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The Search

IN SEARCH OF OURSELVES

The Quest

Since the awakening of our grand humanity on this planet, when spirit was breathed into us so that we became conscious of ourselves, the human species has been searching for its reality and its meaning. What is that spirit which is lodged within us? Why is it? How does it do its work within us? What is its call? These questions have intrigued us since time began.

That quest has not only been intellectual or of historic interest. It is also very personal, touching each of us in unique ways. Ever since I can remember, my own spirit has been talking to me, though my hearing has been severely impaired by a culture that denies spirit's presence within us. In our de-spiritualized age, we have forgotten that our spirit calls us. We have learned not to listen to that call.¹



Is the human spirit lodged in each of us? Yes. When you learn the practices and do the exercises this book offers, your spirit will respond. Its voice, its message, its call await your invitation. It makes your presence on this planet unique and deeply satisfying. “Ah hah,” you will say softly to yourself or proclaim to the world, “Now I know why I am here!”

Are you ready to respond to the call of your spirit? In working with thousands of people over the past thirty years in enspiriting and envisioning the future, I have found that many were ready and some were not. Nevertheless, no one is closed out. When you and your spirit enter into dialogue, you will discover how joyful and exhilarating this is.

The basic premise is that we all have spirit. It works within us, whether or not we are aware of it. Your spirit has emerged into your life spontaneously, particularly in childhood. My first exercise in Chapter Six invites you to reacquaint yourself with that experience.

If your spirit has been too long absent in your life, how might you best bring it back? How might you hear its call to you? By listening, a special kind of enspirited listening I call deep listening. This is a way of listening through silence, listening as an empty vessel, to be filled with that which your spirit offers.

A Transformative Moment

Bringing spirit back into your life is the central invitation and theme of this book... but it is not the only one. *Enspiriting*, listening to the voice of your spirit, is not a journey to be undertaken alone. You may well start out that way. But, ultimately, it is not a solo trip. Intimate friends and family may be with you, perhaps thousands



of others, perhaps more. There is a broad movement toward the transformation point that our species is rapidly approaching. In my view, we are already there. This transformation requires the presence of our spirit in the fullness of its purposes if we are to make it through the mounting crises confronting human civilization. Each of us has his own contribution to make. This transformation is not simply an objective condition we can only observe or comment upon. It is not just a paradigm shift that pundits have been announcing for decades. You and I are in it up to our chinny chin chins. We must respond to its invitation, which comes from our spirit, or we are lost.

Who invites? Who calls?

How might this invitation come to you? In what guise? In this book, you should find an invitation that suits you. In one or another of its chapters, you will hear your own particular call. That call will speak to your deepest aspirations, your fondest dreams. You will find that you can wait no longer.

Your search begins in Chapter Two with *The Abundance of Spirit—Seeking Your Gifts and Talents*. If you are dissatisfied, if you sense that within lies a great adventure to fashion a new world for yourself, then these chapters start you on the path of reinventing yourself. The source of that invention is your own spirit. Its abundance is the invitation to your true self.

But what is your true self? Is it a psychologist's fantasy or a personal utopia? Is it a negative self-image, not knowing what is to become of you? No. Those are surface signals only.

The search is for your spiritual archetype, that which is your essence, that which gives direction and meaning to everything



you are and do. The search begins with uncovering your gifts and talents, which express a spiritual archetype. It names who and what you are.

I am not talking about jobs, roles, labels, professions, or occupations. Roles and labels prevent us from seeing within to the unique person, to the spirit, to the full, dynamic richness.

Is your spiritual archetype captured and framed in your job, your occupation, or your profession? Too often, it is not. In the shifting winds of economic and technological change, too many of us end up seeking a holding place that provides economic security and a quick answer to the social recognition question, “What do you do?”

Listen, now, to hear if your spirit calls you:

- I call you to risk, adventure, making the curve, voices the **Entrepreneurial Spirit**.
- I call you to sustain the world, to rediscover our partnerships with each other, with all living creatures, and with our very Earth, invites the **Sustaining Spirit**.
- I call you to nurture, to empathy, to compassion, welcomes the **Loving and Caring Spirit**.
- I call you to mend our fragmentations, to make us whole again, to teach us not to wound each other in body, mind, or spirit, offers the **Mending Spirit**.
- I call you to bring justice back into the world, in all varieties of human, political, social and economic relationships and practices, calls out the **Just Spirit**.
- I call you to reshape our purposes and to re-create the organizational space among us so as to release our spirit-



energy in the interest of each and all of us, crafts the

Organizational Spirit.

- I call you to generate, release, facilitate, animate the human spirit within, your human spirit, my human spirit, everyone's human spirit, in every situation and in every setting, welcomes the **Enlivening Spirit.**
- I call you to think the unthinkable, to unpack complexity, to unravel the knot, to uncover the criticals and go to the fundamentals, says the **Reflective Spirit.**
- I call you to re-create reality, to describe the world in its underlying metaphors, in images of sight, sound, language, feeling, to lift the edges of the holographic curtain to show us how we might reconfigure our world, shapes the **Poetic Spirit.**

Your Call

Does one of these call to you? Does one of these spiritual archetypes enfold your beingness? If it does, and if you so acknowledge, it becomes your very presence on this planet.

