

## 'Responsible emotional dealing with the 4 elements'

Talk given by Gabriele Ulbrich (Austria) at the Andante Summer School, 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> July 2012 in the Exerzitienhaus St Paulus, in Leitershofen, near Augsburg, Germany

### Responsible emotional dealing with the 4 elements

means responsible engagement with nature, our environment, everything that lives and finally with ourselves. Our dealing and behaviour with the elements is based on what we are feeling, sensing, thinking, believing about them.

It is important to be aware of your feelings and emotions and to allow yourself to realize these feelings because this is the only way to take responsibility for what you are feeling. Respect for your feelings starts where you are willing to look 'again' and this takes time.

Let us take the time we need to perceive what we sense, to get on the track of ourselves and see the right and appropriate answer to life and all living Being.

'**To be responsible**' what does this mean or even more what can it mean, because we have sometimes different perspectives regarding '**being responsible**'.

Here are some possible meanings on 'responsible':

- liable to be called upon to give satisfaction – **answerable**
- willing and able to fulfil one's obligations – **reliable, trustworthiness**
- requiring a person to take charge of or be trusted with important matters – **responsible job**
- able to choose for oneself between right and wrong – **responsibleness**

### 1.) So ... is it at all possible to deal with the elements in a responsible way?

Let us talk about '**Emotion**' and its meaning.

- strong feeling – **excitement**
- a mental and bodily reaction marked by strong feeling and physiological responses that prepare the body for action – **movement**

### 2.) So... is it at all possible to deal with the elements in a responsible, emotional way?

#### Element

- means one of the 4 substances air, water, fire or earth formerly believed to compose the physical universe
- forces of nature
- a constituent part - **rudiments**

#### Elemental

- relating to, or being an element – **fundamental**
- forming an integral part - **inherent**

The **4** elements:

The 4 elements are the basement of our physical world. Worldly Foundations and order relate to the number four: as for example the 4 points of the compass, the 4 gospels, the 4 endings of the cross, the 2 arms and 2 legs (4), the phases of the moon, the four humours etc.

Think for a moment about the

**Qualities of fire:** light, warmth, destruction can evoke very different feelings. What comes into your mind about the

**Qualities of water:** solid, liquid, gaseous, threatening. How do you feel about the **Qualities of air:** colourless, odourless, essential. What are your senses telling you seeing the

**Qualities of earth** before your mind's eye: soft, hard, fine, dirty.

### 3.) So ... what would one need to deal with the 4 elements in a responsible emotional way?

I think what we need is to have a concrete idea about the world we are living in, our family, the people at the working place, about nature and about what we really want to happen in the world.

**Respect** is a very good starting point for all relationships in our life. Respect is only possible if equality is something we have and can live.

Equality means that we are aware of our strengths, abilities, talents and we can choose to be the woman we are. Equality also means that we honour and accept the strengths, abilities and talents of the relationships we live – our family, nature, elements, left and right brain etc.

We relate ourselves to the equality that is our right of birth that means we are ALL EQUAL – no one is more, no one is less – nothing is more, nothing is less.

Are the qualities of the 4 elements equally important, equally essential to us? How is it possible to respect the 4 elements and their qualities in our daily life?

First of all we can accept that we always have the choice, the basic choice how we want to feel about e.g. a given situation, about a relationship, about an element, about ourselves.

The next step can be to realize that we are in the oneness of all life, to know about the kinship of life. We cannot separate from life nor can someone separate us from life. We just can feel separated and here again we have a choice.

We can tune into each one of the elements so that we can experience the vibration of air, earth, water, fire. If we believe that indifference is the right way, then the elements will not function for and with us, we will have no ensemble acting.

Equality starts with respect, as I said already, and ends with grief and feeling guilty not being the good female we should be.

Assurance only can be developed when fear or fear of loss is accepted as possible and sometimes even necessary.

Enthusiasm is the energy that can support our attunement into life itself. Maybe there are enemies out there, but the worst enemy always sits in ourselves telling us that we are not acceptable, not trustworthy, not the person the world needs now.

Our interest in our own life is important and it is not egotistical to be interested in what we really want in our life. It is much more egotistical to expect others to fulfil our interests and, if they try to do so, to blame them for not doing a good job. A situation as such leaves us with all the resentment of all not outspoken words we keep inside and wonder why 'they' do not know.

To be willing to be a part of this life sometimes creates anger about how nature and people are treated. One could use the energy of this anger put it together with the willingness and do something to change what causes the anger.

Acceptance is the greatest gift we can give the world, in relationships, ourselves. Honest acceptance can see, hear, feel that what is – is and still does not have to approve it. Acceptance is also the first step if we want to change. Antagonism holds on what we want to change, but if we learn to accept then therein is the power to learn how to change to the better.

In this sense let us all learn more often to accept what we cannot change in the first step. Accept and acknowledge brings respect and to re-member re-spect means to look again! The second (maybe third) look can bring an insight that can help to change!