

# Preparing for ~~death~~ life

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## Introduction

In November 2016 I was admitted to hospital with pyelonephritis (kidney infection) and septicaemia. Then an inoperable pancreatic cancer was discovered. The oncologist gave a life expectancy of 3 to 11 months. The enormity of the new situation took time to settle in my consciousness. Nothing seemed more surreal than not being. But it was clear to me that I wanted to die reconciled, without fear, with faith and certainty in transcendence. It was not entirely surprising to discover that I was quite far from that.

Being part of the current of Universalist Humanism (and the Humanist Movement), friends from various parts of the world mobilized to make askings for me by including me in their Well-being Ceremonies. Several began to travel to London to accompany me in my work of reconciliation and to help me clarify my images of death, and in particular of transcendence.

I cannot express in words the deep gratitude to everyone for the support I received.

For a while I felt that it was selfish of me to have so many people help me and take time to travel, but I came to understand that this process also served them to make their own personal advancement. At some point the register emerged that transcendence was not "individual".

It is clear that the predicted times of the illness were not fulfilled. I have been in this process more than three years now although the disease advances and at this point it has led to leukemia. All is very unpredictable...

Did the doctors make a mistake? Did the askings and the personal work influence the course of the disease? Be that as it may... I continue with my initial philosophy: do *everything*.

The materials used in my personal works are principally the writings of Silo.

On the other hand, from the beginning Jon, my husband, proposed that we work daily with the experiences of the book of The Silo's Message (the ceremony of the Service, that is to say the work with the Force, and the ceremony of Well-being). At first we worked alone, then my sister Luci - who came from Argentina to help take care of me - and other friends from London joined in, and for some months now friends from other countries have also joined in through Whatsapp. We set out to have permanence even when I was in the hospital, using the phone and trying to escape the noise (environmental and mental).

After a few months, I began to feel a great need to communicate my experience of this whole process to people who are also facing death, now or later.

Ergo this writing.

## Reconciliations

Despite my more or less 40 years of humanism, I discovered that there are things that were left unreconciled until the deepest need was felt, driven by the fear of death and the intolerable register of contradiction.

I began then with Silo's reply to a letter from Jayesh, a friend in India who wrote him that he was dying. I made my list of things that brought me contradiction and violence and another of unitive acts. I could see that the contradictions had more 'weight', particularly guilt and also resentment towards people who were very close to me. Here I saw a mechanism, perhaps cultural, of putting more weight on the negative. Now I often review my list of unitive facts so as not to forget and to give it more weight because it is these registers, of deep internal unity, that allow us to rise to the Light, while the contradictions push us into the lower, darker regions of the mind (see *Ceremony of Assistance* and *Guide to the Inner Road* in *Silo's Message*).

But to the question "Why do I want reconciliation?" I was left almost without an answer, in other words, I gave myself a somewhat prefabricated answer at first. My mind was flying to transcendence as a "place" where I would continue to do projects with Silo (my spiritual guide) or with "the evolutionary intention of the Universe". Coming to accept that no matter what one imagines, it is not possible to know what will happen, brought me closer to myself. To feel the divine spark in the depths of my consciousness.

I got caught up in the idea of finding a superior Purpose. I had worked with the Purpose in the Formal Discipline but it never became established as a permanent purpose and has been changing. And the significance of "superior" was not clear to me.

Only after almost two years from beginning this work, a difference began to be outlined between a Purpose that one builds, carrying it affectively and that sometimes is unstable, and another greater or superior Purpose that I felt was coming from further back, that in reality had been guiding all my life and that was not "mine" but something already existing in the Universe. Something without image, without adequate words to describe it, which for a few moments I have felt as a great register of Love.

After a few months of reflection, the image of a Purpose that belongs to all of us, more universal, appears. Perhaps it was blurred in "the breach", the historical moment where the alliance between the feminine and the masculine is broken and the patriarchy emerges, probably simultaneous with the agricultural revolution where private property and masculine gods also emerge in vertical religions, different from the most archaic goddesses of previous moments. The alliance of the feminine and the masculine, represented by the source (similar to the Hindu symbol of the Yoni-Lingam) in the fountains of the Parks of Study and Reflection, inspires us to go in that direction of union-unity.

From the beginning it was important to start from a moment of internal truth. I was afraid and I was angry. I was jealous of those who were staying even if only temporarily (in fact several friends have left and I am still here). However, I was not starting from scratch. I

was also able to make a list of significant experiences during my process that brought me to the "suspicion of meaning", even if they didn't give me "certainty of experience".

To overcome my contradictions I worked with the guided experience Death (see the book of *Guided Experiences*): I go through areas (of my inner, mental space) where guilt, frustration and resentment have remained (which was both disconcerting and useful). I also worked with the experience of Resentment, and meditated on Silo's talk on reconciliation (in Punta de Vacas, 2007), a difficult subject! In particular, how can you repair "twice" when the person you hurt is already dead? But as moments or "sparks" of faith in transcendence appeared, and I found solutions: for example, asking for that person's well-being, for his or her progress on their spiritual path (wherever they were), connecting as deeply as possible, feeling what they really needed and also sending them Gratitude.

Other guided experiences such as the Configuration of the Inner Guide and the Protector of Life helped in this stage to accept the body and to introduce healing coenaesthetic images, (or simply relaxing) to reinforce the relationship with the Internal Guide and to approach the theme of transcendence.

