



Into the Void: A Journey of Longing, Love and Eros

By Lisa Loustaunau

I am about to take two risks. The first is a great big leap into the unknown; at age 62 I have decided to end a marriage of 30 years. The second is to begin this article with this disclosure, which I have chosen to do because alongside my vulnerability is an energetic expansion and a clarity related to the decision to let go. To let go of what is known in my life and allow myself to be guided by inner truth into a void. To move into the unknown with trust in my heart knowing that this is a move toward love.

Over the years I have accompanied clients of every age as they struggle with major life decisions. Do I let go of this job, this partner, make this move, say yes to this opportunity? No stranger to the fears, ambivalence, and at times paralysis that can overtake us all when facing major life decisions, I know the multifarious obstacles, questions and “what if’s” that make critical life choices arduous. Yet here, at one of the most consequential junctures of my life, with mind still, energy grounded, and heart open, I am just saying, “Yes.”

Perhaps you are asking yourself if I have a secret lover who is inviting me to a new level of late-life sexual fulfillment waiting for me on the other side of divorce? In truth something more compelling is calling me forth—a deep felt sense of the *life-force* pulsing in every cell of my body urging me to honor my longing. Clear as a bell it beckons me forward toward more aliveness, more love, and yes, why not, perhaps the possibility of late-life sexual fulfillment. I step forward with no guarantees, knowing only that my willingness to step into the void is what opens me to new possibilities. Goodness, the old me barely recognizes the new me.



It's been a journey to get to the place where I can trust my heart in this way. Twenty-three or so years ago, while attending a workshop led by John Pierrakos MD, Core Energetics founder, we were led as participants through an exercise he called, "A Step Toward Love." John asked us to stand and to find the felt sense of *longing* in our body. My heart grew weighty and my chest swelled with the depth and breadth of that semi-sweet sad sensation as I began to touch my longing. He invited us to stay with it, then close our eyes, raise our arms, and reach with the force of that longing. I could feel the energy surging from my heart through my arms. The next instruction was to walk forward, at whatever pace felt real, toward that which he simply called "Love." Instantly my mind began to formulate questions. "What does this mean?" "How specific do I get?" "What exactly is it that I am longing for?" "What's the point of even doing this?" Although I could feel myself walking and reaching, most of my energy had shifted out of my heart and into my head. I had to make frequent stops to reconnect with my body. It was a challenge to stay embodied and present to the feeling and difficult to walk with any enduring consciousness of that longing as the fuel propelling me forward.

To feel and honor our longing is one of the greatest gifts we can offer ourselves. More soul-infused than mere desire, it rises from the depths as a kind of fuel for our transformation. Like *eros*, that energy that awakens us to our attractions and brings life

into technicolor, and in which we often find ourselves behaving in all manner of unfamiliar ways, longing stirs us to our possibilities, the life within us not yet lived and asking to be born. Both *eros* and *longing* invite us to know our "otherness." In our *longing*, we concurrently hold our being and our becoming as one.

Most people I meet these days, both in and out of my practice, hold that life is a journey. A journey of consciousness and ongoing transformation, a journey of being and becoming. Just as for children during critical phases of early development, every turn in the spiral of our lives invites us to bring into expression more of who we are. In so doing, we simultaneously discover more about our nature, our energy, our capabilities and our gifts.

Why then do we and our clients resist or disown many of our inner and outer energy movements? What holds us back from feeling our *eros*, from honoring our longing, from living with an open heart, from stepping forward with the full commitment of our life force toward our becoming?

We are born into this vast universe of energy with all of our inherent potential within our Core. However, the experience of deficits, frustrations, and traumas, particularly at critical developmental stages along the way, diminish our capacity to bring our full self to the next growth stage in which we are meant to fulfill a particular task as part of our essential development as humans. Because growth and movement is not optional for children, the developing ego finds all sorts of compensations and adaptations with which to deal with these deficits. If a particular need creates too much pain or frustration, the solution is to close down the energy to that need and in so doing the consciousness of that need. If in reaching for love or nourishment or support, that movement fails to *often-enough* produce the forthcoming of what is sought after, then that need as well as the movement that physically expresses that

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need, gets closed down as a form of self-protection. Ultimately we arrive into adulthood with a body earmarked with discernible energy leaks, splits and blocks that have shaped both our bodies and our consciousness.

