



The Magic of AcuDetox®

by Brian C. Bailey M.D.

Chapter 11: The Role of AcuDetox® in freeing up the INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE

Schizoid Defense When we are confronted with impersonality in the course of letting go of ego identifications, if we neither posit it as the ultimate reality, nor reject it, but genuinely investigate the truth, we will ultimately come upon the personal element. The absence of the personal element, which is felt as impersonality, can be seen at such times either as an emptiness in the chest, or the presence of a hard impersonal shield over it. The emptiness is felt as almost physical, as an empty hole or cavity in the chest. The emptiness affects the individual by making him feel that it doesn't have what it takes for him to relate in a personal way. He is impersonal because he lacks the personal element. He feels the emptiness as a deficiency, a lack in who he is. This deficient emptiness is simply the state of the absence of the Personal Essence. The rigid shield is a defense against this deficiency, which gives the individual a sense of being a person that is not personal. In fact, it is what is usually referred to in depth psychology as a schizoid defense. It is a defense against personal contact, because of the vulnerability that it might expose. So the individual employs this impersonal defense of isolation and emotional detachment so that he does not feel either the vulnerability of personal involvement, or the sadness about the lack of it. This condition is much more common than is normally acknowledged, for it is usually hidden by the ego's sense of being personal¹.

I haven't used the term *schizoid defense* before, because the subject of his book was not the ways in which an individual can succumb to stress, and I will only use it here in passing for that same reason. Those who have completed **AcuDetox**, will notice that some aspect of themselves has loosened up, and is being replaced with something they feel better about. We know that this new competency will be even stronger if we understand the dynamics in play. There is work to be done after one's a, but since the nature of his work is unfamiliar to those who are undergoing it, the more you know about it the easier it will be.

The above quote applies specifically to those people who come to experience a strengthening and spontaneous bubbling up of their previously quiescent **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE**. We have spoken of the origins of the **resources** as occurring at the time of the *rapprochement phase* of child development. This period, at about age 18 months when the child first ventures out on her own following a phase of development during which she has been in a symbiotic relationship with her caregiver, signals a growing sense of independence and autonomy on the part of the young child. Once the child ventures away from the security of the caregiver, understandable anxiety arises. "Where has my protection gone? I want to explore the world, but I'm afraid!" We have suggested that the child experiments with various modes of behavior, until one occurs which feels comfortable, but the evidence is that the pathway chosen at this point has already likely revealed itself, previously. Really, it doesn't matter, because the chosen defense becomes overt and obvious at this juncture, and so we can accurately say that this is where it begins.

This Chapter talks specifically about the *schizoid defence* and the shelved **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE**. Don't be perturbed by the word *schizoid*. In this context it simply means that the mode of dealing with fear is to distance oneself from it, to *withdraw* rather than to charge forward as the other ways of defending oneself would do. This is *the absence of the personal element* spoken of by Almaas.



¹ Ali, Hameed (A.H.Almaas); *The Pearl Beyond Price*, pg 75

People who have employed the *schizoid defense* all their lives certainly haven't seen themselves as *impersonal* – but, really, they have nothing to compare it with. They are the way they are and that's all there is to it. But if the *schizoid defense* melts away, as it does after **AcuDetox**, suddenly one is thrust into an unfamiliar personal world, and one may even see, the first time, in contradistinction to one's current experience - the cocoon-like existence one has employed up until this time. This emergence of the personal may become a new source of anxiety, but our experience is that **AcuDetox** also “greases the axle” which propels the person into forward movement. If one is able to see it, it would be that up until now the arising of fear has caused us to withdraw. We are only as robust and participatory as our environment is unthreatening and unchallenging. Now suddenly we're thrust into the world, and the work incumbent upon us is to learn to enjoy this new mode of existence. So, let's look at it more precisely.