Perhaps more than one calls to you. Your biography, your action, your intention, your self-image may respond to a rich mix of these archetypes. Finding that out will be extraordinarily exciting.

But what if none of them calls to you? Are you lost? Of course not, just the opposite. You might well find your own spirit drinking at some other fountain. If so, you have embarked on the grandest adventure of your lifetime, to uncover your own spiritual essence, to learn to listen to your own spirit's unique call. That is why I have written this book, to help others learn to listen to the voice of their spirit and respond creatively and lovingly to its invitation, whatever that may be!



At this moment in history, are we all called? In principal, Yes! But in practice, so many of us find it difficult to identify our spirit's invitation, much less affirm and respond to it. We try this and that in order to learn what is our project, our place, our beingness on this planet, in this lifetime. At worst, we seek fulfillment and forgetfulness through the addictions of acquiring power, affluence, material things, through the ideological or religious certainty of the true believer, and through alcohol, drugs, profligate sex, and running from one thrill to another, one job to another, one place to another. At best, we seek out the programs which offer empowerment, renewal, emancipation, self-help, or spiritual belief, in the hope that one of them will bring us to a nirvana in which we can lose ourselves and walk through life unconscious of our spirit.

The Abundance of Spirit

Here, in this enspiriting work, there is no "losing yourself." It is about finding yourself. You start by searching for your gifts and talents. Chapter Two, *The Abundance of Spirit*, is a fast track starting point. Its practices will move you quickly beyond labels and to a new space of discovery whose territory lies deep within and whose boundaries are unmapped. You will map them because this is your space, these are your gifts, your boundaries. How do you move from uncovering that inner space to enacting yourself in the world? This book will help you listen as your spirit calls, and it will help you live your response.



FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF THOUSANDS

Naming the Archetypes

What are these spiritual archetypes? Where do they come from? Are these all of them? Suppose you are called by one I do not name?

These are fair questions. My aim is not to close off your experiencing your own spirit. It is to open doors to the room where your spirit dwells, so that you may enter, explore, discover, enjoy, and enact, which means to come to your own true action in this world. Here again is the list of the spiritual archetypes offered in this book:

- The Entrepreneurial Spirit**
- The Sustaining Spirit**
- The Loving and Caring Spirit**
- The Mending Spirit**
- The Just Spirit**
- The Organizational Spirit**
- The Enlivening Spirit**
- The Reflective Spirit**
- The Poetic Spirit**

The Origins of the Nine Spiritual Archetypes

Our human spirit calls to us to be and to do what too many of us have neglected, dismissed, or hidden from. What is that call?

It is a multiple call, and each of the nine I have uncovered comes from listening deeply to thousands of people over the past 30 years. Who were these people? They have come from



many different countries and cultures, different social classes, educational backgrounds, ethnic and historical roots, and religious identifications. Their work has been about envisioning the future. In that envisioning, they were asked to describe their concerns. Not surprisingly, these concerns covered the wide range of human problems which brought with them discomfort, conflict, unrest, unease, fears, even pain. They were invited to learn the discipline and use the practices of *deep imaging* to envision a future in which their concerns were well addressed. It is from that work that I have extracted the nine spiritual archetypes. These people focused their concerns and their deep images on the future of their schools and colleges, their cities and neighborhoods, their natural environment, their nation-states and how best to govern them, their religious communities, their healthcare, their prisons, their police, their corporations, labor unions, farms, professions, their civic associations and groups, their racism and their violence. Many did personal envisioning of their lives, their families, and their work. From their envisioning came, quite literally, thousands of images of the future, and of the compelling actions which those visions invited them to take.

Keep in mind, these participants were not “experts” on the future, those we have come to call “futurists” in the last 40 or 50 years. I asked them, “What kind of future do you want to bring about that is any different from the present?” “What are your intentions toward the future?”

Thus, the origin of the spiritual archetypes set forth in this book come from these envisioners, futures-inventors, and concerned citizens of all walks of life. And as the responses accumulated over



the years from many workshops, seminars, envisioning projects, and one-with-one enspirings, my own spirit was at work!

What lies under the vision?

My own spirit compelled me to ask: “What are these folks driving at?” “Where do these images—so varied in their focus, yet so detailed—come from?” Just their social history? Only their unique biographies? Mainly, their subcultures? The mass media? What they have learned in life and about life?

I was impelled by my own spirit to raise these questions because so much of these visionary materials announced new paths for them and sometimes for all of us. Their visions were not about making a lot of money, raising the bottom line, acquiring higher status, more power, greater influence, personal fame and fortune, nor about moving up the ladder of material success, practicing what Thorstein Veblen called “conspicuous consumption.”

Mainly, their intentions toward the futures of themselves and their relevant worlds were about forging new paths, testing the waters of their consciousness of what was truly important to them. Their images of the future went against the grain, were counter-conventional, and sought alternatives to current realities.

Was something “wrong” with these envisioners? Had they been abused in their childhood? frustrated by their lack of success? Well, in a way, they were special people, for they dared to envision different futures. But they were really quite ordinary too. They were married, divorced, many raising families, some retired and some still in high school or college, paying off their mortgages, shopping for their food and sundries, often not pleased with the systems of



healthcare and schools. They were fearful of nuclear war, or of an economic, political, social, or environmental catastrophe that would engulf all of us.