Then began the work of Operative: Catharsis and Transferences (see the book *Self-Liberation*) to get me deeper into the climates of strong guilt, especially related to the death of my mother, my medical errors, inconsiderate comments, both to patients and friends, things that I recorded as "bare wires" in which one loses attention and gets hurt, and resentments accumulated over the years with the people I love the most (family, couple, friends). And that not only have to do with what others did to me but also with resenting myself for the way I reacted.

In other words, from various points of view the issue was to reconcile with myself. I don't know if I've completely succeeded but there have been some changes. I wonder if it is possible to get completely "cleaned up" before I leave. I see that living in the world as we are, new events sometimes produce new resentments and new guilt.

My Jewish roots also appeared as something important to attend to, actually for the first time. One of my inner journeys (a "transference") took me to a dark cave where the shadows of Holocaust victims groaned in eternal suffering. I felt that I had to perform a very synthesized but very emotional Ceremony of Assistance (see *Silo's Message*). Then I began to see my guilt as something more cultural. This connected me to the Arab-Israeli conflict and created a need to find a way to write about it from compassion for all the human beings involved, beyond the factions.

Many years ago I had already realized that climates (the prevailing mental tone) materialize, and become reality in the world. So it is no longer a "climate", it is reality. If one has a strong climate of feeling rejected one will act among people in such a way that one will end up being rejected. Consciousness creates the world in which one lives. In some way reconciliation appeared in the face of illness as a need to break with this accumulation of climates and "realities". Because if one takes away this negative and contradictory landscape at the time of death, it would be of little interest for... that Evolutionary Intention that is nourished by the best experiences... I'm not saying that this

image is "correct", but it fills me with meaning.

It was very interesting to see how some of the pieces of the puzzle are rearranged some time after doing the specific, intentional work. That is to say, they continue working on the co-presence. One day, being alone in my bed, I touched the pillow of Jon, my husband, and the word 'alchemy' came to mind. I felt that a new understanding of the process was awakening, I saw all our history with its ups and downs like a crucible where we mix, divide, and make a mutual and shared transformation. After a few days that feeling of alchemy was transferred to the world. In this vortex of encounters and divisions, of acts of violence and acts of great love and compassion, we are learning something that transforms us.

### **Reconciliation with cancer.**

Following the guidelines given by Silo in his talk in Bomarzo on coenaesthetic images (about which I had meditated quite a bit when writing my Monograph on the space of representation <sup>1</sup> and the guided experience The Protector of Life, I found myself in various transferences trying to shrink, modify, illuminate and make the cancer disappear. This never happened, and although it disappeared as a representation it reappeared later in the images, accompanied by a climate of great sadness. On one occasion, however, when I took the cancer out of my body, it was transformed into a baby that I put in my arms making cradling movements. This gave me a feeling of having accepted it and being able to work with it no longer as an internal enemy but as one of these difficulties that appear in life, which can serve to deepen the changes that one wants to make. Since that day, and for a while, I worked with coenaesthetic images of shrinking the cancer (or preventing it from growing) but perhaps feeling less "at war" with what is going on inside my body.

But of course, I keep seeing the translations of impulses that come from this physical process I'm going through (not only cancer, the kidneys also keep giving problems and other diseases that have been added in a process already of much medical confusion). So there are many downturns that come from these translations of intrabody impulses and which I no longer try to fight, but accept them and wait for the body to stabilize a little more before resuming my work. *"Do not oppose a great force. Retreat until it weakens, then advance with resolution."*

### **A BIG reconciliation**

A few years ago the Humanist Movement organized itself with the creation of structures, human networks working for nonviolence, humanization, meaning and transcendence. It was a moment of ambivalence for me, with a long history of failure. Finally I managed to establish groups in some places and I finished the process with joy. But I never felt that I was "good" at it. A few days ago in one of our ceremonies my sister read as a meditation theme the Principle *"Things are well when they move together, not in isolation"*. The associative chain was triggered and it took me to Silo saying: *"It is groups that transform*

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<sup>1</sup> [www.parlabelleidee.fr/docs/productions/2017El%20espacio%20de%20representacionSilvia\\_Bercu.pdf](http://www.parlabelleidee.fr/docs/productions/2017El%20espacio%20de%20representacionSilvia_Bercu.pdf)

*individuals*". And another leap is made and I realize that the important thing about structures was the creation of groups. It didn't matter whether you were "good" or "successful". The only important thing was the energy one put into creating groups, groups with direction. What would help people transform themselves was the whole, not "I".

And as often happens with these "coincidences" a Colombian friend has sent me this picture in which we are working with a group of young people. But they are not looking at me! The group is processing itself. Having put my disposition to create those conditions is something I thank from the bottom of my heart. Register of valid action!



## Comprehensions

Coming back from the hospital after spending most of the day waiting for tests, for the doctor to see me, etc, I realize that I am simply doing things to "kill time" and that gives me a register that I am wasting what little time I have left. I realize this time has to be used well for my spiritual progress and for doing things that serve others, which is the same thing. This realization comes with intense emotion. I dream several times about the subject of time. It also comes to mind a letter that Ed from Canada sent to Jon, when Ed was dying. It says, *"It is interesting to see that the proximity of death does not alter the ability to procrastinate."*

The important thing then was not to separate (divide) the activities dedicated to the sacred from the moments of daily routine, but to be in the presence of the sacred in any situation and to relate to others from that frequency. As with "consciousness of self", it is not easy to maintain it permanently, but one can expand the memory of oneself to re-establish the connection.

