

## **History, Herstory, Your Story, My Story**

Below, we reproduce two stories (Ed's and Gwen's, His-story and Her-story) written as developmental action inquiry exercises, which you too can try. First, we have Ed's somewhat shorter story told in a somewhat comic tone, and then we have Gwen's much more melodramatic story.

Both illustrate a kind of writing that you too can potentially do in exploring how you have evolved over your lifetime to date and what your center-of-gravity action-logic now is.

As you read these two stories, no doubt very different in their particular experiences from yours, you can be remembering your own experiences at comparable ages, and you can be asking yourself when you transformed from one action-logic to another.

### **My summary autobiography from a developmental perspective**

Ed Kelly, Action Inquiry Fellow, July 2009

Here, I review my transformation through five adult developmental stages as described in the Developmental Action Inquiry (Torbert & Associates, 2004): Diplomatic, Expertise Oriented, Achievement Oriented, Values Oriented, and Strategic-Systems Oriented.

The Diplomatic action-logic is the one I most associate with my undergraduate days. During this time my sense of self was defined by others. My nickname was "Henry" (after Henry Kissinger) as I was the one called in to resolve disputes. Showing great ability to adapt, I lost any sense of myself. On leaving college I went to work as a solicitor's apprentice. On reflection, this was probably the most difficult time in my life as this was not really what I wanted to do but I had neither the language to express it nor the means to do anything about it. My body responded by losing weight and having anxiety attacks. I subsequently failed one of my law exams and shortly afterwards my father died.

Knowing I needed to do something, I took 6 months leave and went to Sydney to “sort myself out”. Initially I did not like Sydney as I missed my friends in Dublin, but I soon settled in. Much of my anxiety came from being on my own, something I had avoided most of my life. I also found a mentor, who in operating from a higher level of meaning-making than I was, was able to say, “What you are experiencing has been experienced before and here are some things you might consider to help you resolve your anxiety”. Having created some space in Sydney, I began to explore, and to make contact with parts of myself I had long disowned. It was not very pleasant, but in time, I felt the emergence of something new. I recognized I was doing important work and was very grateful for the assistance I received.

The highlight of this period was the success of The Great London to Sydney Taxi Ride in which we drove a London taxi from London to Sydney with the meter running. It was the longest most expensive taxi ride in history and entered the Guinness Book of Records in 1990. In preparing this review, I initially thought the success of the Taxi Ride should be in the Achievement Oriented action-logic but consistent with an Expertise Oriented mindset, the main motivation for the Taxi Ride was my desire to stand out as an individual rather than to achieve, although we did both. This was a great period in my life as I developed a new sense of myself.

In time I felt the need to move on again, this time to leave Sydney after more than six years (not 6 months) and return to the UK to complete a one-year MBA. The contrast in my lifestyle was stark; from Sydney, one of the brightest, most beautiful cities in the world, I moved to Bradford in the north of England, which is, ...well it's not Sydney. I recall arriving in Manchester airport in September, renting a Ford Fiesta car, driving towards Bradford with the rain and the clouds darkening as I descended into this old English city, populated with 350,000 Pakistanis. It was bizarre and yet felt curiously appropriate as well. I was also probably the only non Pakistani in Bradford who had driven through the Balucistan desert and watched a cricket match between Pakistan and Australia in Lahore, something that greatly impressed the many Pakistanis I met in Bradford.

My time in Bradford signalled the end of my adventure phase, or in developmental terms, the Expertise Oriented action-logic. Externally it was necessary to develop my CV as it seemed most employers were put off, rather than turned on, by the Taxi ride. While I saw it as organizing a world class event that raised A\$350,000 for charity and entered the Guinness Book of Records, they saw it as a ‘skite’ across the world. We were both right. Internally my time in Bradford also signalled my willingness to live in the world of responsibility, where many adults get married, have families and trade their products, services and knowledge for money which they use to support themselves, their families and their communities.

As it turned out, employment was an issue in the recession of 1991. Unclear as to what I should do, I returned to Dublin and to my mother's house. It was during this time that I met my wife (who I had known 10 years previously as an undergraduate).

Coincidentally, she had just completed her MBA at another university. We talked about going to America together but ended up staying in Dublin as she had a good job and I had been offered a contract with a cable TV company. I was also content to stay in Dublin as my mother was getting older, and as I was now maturing, I valued my new relationship with her.

