held by my mother. I do not see exactly who else was around. I know my grandmother was the one who came to get me. The image of my sister still stuns me when I think of it. She was dark, had a dark skin, dark hair, beautiful and exotic. Can it be that at age three I wondered about that? I did not expect her to look this way. But how did I think she would look? And where did that image come from?**

**My own birth was rather spectacular, I know from the stories my mother and my aunt and - on my birthday - everyone told. I feel rather reluctant to write it again as I have done this many times before. But maybe I can look at it in a new way. How was this for me to be received by thunder and lightning and storm and rain? How was it that only my mother and my ant were there to welcome me, when I came out of the birth channel on the toilet? Was I scared? Was I afraid those two girls of 22 and 24 would not be able to take care of me, in a way that would give me the feeling of coming home, of being in a place where I belonged? Am I here? Am I her? Questions I have been chewing on for a long time. Yes, I am here and I am her on the edge of Amsterdam in a family of contractors and blacksmiths. Builders that is to say. A family that takes his responsibility for developing the city, for co-creating society.**

**And I am her, I am the one they were waiting for. I am the one who could continue the work my great-grandparents and grandparents started? Strangely enough I have the**





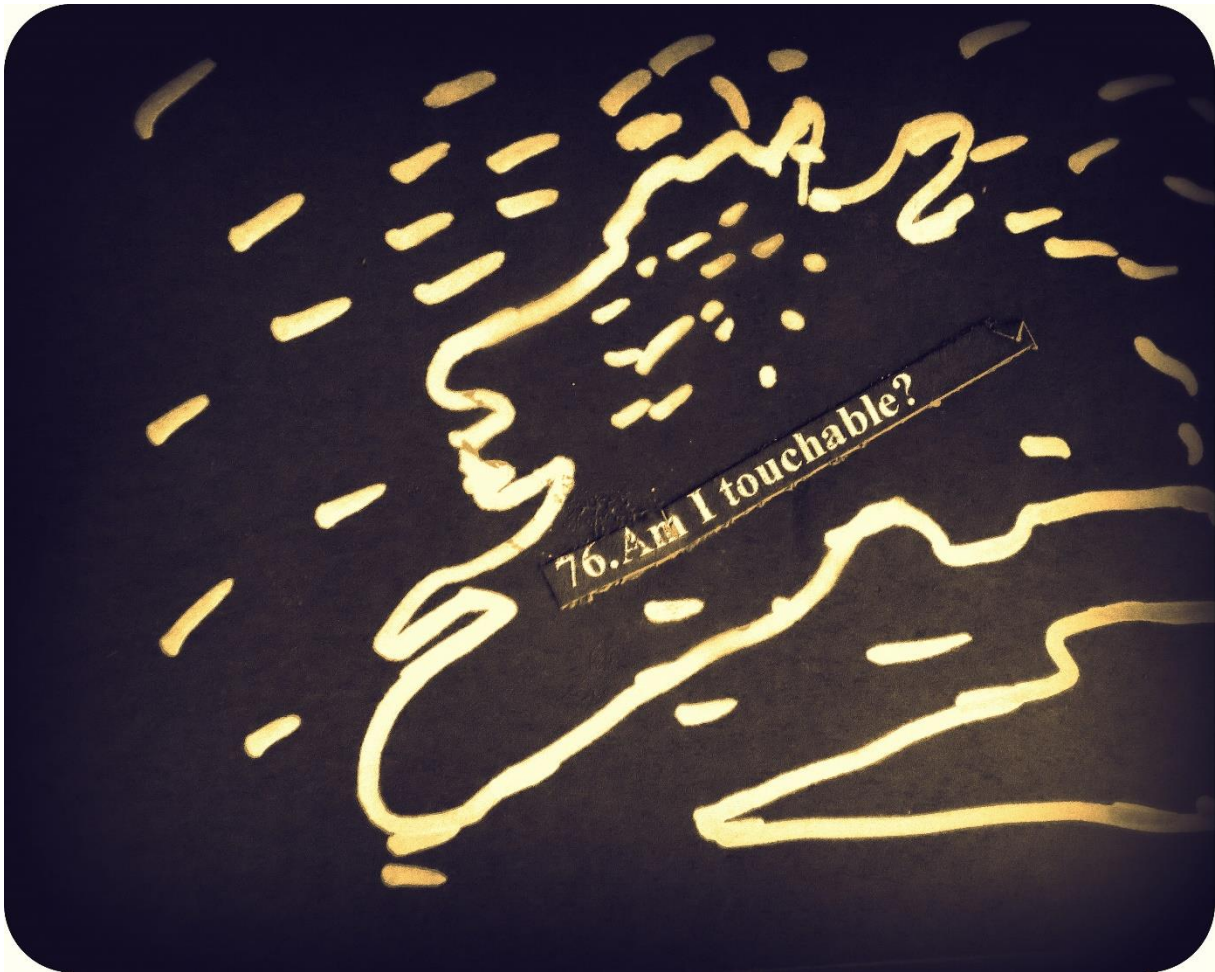
feeling that my parents were stuck, that they did not know what they had to do to go on with the work, that was already set into motion. Or did they do work that was not so visible but existential as well? Did they pave the road for me and my sister and brother so we could build on their frustrations, finding how to dismantle them and start building the next layer? Without foundation no building. Without ancestors no way to live your life or to follow whatever path. By talking about hot fires today and how they are needed, I realize that I come from wonderful, great, exceptional hot fires that were rather frightening to experience. Too frightening even to be able to say, I am in it, I am part of it. I am not the victim of hot fires made by others, but I am it, I am part of IT. I am a good fire maker, I can build a fire, get it going and have to explore time and time again, how to feed the flame so it will not extinguish. A never ending fire, a fire that goes on, like the sun, but then in a different kind of energy and warmth. Was that what the thunder and lightning was for when I came into the world. Hey girl this is to remind you... Also interesting is to think of my great-grandfather who as a blacksmith created enormous fires to handle the iron he was working with.