In those moments and in looking at the world with compassion, understandings have also arisen about experiences of compassion that had appeared years before with the guided

experience of The Saving Action. The common point of these experiences is that, in that moment, the only thing that counts is "the other" while the "I" is silenced. It feels like a gift from the gods, without the effort of silencing the "I" with complicated techniques. It's a contact with the sacred in everyday life. In compassion, fear, calculation and contradiction disappear.

And because my disease leads me to have many blood transfusions I see the large number of people whose lives depend on these transfusions. And I have a deep appreciation for the volunteer donors. I see that the apparent cruelty of this system hides the compassion, the solidarity, this expression of love for others of which we are not always aware. And this opens up the future for us as humanity.

## The Internal Guide

I have been working with the Internal Guide for several years, sometimes as a sensation, sometimes as an image. There have been different images of guides, some based on real life, people I had significant encounters with, and other images that appeared in my personal works (guided experiences, transferences, explorations). This variability has been producing a kind of confusion. But then, suddenly I felt that the Guide is always there as a coenaesthetic Force, accompanying and comforting me, and that the various representations have to do with experiences that give me the "register" of the Guide. As an example, many years ago a friend told me, 'you have a climate of helplessness' while he put his arm around my shoulders, clearly giving me comfort. And suddenly his image begins to appear as the raw material of my Guide in configuration. Another friend, after his death, begins to appear as a Guide in my transferences when I am facing my own death. And then a being that I do not distinguish well but that treats me with infinite tenderness, appears on an exploratory journey. Such an abundance of guides confuses me again, although I understand that there are guides for different spaces, and that the guides for the deepest spaces are the most powerful. I continue for some time to try to see which guides appear in different experiences until my "Coenaesthetic Guide" returns and with much emotion I see that all the others are expressions of him, like the Hindu gods, which are manifestations of a supreme Being. At that moment the words of Silo resound, *"the sacred is within us"...*

I call the guide to ask and to thank.

Deepening my work with the internal Guide, I understood that it is not something external to me, it is about getting in touch with the guide's virtues to realize that these qualities are part of me, the guide represents the deepest layer of my interiority (coenaesthetic register). A new and powerful emotion then arises when I realize that all those guides that have appeared to me are expressions of my Purpose that has taken me to the centre (my own internal centre, the spirit?) from which all those virtues emanate, behaviours that mobilize so much emotion. Tenderness, Compassion, Love, Unity (valid actions), Forgiveness and Reconciliation, Wisdom, Joy, Faith (and self-giving which is also a form of faith), Inspiration, Recognition/Gratitude, Poetry,... without forgetting humour, recognizing there also a sacred dimension.

## The most significant previous experiences

Prior to these works (which led me to the experiences, understandings and changes I am describing in this narrative) I had already had some remarkable experiences.

Perhaps the first was during a work with the Force: the register that there is something sacred within me, something like an "inner temple". Something completely new in my life.

Another experience happened to me a few years ago when, in the hall at Punta de Vacas Park of Study and Reflection, I made a profound Request for Reconciliation with some humanist friends about whom I had a critical and sometimes even degrading view. Suddenly, I saw these people working until dawn with Silo, planning, creating materials and projects that would later be carried out. And I realized that without them, my work of humanization would have been much more difficult, if not impossible. And that I was looking at them through the very narrow gap of that which criticized them, without also seeing all the good and important things they had developed in the world. With this I not only reconciled myself with them but also saw how many times I judged myself in the same way, limiting myself to seeing myself through a negative aspect of myself. This experience helped me to form the purpose of seeing others and myself in a broader and more compassionate way.

One of the most significant experiences was the enormous commotion I felt when Silo spoke these words during the extended meeting in Buenos Aires, 1989:

*... The Humanist Movement is the external manifestation of the profound changes that are taking place in the interior of the human being and which are history itself: tragic, disconcerting, but always growing. It is a small voice that announces, ahead of its time what is to come beyond the human being we have known. It is a poem and a rainbow of diverse colours. It is a David facing an insolent Goliath. It is the softness of water against the hardness of rock. It is the strength of the weak: a paradox and a Destiny...*

In talking to the others present, I realized that most of us experienced a similar phenomenon at the same time. This was a moment of great importance because I always felt that no matter how showy the phenomena were when doing meditation, there was no way to prove that they were not products of my brain, that is, the physical body that collapses with death. But this was different. "Something" supported by words but not coming from them, hit me and others that day and in that place. "Something" that had become independent of the physical body. My first encounter with the possibility of a transcendent "something"

The next day we went to a barbecue and I asked Silo if the physical perception of that something, that energy had to do with the limbic system (connected to the emotions). He answered "Claaaro! Of course it's like Heidegger says, *a-way-of-the-consciousness-to-be-in-the-world*". At that moment something became apparent to me (to my scientific-materialistic formation) and I felt the (transcendental) consciousness taking the body as a kind of container (here I always remember Mafalda, the cartoon strip by Quino. Miguelito asks if one takes the body when one dies and Mafalda says no. Miguelito is horrified: "How's that, the container has to be returned").

