

When Faith Doesn't Work – Consider the Benefits of Theofatalism

A New Therapy for Serenity and Inner Peace

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Preface

It seems that all the creatures on earth do what they gotta do. I need to learn and teach what I learned. This work is the culmination of several decades learning to survive and even grow through the most stressful experience anyone can suffer, untimely loss of a beloved spouse. That occurred on September 3, 1985 when I watched my wife die untimely at age fifty-two after living ten years with the threat of breast cancer. When my traditional family belief system provided no comfort, I entered therapy for complicated grief, death anxiety, issues in aging, and depression, which started me on a pathway I could never have imagined. My first therapist suggested that I do some journaling between sessions, which eventually grew into a formal search for information on mental health. Through three decades and publishing several books, I developed a belief system that helped me make sense of the ubiquitous suffering among all of God's creation. This free ebooklet is a short discussion of my work leading to a new form of counseling I call © Radical Accommodation Therapy. I offer it to suffering souls and professional therapists with hope that it will be useful to others who may feel abandoned and betrayed by traditional beliefs about how the world works when it does not work as expected. Namaste.

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INTRODUCTION

Life is not an easy matter. You cannot live through it without falling into frustration and cynicism unless you have before you a great idea which raises you above all kinds of perfidy and baseness.

Leon Trotsky

Religion helps some people navigate life, but what if it fails to deliver? Where do you go when you are suffering, and you realize God is causing the suffering? A potential problem is the loss of resilience normally provided by faith among those who are religious but not spiritual. Poet, Robert Frost observed that it is hard to get into this world and hard to get out and what lies in between makes no sense. The Buddha observed that suffering is the normal state of human existence, which is caused by discontent. In his old age, Oedipus could say suffering and time had been “instructors in contentment.” No young person can say that. The Stoic, Epictetus said that events do not disturb people, but their thinking does. There are countless ways thoughts cause people to suffer; some are real, and some are unreal. If thoughts control actions, what controls thoughts? People suffering such a crisis may seek professional help and, when they do, therapists may diagnose a psychopathology which is not appropriate. Here is a beneficial therapy for such cases. Know this truth, and it could set you free.

The psychiatric Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) included a category entitled Religious or Spiritual Problem (ICD-9-CM V62.89) For the first time, there is acknowledgment of distressing religious and spiritual experiences as nonpathological problems. According to its author, Dr. David Lukoff, this category can be used when the focus of clinical attention is a religious or spiritual problem. Examples include distressing experiences that involve loss or questioning of faith, problems associated with conversion to a new faith, or questioning of other spiritual values which may not necessarily be related to an organized church or religious institution. (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p. 685)

Dr. Lukoff notes: “Spiritual distress is the state in which the individual experiences or is at risk of experiencing a disturbance in a belief or value system that is the source of strength and hope. The most important task is to give people in spiritual crisis a positive context for their experiences and sufficient information about the process that they are going through. It is essential that they move away from the concept of disease and recognize the healing nature of their crisis.”

Plans do not work out, people disappoint and die, and life is not fair. The earth actually is a very violent place. The assassinated Beatle, John Lennon said life is what happens as you are making other plans. Tribalism and competition – us vs. them - are part of human nature; winners and losers, wars and revolutions are bridled only by government, and that not very effectively. Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) and other therapies were developed to help people deal with life traumas. Such mind treatments have their place, but

they are insufficient and unavailable for many sufferers. Why they, along with prescription drugs, work for some and not others is unknown. For some suffering people, rational preemptive suicide seems to be a way out. Public-private attempts to understand and prevent suicide are still in the incipient stage. There should be a better way, and maybe there is, for suffering souls to accommodate the world as it is when that is imperative.

Jungian analyst, Dr. James Hollis wrote, “Depression, loss, disease, war, poverty, betrayal, angst, murder, fraud, theft, grief, and so on are part of the human condition from which none of us is exempt. But to move beyond a posture of outrage (and impotence) at life’s suffering, we are called to ask another question: to what present task is this swampland calling me? Asking this question moves us from a posture of victim to engagement with the unfolding of our destiny.” (*Swamplands of the Soul*, 1996) Hollis says we can live without happiness, but not without meaning in our lives. It is precisely our mortality that makes our need for meaning necessary. Still, the opposing view of Nihilism claims there is no meaning, it just is whatever it is. Life is a struggle between joy and despair, love and fear, trust and betrayal, and then you die. Life always is fatal. We all must navigate white water on the way to our waterfall. Nietzsche said, “Those who have a why to live can bear with almost any how.” This work offers a reply to the “why” of life.

There is a belief that offers to make sense of the apparent nonsense and suffering in the world. If suffering in life cannot be avoided, at least it can be understood, and with understanding comes acceptance and inner peace.

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DERIVATION

Theofatalism is belief in the triune prime force in the universe that Generates, Operates, and Destroys everything material and immaterial according to its will, i.e., GOD. As such, it is assumed that nothing happens among all sentient beings outside the will of GOD. This belief system may help people feel good inside whatever happens outside - or not. Theofatalism provides a solution to the ubiquitous question of “why” that has been debated since the dialogues of Plato and Aristotle. Theofatalism is the ultimate absolute infinite explanation for what is, what was, and what will be, from atoms to galaxies – no exceptions. Theofatalism has it all covered.

Theofatalism is derived by integrating three concepts:

1) the Hindu concept of Trimurti, i.e., the triune gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva recognized as the sources of creation, maintenance, and destruction of all things, These three sources are restated as generator, operator, destroyer. GOD

2) the concept of theological fatalism, i.e., the existence of an omnipotent power that determines all events past, present, and future, and

3) causal determinism which infers that all events are caused by previous events connected in a perfect chain of necessary and sufficient events back to the first cause, which leads forward to the inevitability of all things.