Soon afterwards and heading into the Achievement Oriented action-logic, I got married (age 35), set up house in Dublin, started a family and a new business. These events are run together but each was monumental on its own. Getting married was perhaps the most difficult. How did I know she was the right one? What would happen if I woke up in five years time and decided it was the wrong decision? It never struck me that she might be asking the same questions or that such questions are unanswerable.

The combination of developing a business with a young family at home (and little sleep) was very challenging, although the sense of achievement seemed to make it all worthwhile. In time however, the stress of living up to the expectations I had created began to take their toll. The business was successful which was great, but there was always the pressure to do more: we could sell more, we could hire more staff, we could expand into Britain (which we did) and France (which I explored but decided against) and in the process I could make more money.

After September 11, the business temporarily crashed which helped to highlight its limitations. I began to realize I was not a legend after all and that much of my success was due to having caught a telecommunications wave that swept the country. This came in part from being one of the main distributors for a large telecommunications company. As business slowed it also became apparent the extent to which we were handcuffed in what we could do. Eventually I got to the point where I had to leave and find some space for something else to happen.

In time, this led me to sell the business to one of the younger guys, completely change my lifestyle and begin research for a PhD on Warren Buffett. I had been much taken with Buffett's 'simple' approach to business and life and thought that I could learn to be more like him. However, before I started my PhD, I had to extract myself from my Achievement Oriented expectations which was not easy. At the earlier stages there is always the sense of more to come, but when one achieves successfully one is thought to have arrived. Where do you go after you have arrived? With no signposts, moving on toward the Values Oriented action-logic is a huge leap. With the support of my wife and with the understanding of some friends and family, I consciously turned inwards, and gradually reduced my presence in the external world. It felt like a 'deconstructive stage', which would eventually lead me to reconstruct a new way of knowing about myself and my world. This arose in part through a new community of inquiry, beginning with Wilber's integral theory and moving on to Torbert's action inquiry theory and practice, which helped me explore and understand ideas that I had sensed on my own but for which I lacked support.

From having being defined by the group (Diplomatic) to seeking acknowledgement from the group for my individuality (Expert Oriented) to being part of the mainstream of success (Achievement Oriented) to separating again and reflecting back on myself (Values Oriented), I now feel that at the age of 49 I have entered a more integrated (Strategic-Systems Oriented) action-logic which is less about me and more about mutually exploring sustainable solutions for all of us. I also feel ready, and have been for some time, to reintegrate disowned parts from earlier stages of development, a number of which have been identified in the process of this review. Equally, I feel willing and able to reactivate positive aspects of earlier stages (skills) that could be used in this next period. Comfortable with my new map I am also mindful that that is all it is.

## GWEN

'Gwen' (a pseudonym) sections her story with subtitles introducing each successive action-logic and the ages when she believes that action-logic ruled her. You can see whether the evidence she offers supports the transformations she claims to have passed through. You can also ask yourself what evidence you have to support the periods in your own life that you come to see as developmental turning points. (The author gave permission to use the story for educational purposes; some details have been camouflaged to protect anonymity.)

*I was born in Medford, Massachusetts, during a snow blizzard on February 16, 1951. I was breach birth and one ear was folded over as a result of having been held that way during development. My parents, both with extremely high I.Q.'s had recently graduated from Queen's College and were now in Boston where my father was doing graduate work in philosophy (epistemology). By this time, both of my parents were well on their way to becoming alcoholics.*

*I was the second child of six. My older brother, Mike, was born 13 months before me and Jed 18 months after. Of course, I know only what I have been told about those first two years, and all of that information was obtained from a mother who is riddled with feelings of guilt and worthlessness for the part she played in parenting us.*

*My mother had no love for childrearing or housework, and never wanted any children after Mike, but because of the Church, she did not consider birth control until after her sixth. Each time she became pregnant, she would not speak to my father nor cook for weeks. She said that I never cried, that I could sit in a wet diaper forever and never make a sound, that I would not eat, and lived on milk for my first two years. She said that she seldom held her babies, that she propped bottles as a general rule and would leave french bread in my crib in latter years, so that if I woke hungry, I would not disturb her sleep. She still has dreams about having this baby with a head and no*

body that she has failed to care for. She claims that Mike never spoke until he was three because she never spoke to him.