The Research

Perhaps more than any other “futurist” on the planet, I have listened to the heartfelt responses of envisioners and enspiritors to my invitation to go deep, to listen to their inner voice, their central beingness which is the voice of their spirit, to learn what is most important to them.

Their faces, their laughter and tears, their spirits are still with me as I write these chapters, though some I worked with as many as three decades ago. They were students, teachers, managers, doctors, nurses, consultants, farmers, artists, politicians, factory workers, government officials, ex-offenders, persons from all walks of life who wanted to invent their futures. As I worked with them, their spirit came to me. Give attention, Warren. This is what we are about.

So I learned to listen to their hopes, their intentions, their compelling images, as well as to their despairs, and their unrequited spirits that are the reverse side, the inner painting of the cultural canvas of the twenty-first century. In short, I began a reflection like the kind of deep questioning you yourself will use as you explore the source of your own intentions, aspirations, and dreams for yourself and your world. I sought to go underneath the enormous amount of their visionary data to its sources. I asked, “What drives them to envision these futures and to seek to actualize them in the here-and-now?” The nine spiritual archetypes described in these pages came to my awareness as I processed this amazing accumulation of



visionary data from these participants. These envisioners, ordinary folks from all over the world, were responding to a call in them, a call to them, which came from their spirit.

The Concept of the Spiritual Archetype

What is a “spiritual archetype” as I use it in this book? How does this concept relate to the call of your spirit, to your spirit’s voice, to that which lies at the core of your being? And why did these nine spiritual archetypes surface in my reflection? Why did they emerge into my conscious awareness, and not nine other spiritual archetypes?

At the outset, I think it’s important to say that the spiritual archetype is a concept. It is an idea. It seeks to give an account of the underlying reality that your spirit is enfolded in you, not by accident but by purpose. Your beingness, your presence on this planet is not random. It is not accidental. You are constitutive of a purpose that transcends your biology and transcends your particular culture and group. That purpose, your purpose, is known by the call of your spirit which I now invite you to listen for, to hear, and to enact in your life. In one way, that call is unique to you because your own spirit, the deepest and truest and most real part of yourself, is unique to you. My spirit is in me and your spirit is in you. The choice your spirit made to enfold in you was and is not accidental. Please don’t take my word for this. Please don’t require “empirical” or “scientific” proof. Rather, query your own experience. Respond to my invitation to discover this for yourself, out of your own inner listening and out of your own deep learning about what your life experience says to you. Science and technology can do remarkable things for us. But they can’t keep us from dying. They can’t keep us from killing. They



can't keep us from loving. They can't keep us from our choices. And they certainly can't keep us from listening to the call of our spirit.

I do not say that these are the only calls. I do not say that this is an exhaustive naming of spiritual archetypes. These are the ones I have uncovered, named, and offer to you. The nine spiritual archetypes described in this book are templates, or ideal-types, to lie beside your spirit's call and see if they fit. They should help you to identify, describe, and better understand exactly what your own spirit is telling you.

Why make this offer? Because so many good people I know, hear about and read about are not yet clear about why they are here. They are not clear about their purposes. They are not clear about how they might impact their world and give some direction to their own lives. So they try this or that, impelled by an inner source but not knowing what that is. They are frustrated, disappointed, unfulfilled. Perhaps their work is misplaced. Perhaps their lives are misspent. If you are one of these, read on. You have some joyous work to do.

But there is more. These archetypes, these essences of human spirit, are about transformation. Your spirit might call you to that. That call is to something new and vital, which portends a different way of living, of being and doing. It starts with you but might involve other people as well. That indeed would be beautiful.

But what if these nine spiritual archetypes do not speak to you? What if there is no fit between one or another of the archetypes and who you have been and are becoming? That's perfectly okay. Search for your own mix, your own uniqueness, the special quality of your own spirit's call.



DEFINING AND DESCRIBING THE ARCHETYPES

Unexplored Territory

It will be helpful to review in greater detail the focus and drive of each spiritual archetype before you begin your search and self-questioning. This is the landscape you are about to explore. For many of us, it is unexplored territory. But we know some things about this inner territory of the human spirit. For example, in the desert of our mostly de-spiritualized world, there are some oases. You can rest at one, reflect, relax, and drink at its always-replenishing fountain. Then if you will, you can move on. Some of you will reach the border, look back, say: “None of these archetypes represent my spirit’s essence,” and continue your search. Others will realize that all of their searches, dreams, and inner questions reside and are requited right here.

The spiritual archetypes described below are basic essences, ideal patterns for the human spirit’s presence within and among us. They help us to understand who and what each of us is. They bring a clarity of persuasion, passion, project, and potential to those of us who sense, perhaps even from infancy, that we are called, but know not what is the call and who is calling.

The Entrepreneurial Spirit

One of the first spiritual archetypes I came to was the entrepreneurial spirit. It is explored in Chapter Three. This spiritual archetype goes far back in history, to the inventors of fire, language, cities, domesticated grain and animals, and to all of the other first-order inventions which put the human species on the path to its



initial civilizations. But we have a long way to go. Our need for a vast number of next-order social inventions is now as desperate as at any time in human history. Who will make them?