Theofatalism consolidates these three precepts into the concept of GOD as generator, operator, destroyer, the prime force in the universe and whatever other universes there may be. Nothing, good or bad, material or immaterial, whether thoughts or actions, happens or does not happen without the will of GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. This concept accommodates all belief systems, past, present, and future as the GOD above gods. In theofatalism, the only plausible answer to “why?” is GOD’s will - from atoms to galaxies; no exceptions.

ORIGINATION

Life is a wonderful opera, except that it hurts.

Joseph Campbell

Theofatalism was developed by Lewis Tagliaferre while he was searching for emotional comfort after the untimely death of his wife in 1985. He thought he could not live without her and the lifestyle that she provided, and he was inconsolable. He made the living and she made the living worthwhile. When his traditional faith failed to provide any consolation, it felt like the earth was removed from under him and there was no firm place for him to stand. During the unspeakable grief after untimely death of his wife, British theologian C. S. Lewis wrote, “Nobody told me that grief feels so much like fear. There is not much danger I will stop believing in God. The real danger is that I will come to believe such terrible things about Him. Go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find. A door slammed in your face and a sound of bolting and double bolting on the other side. After that, silence. You might as well turn aside. Why is He so present a commander in our time of prosperity and so very absent in time of trouble?” (*A Grief Observed*, 1963) Indeed.

Tagliaferre felt betrayed and abandoned by withdrawal of the church support network he had trusted. His faith in the Lord and His people seemed to have forsaken him, just as the apostles ran away when Jesus was crucified. Even the pastor had no words of help after his wife died. His display of grief seemed to be contagious, and people avoided him. His subsequent loss of faith presented as anger, resentment, emptiness, despair, sadness, and isolation. Finding no peace in scriptures, he set out to find some way to survive the worst grief and post trauma shock imaginable. His life was shattered and, like Humpty-Dumpty, it could not be put back together again. When conventional therapies were exhausted, he expanded the search for inner peace through reading and journaling.

His research for relief spanned the fields of religion, psychology, sociology, cosmology, geology, anthropology, criminology, history, government, and more. He discovered life is hard and complex, and what comes after is indefinitely uncertain. Much of the time we are lost in the dismal states of disappointment, guilt, grief, betrayal, doubt, depression, anger, terror and the like. Life is a struggle between opposites including joy and despair, love and fear, trust and betrayal, and then we die. Theofatalism claims that any belief which denies this reality is false

and delusional. Sigmund Freud defined religion as: *A system of wishful illusions together with a disavowal of reality, such as we find nowhere else.* He viewed religious beliefs as fantasies that prevent people from coming to terms with how things really are. Tagliaferre concluded that a belief is needed which accommodates the truth of this definition yet does not destroy the basic human need for grounding in spirituality.

There is no doubt that the mind affects the body and the body affects the mind, whatever the mind may be. Dreams reveal contents of the mind that are not accessible when we are awake. Tagliaferre intuited that the brain-body system in all sentient beings acts as if it has a mind of its own that is controlled by the universal triune energy of generation, operation, and destruction, which he called GOD. Recent discoveries in quantum mechanics and neurology imply that all actions begin unconsciously in the brain immediately before those events are executed in thought or action. A baseball batter has 0.6 seconds to swing or not at a coming fast ball. What appears to be conscious decisions actually are driven by unconscious resources – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Since no one consciously controls the organs in their bodies, and the brain is an organ, it is reasonable to assume that the adoption of belief systems and all other thoughts and decisions are driven by forces beyond conscious awareness.

The brain, which controls behavior, is not a static construct. It changes in response to accumulated experience and influence, (called neuroplasticity) but apparently by some volition superior to human consciousness. This process is evident in the performance of a great musician, athlete, artist, author, or poet – or a mental patient, criminal or despotic dictator – leaders and followers, employers and employees. Existence of theofatalism itself - including your reaction to it - illustrates the conclusion. Nothing happens outside the will of GOD – in churches, schools, bedrooms, in hospitals, restaurants, on battlefields, in banks, theaters, prisons, parks, hurricanes, atoms and galaxies – or anywhere. Thus, free will may be an illusion, necessary though the illusion may be at this stage of human evolution.

THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Evidence for theofatalism exists in various scriptures of both the Judeo-Christian and Muslim faiths. Christians may say God is in control without really asking what that means. You probably won't get this in church, but scriptures say the Lord does not just allow things to happen; rather he causes them, both good and bad. A few examples suffice:

“The Lord kills and makes alive; The Lord makes poor and makes rich; He brings some low and lifts some up.” (1 Samuel 2:6-7) “I make peace and create evil/calamity. I, the Lord, do all these things.” (Isaiah 45:7) “When a disaster comes to a city, has not the Lord caused it?” (Amos 3:6) The Quran says the same thing to Muslims; “No calamity comes, no affliction occurs, except by the decision and preordainment of Allah.” (S:64.11) “It is God who directs the

lives of his creatures; everyone's life is in his power." (Job 12:10) It seems like this applied to Jesus also. "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." (Matthew 26:39) "No one can come to me (Jesus) unless the Father calls/enables them." (John 6:44,65) We are the clay and God is the potter, making some for common use and some for royal use. (Jeremiah 18:2-6, Isaiah 64:8, Romans 9:12) Famous Swiss psychiatrist, Carl G. Jung (1875-1961) said, "Man's suffering does not come from his sin, but from his paradoxical God." After all, it was God who created the serpent, gave Eve and Adam free will to fall for its temptation, and then condemned mankind by His own will. St. Clement of Alexandria (150-215CE) saw God as ruling with two hands, wielding the power of Satan in one and Christ in the other. If Satan rules the world, that must be the will of GOD, or Satan would be more powerful than GOD which is impossible. You may not understand the full implications of this conclusion until you actually are impacted by it. The created has no power to control the Creator, and Satan could not create himself. Thus, not only suffering, but reaction to suffering must be God's will. This idea is threatening to established religious institutions, but the conclusion is inescapable when you really think about it. So, most people refuse to think about it.