I do not know how accurate her descriptions are, or if her behavior was really as negative as she projects. Thinking back on David's discussion of "passing through stages imperfectly" in class, I suspect that I never developed trust in the primary caretaker (mother) and that the bonding that did occur took place with my father, if anyone. To this day, I feel a very low level of trust in others and feel uncomfortable touching or being touched by others. Parental affection did not exist in our home, except for an occasional fatherly pat on the head.

#### *Stage 1: The Impulsive Action-logic (age 2-6)*

Shortly after Jed was born, we moved to Belgium where my father did his dissertation. I don't know what we lived on in those days because my grandfather, a wealthy Irish builder, was angry with my father for having declined the priesthood, and would not support him. We stayed upstairs in the third floor of a flat and seldom went out because my mother could not manage three children nor speak the language.

When I was three, we moved to Pennsylvania where my father secured his first teaching position. We lived in a small farmhouse that was adjacent to a nursery school. The house was situated on a large estate, where flowers grew wild around a large pond, and the smell of lilacs filled the air. In summer we picked wild berries and in winter we went skating on a pond. We were poor then, living mostly on lentil soup and had only a secondhand bike for transportation.

This was where recollection began for me, but it is not continuous; more a series of disjointed snap shots that, when pulled together, create an idyllic picture of a happy country life. These were the senses, the impulses that were me.

When I was six, the picture shattered and the 'dark age' set in and held firm. At six, Ann was born, Dad came out of the closet (as a transvestite), had his first manic-depressive episode and was duly fired. (Dad was the oldest of five boys and believed that if he had been a girl, his father would have been kinder to him.)

#### *Stage 2: The Opportunistic Action-logic (Age 7-13)*

My father was fortunate to locate another position at Notre Dame College for girls. We moved into a 13 room Victorian house on Staten Island that overlooked the Verrazano Narrows. It was a broken down old house, purchased under the GI Bill, which was too cold in winter and supported a family of water rats year round. But my parents fixed and decorated, and it provided plenty of room for all.

While barely a year younger than Mike, as school dates fall, I was not able to start first grade until two years after him. I did not begin with a 'school phobia', but I quickly developed one. I had no embeddedness problems, because my parents were so consumed with their own problems that there was little to foster embeddedness. In my family, you were set free to sink or swim almost at birth.

School and I quickly developed a mutual dislike for each other. We soon discovered that I could not read, nor write, nor multiply, nor divide. I was an enigma to my parents, to nuns who were use to a very bright older brother, to a world that held no tolerance for the less bright. (It was not until a few years ago, after reading an article in the Globe and being tested at Mass General that I learned, with great relief, that I

was dyslexic, not stupid.) I was taunted by my brothers, classmates, and parents, and the mere thought of going to school made my physically ill. My father used to wake me up in the morning, saying, "It's a terrible school day but you have to get up anyway!". In addition, I was much too skinny, my clothes were always dirty and ragged and one ear always stuck out of long stringy hair. That made me, not only stupid, but ugly too. Stupid and Ugly! Ugly and Stupid! By eight, I was a believer! By nine, I was going to school in a fog. Never learned, never tried. I had given up early on. Each year the school work got tougher and each year I learned less. By seventh grade, one nun finally decided it was time to leave me back. My mother pamiiked at the idea that I would be in Jed's class, three years behind Mike, two years older than anyone else in my class. She begged the nun to promote me if she sent me for remedial reading during the summer. And so it was. I was pushed on again.

Mike was embarrassed by me, Jed didn't notice much, and my only occasional friend was more cruel than kind, but I believed myself deserving of cruelty and needed friendship, so I tolerated the treatment.

At home, things got worse. Mom was always depressed or angry or drunk, and Dad was always manic or depressed and drunk. His manic-depressive episodes were now on the calendar. Up every spring and down every fall. When you live with a manic-depressive, you are a manic-depressive. You ride the same roller coaster as if you'd paid full fare. When he was manic, his drag came out of the closet, and when he was depressed, they went back in. At the time, he was diagnosed as schizophrenic but all attempts by psychiatrists to talk him out of being ill failed. When I was ten, he became very violent and manic, and as a result, the rhythm system failed, and Kelly was born. A year later, it was a repeat performance, and Jill came into being. By this time, the college was catching full wind of the situation. He was into cameras during one manic episode and took many pictures of the men's bathroom. Unfortunately for Dad, Mom had to return all the cameras in order to pay the bills. (Having the phone and heat turned off was standard operating procedure.) One year, he ordered several baby grand pianos. Those too were stopped at the door. Mom was always covered with black and blue marks, and the police, who never did anything to help her, were forever at the door. Several times, Dad was hospitalized or Mom ran away from home. One year, Dad decided that alcohol was the problem, so he gave it up in favor of coca-cola. He drank so much coke that he finally decided that it would make more sense to rent a coke machine. The machine sat in our living room until the caffeine and mania finally necessitated another trip to the farm, at which time it too was promptly returned.