Another interesting experience was that at the end of a retreat of the Force I felt an unavoidable need to write a poem (it is in English, and I transcribe it at the end of this writing, the translation into Spanish was a little difficult for me). Sometime later I understood that the inspiration was evidence of a contact with the Profound during the retreat. And when I study it more closely, the poem seems to express the Purpose, that is, in a moment much earlier than the intentional works with the Purpose. And since there is no memory of what happens in the Profound, reminiscences, deferred translations appear.

Strange commotions and significant coincidences appeared when I did the Formal Discipline, which although the registers were diluted over time, they remained engraved in memory as "reference registers". The strongest was a feeling of infinite expansion and contact with the Energy of the Universe (I don't know how to describe it other than in this way). And there were commotions similar to that of the extended meeting. Here too something changed in my view of death. Some commotions appeared in moments as confirmation that something was "right". I noticed that I was feeling more "directed" in my affairs. It reminded me of Socrates with his "daemon" that warned him when he was going to make a mistake.

## **Faith is emerging**

Starting from doubt, fear, the material-rational (despite previous experiences that had already given me the "suspicion of meaning") there begins the process towards profound reconciliation, with the world and with myself, the direction towards the unitive and the contact with the sacred.

As time goes by I realize that I am beginning to have confidence that when "the time" comes, they will be there to accompany and guide me. That the accumulated registers tell me that although things are very different from how I imagine them here and now, these registers are translations of other, more profound ones, and that I have all the tools for my final journey. Big surprise, I have Faith! Faith is reinforced by the register that transcendence is not individual. I am part of a collective of energy and love, working for changes in the world and in other spaces, towards Love and Compassion.

What led me to recognize the message when so many people remain blind to it? Why did so many "signs" appear during my childhood and youth, prompting me to seek answers beyond those given by this dehumanizing and meaningless system? I now recognise this Purpose leading me on the path to the sacred, and this too is Faith.

## **The image of Silo changes**

It happens that working with the Guide of the Inner Road and the Ceremony of Assistance, incorporating Silo as a companion, at some point in the experience he embraces me and I merge with him. This experience of closeness changes my vision of Silo and his project, which at that moment appears to me as the creation of a "new universe" where the question is not only to reconcile and elevate oneself to transcend but

also to "purify" as many souls (doubles) as possible because they are needed for "something else". I cannot describe this change well, but I am deeply grateful that I had the opportunity to come to this relationship with Silo before I left. I feel strongly that this "project" has been going on for thousands of years and that we, this "cohort", is a new addition, also for thousands of years to come.

## Edgardo's departure

We are told that our friend Edgardo has died in Buenos Aires after a relatively short illness. At the ceremony we organized the day after his departure, I was surprised by an immense emotion: Edgardo's joy at his reunion with Silo. It is as if I were living it. And in the following days I continue to feel it every time I connect with him. A few days later, also in ceremonies, I feel Love as never before, while this happens, it is as if I were not there and when I "come back" I recognise the experience. I feel that Edgardo opened a new door of my mental space, I feel that he prepared himself on his departure to spread love. I realize that my desire for transcendence has had a lot to do with the fear of death, with a "for-me", and that there is another way to "prepare" by connecting with that love for everyone, that infinite and transcendental love that complements compassion (which I had already felt as a gift from the gods) in this new and unknown path but full of wonders.

## Some coincidences...

It seems to me that coincidences reflect the existence of connections that occur in a non-material world. They're like a kind of "evidence" that there are other spaces. And it happens that when the internal work is intensified, more coincidences appear; or perhaps we are in a better position to recognize them.

Here are some examples (in different levels of consciousness).

In a dream, I go to Paris, with the Eurostar train passing through the tunnel (the Channel Tunnel represents the way to the Profound) to attend the "funerals" of 38 humanists (these "funerals" are sacred and festive in nature, resembling a rite of passage). On the way back (to London), I feel transformed (there are several scenes in which I have a new, unusual behaviour). I wake up with an immense sense of well-being, before the pains of illness return. Doing the allegorical analysis of the dream, I am told that there were 38 people (without me) at the first meeting I attended at the Park of Study and Reflection of the Belle Idée (a very sacred meeting since it was an "entrance to the School", that is, the constitution of a group of "spiritual masters" who had experienced a spiritual conversion).

In a "journey of exploration" (in active semi-sleep) the first image that comes to mind is that of a galaxy. I don't know how to go on, I feel I've entered "badly" and I start again. But the image of the galaxy appears again. A few days later, while reading a book by Bruno Pezzuto, I discovered a story in which he describes how, on the day of Silo's death, he discovered a point in the sky that indicates a galaxy that appears in one of the guided experiences. A short time later, friends from Chile visit me and bring me a gift: a painting

of Silo looking at a galaxy!

In an exploratory, a friend appears who I have not seen for a long time, nor have I had any contact with, and a scenario of an open future towards a better world is given. Days later my friend sends me an email to get involved in a project.

A friend goes to the Park of Study and Reflection in Punta de Vacas for the end of the year celebrations and asks me what I need most for the coming year, and that she would reinforce it from the Meditation Hall. I send her my deepest wish. The next day I receive a propaganda spam email completely disconnected from all this. However, in the attached photo, a smiling young woman announces: "Request successfully received" in Spanish, instead of English!