The Bible also says it was God's will for some Jews to reject Jesus as Messiah and were destroyed by Rome. Their eyes and ears were closed so they would not repent and be saved, and that was their destiny. (Isaiah 6:9-10, Matthew 10:13-15, Mark 4:10-12, 1Peter 2:8) Also, God's will is invoked in daily living. "Go to now, you that say, today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and make money: Whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, which appears for a little time, and then vanishes away. Therefore, you ought to say, if the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." (James 4:13-15). "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails." (Proverbs 19:21) "Be thankful in all circumstances because this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:18) St. Paul wrote that to Christians who were being crucified for their refusal to worship Caesar.

There are only three options: God wants to relieve suffering but he cannot, God could relieve suffering but he chooses not to, and God actually causes suffering. Jung said, "God is the name by which I designate all things which cross my path violently and recklessly, all things which upset my subjective views, plans and intentions, and change the course of my life for better or for worse." Those who claim that, "God is love" (1 John 4:8) overlook that God also is a "raging fire." (Isaiah 30:30, Hebrews 10:37)

So, where do you go when you suffer and realize God is causing the suffering? This god is not one to worship, but rather one to fear. (Luke 12:5) "It is a fearful/dreadful/terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 10:30) As with Job in the Old Testament, we must say, "The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away....this is the day the Lord has made." (Job 1:20) This awareness can present a spiritual dilemma to the faithful, i.e., to continue living the illusion that God is love, or to abandon it for indefinite uncertainty. There is another option.

Modern churches all "proof text" scriptures, choosing only the ones for Sunday sermons that keep people attending and donating. The Bible says: "God is not the author of confusion." (1 Corinthians 14:33) Since there is confusion in the Bible and among various beliefs, Tagliaferre concludes that it must come from a higher power than any of them, i.e., the GOD above gods as posed by the late theologian, Paul Tillich. Ergo, theofatalism.

SECULAR COROLLARY

What is important in knowledge is not quantity, but quality. It is important to know what knowledge is significant, what is less so, and what is trivial.

Leo Tolstoy

For those who recognize spirit but cringe at religion, consider the concept of causal determinism. In secular terms, for anything to occur the opportunity must precede its recognition which must be followed by action, which must produce results regardless of outcome. All actions, large and small, gestate in the subconscious mind before they become conscious. Some examples follow:

Jeff Bezos got the idea for online retailer, Amazon.com, while driving cross country. Danny Thomas got the idea for St. Jude childrens' hospital while starring television. Mark Zuckerberg got the idea that became Facebook while he was a sophomore in college. Bill Wilson, alcoholic, got the idea for organizing Alcoholics Anonymous and wrote *The Big Book* after a delirium experience with The Oxford Group (now Moral Rearmament) during experimentation with The Belladonna Cure. Travis Kalanick got the idea for Uber while he was carpooling to work. Elon Musk got the idea for SpaceX rockets to Mars while building Tesla electric cars after he emigrated from South Africa by way of Canada. Jimmy Dean got the idea for a sausage business from his brother while he was a country music singer. Joel Osteen got the idea for his prosperity ministry, with no seminary training, after untimely death of his pastor father. Adolf Hitler got the idea for Nazism after failing as a student of architecture following combat service in WWI, and caused WWII. Mark David Chapman got the idea to murder Beatle co-founder, John Lennon while he was living in Hawaii. Theodore John Kaczynski got the idea to drop out of society and live as a hermit in opposition to technical modernization, producing home-made bombs that killed three people and wounded eighteen, after earning a Ph.D. degree in mathematics and teaching at the University of Michigan. Donald J. Trump got the idea of being President while he was a real estate developer, and Tagliaferre got the idea of theofatalism during several trips to Sedona, AZ.

These are examples of what renowned psychiatrist, Carl Jung called active imagination, i.e., thoughts arising from the subconscious mind. He wrote, "All the works of people (good or bad, important or trivial) originate in their active imagination." Napoleon said imagination rules the world. Churches are populated by people who believe God came to earth through the womb of a virgin, volunteered to be crucified to absorb punishment for the sins of his human creation, resurrected himself from death, and returned to heaven to prepare a place for his chosen people.

(John 3:16, 10: 17-18, 14:2-3) Imagine that. Willis Carrier, inventor of air conditioning, said to be happy imagine the worst that can happen and plan to accept it.

All events in every life have a cause that is linked in a chain of events back to the First Cause, which makes everything inevitable. If any link in the chain were different, the outcome would be different. Here are some examples:

Modern smart cell phones can be linked back to the personal computer created by Steve Jobs (1955-2011) to manufacture of micro-chips by Andrew S. Grove (1936-2016) to invention of the transistor by William B. Shockley, Jr. (1910-1989) to information science developed by Claude Shannon (1916-2001) to fractal geometry explained by Benoit B. Mandelbrot (1924-2010) to the binary arithmetic developed by self-taught mathematician, George Boole (1815-1864) and back to discovery of the precious metals that make them possible. Digital video can be linked back to invention of “moving pictures” by Thomas Edison (1847-1931), back to the discovery of primary colors and the rare earth phosphors that make the visual displays possible, and all the events preceding and following. A flat tire can be linked back to the rubber manufacturing technology and discovery of rubber trees that came together with the nail that is linked back to metallurgy and the creation of iron deposits on earth. (By the way, tires are black from use of carbon black for strength and durability that replaced naturally white zinc oxide that was needed for making brass shells during WWI.) Growth in electric vehicle sales is linked to government mandates for higher mileage which is linked with perception of global warming, invention of electric motors, and the materials that go into them, plus discovery and generation of electricity. Drug addicts can be linked back to creation of the natural plants and discovery of harvesting them and refining and distributing them. The Protestant Reformation and plethora of churches can be linked back to the thoughts of Martin Luther which can be linked to policies of the Catholic Church throughout previous centuries. All in GOD’s will of course. Get it?