The first four of us were rather a loose band, fending for ourselves and avoiding Dad's heavy hand and cruel mouth whenever possible. As it became more evident that Dad could not be depended upon as the primary bread-winner, Mom decide to return to school to get her PhD in English so that she could support the family, if need be. This was fine with Mom because kids and household drudgery were not her strong suit and, as she loved to read, she could now make a career out of her hobby.

### *Stage 3: The Diplomatic Action-logic (Age 14-18)*

Kelly and Jill's arrival into the family also changed the order of business. With Mom out of the house and Dad out of his mind, Mike and I took over as the new Mom and Dad to all. I cooked, washed, did dishes, shopped for food, and cleaned, also

*feeding, dressing, and otherwise caring for the babies. Neil took over as disciplinarian and diaper-washer.*

*Surprisingly, or perhaps not, I loved it. Finally, after being excluded from school, peers, and family, I had found a place where I belonged. I was a mother at ten and I was very good at it. I was filled with a new, very important sense of self that was distinct, positive, separate, yet I was needed and wanted. Something to replace "Stupid and Ugly". I was no longer the 'dumb blond' as my father had Mikenamed me. Now, I was referred to as 'Cinderella.'*

*When I was 13, the crunch came. During one manic episode, Dad was picketing the college on behalf of the Teacher's Union with a sign that read, "THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE, NOT FIRED." Dad was fired! Just in time, Mom finished her graduate work and they both were able to locate a new position at St. Bonaventure in Olean, N.Y.*

*We moved into a small ranch house located on (and one day to be swallowed-up by) the Alleghany River. I started my second year of high school and was doing as poorly as ever. My old sense of self, as the good mother had faded. Additional monies from a dual income permitted for day care, and Mom was now home evenings. The much needed love that I had given and gotten from two helpless babies was also gone. They were older now and did not need my care and protection as they once had. I felt, once again, reduced to the status of stupid and ugly, and with that, came a growing feeling of anger. I grew angry and I grew tough, and I began to befriend some of those 'others' that life had been less kind to. I had found a place for myself with life's losers. More than once, I was suspended and told by the assistant principal that I was "nothing." Within a year, I was #1 on the DA's list for drug addiction at Olean High, yet I barely knew at that time what drugs were. Once, I quit school, telling the vice principal, "Your education isn't worth the bullshit that I have to put up with." Dad returned me to school the next day, saying, "...and a man is a man for all of that."*

*In reality, I had few friends. I was a solitary person. I slept all day and stayed up all night, reading the forsaken Emily Dickenson ("I'm nobody, who are you...") and listening to the downtrodden Leonard Cohen. I was on everyone's wrong list, especially my own. I wasn't going to make it and I knew it. At sixteen, I slit my wrist, but stopped short at the sight of my own blood. In addition, I slept with anyone, yet felt loved by no one, except my father.*

*When I turned seventeen, my father had another bad manic episode. He was paralyzed with fear that the university had bugged the house. He pulled every nut and bolt in the house, took apart T.V.s and phones and walked around everywhere with a kitchen knife. In attempting to protect my mother from him, Mike was stabbed. Mike, in turn, grabbed a part of a chair Dad had smashed, and put a few holes in Dad's head. Shortly after, Dad announced that he was going to commit God's unforgivable sin (suicide) and he was committed. I had taken the manic ride again, but this time, when Dad was committed, I felt left in mid-air. The gradual 'come-down' was not forthcoming. I simply 'crashed.' The stillness that came over the house defied reality. After recovering from a prolonged depression, I knew in my heart that I could not go through this again. I could simply take no more.*

*I moved to Oswego, N.Y. with a black girl friend and her white illegitimate daughter. We lived in a shack, and I spent much time caring for the baby that Michelle*

ignored. Soon after, I located a part time job and enrolled myself in high school. I did well in high school there, but within a year, Michelle found a lover and I was forced to leave.