Through the exercises in Chapter Three, you may discover that a sleeping giant lies deep within you, waiting to be called out to breathe the fresh air and roar its proclamations to the world. The entrepreneurial spirit, if it is yours, will take you to new places on your life's path, and it will encourage and support new activities if you heed its voice. This is childhood's insatiable curiosity resurrected in you to pull you to creativity and inventiveness. It will encourage you to do other than your peers.

The Sustaining Spirit

The chapters and practices in Chapter Four, *The Sustaining Spirit—Partnership Rediscovered*, are for those whose spirit calls them to create ways of partnering with the Earth and all of its living creatures, including human beings. Do you sense deep within that you are one of that group, who are called to uncover new ways of being and living with the Earth? Through these discovery exercises, you may hear your inner voice speaking clearly and compellingly about your partnering with the Earth.

The Loving and Caring Spirit

This spiritual archetype is about loving, caring, empathy, and nurturing. One would hope that these relational qualities were evenly distributed among humankind, among all parents, all teachers, and all counselors, and that they would pervade all of our human relationships in every form and content. Of course they don't.



Might your spirit tell you that herein lies your special strength and prowess, that the acts and competencies of engendering fulfilling relationships constitute an expression of your deepest self? The loving and caring spirit is the focus of the chapters and practices in Chapter Five. It is here that you may find your special call, if you will listen deeply when your spirit speaks.

The Mending Spirit

The call of the mending spirit is described in the chapters and practices of Chapter Six. Is that, perhaps, your underlying theme? It follows closely on that path of the loving and caring spirit. Yet here, spirit's purposes and methods are different, for we are talking about mending that which has been torn asunder. Mending is making whole that which has been separated into parts. It is about a reintegration in new ways that will stretch our imagination to its infinity. Healing, medical or natural, is one way to talk about the art of mending. But this spiritual call and competence goes far beyond the “doctor-patient” relationship, beyond healing the sick of body, heart, or mind.

Most people on our planet are split off from their centers. There is a pervasive separation that characterizes most of what we do. Job is split from work. Government is split from governance. Sex is split from erotic loving. Family is split from friendship. The institution of religion is split from God. Teaching is split from learning. And most important, the human biography is split from its spirit. All of these splits need mending. Who is called? Who are the menders? Chapter Six, *The Mending Spirit—Growing the Whole*, is designed to help you discern if this is the stream of the human spirit that flows through your life.

The Just Spirit

Chapter Seven, *The Just Spirit—In Search of Governance*, is offered to those of you who are ready to learn from your spirit's voice how we might live together without violating each other's spirit. That is the question of governance. Mostly, throughout human history, we have been unable to come up with a response to that question which favors us all. Now, in this transformative moment, we are in desperate need of springing loose these social inventors.

Note the phrase, without violating each other's spirit. This is the seminal ground in which to plant the seeds of human rights, a fairly recent social invention which seeks to grow in all countries and cultures but is more noted for its absence than its presence. There is more. The just spirit applies as powerfully to family life and to one-with-one relationships as within whole societies. How shall a family govern itself so that no one within its reach violates the spirit of another, whether it is child, wife, mother, husband, father, or the extended family? How shall schools govern themselves justly, so that we learn about each other and our world without violating each other's spirit? Justice and learning are inextricably interwoven. When those of you called by this spiritual archetype show us why and how, learning and its governance in education will never look the same.

The Organizational Spirit

The organizational spirit archetype speaks to those who are called to gather us together in our collective conduct in such a way that our human spirit flourishes.

In this day and age, “organization” has become the metaphor for social reality. It has long replaced the older social dimension of “community.” In one major corporation with which I worked, managers sought to envision and actualize the spirit and practices of community into its organizational milieu, into the ways its members related to and worked with each other. But senior managers stonewalled the effort in their quest for rising profits. Consultants learned to substitute the notions of team-building, diversity, and learning to feel good about each other for the sacred idea of community.

It is still unclear, at least to me, if the organizational principle must pervade our lives so extremely. How might we best organize our businesses, our schools, our hospitals and health care delivery systems, our governments, our churches, and our families? These have become powerful questions, drawing upon so much of our intellectual resource. But we have not learned well enough how to create the space in every organization for each member’s, employee’s, participant’s, or citizen’s spirit to emerge.

Might this be your space? Is your path to invent the ways of our working and making and creating together? To break through the barriers of organizational omnipotence to the space where, together, we may be fully human? Such space lies far beyond roles, rules, making money, or being successful. This space reaches far back in human history to our early consciousness of ourselves as both creators and creatures of our basic organizational proclivities. It reaches far forward to a new era wherein we all will have learned how and why to release each person’s spirit-energy in the interest of all, and everyone’s spirit-energy in the interest of each. Probe the



exercises in Chapter Eight, *The Organizational Spirit*, to see if this is your quest and adventure.

The Enlivening Spirit

Perhaps most dear to me because it is my call is the enlivening spirit, that inner voice which serves to bring to life spirit's expression in everyone else.