Spiritual literature is peppered with the term *broken-ness* as the description of an essential characteristic of the adult human condition. Spirituality posits the cause of this brokenness as being our separation from God. The healing of this condition is through the journey back to oneness with God.

Though the terminology differs, healing in Core Energetics is also a journey back to energetic integrity, to unity, and oneness. Interestingly, to ultimately reach that goal is not really the point! The point is the ongoing expansion and movement and willingness to reclaim the energy we have left behind at the various junctures in our life. We look back at our history with that reclamation in mind. Focused-energy work supports the recovery of what may presently feel like our *otherness*—the lost movements and disowned feelings, needs, or aggression. Energy, emotions and sensations held captive, unexpressed or distorted into other presentations can thus be reintegrated into the flow of our embodied being and consciousness. This is what it means to heal our splits, our brokenness, as this restoration of energy flow weaves together the divided energy currents to heal the conflicts between head, heart, and sexuality.

Each step in this journey toward what is unknown in us—our otherness—engenders an increased experience of aliveness. Our capacity to be with and hold what we have previously disowned, builds and expands energetic tolerance. The greater our capacity to contain and sustain energy in the body, the more alive we feel. If our bodies are free and responsive we can charge (build) and discharge (release) energy with the rise and fall of each full breath, with the natural rise, expression and release of all of our vital emotions, and in the arousal-orgasm-discharge cycle of our sexuality. Our capacity to feel the quality of our energy in these changing shifting movements, to allow this flow, is pleasure in living.

Pleasure in the above definition, has little to do with having things go our way, or never feeling unpleasantness or frustration, or having a guarantee that we will never have our heart broken again. Pleasure is in the very experience of our vitality, of our pulsation and responsiveness. There is pleasure in saying yes to life, free of the expectation of never being hurt, with the freedom that comes from a willingness to accept hurt, an OK to having our hearts broken, grateful that we have a heart that can feel and break. We have after all, in some form or another already survived this. Far more costly and painful is to never risk living fully again. With nothing to defend we have nothing to fear within us.

This doesn't mean there is no fear. Fear will always be a part of life, as it should be, as a basic life protecting emotion. The problem with fear is how it surfaces from our history disconnected from any real or present danger, as a nervous system knee-jerk reaction to change. Fear is problematic when it grips us and stops us from moving toward that which we desire, toward our longing, our next step, our otherness.

The antidote to fear is courage, a quality of the heart. Etymologically courage stems from the root word meaning heart (*Latin: cor*). Every step we take to follow our heart, each plunge into the unknown, builds our courage and our undefended open-heartedness.

For the adult, the journey of consciousness requires us to embrace what we have disowned and by recovering our lost energy bring more of ourselves to our next step. This is a YES to all of who we are. It includes an awareness of all the ways we have said NO to ourselves along the way, or are still saying *no*, consciously or unconsciously; not with shame but with humility and a willingness to face ourselves fully. In so doing we take full responsibility. There is enormous power in this. No longer attached to blaming others for what is unfulfilled in us, we can center ourselves in our essential creativity. Courage and willingness to explore the territory within simultaneously generates a parallel willingness to take bigger risks in our outer life. It is a beautiful experience to feel the ongoing interconnection of energy within and without. It is the gift of deep work on the self.

So here is where I stand today, putting the finishing touches on this article and feeling a connection to my essential creativity, where so much feels possible. I am walking forward into unknown territory unsure of where I will live or be in a few months time following my divorce. But my head and heart feel unified, I feel the gift of the energy that moves in me as me, and the

ground that supports me. I feel in love with life and more than a little proud of myself, a 62-year-old, unwilling to compromise her longing or set aside her eros. Life is too short and holds too much potential for that.

Lisa Loustaunau MFA, CCEP, is Director of Education at the Institute of Core Energetics. In private practice for 20+ years, she is also an international workshop leader, process facilitator, teacher and supervisor of Core Energetics practitioners in the USA, Canada, Holland, Australia, Brazil and Mexico. Lisa is currently working on a book entitled *Out of the Comfort Zone: Overcoming the Blocks to Living and Loving.*

Lisa will be presenting at the USABP convention in July, 2016 in Providence, RI. Her experiential workshop will be open to the public.

Overcoming the Blocks to Living and Loving: A Core Energetics Workshop Sampler

with *Lisa Loustaunau*
July 23, 2016

12:45pm - 4:45pm

USABP Convention
Providence, RI