If any link in the chain of causality were different the outcome would be different, hence everything is inevitable and necessary, including getting a flat tire or breaking a fingernail. The same analysis of culminating causality can be applied to all inventions and wars, diseases, disasters, charity, politics, cosmology, marriages, divorces, and everything that occurs each instant of each life on earth, according to laws of science from atoms to galaxies and logical or illogical decisions and beliefs, right down to trimming your fingernails and brushing your teeth. Events today among all species on earth - including belief or rejection of theofatalism - are creating causal links moment by moment in the invisible chain of development reaching far into the inevitable future.

Shakespeare wrote in *As You Like It*, “All the world’s a stage and men and women merely are the players, They have their exits and their entrances; And one man in his time plays many parts.” Albert Einstein said, “Human beings, vegetables, or cosmic dust, we all dance to a mysterious tune intoned in the distance by an invisible player.” Dr. Hollis wrote, “The great rhythms of nature, of time and tide, of fate and destiny, and of our own psyche move their powerful ways quite outside of our will.” (*Swamplands of the Soul*, 1996, p.124) The Bible says, “You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day of my life was written in your book.” (Psalm 139:16, TLB) It seems like our lives are scripted before we are born, whether we like it or not. You need not seek your purpose in life

because you cannot avoid it. Consider the arctic snow leopard whose purpose seems to be eating mountain goats, and the mountain goat whose purpose is providing food for the snow leopard. After he was asked why he writes only horror books, Stephen King replied, "I have no choice because I cannot imagine doing anything else." Your purpose apparently is to be who you are where you are when you are doing what you do and feeling what you feel.

By extension, everything from atoms to galaxies is fulfilling its purpose. No exceptions. The earth is a very big place with lots of stuff going on and, like grains of sand on all the beaches or drops of water in all the oceans, each individual of all the species is both insignificant and indispensable while doing what it must. Theofatalism is that simple and that complicated because it explains the behavior of all sentient beings and everything else in the universe. This concept boggles the mind when you think about it. So be not dismayed if it is too much to swallow in one gulp.

All creatures on earth do what they are destined to do moment by moment, each playing out the role they are given by GOD, the prime force in the universe – generator, operator, destroyer - thinking and doing what they must even when it leads to their death or to the death of others. Randomness is overcome with essential causality, i.e., there are no accidents or mistakes, there are only predestined choices and inevitable consequences. All decisions are learning experiences. After a thousand experiments failed to disclose a material for his light bulb, Thomas Edison declared, "Now I know a thousand things that don't work." All in GOD's will of course.

Thus, theofatalism cancels the need for remorse and guilt for actions in the past because if they could have been different, they would have been different; the little things as well as the big things. GOD does whatever it wants with whomever it wants whenever it wants. Although praise and blame are necessary opposites, neither one is appropriate, but they must co-exist or it would be different. Theofatalism claims we are not accountable for what happens to us or how we react to it. But, grief and remorse, like all emotions, must be necessary at this stage of human evolution or they would not exist. The created cannot control the Creator. We are the clay and It is the potter with power to make some for royal use and some for common use. (Romans 9:21) This is a non-negotiable fact throughout the universe. You can accept it or reject it, but you cannot change it any more than you can change the laws of physics from atoms to galaxies. Despite this irrefutable conclusion, many people are given the illusion of free will at this stage of human evolution. All in GOD's will of course (AIGWOC).

FIVE PRINCIPLES

From his research, Tagliaferre sees the emergence of a common thread leading to five principles of theofatalism. Principles can never be invented, only discovered. The principles of theofatalism are summarized here to stimulate readers to complete their full development by reading the books referenced, to learn them and to make them a part of living twenty-four hours each and every day.

1. Absolute Predeterminism: Everything is happening as it must or it would be different. The divine will of GOD the Almighty One cannot be disobeyed. It is the utmost arrogance and ignorance to assume that the creature can disobey the Creator or the clay can control the potter...or the puppet can pull its own strings. Disobeying GOD's will is impossible.

2. Necessary Opposites: For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction; as in physics so in human thoughts and actions. All energy of the universe is distributed about a neutral center like the air in a balloon, with equal power invested in opposing forces manifested in life events. Like a battery with two poles, energy is impotent until the two opposing poles are deployed. Since Homo sapiens manifest energy in thoughts and behaviors, they, and all material and spiritual forms, must conform to this principle of necessary opposites.

3. Unconscious Decisions: All thoughts begin unconsciously before they become conscious. All behavior is driven from unconscious forces among and within people who select options presumed to offer more valuable benefits than burdens. All options among choices are selected because the benefits are worth more than the burdens, even though they may be unconscious and seem to be unreasonable or even insane to a rational observer. There are no mistakes, only unconscious choices and inevitable consequences.

4. Indefinite Uncertainty: Life does not grant us certainty, only options and probabilities. Nothing about the future in human affairs can be forecast with accuracy, especially those things that we think we know for sure. The famous American philosopher and baseball star, Yogi Berra once said, "Making predictions is hard, especially when it is about the future." That awareness makes humankind feel anxious necessarily. To be anxious is to be human, because it is a normal reaction to the awareness of indefinite uncertainty.