Joseph Zinker, 2001, interviewing a woman, just before she died. Asking why she does not want to hear from the doctor about her nearing death: *'Nobody's gonna see me worried about nothing the doctor tell me... (...) So long as you don't be born you won't have to die. But the minute you are born, you can just die anytime...'*

**Doing it your way?**

No doctor to tell you what IT is about? Frightening? Giving trust? Knowing that you know and are part of Nature, of Fires and of the Big Whole. Are you ready to surrender and able to do IT?

**Q76. Are you touchable?**



**At this moment I am not. I am irritated, impatient  
because the sun will disappear within a minute  
because my cat keeps striking along my nose  
because my dog is waiting for adventures  
and most of all because I want this manuscript to be finished.  
I long for someone who taps me on the shoulder  
to let me know I did a good job.  
I feel alone in the vastness of possibilities.  
I am too obsessed to long for and be open to touch.  
I am too much in my frustrated doing pole.**

**But I discovered Lee Irwin\*, a new guide for me, a new master, since my journey to  
Charleston and the Dream conference in Amsterdam, I know he exists. I open his book  
'Alchemy of the Soul' on page 104 and read: *'The communication of insight should be a  
multidimensional process, not a simple mastery of speaking but also a mastery of hearing  
and taking in the other as a partner in the processes of discovery. This taking in must go  
far beyond the immediate visible or verbal sign; it must move into the subtle energetic***





*realms of shared perceptions, intuitive and empathic impressions, and the full range of our inmost psychic capacities. (...) In a soulful seeing and listening we ourselves are seen and heard.'*

**This is precisely what my work is about. It is what drove me to explore the undercurrent in groups and by writing. It is hard work I feel rather alone with sometimes. It seems that most people have other things to do. But knowing that I am not the only one who cares and who thinks it is important enough to teach and write about, I can relax and be happy caressing the cat on my lap, while feeling I am touched by the sun. At the Dream conference I was touched by the presentation of Lee, who knows how to embody his words and who radiates when he dances an energy I can recognize and enjoy. Remembering gives me the subtle energy I need to start breathing again and to go on with all those multidimensional processes.**

**How about you?**

**Do you recognize the longing to do the Work together? Where and how do you find your nourishment? What is it you need? Energy? Music? Words? Dancing? A master that can be your ideal model?**



*Q77. Are you ready to do IT?*



Am I ready to stop preaching and just do IT? Is sitting here writing together with L, E, and G preaching or doing IT? I think it is both. Of course I preach but that is just the beginning of IT. Isn't IT or can IT not also be the preaching that I have to do. IT can depend on the writing. For me sitting here is doing what I have to do and long to do: creating contact and change. What is this dream that is haunting me exactly about? Is it about having fun, laughing and crying together. About celebrating being human and agreeing that being human is not an easy thing to do. I have to face I am not only human. I am also a woman who longs to be a complete human being.