The enlivening spirit offers, invites, cajoles, soothes, provokes, and witnesses to each of us, one-by-one, that which the human spirit in each of us calls us to. It invites another person's spirit into its own inner well of spirit-energy, warms and loves it, empathizes with it, judges not, gives to the other full and complete attention, and provides the space for the other's spirit and biography to play together and to negotiate a new presence on the planet. Its main practices are deep listening and deep questioning, the first two disciplines of the spirit. Each of us is invited to become adept in these disciplines and attendant practices. But not too many of us are called with the strength of thousands to focus the enlivening enterprise on the singular person, one-by-one or in small groups of communities of learners. The enlivener offers herself to others because of her own vast reservoirs of spirit-energy.

As you respond to the invitation in the chapters and practices in Chapter Nine, *The Enlivening Spirit*, discern if that is your call. Or if the enlivening spirit joins with other spiritual archetypes which, all together, constitute your uniqueness.



The Reflective Spirit

Some of the envisioners with whom I have worked offer a provocative stance that comes from the spiritual archetype I have named the reflective spirit. Its most visible expression is the quality of thinking before speaking, sometimes even thinking out loud in the midst of the most precarious of situations. Here, thought truly precedes action. In this spirit's expression, there is no such thing as impatience. The practical becomes the ruminative. The pragmatic translates into considering all alternatives. No question, even the most shocking or foolish, is inadmissible. The action lies in the thought. Uncovering the criticals and going to the fundamentals is its *métier*, though all of us are invited to and practice these enspiriting crafts. Chapter Ten, *The Reflective Spirit*, provides the exercises of the inner space to ascertain how and why this might be your call.

The Poetic Spirit

Finally, there is the poetic spirit. It does not require you to write, or even to read, poetry, though some may. A little piece of this essence is in each of us because we all have imagination. Its full call is to those, special among us, who put anything and everything—human relationships, events, organized behaviors, history, the future, human dispositions and needs, problems, solutions, even our basic “human nature”—into a new language, into new ways of perceiving, sensing, and interacting. I call these depictions or metaphors, “stand-fors.” In their being enacted through dance, music, literature, painting, sculptures, images, and storytelling, new ways of being and doing are uncovered that stretch our imagination to its borders and show us our human possibilities.

Overlap

I think we want to ask again, “Is there an overlap here? Do these archetypes of spiritual presence on the planet interweave, parallel, or offset each other? Might not each of us, in our biographies, our character, our works, our relationships, express several of these powerful forces of the human spirit at the same time?” Of course. Why single them out? One supports the other. They are sympathetic.

But I remind you that an archetype is more than a predisposition. In the ways of the human spirit, it describes an essence, a call, a stream of adventures as your spirit essays its journey on this planet through you and not someone else. When self-clarity is achieved, your biography, your persona, the space in the world you take for your own, may well be characterized by one of these archetypes, or a rich mix thereof.

Through the enspiriting practices this book offers, I think you will find the clear stream of your spirit running deep through the events and the choices you make in your life. Cultures, institutions, and biographies muddy those waters, so that too many of us end up dissatisfied and frustrated. Unclear, we may try this or that, but we are never as effective as we sense we have it in us to be. We are searching, true. But are we listening... deep listening.

I invite you to journey to the further shores to which your spirit takes you. On that new land, you may discover that which is special to you, your unique essence that you can offer to the world.

THE METHOD

How shall we proceed?

What has impressed me most over the years is that those who have deliberately sought to hear the voice of their spirit have *listened* for it. It was a special kind of listening which I came to call deep listening. I want to invite you to learn and to practice deep listening because it will give you access to your spirit when that is important for you to do. In searching for your spiritual archetype, deep listening is the main method. In Chapter One, I will guide you through the steps. Indeed, when I first learned, practiced, and offered this method, I called it *Deep Listening the Empty Vessel Way*.² Through deep listening, you will find the path to your renewal, your healing, your calling, and to your place in the world. I think we must all become deep listeners, now, not later, if we are to create a world without destitution, without hopelessness, and worthy of the promise that our human spirit offers to each and every one of us.

The Method of the Book

I have written this book to help open the door to the room within which your spirit dwells. That is my intention. As you read on, one of the chapters will lead you to your deepest self or will offer ways of uncovering it, of that I am sure. Why? Because in these rooms are encompassed our aspirations to become fully human, to be fully integrated with our spirit.

As the door opens, you will discover your compelling image and your compelling action. In these, your spirit speaks to you. You will shift from the mode of reading to the modes of listening and doing.



These are the practices of enspiriting by which we learn to listen to, for, and with our spirit.

What is this enspiriting? What is its language, its meaning, its application and relevance, its new place in our lives?

Enspiriting

As I have come to know it, enspiriting is a twofold action, a reciprocity in which there are two “actors.” One actor, the one you know best, is you, the human person, characterized by your biography. The other actor is your spirit, your human spirit. Enspiriting is the dynamic interaction between the two.

On the one hand, enspiriting is the active voice of your spirit speaking out, often without words. Sometimes the spirit announces itself in feelings that won’t go away, or in images that enter your mind as pictures or through one of your other senses. Sometimes the voice of your spirit comes to you in intuitions or flashes of insight.

Enspiriting is the act of listening to the voice of your spirit in its many manifestations. Unless you listen, your spirit’s voice goes unheeded. So you want to learn to listen deeply to your body, your feelings, your images, your intuitions, and your altered states of consciousness. Are you ready to listen? Have you prepared yourself? Preparation, readiness, and competence are involved here.