5. Immaculate Immanence: GOD works a very specific plan for each material element and sentient being that forms a unique and necessary part of the whole universe. Most of human life is like assembling a jigsaw puzzle without the picture on the box. Each individual sentient being may be only one small insignificant piece, but a necessary indispensable piece or we would not be here. The whole picture composing each life becomes more apparent near completion as we take our place in it. "Immaculate" means without flaw or error and "immanence" means operating within, inherent, present throughout the universe. So, this is not the same god as the one in any holy books. It is the Generator, Operator, Destroyer of universes. GOD

Theofatalism also accommodates both acceptance and rejection of this reasoning and adoption of other belief systems. Everything must have its complimentary opposite as GOD never made any one-sided coins, i.e., up and down, in and out, sweet and sour, good and evil, male and female, anima and animus, cold and hot, pessimism and optimism, content and discontent, creation and destruction, predator and prey, criminal and victim, love and hate, joy and suffering, sickness and health, rich and poor, pain and pleasure, positive and negative, light and dark, truth and falsity, first and last, win and lose, war and peace, birth and death, first and last, maze and labyrinth, order and chaos, optimism and pessimism, introvert and extravert, random and destined, heaven and hell, trust and betrayal, Christ and Satan - as in the ancient symbol of Yin and Yang. Apart from their opposites, everything is meaningless, like one hand clapping. We must live in a world of both benefits and burdens, all balanced in the universal One. F. Scott Fitzgerald said it is a mark of maturity to hold the opposites and still function normally – including acceptance and rejection of theofatalism - all in GOD's will of course.

THE SYMBOL



C. G. Jung said there is the thing and the symbol of the thing. Whereas the Catholic symbol is the crucifix and the Protestant symbol is the empty cross, the symbol of theofatalism chosen by Tagliaferre is the Chartres Labyrinth (ca.,1200) in which there is only one pathway for each animate being to follow. Jung said, “*The way is within us, but not in Gods nor in teachings, nor in laws. Within us is the way, the truth, and the life.*” (*Redbook*, p.231) Mythologist, Joseph Campbell may have described this pathway in his instruction to “follow your bliss.” He wrote, “If you follow your bliss, you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and

the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living. Wherever you are—if you are following your bliss, you are enjoying that refreshment, that life within you, all the time.” The Rev. Lauren Artress wrote, “Walking the Labyrinth has reemerged today as a metaphor for the spiritual journey and a powerful tool for transformation. This walking meditation is an archetype, a mystical ritual found in many religious traditions. It quiets the mind and opens the soul. Each step unites faith and action as walkers take one step at a time, living in trust and willingness to follow the life course set before them.” (*Walking a Labyrinth – 2011*) You can buy a labyrinth at www.bwatsonstudios.com.

Unlike the dead-ends and random pathways of a maze, which is intentionally designed to confuse and frustrate, the labyrinth has no barriers, there are no shortcuts, and it definitely is not a random walk because everyone one must take the steps before them. The labyrinth symbolizes how we emerge from the source when spirits incarnate in the body and traverse through stages of infancy, childhood, youth, adulthood and then after midlife we return to the source through stages of maturity, seniority, contemplation and mortality. Four seems to be a significant number because it occurs 278 times in the Old Testament and sixty-one times in the New Testament. The four quadrants of a labyrinth symbolize the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of mankind. The walk of life traverses these four quadrants from infancy to mortality, each person on their own inevitable predestined pathway. They also represent the four functions of personality – sensing, thinking, feeling and intuition - described by the personality model of C. G. Jung and implemented in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). For applications of the Jungian personality model in therapy, visit www.16personalities.com, www.personalitypage.com, and www.mbtionline.com.

In the end, death may not be a tragedy, but a transition of energy from the physical to the spiritual form– all in the process of becoming. Scripture says, “Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day...For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” (2 Corinthians 4:16–5:1) Dying is easy; trying not to is hard, painful, and expensive. However, we are not made to welcome death because contemplating it is like staring

at the sun. You can only peak in small squints through a dense filter and maybe not discuss it at all. The late founder of Apple, Inc. Steve Jobs observed that even those who think they are going to heaven don't want to die to get there. His family said his last words were, "Oh wow, oh wow." Anthropologist, Margaret Mead said, "When someone dies, we pretend nothing happened." But something very big happens, and the world scarcely takes notice.

In the final steps of life, we must reconcile courage with surrender. We may endure shock, denial, anger, bargaining and depression, but in the end there is only surrender as nothing else matters. All beginnings come with endings. "Build your nest high as the eagle, and I will bring you down," says the Lord. (Jeremiah 49:16) We may fight for immortality, but mortality always wins. Always. Sometimes, medicine just gets in the way of it. How much suffering is enough? We do not have a tradition to mark the beginning of dying. We need a ritual for death as a rite of passage, not as an ending, but as a passage from here to what nobody knows. It is the pathway that each of us must walk through alone in our own time and in our own way. All in GOD's will of course. Ergo, theofatalism.

CRITICISM

"Religion is the opiate of the masses."
Karl Marx

Hope is the worst of all evils for it prolongs the torments of man.
Friedrich Nietzsche

Every new idea must survive opposition and rejection before it is accepted. Criticism of theofatalism lies primarily in its apparent negation of conscious free will. Assumption of free will is the international basis for jurisprudence because without it there would be no justification for laws or their enforcement. Without free will, all actions would be robotic, and people could not be held responsible for the results of their uncontrollable impulses. All human governance would be impotent without assuming free will, and society would be driven by instincts alone. Apostle Paul wrote: "Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves." (Romans 13:1-7) "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right." (1 Peter 2: 13-17) Without assuming free will, the rule of law is made a mockery, and theofatalism is a one-sided argument for determinism.

Proponents of free will may argue that the negation of free will, or its falsification, would mean that God is a liar and not worthy of belief. Some scriptures claim free will is a gift from God, for it lets people love and obey him because they choose to do so, under penalty of hell. (Matthew 22:37, Luke 12: 5, John 3:16,14:15). However, free will is negated in other scriptures, as Jesus declared to his twelve apostles, "You did not choose me, I chose you." The New Testament describes Christians as "the chosen" thirty-eight times. (Matthew 22:14, Mark 13:20, Luke 18:7, John 6:37,44,65, 15:16, 19, Acts 22:14, Romans 11:5, Ephesians 1:11) Thus, church membership apparently is not voluntary – unless it is.