There is also a coincidence with Teresa of Avila: I admire her statue (Teresa of Bernini near Termini Station in Rome). Her ecstasy is impressive. I identify with it... Back in London, shortly after, the illness appears... and in the various internments, between life and death, I have experiences more powerful than the usual ones. Later I learn that Teresa had great mystical experiences during her many illnesses.

## The spirit

I come here to the big question. According to Silo (and other currents), in death the energetic double is left without its material foundation, and it would dissipate if a conscious centre, the spirit, has not been built, and which can continue to evolve. This spirit is built in life by unitive, coherent actions. In other words, the double loses its energy and cohesion through contradictions and with coherent actions it unifies and generates the spirit that transcends. And in my case? I don't know. Sometimes I have had sparks of a presence, of a "something else" and when that happened everything was just fine. But the experience escapes me, and I'm helpless again. When it comes back I can't believe it's not there all the time.

After a while an image begins to appear that the spirit has always been with me, in the

"recognition" of certain events even before I encountered Humanism. With my husband we talked about the strangeness of having a strong emotional connection with some of Silo's writings, and when trying to share them with friends, they felt nothing! I understand that some people simply "recognize" something that they have inside and others don't. Perhaps they recognize other things? I don't want to say that it's about the spirit. But "something" has been giving direction to my life and has been giving signs with certain significant experiences, beyond accidents, detours, contradictions and confusions. I have to thank this crisis I am going through for leading me to this awareness beyond the doubts I feel that a deep and constant Purpose has been acting in my life, giving me direction.

Today (25/04/2019), my friend sends me beautiful photos of the interior of the cathedral of Amiens where she is doing a practice and invites me to do it with her in co-presence. I am inspired and suddenly this thought is formed that feels like a big comprehension: The registers are what shape the double, and the registers of unity, love and compassion, wisdom, energy, joy are what accumulate and allow the spirit to be enlightened. It's not a matter of memories but of "registers", that's why Silo insists so much on registers. It occurs to me that this is what one takes away, not the memory of unity but the registers of unity. In the Ceremony of Assistance, memories are evoked, but then they are released along with the body. In the end, everything seems much simpler: less head/images and more attention to the registers!

Suddenly one understands better the meaning of the practice of thanking, which is precisely a way of intentionally "reinforcing and recording", consciously the most positive, significant registers: *"When you find great strength, joy and goodness in your heart, or when you feel free and without contradictions, immediately be internally thankful. (Silo's Message).*

## **The journey through valid actions**

In the first work I started my "list" of valid actions, unitive actions as recommended by Silo to Jayesh. As time went by I found others, people close to me pointed out actions that I didn't even realize were unitive, because they were "simply helping others in the most natural way". But paying attention, yes, indeed, they had that characteristic of thinking, feeling and acting in the same direction and treating the other as I would like to be treated. So I added them to the list. But re-reading the list, I realized that it lacked "charge".

Then, when taking one of these "internal trips of exploration", my guide invites me to "visit" some of the actions on the list and I find that "living them" in images has a huge charge. The registers are clear, deep, powerful.

With time, the images of important experiences expand and it becomes clear to me that repeating them with their more emotional registers creates a more solid sensation of that internal "something" from which they emanate.

## **It is forbidden to look God in the face**

This ancient Jewish precept (?) arose during a work with the Force (ceremony of the Service, in Silo's Message). I felt soft undulations inside my body, but when I tried to pay attention to them they disappeared, and when I concentrated simply on the image of the expanding sphere, the undulations returned. I also remembered Silo's phrase, *"Friends, I would like this Message of the Profound to be heard. It is not a strident message, it's a quiet message that cannot be heard when one tries to trap it."* Ah, so the thing is not to look from the "I", from the superficial and everyday "me" but from "that other", deep and intuitive but not controllable place. I'm grateful for the understanding.

## **The void**

After about six months of internal work (since the beginning of my illness), I experience a very deep and unexpected catharsis after working with the Guide to the Inner Road which a friend reads to me as if it were a guided experience. After the catharsis, I am left with a feeling of great emptiness for quite some time. It's okay... All the work with images leads me to that. The guides tell me: silence, wait, don't move, something very difficult for me. Then other images come: the obsessive and compulsive search for the "certainty of experience".

The sacred is in the world, they tell me. If you work for the sacred in the world you also work for it beyond this life. If you look only to the beyond you turn your back on the sacred in the world.

I ask the Guide what my mission in the world is, he reminds me that on several occasions different teachers told me "you are a natural writer". In fact, I like to write. I see the importance of using that quality to communicate my process to others, so that it is available to anyone facing death (we are really always there) and that I can take some elements to develop their own process. But I also write for *Pressenza* to follow the chain of change, of humanization (although I find it difficult to write in *Pressenza* the things that give a deeper meaning...).

And little by little, new answers emerge from that void, new comprehensions, new projects... a kind of orientation that comes from the inside...

## **Dying in this system**

When I was given the diagnosis and prognosis, which was very bad, I was withdrawn for a while. When my friends talked to me about what was going on in the world, stories, news. I couldn't connect. Then little by little the world was coming back. Later on, in my work with the transferences I found images of many people who had died "badly", in horror, without time or elements to reconcile. The Holocaust. I felt a deep sadness and compassion appeared in those transferences, "mini ceremonies of assistance" that I did for them, some dead many years ago, others more recently, but all of them in a world of great violence and dehumanization.