Chapter One, *When Your Spirit Speaks—Practices in Deep Listening*, is about how your spirit has already spoken to you. It reminds you that enspiriting is our most human voice, that which spirit brings to us when it is en fleshed. It is the reason for our being here, living on a planet on an outer edge of our spiral galaxy, far from its center.



How do I learn to enspirit? Keeping a Journal

One of the tricks of the trade in enspiriting is to learn how to enter the space for spirit as a commonplace human activity, whenever it is wanted or needed. Using a journal helps open that space when you are ready to jot down your moments of insight as they come to you. Respond to the questions posed in this book, note and record the steps in your journey to the space for spirit.

From Exercise to Practice to Competence

Take your journal with you wherever you go. Enspiriting can and does happen very quickly when you are ready and prepared. Its modus operandi is deep listening. That mode you can learn to enter into as fast as you can take and exhale a few deep breaths, empty your *tant'ien* (see endnote no.6) and shift two degrees out of your mind's and your body's current perspective to the new one of your spirit's space.

You can use your journal to record in as you choose. As you engage with your spirit, you will enter a new space where your spirit feels comfortable enough to speak out because you are listening for it and can hear it. As your spirit learns that it is welcome, its space expands within you as well as outside, with other persons. That space becomes the ambience within which your transformation begins. You practice, then, at the different ways to listen for and to hear the voice of your spirit. These are the seven disciplines of the spirit. You learn, or rediscover, how and why to enspirit. You are on the path to discovering your true self. You are becoming spiritually competent.



The Enspiriting Matrix

The nine spiritual archetypes are “pure” in their naming, their description, their definition. They are ideal-types or templates through which you can search out the quality and purpose of your own spirit’s presence in you. I have sought to convey their essences so that you can discover if, how, and why you respond to their clear invitations as your own calling, your compelling image, that which you **cannot not be** and **cannot not do**. Be elated at your “Ah-hah, so that is what my life is about!” Be overjoyed if you discover your own special mix, where one archetype explains your compelling action in one situation, another in a different setting.

Your spirit, even in its essential mode, speaks and acts through your personal history as well as through your particular role as a citizen in world history. The enspiriting practices often lead to a deep negotiation between your spirit and your biography. In that rich interplay, your biography may respond more fruitfully to a complex possibility your spirit offers, a mix of archetypes as in *mending* and *caring*, or *entrepreneuring* and *organizing*, or *sustaining* and *enjusting*.³

How do you discover if you are called to respond to more than one invitation? Intuition and a feeling for it, coming from your deep listening to and deep questioning of yourself, are effective ways. Another way involves a bit of recording.

As you respond to the invitations in each chapter, record and review your responses in your journal. You will begin to get a sense of where you are at this point in your life, to what extent you have responded to a particular call, to a particular theme.



This becomes a self-searching about the ways you have responded to the call and invitation of a particular archetype, or the extent to which you find that particular archetype speaks through your spirit to your biography, your intentions, and your actions.

For most of us, the calls are not a perfect fit. For many of us, there is little congruence between our call and our expression in this life. Many barriers and constraints block spirit's expression. Discerning that which your spirit invites may take a piece of a lifetime. Unlike Mozart, who perhaps knew and responded at age five, most of us take a lot longer. This is a small but an important point. The human spirit is not concerned with chronological, biological, or biographical time. Old, middle-aged, young are not its scale. When you are ready, you will respond to the invitation. Enacting spirit's call constitutes a joyful adventure yet to be taken, just starting, well begun, deeply into, or nearing completion.



IN SEARCH OF YOUR SPIRIT

Childhood Speaks

Spirit speaks in many ways, perhaps no more so than with youngsters. With youngsters it speaks through a spontaneous dance, through a laugh or a cry, and through wide-open eyes of wonder and curiosity when a butterfly settles on the knee, when the puppy nuzzles into the crook of an arm, and when fingers paint inner images on blank paper. Spirit speaks in the gentle cooperation of two youngsters building a sand castle, in an honest response without guile. Most often, it speaks in an inner listening, giving attention to internal sounds, feelings, pictures that come from a space both unique to that youngster, and yet part of the universal space in which all spirit resides.

When I speak of the search for our spirit, it is not about hidden agendas, tasks and goals, worries, or false stories we soon learn about how the world works. This chapter is an invitation to bring into your conscious awareness some stories of your spirit speaking out, and your listening to it. I invite you to search for these stories from your childhood years.

Do you remember your days of innocence? Can you reach and touch an inner memory, in recall or in flashback, when your spirit, unbidden, was simply “there” in all of its simple splendor? In these days of innocence, you were your spirit. That is what innocence means. Throughout humankind, that wholeness, that naturalness, that integration of spirit with body and mind is recognized and supported, cherished and celebrated until the youngster is required to grow up. Whatever the culture, wherever the country, before the



growing up takes place, the child's spirit is completely present. That wholeness and integration are the marks of innocence.