***Jeannie M.** is a 40-ish single mother who has been very guarded with what she says and to whom she says it. She was sexually abused from a very early age, and has kept the story to herself. She is likable and has lots of casual friends, but few of them are close - by her own choice. She broods. At various times in her life she has had problems with addiction to drugs and/or alcohol. Sometimes she has been able to create for herself a distance from them, but on these occasions has fallen prey to overeating. Jeannie has a 15-year-old son, with whom she would like to have a closer relationship, but she finds herself often snapping at him, and then regretting it later.*

*At her **AcuDetox** sessions, **Jeannie** was a fly on the wall, and except for her friend whom she recruited to come with her, nobody would remember her being there. She felt relatively unsafe throughout, often left early and never stayed around to talk or exchange insights with other group members after the sessions.*

*We had to twist **Jeannie's** arm to get her to come to her individual follow-up session. Finally, when her friend came and reported back that she'd gotten considerable value from her session, she grudgingly agreed to come. Once there, however, and somewhat disarmed by talking about her friend, she said that nothing much had happened until about two weeks after the sessions ended. One day she noticed that she was angry—for no good reason. Her anger smoldered on for a few days, and eventually she started thinking about the fact that one of her neighbors plowed the snow in her laneway in the middle of the night, always waking her up. She did the unusual thing, calling him up and asking him to stop waking her up. He resisted changing his routine, but finally agreed, and afterwards proved to be quite friendly towards her and understanding of her sleeplessness dilemma. **Jeannie** mused that this was the first time in her memory she had ever forcefully asked for anything. It brought a big smile to her face, also meaning that she was anything but angry at this juncture.*

*We talked about this at length, with me explaining to her that in people who have suppressed their feelings reflexly, being freed of this through **AcuDetox** often begin to experience strong feelings of many varieties.*

Almaas calls the suppressed state *impersonalness* - and the state of freedom from it - the *Personal Essence*. An **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE person** (i.e. a person who has acted with limited instinct) - approaches life like a turtle, ready in each moment to retract inside, and thus protect themselves from the fearsome world. Often such persons do not describe themselves as *impersonal*, but the people around them find them quite prone to disappear, emotionally if not physically, on a moment's notice. We could say that they reserve the right to be by themselves whenever they want.



The “Clunky” Beginnings of INSTINCTUAL Mastery

People like **Jeannie**, who are on the road to **INSTINCTUAL** mastery, are, like all the other resource types, “clunky” in the beginning. Delighted when they have a breakthrough and are suddenly more personal, they quickly forget this in the face of a newly appearing strong emotion. It is like people have been trying to pry emotions out of them all their lives, and suddenly they feel their cup running over, and they don’t always like it. Now they are prone to suppress these emotions, or to complain about them. As a psychotherapist, it feels natural to prod such people into expressing their feelings - not an easy task in its own right, but if we succeed, we often find ourselves with a person with more feelings in play than they can deal with – who continually seeks a place to talk about the feelings. In the West, we know a lot about prodding people out of their withdrawal, but does this really work in the long run?



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In the East, and specifically in Japan, we have seen the appearance of Zen hospitals, which are located near some naturally occurring beauty, a vista over the mountains or a view on a magnificent waterfall. Hospital rooms look out on these natural beauties, but the hospital itself is a sea of white. The rooms are white, the trimmings are white, the curtains are white. The beds, dressers, lights and everything else are white. Meals are served in one’s room on white trays with white utensils—and are relatively white themselves. Patients remain in their room except for a weekly one hour session with a therapist. Complaining is not allowed during this session. At a certain point, the patient feels better and is discharged. Results are said to be better than those at Western psychiatric hospitals.

We must make it apparent to our **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE Types** that they will prosper mightily through the emergence of strong feelings, even uncomfortable ones, and that they will even prosper more when they manage to acknowledge them but not act them out. The result is the appearance of a deeper level of experience, in **Prigogine’s** terms, *a higher level of complexity*². In time, one’s initial clunkiness disappears and the demeanor of our instinctual types shows the ability to mine one’s depths, bringing forth truly human values, and to contribute their expression to others. **Abraham Lincoln**, whose *instinctual resource* had been reined in all his life, and whose opposition to slavery had been until this time - lukewarm, suddenly *rose to the occasion* in 1863 with his *Gettysburg Address*³.