I began to watch the news with more interest, followed the campaign of a very interesting Labour politician (a humanist in the broadest sense of the word) and wrote for *Pressenza* supporting him as much as I could. I saw the sacredness in the world, the people trying to get things right despite the system, the doctors and nurses working in the best possible way within a health system that is being deliberately dismantled to make way for privatisation. My little body, *MY little body!* At the mercy (or lack thereof) of the forces of cruel anti-humanism in action, and also the sacred in the human being building compassion, rebelling against the death of the spirit.

It is that one does not die in isolation but as part of a family, a society, a humanity. The process of dying can also be a tool to humanize the earth, to put nonviolence into action. I made it a point to recognize the good work and humane treatment of people, to let them know that someone notices, unitive actions that recognize unitive actions. This is not easy when there is reluctance, lack of attention or even hostility from the professional in charge of taking care of you. Being a doctor myself, it is hard not to see when mistakes are made. Try not to personalize, to see the system, to focus so as not to fall into resentment. So many opportunities to do personal work!

The health system is a medley of nationalities, colours, religions, abilities and ages. Where else would I have found that nurse from Ethiopia, that angel always giving love and compassion, or the doctor from India, always doing more than necessary, or my fantastic Irish surgeon, or the professor from Pakistan, kindness and wisdom in academic action, or the doctor and nurse in haematology, who humanized my treatment? They are the balm I need to counteract the repulsion towards politicians who are destroying, privatizing, exploiting the goodwill of those who work in this health system.

I ask again if it is possible to leave without anger and resentment, all "clean", even living in a violent system like this. It goes with my doubts. Perhaps it is like the lists of the unitive-contradictory actions, learning to give more "weight" to what goes in the direction of light.

## The downs

Although it goes well with reconciliations and some luminous experiences, there are moments of depression and anguish in which I doubt transcendence and the time I have left seems to be shortening dramatically. In general, I see that the translations of impulses of the illness carry their own dynamics. After reading Lala's book (Laura Rodrigues, the first humanist deputy in Chile, died of cancer and wrote about her internal process in her book *To Whomever Wants to Listen* where she describes in depth "the virus of altitude") in which she describes that there are cycles, I say to myself then: "this will pass". And in fact it does. Sometimes I need a good catharsis. Sometimes I enter into a work of images that takes me to a place of peace and luminosity that then elevates me also in my daily life. Sometimes I get inspired to write something that seems interesting and this also brings me out of the doldrums. Sometimes a conversation with a friend makes me realize something interesting, and I come out of the tunnel.

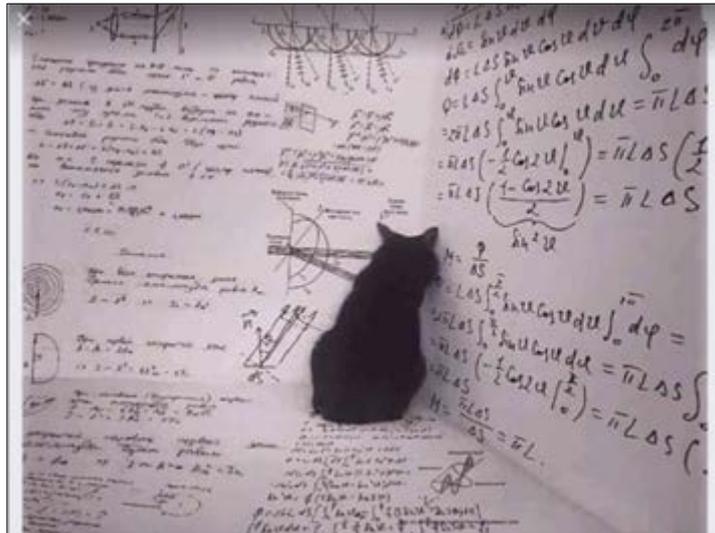
I've learned not to fight with some familiar translations of impulses. The nausea from the chemotherapy makes me climatic, the fever gives me anxiety, uneasiness, on the other hand it is possible to escape from the pain if it is not very strong and do personal work and participate in the ceremonies. I know that many people are asking for me, I am grateful, I am thankful. And it gives me a lot of energy and joy to ask for others, to try to wrap them up in love. When I make a request in the Well-being Ceremony for others I do a kind of "Imposition" (communicating the Force to others) with my hands (in image/imagination), and then a greater energy register is awakened which in principle surprises me. I see that the registers of the unexpected connect me with advancing towards the sacred.

Accepting the downs, do I have the register of failure? I see that one can put the illusion of success into one's work as well. Sometimes I have a good register, something unusual, ah, success! says the I and the experience disappears. Lows come sometimes when time passes without anything unusual, extraordinary happening. The failure of contact with transcendence creates dependence on others to help me connect again. (This internal judge is not much help, I am told that one must learn to accept help). But failure is interesting. It's perceived from a greater depth, there's another Look that sees it and makes me realise that what I perceive as failure is the collapse of the illusory and redirects me towards what's important, the luminous, that which gives and has meaning.