Can your spirit's experience of another human spirit be recalled? Of course. The bonding of your spirit with another, the search for its welcome by others, lies within. Your spirit just awaits a jostle, a tickle, or a beckoning finger from your consciousness of yourself to remind you of these stories. Sometimes the stories are about another human being, sometimes about a forest, a tree, an animal, water, mud, leaves, or mountains. Once, I worked in a one-with-one enspiriting with a person whose spirit was nurtured by turtles, doves, mud, leaves, snails, and undergrowth, and whose spirit in turn called her to nurture our natural world. Perhaps she was an unrealized sustaining spirit. Her biography resisted. She is still learning to enter that space where her spirit and her inner biography can negotiate a new life for her and write a new script.

All living things welcome and bond as partners with our human species in that special space for spirit that is the universe, the "spiritual" counterpart of what Fritjof Capra calls "The Web of Life."⁴ Youngsters have this space within them without being prompted. Some of us, distant from our childhood, need a bit of prompting. Here are a few of my stories that constitute a piece of my own search through my childhood and youthful years for spirit's presence in me.

Some Prompting Stories

I remember playing on the rooftop of my childhood school when I was six or seven years old. Twenty or thirty children were around and about, playing and making lots of noise during a recess



from class. The roof was fenced in with those high mesh wire fences used mostly at street-level playgrounds, surrounding asphalt basketball courts. Ours was on the roof. And here was a young girl. Pamela was her name. We stepped aside to a corner of the roof, away from the shrieks and screams. She leaned back against the wall as I stood in front of her, our bodies not touching, neither awake nor aroused. We stood very close. My arms were raised, palms against the rough brick on either side of her head. And we made a kiss. I was overwhelmed by the surge of spirit energy. Her blue eyes opened in wonder as our spirits embraced. An offer? A speculation? A question? What would it be like if... ?

I also remember sitting by myself in a backyard sandpile, not yet three years old, fashioning a new world out of toys and sand. My back was to a two-story frame house that provided the security of home. The sun blazed down with its own offering of midmorning heat, and I heard, unmistakably, my spirit sharing with me, “This is your world to make, Warren. You are part of it. Don’t let someone else fashion it for you.”

I didn’t hear those words, of course. Often, as Mary Watkins notes,⁵ images of the past or future come to us as “meaning-feelings.” The meaning carried in the memory of the feeling is absolutely clear, as clear as you will find your own memories of your spirit’s speaking out in your early years, if you are ready for it.

That very early experience, as I remember it, is parallel to an experience in my young adulthood. I was home on leave from the U. S. Navy, 18 years old, talking with my mother about my future. We were seated in our living room, facing each other over a small coffee table. My mother’s spirit always spoke to me through her



eyes. As her eyes flashed and cut through the facade of my youthful biography, she spoke out of the depth of her own spirit's journey through her life. "Warren, you can do and be anything you want in this world. Just be clear about what you want to be and do."

And finally, in the in-between years when I was nine or ten, I recall one summer night. I was on a mountaintop in Vermont, lying on my back on a bedroll outside my tent. I looked up at the endless canopy of stars, not counting, not in wonder, not in fear, but with a great sense of belonging and longing, knowing that among those stars was my home to which I would return after my sojourn on earth.

These are a few of my stories. They are nothing extraordinary. They are the accouterments only of a restless spirit. What is extraordinary is my spirit. What is extraordinary is the human spirit's journey in each of us.

What about your journey, your spirit's presence in you?

Has your spirit spoken to you? Of course it has. This is not fiction or fantasy to which I appeal. It is grounded in the invitation your spirit makes to you to begin listening again, as you once did before you learned not to, and so, like most of us, drove your spirit into hiding deep in your core being, your *tant'ien*, where it awaits its calling out.⁶ That calling out is an invitation. Your recall of your spirit's action in you is an invitation.

An Invitation

"Invitation" stands for an act absolutely central to enspiriting. Throughout this book, invitation is the mode of our action. Nothing to be forced. Nothing demanding that you do or be what you would



not otherwise do or be. My invitation to you is to relive what it was like when your spirit spoke to you. But this is also a self-invitation. Eventually, your spirit will invite you to the discovery of your true self, for the first or the 100th time. That discovery lies at the heart of the inner work this book invites.

So... to the inner work. The mode is invitation. Relaxing, not forcing. Yielding, not overcoming.

The focus of the invitation is bringing back into conscious awareness what it was like when you felt spirit's presence in you. Describe that. Relive those moments. Practice putting yourself in that frame of body and mind.

You might choose to stop here, put down the book, and relive, by recalling, your spirit's voice. The time, the energy, and the space you create for this are yours. Keep your journal handy. That way, you can record salient features and events of your journey.

Some of you may be in frequent, even constant, communion with your spirit. But for some of us, a little help, a little support, and a little re-familiarization with the practices unlock the door to spirit's room. For some of us, that key has been thrown away, and so we must refashion another key. For those of you for whom this is more or less true, what follows in the next chapter is a "start-up" exercise which, when well undertaken, is a big, first step on the journey to the space of your spirit.



WHEN YOUR SPIRIT SPEAKS— PRACTICES IN DEEP LISTENING

Some Ways of Deep Listening

This first exercise begins to create the space for spirit. It is an early step in that direction. By remembering what it was like when you felt spirit's presence in you, you may be able to recall some of the characteristics of that happening, making it easier to create that space again.

To create that space is to listen for it. Deep listening is the way. It is a discipline of the spirit, an enspiriting practice we use throughout our search.