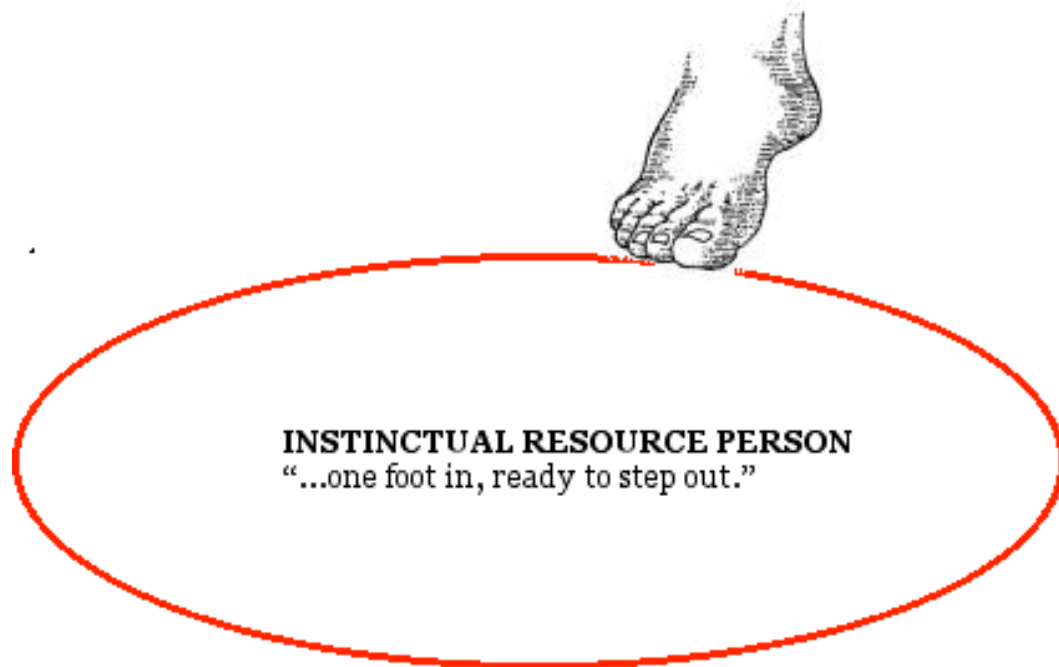
In Anne Tyler’s *The Accidental Tourist*, Macon Leary (*William Hurt*), an emotionally distant writer of travel guides must carry on with his life after his son is killed and his marriage crumbles. Part of his unwitting strategy to fend off strong feelings of sadness (or anything else for that matter) is to write tourism books about how to visit exotic foreign cities - reducing the experience to emotional pablum - by finding restaurants where bland American food is served. Macon is committed to shielding himself from his own strong feelings, and at every turn in the road finds a way to do so. He succeeds until he meets Muriel Pritchett (*Geena Davis*) who refuses to take his stultifying withdrawal at face value. Ultimately, Macon discovers his **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE** - in the last scene of the movie. I won’t spoil it for you, as I think that actually watching this highly evocative movie is the best way to get the benefit from it. **Highly recommended!**

² Prigogine article http://www.acudestress.ca/startup/WEEK_TWO.html

³ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_hYZFUsOuw&feature=related

The Road To INSTINCTUAL Mastery

Occasionally (*especially in novels and movies*), we see **instinctual mastery** precipitating in one fell swoop, as it does with **Macon Leary**, but usually it is a series of infinitesimally small incremental steps. Each of these steps is a small step forward in one's world, a world where stepping back has been usual. While there is a great variation in the way **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE** people present themselves, we know that it is not always apparent that they are all prone to withdrawal; such people are ready to move away from reality at the drop of a hat. If they have stepped into the circle of involvement in anything – a job, a relationship, a sport – the other foot is always ready to make a quick exit. This makes them unsure of themselves – hardly the ingredients of *mastery*.



