

Catherine Shainberg

Kabbalah Imagery and the Power to Heal

I felt myself in a very deep place both touching my core wounding and the potential for my existence this time on the planet. I heard my young son wake in the room next door with an unusually painful cry. I had the sense of breaking through the illusion of ancestral pain, my own ancestral issue being of the father hating his own son which is extreme self hatred as reflected by the offspring, I felt this healing in my body and a releasing of the burden I would pass on to him.

I heaved a deep sigh of relief and felt him drop into a deep and relaxing sleep. My full attention returned to the telephone I held tightly to my ear and Catherine's voice as it crackled on the faint all the way from New York to our little home in the suburbs of Perth "This is not Therapy it's Revelation," she said. Well it certainly had rocked my world.

Catherine Shainberg, a Kabbalistic Teacher and the founder of the School of Images in New York had just guided me through a five-minute visualization exercise. The visions were my own, Catherine guided me to experience them and then subtly assisted me in turning my attention to my true purpose, my pre-incarnate reasoning for taking this garb of flesh one more time and dabbling in the world of form. "As soon as you return to your true purpose, healing will automatically occur," says Catherine Shainberg. It was true. I could already feel the process happening, my lethargy and weariness of many years beginning to lift. Just like snow automatically melts once the cars engine is turned on and begins to heat the bonnet, no effort was required to cause the snow to melt it was just a side effect of opening up to the power inside. Now my purpose was nothing huge or complicated not worthy of a book to instruct all on the meaning of life, it was simple, oh so simple for all the effort that goes into rearing life, and very personal. But sensing it, feeling it in my body, was a revelation. It gave meaning and well, purpose to everything I had experienced to date. Every rumble in the womb, every heartache, every joy and sorrow and more than that, sorrows of the past went. The events didn't change, just my current experience or recollection of them. A memory of getting bullied at school instantaneously went from cringe making, literally causing me physical discomfort at the memory, to a detached amused "boys will be boys" response. Catherine described her technique; "What I have done is create a jolt within you so you could open up to your inner world. The inner world is so impressive that once experienced it can change your life." I was lapping it up. "A lot of people do visualizations but they are not aware of the power," Catherine went on "Every story in the Bible starts with a dream or a revelation or a clairaudient experience. These are all inner experiences directly from the creative source inside."

Catherine Shainberg is an amazing woman who has led a storybook life. She was brought up between England and France, training as an art historian at the School of the Louvre, Western Europe's most celebrated Gallery, before going on to be an art consultant for UNESCO, the body that decides what treasures and works of art in the world are most worth protecting. To my mind the most beautiful art or architecture is

Transformational Tours

the clearest projection of the artist's inner world, and it appears that from the very beginning Catherine was helping secure the presence of the inner world. In 1972 she moved to Israel, converted to Judaism and spent ten years studying the Kabbalah of Light in Jerusalem with Madam Colette Aboulker-Muscat, a recognized Kabbalist, mystic and teacher. Colette, Catherine told me, was the last lineage holder in a direct line from the first ever Kabbalist Isaac the Blind, who lived in Provence in the South of France during the 13th Century (although the Kabbalah's roots are said to go back further to the Mer-Ka-Ba texts of the 3rd and 4th Centuries and even be present in the Talmud written in the first century B.C.). Colette was also a descendant of Sheshet, one of Isaac's direct students. Catherine's deep love of her teacher, Colette was evident in the way she spoke about her which prompted me to ask more. Catherine told me that Colette was a very well known person in Israel yet she never left her house. This was so that when people from all over the world came to see her they would know where to find her. For forty years Colette did not even leave her street, there were always many people queuing along the road to see her. As Colette never left her home she sent Catherine out to do her work and to teach.

One of the first missions Catherine was sent on, was to help with the Israeli Army. She would teach workshops to Israeli Army psychologists to help them heal the minds of men and women who had witnessed horrific events. Yet more often Catherine was called upon to help actual soldiers overcome post-traumatic stress. When someone witnesses a bomb explosion that kills people, tearing their flesh apart or some other terrible event the memories live in them like layers in the mind. Catherine's job was to help give them a "jolt" so that their attention went from the objects in their mind to the inner world. The body only needs to get to its natural rhythm. Once there it will heal, because that's what it does.

One Israeli soldier who had been wounded by a cluster bomb, could not sleep and in fact had not slept since the attack took place. This was quite a while by the time he saw Catherine. A two-minute exercise cured him of this problem. Through the process he discovered that when the bomb went off he had made a decision to be brave, not to close his eyes, to keep them open so that he could see his wife and children again. And that's exactly what he did. Through the "jolt" Catherine enabled him to see this and once he knew his family were in a safe place he could close his eyes and within minutes he was asleep for the first time since the incident.

"Everything for us is in images, a sensation, an event is held images," says Catherine. So if we change the images that are held in the databank we change the experience, or more holistically if we restore ourselves to the natural balance through accessing and connecting with the inner world, true beautiful and ecstatic experiences would arise as the natural order of things. This took me back to the taste of the bliss following my own exercise, a blissful feeling I was still enjoying the remnants of.

The visionary path of the Imagination is the oldest in mystical Judaism used by prophets and dreamers who carry its wisdom as a guide to help them weave their way through the web of life. Learning the skill of communing with your imaginal mind means you can elicit an instantaneous response to any life circumstance, by plugging into this source. So when a healing crisis, challenging life circumstance, health issue

or relationship issue confronts you, and you allow a descent into your Imagination, you will come face to face with the radiance of your true being and this will propel you through anything that life lobs at you.

A more recent example of the healing power and simplicity came in the wake of the September 11 attacks in New York. A man was telephoned by his friend, who was working in the World Trade Centre at the time of the attacks and aware of his impending death, telephoned his friend to say farewell and let him know that he loved him. This left traumatic imprints in the man. He was haunted by these imprints, images of the burning building and his friend inside. Catherine helped the man to use other images that arose from his inner self, his own mind to replace the traumatic imprinted images. This opened up a gap and Catherine taught him that when the traumatic images arose again to simply sweep them to the left and eventually he was troubled no more.

Catherine's deep knowledge of the inner meaning of the biblical parables was evident in the way she spoke. In fact she used to teach this as well as stage theatrical and artistic renditions of these stories through dance and plays. She authored a play "The Big Egg" to unite Arab and Israeli children. The play was shown throughout Israel. Her talents were also snapped up by the Hebrew University and the Music and Dance Academy, where she taught for many years.

Her knowledge of the sacred texts and understanding of imagery and the inner world led me to ask her about the Kabbalistic take on 2012 and the predicted Golden Age, one of my pet interests. She told me Kabbalists spoke of a Messianic Age and that we were in it now. They predicted it to culminate a little later, around 2028 but due to time acceleration it was to come earlier. This age provides us with a great opportunity for transformation, to open to our inner world. All great traditions agree that what is coming announces a Golden Age. There will be great difficulty for some but opportunities to find deep peace first individually and then collectively depending on how easily we accept the "jolt".

I feel I have just interacted with a modern day mystic. I have always felt a strong connection with my inner world but it was as if I was mining parts of the gold inside and drawing it into my mind, where it could become tainted and wrapped in conditioning. After my 10 minute session with Catherine and the conversation that followed I feel as if I am my inner world projected out into the world. Instead of having the sense that I am a mind having glimpses of an inner world I now feel I am that Gold within, projecting (or imaging) experiences into the world outside.

Catherine Shainberg will be visiting and teaching in Australia for the first time, at the end of January 2009, first in Melbourne and then in Perth. She will be available for one-on-one sessions and will be running workshops on the imagery path of the Kabbalah.