Another criticism involves possibly confusing correlation with causation. Just because two events are related does not mean they are causative. For example, telomeres on the ends of chromosomes are depleted with aging. This could be a cause of aging - but aging also seems to be related to genes and environmental factors, diet, etc. Certain chemical changes in the brain are observed in people with depression, but whether they are the causes or the results of depression is unknown. In addition, experiments in quantum mechanics demonstrate that there is an instantaneous connection between subatomic particles no matter how far away they are from one another. Biologist, Rupert Sheldrake has proposed the existence of morphic energy fields to explain this phenomenon when it is observed between sentient beings. (*A New Science of Life*, 1995) If you are sensitive enough, you may feel this energy with loved ones or a pet. Morphic energy may help to explain the lifestyle similarities seen in studies of twins who were separated at birth. Jung defined events seemingly unconnected but causative as “synchronicity.” There may be no coincidences, only “godincidences.” Since, according to the law of universal conservation, energy can neither be created nor destroyed, it follows that death of the body does not extinguish its energetic existence, called life. Thus, correlations may well be causations while causations may not require connections.

Theofatalism acknowledges the opposing views of free will and determinism as necessary opposites. But it postulates that whatever people believe or eventually discover, it is the consequence of the will of GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. The renowned scientist Albert Einstein said, “Man can will what he wants, but he cannot will what he wills.” We have no free will, so we must believe in free will. Nothing happens outside the will of GOD, including the rejection of theofatalism.

A NEW THERAPY – FIVE STEPS TO INNER PEACE

The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence.

Rabindranath Tagore

We are taught a formula for life that says “do this, get that.” Sometimes it works and sometimes not. There is possibly no worse shock than to trust in a personal faith that is impotent when needed the most during the painful trials of life. When things do not go as planned, what then? Living in harmony with the reality we do not create, that is the key. It follows from this discussion that to feel inner peace and serenity while living in the world as it is, one must employ ©Radical Accommodation Therapy (RAT) in five ADTDA steps. There are only two rules to follow in their application to life: begin and continue.

- 1) *Accept* what is moment by moment including your personal reaction, because it must be necessary or it would be different,
- 2) *Detach* from what you cannot change and wish was different because it hurts too much not to,
- 3) *Transcend* the need for control because you don't have any as the brain has a mind of its own,
- 4) *Don't fight* with GOD because you cannot win – but if you fight that also is inevitable because you must walk the labyrinth you are given, and

5) *Assume* there are no mistakes, only predestined choices and consequences. Every decision is a necessary learning experience.

This new therapy comes with a single, but very powerful affirmation: ***GOD – generator, operator, destroyer - grants me willingness to accept what I cannot change, the courage and ability to do what I must, and the wisdom to know the difference.*** Everything in life among all species flows from that. Of course, this affirmation is easier to practice under mild stress than during a life-threatening situation. Implementing the steps is encouraged by praise, empathy, attention, and approval (PEAA), which goes a long way toward soothing the suffering soul. The transformation from infantile faith to mature reality takes a lot of patience and persistence and practice in all things – mild and severe. But the endurance can pay off in survival of the ego. After all, that is the main goal, isn't it? Jesus said, "The spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing." (John 6:63) His response to adversity was radical accommodation. If someone slaps your cheek turn the other, if someone takes your coat give them your cloak also, if a soldier demands you carry his pack a mile carry it two miles, if someone borrows something do not demand it back, love your enemies, and do good to those who harm you. Tagliaferre proposes this form of therapy may be a powerful advance in human evolution, i.e., "a giant leap for mankind." But its discovery and use in counseling troubled people is, of course, the will of GOD, the generator, operator, destroyer of everything from atoms to galaxies.

APPLICATION to LIFE

Don't judge the day by the harvest you reap, rather by the seeds that you sow.

Robert Lewis Stevenson

"In spite of all my uncertainties, I feel a solidity underlying all existence and a continuity in my mode of being."

C. G. Jung

"The world is not something in which certainty is possible...and therefore you must learn to act on things which you still very much doubt."

Bertrand Russell

Living in the past invites depression, and living in the future invites anxiety – but if you must, you must. Living mindfully here and now moment by moment clears the soul from all manner of perfidy and baseness – if you can. Jesus instructed not to worry about tomorrow because the problems of today are enough, so why borrow trouble? It does not change anything, and worry can impact resilience needed today. All in GOD's will of course. Poet, Robert Frost lost his wife and four children by his age sixty-six and lived to age eighty-eight to think about it.

Frost wrote, "Lord please forgive my many little jokes on thee, and I will forgive thy great big joke on me." One literary critic wrote, "Frost's best work explores fundamental questions of existence, depicting with chilling starkness the loneliness of the individual in an indifferent universe." His epitaph states, "I had a lover's quarrel with the world." The best

meditation upon GOD may be that given to Moses: I AM – here and now – because that is all we have for sure. (Exodus 3:14)

C. G. Jung said many of his troubled patients lost contact with whatever resilience was provided by their faith, and no one recovered who did not regain it, i.e., “they made peace with GOD.” “Be thankful in all circumstances because this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18) St. Paul wrote that to Christians who were being crucified for their refusal to worship Caesar. For some, this solution requires a personal transformation to accommodate the world as it is for them. Jung proposed the second half of life is preparation for the personal development leading to a transition from physical to spiritual that he called “individuation,” i.e., removing the dross of life to establish who you were born to be. He declared, “Those who look outward dream, those who look inward awake.” The transformation requires examination of the influence of your family, what you learned in school and social environment, and your natural personality to uncover your authentic self. This inner work is hard, but Socrates said the unexamined life is not worth living. Unfortunately, it may require help of a therapist which most people never obtain.