Cynthia, an accountant in her 50s, came to **AcuDetox** with her construction boss husband, **Mel**. She complained of being reclusive and isolated, and her husband noted that she was unhappy, lacking in confidence. Quiet as a mouse, Cynthia sat through the sessions impassively, as if she was resisting anything that might come up - while her husband entertained the other participants with his outgoing joking manner. They were hardly two peas in a pod! When she came back for her post-**AcuDetox** visit, there had been a long hiatus, and predictably she claimed that nothing had happened since. Her husband almost fell off his chair. “*What about the cookie exchange?*” he bellowed. “*What about it?*” she returned. “*Well, first of all, you went. Every other time they called you, you excused yourself, thanked them and hung up. This time you accepted right away. And you went out with a smile on your face.*”

“*I guess I did.*”

“*When you got there, you found that everyone else had brought bushel baskets of cookies – and you brought a dozen. Ordinarily at the first sign of embarrassment you would have hightailed it home. But you hung in and asked everybody their address, came home, baked more cookies and went out and distributed them. Wow!*”

Cynthia grudgingly admitted to **Mel** that her actions were uncharacteristic of her. Still she tended to downplay them - but 2 years later she was running the cookie exchange. She remained understated – but not nearly as cautious.

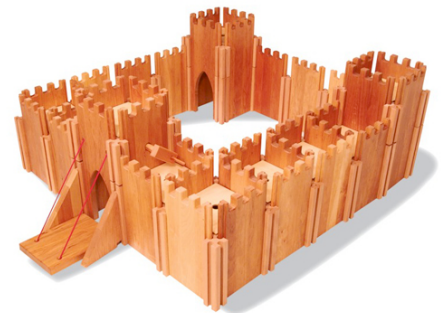
Joining The Masters

Absolute mastery of the results of **AcuDetox** is rarely achieved in the first few months, but from the very outset, even when recipients are troubled by new challenges on their plate, there is a marked tendency to do the right thing. **Jeannie** didn't act out her anger; instead she asked for what she wanted. **Abraham** didn't succumb to his sadness at seeing thousands of soldiers massacred daily. He set his mind on doing the right thing and even when it was unpopular with him, he did it. **Macon** couldn't get over the death of his child, but he chose the right person to nudge him out of his misery. **Cynthia** wasn't happy that she got the instructions wrong about how many cookies to bring, but that didn't let her go into retreat mode. It is by *venturing forth* that the **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE** person learns to create magic. And *venturing forth* becomes a lot more effective than sitting in a psychotherapist's office.

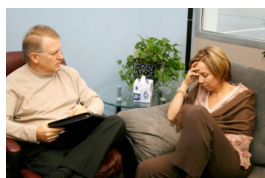
Long before I knew about **AcuDetox**, I knew about the *schizoid defense*. It's the same one I use too. Used by about one third of people, it often backs the user into a corner, and then we need to move out, but instead we move further into the corner. **Valerie S.** was a 28 year old filing clerk with the federal government. She had just moved to the area with her highly abusive husband, who beat her up so badly one night that she had to call a colleague from work to take her to the hospital. Her rescuer became her knight in shining armor, saving her from eight years of beatings. She summoned up the courage to leave her husband and quickly moved in with her rescuer.

Soon, however, the lovebirds were hardly speaking to each other. Each of the pair was hypersensitive, and reacted to perceived slights on the part of the other with avoidance. **Valerie** retreated to her room and her hurt feelings, while **Andy** parked himself in front of the television set. Sometimes days would pass without them speaking, and then suddenly things would be all right again for a while. That brought **Valerie** in for psychotherapy, not exactly enthusiastically - for she could only see things between her and **Andy** ending - but at least she was there.