## Schrödinger's Chemo

Like Mr Schrödinger's cat, you don't know if it's alive or dead until you open the box. You don't know if the cancer has responded to the chemotherapy or not until you have a CAT scan. The initial prognosis was quite bad, but there was some response and therefore time could be stretched. Time becomes an accordion, today I feel bad, the kidney is infected, I have to be admitted to the hospital, ok, the image of death is right under my nose, the things of the world do not have much interest. I wonder if I have done enough valid actions, if I will be sufficiently reconciled, do I have faith in transcendence, *really?*

Then I feel better, I go out, I look at the world, I eat nice things, I connect, I write articles for *Pressenza* that can inspire people to commit and activate themselves with nonviolence. I try to communicate even if my discoveries are small with regard to transcendence and death, anyway it can serve others. This becomes a priority. I forget that I am going to die and I concentrate on the world, until a sneeze reminds me. But one of the things that I appreciate most for its ability to change states and climates is a sense of humour. Here's a favourite. Thank you, Danny Z. This is Schrödinger's cat planning his revenge.



## Placebos and coenaesthetic images

Returning to the theme of the coenaesthetic images of Silo's talk in Bomarzo, while meditating on the subject of placebos in the context of my monograph on the Space of Representation, I found it interesting that these coenaesthetic images were, at least in part, responsible for the improvement obtained by taking a placebo. I knew that my scientific mind would resist accepting Facebook's recommendations of miracle cures without a solid foundation, so I had to find elements that had some scientific basis. I found on PubMed, the database of medical studies, a number of common food items that had been found to have some anti-cancer compound or at least epidemiological studies showed an inverse relationship with cancer (red onion, red grapes, shiitake mushrooms, nuts). I added my placebos to my diet with the intention of improving my coenaesthetic images to stabilize the cancer (without cutting the chemotherapy). It is not something I can "recommend" to others as a panacea or cure. If I say that I eat nuts because an inverse relationship was found between people who eat nuts and cancer there is nothing that assures that nuts are the cause, it could be another factor common to those who eat nuts and have little cancer. Just to be clear, if someone is looking for something to enhance their cancer treatment, they should look for their own placebos within their own belief system. I found that this helped me feel that I could do "something," contribute to my treatment, and not remain passive and helpless in the face of the disease.

Another way to reinforce the coenaesthetic images is with the guided experience of The Protector of Life, and of course more specific and more personal images can also be configured to get into the body in a positive way. The important thing, as explained by Silo in Bomarzo, is that the image, although visual to begin with, must trigger coenaesthetic registers, otherwise it does not act on the body a the way that is of interest.

It is also possible that knowing that other people are asking for one, as in the Well-being Ceremony, will trigger those coenaesthetic images that will hit the body in a proper way.

I also saw that in the face of the anxiety of death one wants magic. And perhaps that makes us vulnerable to charlatans who exploit the terminally ill. It became important for

me to try to understand the mechanisms of consciousness that are at work here for me and for others.

Furthermore, I cannot rule out that the positive energies sent by the Askings of others and those of my own will act on the body. I have had enough experiences where there seems, or at least (as a minimum) there has been a strong register, to be an action at distance, always in the context of a strong emotional relationship, so as not to deny this possibility even if my rationalistic tendency struggles with it.

## **The "I" gives signs, Possession. How to transform the negative into positive**

When one is in search of the sacred, the confrontation with one's own possession, arrogance and other tricks of the I becomes intolerable. I give this example. In a meeting someone mentioned an idea which he attributed to someone else. But it was MINE! Needless to say, a few minutes later I felt terrible, my possession exposed to people so loved. The image of self! A disaster!

Little by little I calmed down and saw that it is precisely the development of a Centre that allows one to see possession in action and to reject it. OK. That's how you learn.

It is true that many times we deny in ourselves things that we criticize in others. I knew that already. The novelty that appeared in a conversation was to see the same mechanism but in the positive, that is, sometimes it is difficult to see in oneself things, virtues, which we admire in others. We have the impression that the other, the leader, the guide, the example, is full of virtues but we do not realize that they are in us and that is why we recognize them "outside". Once again, the taste of the discovery of something revolutionary for a world where criticism, of others and of oneself, prevails, and virtues, recognition, graces, are lost, outside and inside. The Centre is formed by valid actions, but we must recognize them! If there is a severe and critical internal judge, there is a danger of losing them.

The judgment of our lives is the memory of unitive actions, so it is important for transcendence to know and recognize the best that is in one. It matters in the same way for politics: virtues are not in charismatic leaders but in the hearts of the people who elect them, and if people do not see them in themselves they may believe that they depend on the powerful who appear to have them. In other words, Revolution. Who would have said that the keys to transcendence also open the door to Democracy! (I pat myself on the back, I feel that these mixtures of planes are a virtue of mine and I admire it in others as well. It has to do with the ability to make broader relationships). The best guides are internal, those who represent Kindness, Wisdom and Strength in the depth of one's own consciousness. Thank you Guide!

I also saw that the "I" with which we began our work, in its most mechanical state, an illusion of identity created by the conjunction of memories and sensations, can in unfavourable circumstances take on a basic climate, the fear of disappearing, and a basic mission, not to disappear. It enters into a kind of war with its destiny. It makes noise, it

does not allow itself to be silenced in order to enter sacred spaces, it is burdened with guilt and resentments that are apparently indigestible, unforgivable, heavy and weighty. But the "I" is not an enemy, or a trap, since, apart from being essential for daily life, it can also sensitize itself to the impulse of the deepest consciousness and create the search for that which gives real meaning to life. I find this awareness one of the most interesting reconciliations in this process.