#### *Stage 4: The Expertise Oriented Action-logic (Age 19-26)*

After a time, I went back to Olean High. The vice principal, grinning, told me that Oswego High was glad to be rid of me. I called him a liar, and left for class. During my fourth year of high school, I started dating an English professor from St. Bona's. He told me that he had had my school records checked and that I was really quite bright, only I never tried. He said that I had a 136 I.Q., but as it turned out, it was Mike's I.Q. that he had been quoting. Mine read only a 106, which I just recently learned, though Mass General put it up much higher. (I have had 106, 128, 137 for numbers to date, so it's anyone guess.) After many discussions with Greg on the subject of my intellect, I started to believe him. Those talks marked a turning point in my life because I decided to succeed. While attending my fifth year of high school, I started college evenings. It felt so strange. During the days I was treated as juvenile, and in the evenings as a respected adult. I loved college and started to get A's, especially in Philosophy. Two of my professors told me that I was the brightest student that they had ever had, and a third, George, I married (age 19).

While married, I continued to go to college, but it was difficult. I had never learned how to study and as a consequence, I worked too hard at it. To get less than an A now was to fail in my eyes. I studied so hard and for so long, that I began to make myself ill. Shortly after I was married, I conceived. George was upset about this and suggested that I have an abortion. But the pregnancy was no accident. I wanted that baby and the type of loving and caring that went with it, as I had known it before, and I had no intention of terminating the pregnancy.

Only months after Jessica was born, George and Mom were laid off. As all schools were facing the same enrollment problems, there were no other jobs in philosophy or English to be found. So George and I, Husserl and Whitehead, packed up and moved to Florida where George's mother lived. George was unable to find suitable employment, as he was considered either over or under qualified. Within a span of a few short years, he had had nearly a dozen jobs with long unemployment periods in between. In addition, our relationship was under other stress. He had no interest in sexual activity, he was unable to show physical affection, and, in fact, it became evident that he did not love me.

Due to financial necessity and because I felt a need to work, I located a job almost immediately in mortgage lending. I did well at my work and enjoyed it. I also fell in love with my boss, Samuel, age 50, and that began a long seven year relationship. In reality, the relationship stemmed from two needs, a need to be loved and a need to secure my position. I rationalized that marriage was more than love and sex, and that if I was able to find fulfillment elsewhere, then this would serve to hold the marriage intact. I was very much afraid that if the marriage was dissolved, the psychological balance that the marriage provided me with would be lost, and with it my sanity. Equally, I was afraid that I would not be able to support Jessica on my own. As Samuel was also married, I saw no need to change the status quo. (I'm sure there was also a father complex in there somewhere, or so I've been told, but I did not care.)

*After a time, my relationship with Samuel grew too intense and it was causing personnel problems. The office gossip and the futility of the relationship became impossible and all attempts to quit it caused Samuel to become hostile. Therefore, after two years, I terminated the relationship and went to work with an S&L.*

*Unfortunately, Samuel had a business relationship with the bank, which was the main reason I was able to secure the position in the first place, and he arrived there every day to take me to lunch. The relationship again became obvious to an entirely strict Catholic Cuban population, and I was mortally embarrassed when one employee shouted at me in front of everyone, that my morals were indeed lacking. On that note, Samuel hired me back. It only took another two years before all of Samuel's employees had quit and Samuel's partner refused to do business with him because of the relationship.*

*Samuel then moved in as S.V. P. of a commercial bank in which he owned a large percentage of the stock, and he took me with him to set up a mortgage department. I had not stopped sleeping with Samuel, but I was finding the bed of many others in addition to him. The need I sought to fill was never sex, but love. The men were generally older, established, and treated me well; but always, I was left feeling sad and lonely. By the seventh year, I recognized the marriage, the affairs, all of it, for the charade that it was. I wanted to go far away, to leave it all, to start anew.*

*The opportunity found itself in Richard. Dear Richard. My brother's best friend from college had started calling. Rich moved to Framingham, where Mike lived, to make a new career for himself and he invited me to stay with him until I could get situated. I had been seeing a psychiatrist for awhile, but following a relationship with him as well, I decided it was time to pack up the show. I got divorced, gave up everything material to George in exchange for the right to leave the State with Jessica, and moved to Framingham.*