There are many ways to deep listen. Some ways you do with other persons. Perhaps you have come to your own way. Perhaps you have deep listened to others. Have you deep listened to yourself? Have you entered into that inner state where all is silence, where all is empty, so that what is to be spoken is heard, what is to be recalled is remembered, what is to be offered is received? If not, here are some ways we have learned over the years for deep listening to your spirit.

One way is being silence. This is an inner silence in which there is no conversation with yourself. This is a feeling of silence that pervades your whole being: body, mind, and spirit. This is not a task to be undertaken. It is an entrance into an inner state of consciousness where the noise of your life, the noise of the universe, has departed. An emptiness pervades all.

A second way is giving attention. As the inner silence grows, you enter into a state of focus, of giving attention to the exclusion



of all and everything. This is not a desperate concentration and it is not a task. It is a focus on what is to be spoken, remembered, and offered without expectation, without even knowing what that will be. It is a giving attention that is a readiness to listen.

A third way is to empty. Perhaps this is another way of saying *Be Silence, Give Attention*.

Here, move inside to your *tant'ien*. Empty all that makes you who you are, your inner biography and your social biography as well. Your hopes, dreams, wishes, problems, personal history, worries, and concerns are put to the side so that all that remains is the question, a great question which you pose to your spirit, a great question which your spirit poses to you.

What is this question?

Deep Questioning

Most of my work begins with a question. A deep question is one you are compelled to offer. It is not posed to start a debate or an argument. It is offered because your own spirit calls it out.

Here is my deep question, my offer to you. What is it like when your spirit speaks to you? I have learned that for many folks, the question is easier to address when it is put in the past tense, like this: What was it like when your spirit spoke to you?

Why the shift to the past tense, inviting a memory of a past experience? Because if you are unfamiliar with the language of enspiriting, or if you are suspicious of the invitations posed in this book, allowing yourself to search for and remember that it actually happened gives you confidence that enspiriting is not make-believe, is not a fairy tale, but is a very deep and living part of your inner



realities. So much of our knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes and faith (KBVAF) fight this understanding. We best begin by reminding ourselves that this actually happened. My spirit did speak to me... perhaps more than once! And this is what it was like!

Preparation

Each of us prepares ourselves differently. Some muse while they set the table for a meal or do the dishes after supper. Others organize the papers on their desk. Some of us arrange our bodies in our beds as we lie down to sleep and to dream. Some of us take a walk in the woods, do a meditation, or listen to music. There is always a personal preparation that opens the door to this experience. It is self-invitation which eases us into the enspiriting, which sets the stage for something unique and wonderful to happen when we have accepted it.

The basic preparation for most of the practices and exercises in this book is emptying. Emptying is a mode that fits all of the enspiriting, not this exercise alone. First comes a quieting down, an inner quieting, perhaps accompanied by some deep breathing, a half-dozen slow, deep breaths on which you concentrate, listening to the sound of your own exhaling. Or perhaps you prepare yourself by stretching your spine, standing straight, entering your body, and aligning your spine, vertebra by vertebra, as you push the top of your head towards the ceiling or the sky. I learned these from a yoga master, and they have stood me in good stead in enspiriting. They move me to a quiet inner space easily and quickly, unforced yet responsive to my need to generate the space for spirit.



These kinds of self-concentrations, including those of your own making, produce a special kind of focus I call “giving attention.” Giving attention tends to exclude all else. As you exclude the most pressing of your concerns, you begin to empty an inner space. Worries, anxieties, and tasks begin to disappear so that you feel the empty space emerge within your body.

There is nothing to force here. Find and use your own ways of preparation which allow a silence in your body, an emptiness. Then you are ready to yield to your spirit.

Ask Your Spirit... and Yield

What was it like, my spirit, when you spoke to me?

Remind yourself that “speaking” means many things, not only “words.” Your spirit may come to you as feelings that are loaded with meanings, as images that arrive in various guises like pictures, smells, tastes, body movements, or sounds. Your spirit may enter your conscious awareness as an intuition. Or, it may sneak in unannounced.

To yield to your spirit is to have no expectations. It is to empty, to be prepared for any and all manifestations of your spirit. It is to wait in silence. It is not forcing. It is offering. It is an invitation.

Now these become your questions:

- What was it like, my spirit, when you spoke to me? When I was a child? Before I learned not to listen?
- What did you say?
- How did you announce your presence?
- How did I feel it?
- What was this about?



As you recall, listen for your spirit's reminder so that the memory is a bit like the actual experience, so that you can live it and render the past present. In the past present moment, chronological time is obliterated and, once again, you are living the memory. This is your spirit speaking to you about a time in the past when it spoke.

To close this exercise, may I welcome you to the "order of enspiritors"? There are no medals, no special clothes, no smoke and mirrors, no gurus, and no high priests. This listening to your spirit will happen time and again. The memories will start flooding back. Now you can invite these memories as frequently as you choose, through these practices of yielding, emptying, giving attention, and invitation.

Sometimes your spirit will come to you unbidden, for it now knows that it is welcome. It too will learn what it is like to "come out of the closet," or the tant'ien, or wherever it has been hiding in your body. It too is practicing.

So the enspiriting begins. So the deep listening begins.