And on the subject of fear: A guide with Wisdom tells me (in one of my explorations): "Overcoming fear, that's the secret for human beings, to jump over fear! Because fear is of the monkey, the spirit does not feel fear. Getting rid of fear in people (and in oneself, of course) is the greatest act of compassion, but it is not something that can be done for others, you can only give the tools, which come from the Profound. And one is there to pass them on.

## Changes

I'm still me, and if I don't look at myself properly it seems that everything is the same, but a lot has changed on this strange journey. I have felt the strength of the Askings, my own and those of others, my relationship with the people who helped me in the process has created the awareness of links of an unexpected depth, almost "magical", comprehensions with the ceremonies, sudden inspirations in planes so varied, sometimes connected to transcendence, sometimes to the socio-political to write in *Pressenza*, deep reconciliations, the awakening of Compassion, and also more lucidity: seeing frustrations and expectations in action, the tricks of the "I", the failures, the going back up, humbly learning from the downturns...

The falls have sometimes been subtle, sometimes painful. But the most significant thing was to realize that it is the registers that matter, not the memory, and that the contradictions pulling at different sides hurt me because I already register it as disintegration. On the other hand, unitive actions, where everything goes in the same direction, create a centre of gravity that I already register as an open future.

There are 7 billion human beings on this planet, yet I have had the privilege of listening to Silo in person, reading his materials, practicing with others a doctrine that is being discovered step by step as if it were a treasure hunt. In everyday life, in games, in art, in stories, in everything, the sacred is expressed, and if we learn to see it, *everything* that happens is an echo of the path of liberation of the enchained god.

## The Poem written after a Retreat of the Force

### Thankfulness

No blueprints? No magic pathways?  
No fixed Whens, Whos, Hows and Whats?  
Just a deeply felt old compass  
for a change, Made-in the South

Killing dragons, fighting windmills  
from the 60's we survived  
No regrets for dreams frustrated  
for they brought us oh so nigh

Did we use up all the stones  
to build castles in the air?  
Or is dawn coming to a world  
for us all, peaceful and fair?

Dear Prometheus, your adventure  
brought us the secrets of fire  
But did it leave us somewhere  
between pâté and crude desires?

Well done Armstrong, spacesuit hero  
Moon's first seen leapfrogging man.  
Pioneer stepper into heavens  
frying chips in non-stick pans

We run after rights and wrongs,  
confused by the pleasure of sex  
Now it's good and now it's evil  
Wind of life or game of chess?

Money talks and it speaks English  
With an accent from Wall Street  
Empty of meaning giant tyrant  
god-like puppet with clay feet.

Feel important, famous, well known  
Respected, admired, served  
Fill the void of near existence  
With illusions of grandeur.

End of childhood neon banner  
for the not-so-human race  
marked by noise of broken handcuffs  
from the worldwide inner Yes!

Wondrous climbing human psyche  
super extra complex brain  
caged behind golden reflexes  
Simple switch. On: joy. Off: pain

Yet excluded from the concert  
of all universal knowledge  
to play alone and without score  
songs of milk and lumpy porridge

Apparent splitting antinomies  
Ghosts of struggling fighting halves  
Intuitive relative E: mc squares  
Quantum oneness earth and skies.

Eve awakens from dream knitting  
Warning others of the flood  
Nine short months to make a human  
But lifetimes to steer the Ark.

Forgiveness is round the corner  
No wrongs done, just growing pains  
for funny monkey with a conscience  
to catch up intention's train

We may bring our choirs and music  
our poetry, science and Mind  
but violence, strife, racism  
and wars must be left behind

New cradle for baby Reason  
New playpen for toddler Heart  
New social nest for Doing.  
new nows for futures past

Discard revenge and (will) power  
No room for whips and for guns  
Be mindful how is delivered  
the sacred word you call love

What models are we to follow?  
What words are to be our guide?  
Wise thoughts, kind feelings, strong actions  
In unison we shall find.

Treating other like we'd like them  
To treat us, to free our lives  
Humanising jobs, towns, values,  
Habitat, production lines.

You glimpse it then brother, sister?  
You make out the journey's end?  
No real ends, just beginnings  
Chick Phoenix's cracking the egg.

From suffering to growing freedom  
From ignorance to the Light  
not quite led, perhaps escorted  
by myths, by the arrow's might

You're welcome to see the window  
Look through, ponder, decide  
Stay dozing in snug armchairs  
or push, the door is only ajar

These gates are not made for solos  
No ivory towers, no prams  
The road is wide enough for many  
Or too narrow indeed, for just one

Thank you Negro for your teachings  
That learning is DIY  
Here we go in stream of softness  
And hard rock turns friendly sand

But silence! Edges are parting  
The slit opens to let in the sun  
Flower, crystal, eye reflections  
To ego and I we say good-bye.

New People dazzled and planning  
Blink, laugh, play and shake hands  
The writer makes one last entry  
True History has begun.

## Epilogue

At a little after 5am on 1st April 2020 Silvia left her physical body to continue a separate life, the mind once again triumphantly freeing itself opening its way towards the Light. ...the most beautiful city of Light, never seen by the eye, whose song has never been heard by human ears... Peace in the heart, light in the understanding... ..

*Note: Translation to English by JS and AW  
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