How? Or rather let's begin with: WHAT are the facts? What am I supposed to do to make my being complete? Fact today is that I live in an aggressive world, I do not want to be identified with. I do not want to be part of IT.

HOW does this feel? I feel uncertain. I wonder if I should not go out in society more and participate in politics or in a church or in something social. My head says immediately: No, no, no, use your passion to create this non-violent group. Non-violent because we have the intention to express ourselves without judging. The intention to confront, when we have to, confront with love and interest not with violence. contempt and reproaches.



**WHY** do I have to do this? If life is a gift, I got a rather big part, I feel. Too big for me alone. I had better unwrap, use and share IT. I find it frustrating to see how people are hurting themselves and others, because they are not able to see the reality. I believe I have a responsibility to teach people to look and listen, to see and hear and IT is what I am doing. All I need to make my world a better place, is believe in me and make you believe in you. But why do I need so much courage to do this?

**Quote**

*'Am I stupid? Isn't it time to give up staring with open mouth at icons who cannot be reached, but do something that evokes my admiration? The best example is the singing teacher, who is of course the man who set me on fire when I listened to his concerts in Amsterdam. He gave me the energy and the courage to follow him and learn from him how to sit and sing, how to sit and just be.'* Tine van Wijk 2011: Chapter 35: Chosen.

**Your IT?**

And you, are you ready to do IT? What is your IT? How is IT to experience IT? And why is your IT as IT is?

**My book Gestalt Process Writing to C can be ordered as soft cover or E-book:**

**[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) – [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com)**







**The 77 Right Questions are part of the book ‘Gestalt Process Writing to C’, that is about the longing to communicate and connect with teachers, colleagues, clients, students and loved ones. The moment I began my Gestalt Training, I started writing to open a source, a stream of energy that connected me with the wisdom that had been in me all the time. I just did not know how to reach it. My Gestalt Colleague Julia Rodders from Northern Ireland wrote about her adventure reading it: .**

*‘There is a freedom and a truth in your words. You offer the reader courage to really examine what it means to be human. You stay with the here and now almost to a point that it forces the reader to stay on the edge of the discomfort of the mundane and then towards enlightenment. Your passion for life is contagious. I feel inspired by your passion. I feel alive in your sense of humour. Your words remind me what it is to really be true in my role as a Gestaltist.’*

*Tine van Wijk was born in Amsterdam just before WWII. The war marked her life. It made her aware of how wrong life can go when she saw her father disappearing in a psychiatric institute, where he died when he was 53 years old. Seeing how he was medicated and elektro shocked made her afraid of the care he was given. She decided this would never happen to her and succeeded by writing, painting, singing and above all by giving therapy.*

*If you are curious about the details please go to my website [www.tinevanwijk.nl](http://www.tinevanwijk.nl) where you can download the To C Magazines, my books ‘Spelen in het Land van Toen’ ‘De Beleving Schrijven’ and much more.*



**Q66. Who are you?**



**Who are you? The obvious question.  
Of course you know the answer.  
You are who you are, nobody else can stand on your feet,  
or breathe with your mouth,  
or write the words you long to write.  
It means that nobody can tell you what you do  
or write or say is right or wrong.  
Only you can feel what words or actions do with you.  
Your responsibility is to find out who you are in relation  
to the world and to all those other voices surrounding you  
and expressing themselves.**

**Once you decide you are going to do IT  
It is a great and wonderful adventure  
That of course can also be painful.  
But the Right Questions in this book  
Will teach you to 'Never to Give Up'  
Because love is always just around the corner.**

**With support from Tine van Wijk [www.tinevanwijk.nl](http://www.tinevanwijk.nl)**