Jung said, “The way to yourself is the longest way and the hardest way. Everybody would pay anything, his whole fortune, to avoid going to himself. Most people hate themselves, and for nothing in the world would they go where they are, where their native town is, because it is just hell. The dread and resistance every natural human being experiences when it comes to delving deeply into himself is, at bottom, the fear of the journey to Hades.” (*The Vision Seminars*, vol 1, p. 30) Jesus said the gate is very small and the road to it is very narrow so only a few ever find it. (Matthew 7:14) Buried in the subconscious is a person we really may not want to know, what Jung called the shadow. St. Paul lamented he was a “wretched man” because, “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. I myself in my (conscious) mind am a slave to God’s law, but in my (subconscious) sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.” (Romans 7:23-25) Necessary opposites. If there is one modern resource to recommend that helps people learn more about themselves and others, it might be a personal subscription to *Psychology Today* magazine.

Concerning his discoveries in human psychology C. G. Jung said, “I do not have to believe because I know.” And so it is with theofatalism. Tagliaferre postulates in every life, there is only one way, GOD’s way. Whatever you do or don’t do, think or don’t think, feel or don’t feel, moment by moment and step by step is the only thing for you as there can be no other. Theofatalism is the ultimate absolute infinite explanation for what is – from atoms to galaxies. Whether you believe this or not is the right choice for you also. As with the law of gravity, you can ignore it, but you cannot avoid it.

Further, Jung stated, “The greatest and most important problems of life are fundamentally unsolvable. They must be so, for they express the necessary polarity inherent in every self-regulating system. They can never be solved, but only outgrown.” For many people, this means ignoring problems and going on with life as though nothing happened – seeking happiness outside of themselves. Thus, the world is a mess. However, things are happening unconsciously inside that may display in unexpected ways outside. Celebrated author, Ernest Hemingway said, “Life eventually breaks everyone, and some people grow stronger at the broken places.” But, some things that are broken cannot be fixed, so we have cemeteries and junk yards and prisons. He committed suicide. (Need I say it? All in GOD’s will of course.)

Some people see things as they are and ask why. Other people see things as they could be and ask why not. Pessimists see the glass half empty and optimists see the glass half full. Theofatalists see both sides in such views, and they say GOD's will. This awesome idea may be true or not, but nothing you can do will change the truth. There may be an infinite variety of beliefs, but there can only be one truth. Nietzsche said truth always is on the side of the more difficult. Instances of confusion are not uncommon among people who become dazzled by ideas too great or energies too powerful for their mental capacities to grasp and their personality to assimilate. If you are not scared and confused, you don't know what is going on. Dr. Hollis wrote, "We are daily obliged to choose between anxiety and depression, which comes from being an animal who can become aware of just how thin the thread by which it hangs really is. (And wherever you go, you are there.)" (*Swamplands of the Soul*, 1996, p.103) The universe is so big, and we seem to be small and powerless. Breakthroughs, like discovery of theofatalism, often are very painful, often acute and dramatic, initiating opposition and rejection. It is dangerous for breakthroughs to challenge established traditions.

Scripture says with much wisdom comes much grief and with much knowledge comes much sorrow – again an example of necessary opposites. (Ecclesiastes 1:18) There may be nothing new under the Sun; it is all there waiting to be discovered. However, painful spiritual enlightenment has been beneficial in healing deep psychic wounds. Dr. William Ferraiolo wrote, "To develop sincere appreciation for this opportunity to be born in a brutal world not of your making, to struggle and fail time and time again, to feel repeatedly lost, bewildered, frustrated, and hopeless, to swim in this ocean of misery, and, ultimately, to drown in it—this is the beginning of wisdom." (*Meditations on Self Discipline and Failure*, 2017)

Most therapies imply that you can change thoughts to change feelings, (whatever "you" are) but what if "you" do not control your own thoughts (whatever they are). Mystical writer Abd-ru-shin (a.k.a. Oskar Bernhardt (1875—1941) who was big on free will, intuition, and personal volition declared in *The Grail Message*; (19-41): "All teachings (thoughts, ideas, interpretations) were at one time willed by God, precisely adapted to the individual peoples and countries, and formed in complete accord with their actual spiritual maturity and receptivity." Therefore, if you were raised in Italy you probably are Catholic, if you were raised in Tennessee you probably are Baptist, if you were raised in India you probably are Hindu, if you were raised in China you may be Buddhist, Taoist, etc. GOD assumes many different forms among all the cultures on earth, and it makes atheists also. We all must be who we are, saints and sinners, rich and poor, sick and healthy, predators and prey. Thus, theofatalism concludes that we all must be robots of GOD, believing and doing what we must.

Beware of consuming too much knowledge. C. G. Jung observed that some discoveries during mystical enlightenment produce ego inflation. "The inflation has nothing to do with the kind of knowledge, but simply and solely with the fact that any new knowledge can so seize hold of a weak head that he no longer sees and hears anything else. He is hypnotized by it and instantly believes he has solved the riddle of the universe." So, perhaps it is healthy not to know too much about GOD. However, great things may come from ego inflation. Now, go outside and play.

Appendix A

What Distinguishes Psychopathology from Religious, Spiritual and Transpersonal Experiences?