*My attempt to find acceptance with peers had been a sham, to find love a fraud, to gain self worth a farce. But I had my baby and my experience, and the hope of a meaningful career and relationship.*

#### *Stage 5: The Achievement Oriented Action-logic (Age 27-32)*

*Within two weeks of arriving in Framingham, I had located a position as Assistant Treasurer, head of mortgage originations at the Home Savings Bank. It was more responsibility than I had ever had before, and I had to do it on my own, but I was also excited by the opportunity to prove myself, to really make it this time. The job almost failed immediately because my boss, Roger, made sexual advances toward me, and I was determined not to get caught in such entanglements.*

*I started back to college in the B.C. undergraduate evening program simultaneously and asked my sister to live with us as she was in need of support. I was proud of my accomplishments at the Home, but the stress of the job (as you may remember from my last paper), home, school and the divorce finally took its toll. I went into a clinical depression and the night before I was to be made A.V.P., I overdosed on my anti-depressants. In spite of all, I did get the title, and the new medication from a new psychiatrist brought me out of a long three month depression in five days.*

*I held the job for another year, when Mr. Dickenson of Bay Banks asked me to take over as A.V.P. in what was to become a consolidation of 13 mortgage departments. I was excited by the challenge, and even though Roger matched the \$35,000 salary, I wanted this opportunity. Unfortunately, while I was hired by the holding company in Boston, space required that I work out of Dedham, and personality conflicts quickly developed between another officer and myself. Dickenson had told me that I worked for myself, but 'through' John. John was led to believe that I worked 'for' him, and Dickenson, playing a delicate political game, refused to settle the issue. A month later, Roger asked me to come back to the Home and I accepted due to the unsettled division of responsibilities. An hour after I quit at Bay Banks, Roger withdrew his offer stating that the President was too embarrassed to go back to the Board for my reinstatement.*

*I tried to locate another position but rates were high and most mortgage departments had folded. What I truly wanted was commercial lending, but the insurance companies that I had visited advised me that I would need at least an MBA to secure such a position and a JD was a plus. So, we sold our two homes, banked \$25,000 and moved into a small house in Framingham so that I could continue my education. As I also wanted babies very much, I thought this was a good time to have them, thus, Morgan and Collins (two more daughters) were born. (Morgan almost died shortly after birth due to SIDS.)*

*While I still had made no friends, Richard filled an emotional need for me and I have had no interest to look elsewhere. My desires have been to accomplish, to become, to be someone. While I was pregnant with Morgan, my father died, and I was shattered. I became obsessed with having his book reprinted so that he could live on, immortalized, in print. But more than that, I felt cheated. He had died too early from cirrhosis (as my mother is dying now), and I wanted the opportunity to prove myself to him. Without him, what was this all about? I went into another depression and had to go back on medication while pregnant, in order to keep going with school.*

*Now there is only me left to prove something to, and I grow weary of the effort. Once, "I'm nobody, who are you?" consoled me because I did not believe myself capable of being someone. Now, being someone seems close at hand. Now, I'm almost good enough, but to whom? To me? I'm tired of proving, proving, proving. I'm tired of the need of all the things external to me to reassure me that, somehow, I'm a fit human being.*

*Because the things that make me are outside of me, the house of cards that I've built to hold me could crumble with a light breeze, or so I fear. To that, my father would say, as he has before, "You have been through piles of shit before. You need nothing and no one. You are your own rock." Perhaps so, but I am not so sure. Often, it feels as if the negative self is wrapped loosely in pretty colored paper, and I avoid all that seeks to rip that paper from me.*

*While reading Kegan, I wrote in the back of the book, "This psychological balance, even if not wholly the most healthy of states, is better than no balance at all. It is the devil I know. To look, to question too deeply, may risk that balance, replaced, perhaps, by none. Always, under the surface is the old feeling of self-pity, crushing self-pity for all that came before. Above all else, I fear its return, for it consumes all else. The thin strips of colored paper that hold me are worth hanging onto."*

*Of course, I hope that I am not as loosely wrapped as I fear that I am. One of the main reasons that I wanted your course was so that I might gain a perspective on myself from someone besides myself. I like you and I trust you. I respect your mind and your judgment. If you feel comfortable in commenting on this, I will be most indebted to you, but feel free to decline.*