Most people have some kind of experiences that would be considered religious, spiritual and/or transpersonal in nature. However, clinicians are often faced with the problem of identifying when these experiences indicate something may be wrong and perhaps actually an expression of psychopathology. In a review article in *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, (March, 2009) Chad V. Johnson and Harris L. Friedman made several recommendations for clinicians to help them in the differential diagnosis of religious/spiritual/transpersonal (R/S/T) experiences from psychopathology: (*Verbatim*)

1. Accept reality of spiritual and transpersonal experiences.
2. Obtain thorough understanding of client's religious history and background.
3. Realize that psychopathology cannot be determined solely by content in clients' R/S/T experiences.
4. Assess adaptive functioning preceding and following R/S/T experience, whether symptoms are acute or chronic, and level of openness to exploring spiritual experiences.
5. Assess quality of clients' R/S/T orientation.
 - a. Does current behaviors/practices exceed religious injunctions?
 - b. Does client overemphasize certain practices or beliefs and neglect others?
 - c. Do beliefs and practices promote wholeness, relatedness and full humanness?
6. Compare idiosyncratic behavior and beliefs to normative practices in religious/spiritual community (e.g., speaking in tongues, hearing the voice of God).
7. Determine nature of religious or spiritual problem (Lukoff et al., 1992, 1996).
 - a. Purely religious or spiritual problem.
 - b. Religious or spiritual problem concurrent with mental disorder.
 - c. Religious or spiritual problem not attributable to mental disorder.
8. Recognize and understand spiritual emergency versus spiritual emergence (Grof & Grof, 1992).
9. Recognize that psychopathology is often characterized by greater intensity, terror, and decompensation than genuine spiritual experience.
10. Consider markers of religious psychopathology (Lovinger, 1996).
 - a. Self-oriented display: Narcissistic displays of being religious.
 - b. Religion as reward: Using religion to explain assistance with ordinary difficulties in life (e.g., God helping one find a parking space)
 - c. Scrupulosity: Intense focus on avoiding sin or error
 - d. Relinquishing responsibility: Feeling responsible for events beyond one's control and neglecting responsibility for manageable things
 - e. Ecstatic frenzy: Intense, erratic emotional expression often containing religious content or occurring in religious contexts that may signal impending decompensation
 - f. Persistent church-shopping: Suggests difficulties in maintaining stable relationships.
 - g. Indiscriminate enthusiasm: Religious enthusiasm frequently expressed to people who do not welcome it.
 - h. Hurtful love in religious practice: Expressions of love that unnecessarily cause harm to oneself or others (e.g., setting unrealistic expectations for a child out of a notion of love based on strict Biblical interpretations)
 - i. The Bible as moment-to-moment guide to life: Applying scripture in concrete ways to

direct one's daily experiences (much like a daily horoscope)

j. Possession: May reflect underlying pathology such as hysteria, dissociative reactions, paranoia, psychosis, and borderline disorders.

11. Consider intrapsychic conflicts manifested as religious pathology (Spero, 1985).

a. Person integrates religious beliefs and practices into overall lifestyle (not pathological, but a necessary criterion)

b. Relatively rapid and recent onset of religious affiliation or increased religious fervor with associated severing of significant social and professional relationships.

c. Person's religious history includes frequent and repetitive spiritual crises and changes in religious affiliation or degree of belief.

d. Person demonstrates fixation or regression to early stages of object-relations development marked by decompensation in psychosocial functioning, predominant primitive thematic material in dreams, fantasy, and thinking, and conflict between religious expression and adaptive ego functioning.

e. Person preoccupied with fear of backsliding (consciously or unconsciously) and reaction formation of overly rigid and scrupulous religious expression.

f. Person displays continued depressed moods and lack of productivity following religious conversion or awakening.

g. Person inappropriately idealizes religious leaders or movement and applies this to resolving psychological issues such as autonomy, identity, and impulse control.

h. On occasion, an analyst's carefully interpreted countertransference may indicate the client is using religion to manage neurotic impulses.

12. Consider assessment tools for identifying adaptive from maladaptive spirituality – for example, the SELF (Friedman, 1983). (p. 523)

Note 1: The relationship between spirituality and mental health has been the focus of growing interest and research. However, the implications for psychiatric classification are only beginning to be systematically explored. "Religious and Spiritual Issues in Psychiatric Diagnosis: A Research Agenda for DSM-V" gathers the collective contributions of the prominent clinicians and researchers who participated in the 2006 Corresponding Committee on Religion, Spirituality and Psychiatry of the American Psychiatric Association. The symposium was an attempt to expand the DSM text on "Specific Culture, Age, and Gender Features" and "Differential Diagnosis" to include the impact of religious/spiritual factors on phenomenology, differential diagnosis, course, outcome, and prognosis. The issues at stake in the differential diagnosis of spiritual versus psychiatric conditions are explored at length, as is the case for updating the V Code for a Spiritual or Religious Problem. Two expert commentaries follow each chapter and seek to contextualize and extend the research, analysis, and recommendations presented. Mental health clinicians who seek to practice in a more holistic, integrative manner will find in this unique and important volume the theoretical and practical foundations to support and further their work.

Note 2: While there are no drugs approved for treating religious and spiritual problems, herbal treatments are claimed to be helpful in soothing the troubled mind and restoring emotional equilibrium and cognitive clarity. Herbal remedies listed for mental health disorders include St. John's Wort, Chamomile, Valerian, Ginseng, Kava, Winter Cherry, Ginkgo Biloba, Chinese

Skullcap, Meadow Sweet, Bacopa, Hops, Passionflower and Licorice. Consult a doctor before trying any of these herbal supplements. (Anne Procyk, ND, "Nutritional Treatments to Improve Mental Health Disorders: Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions for Depression, Anxiety, Bipolar & ADHD," 2018) registered

Appendix B

Desiderata

Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant for they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive people because they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself to others you may become vain and bitter, there will always be greater and lesser people than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your career however humble, it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is. Many people strive for high ideals and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Those who matter will not mind, and those who mind do not matter. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and stars, you have a right to be here. And, whether or not it is clear to you no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore, be at peace with God whatever you conceive him to be. Whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams it still is a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy. Amen.

Max Ehrmann, 1927

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