Valerie had grown up in a small town mining community in Nova Scotia, the only girl in a family of boys. Her father and brothers enjoyed kibitzing, and all the boys were headed for work in the mine. She often wanted to join them, but they liked teasing her, making fun of her femininity. It was part of their macho dance. When she had had enough, she tore up the stairs, slamming the door of her bedroom, often crying herself to sleep. It was like her room was her castle, and she defended herself by pulling up the drawbridge. When she was 17, she'd had enough, and she just wanted out. The first boy to propose to her promised he would take her to a new community. She leapt at the opportunity. It was leaping out of the frying pan into the fire.



In talk therapy, one tries to get the patient to consider a new and more successful course of action. Hopefully it's their idea, not yours, or else they will soon become addicted to outside advice - or to having someone who facilitates discharging their tension by incessantly talking about their feelings. Both therapist and patient can also easily get sucked into the error of *Shifting the Burden to the Intervener*. Like paying jobless people welfare payments, the therapist often finds that the more effort she makes, the less effort her patient makes. It's called *learned helplessness*.



I pointed out to **Valerie** that withdrawing was the way she dealt with her brothers' teasing, and now it was the same way she dealt with **Andy**'s comments. I pointed out that it wasn't working now, but acting on a hunch, I asked her if things had worked out well when she was at home with her brothers. She brightened up immediately. She said "Yes, I'd race upstairs and have a good cry in my room, and then I realized that my brothers were just joking, and my dad was just joining with them, and in the end they all

really loved me. Once that came to me, the crying stopped. I went cheerfully back downstairs and joined in the fray again, this time with a slightly thicker skin.” “That’s great” I returned. “Could you do the same thing with **Andy**?”

Valerie returned the next week, but she hadn’t done anything. I asked her why she said that she was really mad at **Andy** for making fun of her going to therapy, and for refusing to come with her. “I’m too mad at him to lighten up.”

Here was the opportunity to explain that not acting out her anger, would make room for something new to happen.

The next week **Valerie** came bouncing into the office. She bubbled ” **Andy** never knew what hit him. I went up to my room for my little cry, got over it quickly emerged from the room in high spirits. **Andy** immediately shut off the television and gave me a great big hug. It happened again a few days later. Same result! I’m really magic!”

Yes she was *magic*, but it was all very understandable. As much as **Valerie** was a *withdrawing* **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE** person, so was **Andy**. So, when **Valerie** withdrew, he just mirrored her and *withdrew* too. When **Valerie** came forth, **Andy** reflexively came forth too, again mirroring her. Its true he didn’t know what hit him - but what hit him was inspired action. She was doubly effective here because he was reflexly benefitting from her work.

Onwards to Mastery



Two of my favorite people are **Martha** and **Don Rosenthal**. As two **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE** people, themselves, they were confronted with their relationship crumbling, much like **Valerie and Andy**, and they decided together to find a way to *master* the perpetual bickering that went on between them. The result was the creation of a workshop which is now called *Awakening Together*, backed up by their book *Learning To Love*⁴.

From their own self-observation they began to focus on two skills needed in relationship, which are rarely learned before one enters a relationship. The first is the **instinctual** skill of *being fully expressed* - emotionally. And the second is the equally **instinctual** skill of *openhearted listening*. The **Rosenthals** show in a hands-on way, that these two skills can be learned, one at a time, then in rapidly progressing sequences, in the course of a single weekend, resulting in the relationship becoming a safe space for the each of them, by which they can skillfully help each other to be the best they can be. In **Don and Martha**’s case, inspired work of one member of the couple blows the other member out of their socks - with love.

So, *mastery* is the emergence of an ability to get a *previously unachievable* result - time after time. While it is an unending quest, the *previously unavailable* raw ingredients for *mastery* are served up by **AcuDetox**. Sometimes acupuncture mobilizes white cells to head off a bacterial infection. With stress, it’s a teacher, taking three weeks to break up the defensive patterns of a lifetime, and to move the recipient forward into an increasing experience of the unity of all beings. Acupuncture works with the neurotransmitter **β-endorphin** to create an environment of flux and liminality, in this instance pointing recipients toward true autonomy and away from early childhood based defensive pseudo-autonomy. This is not about problem solving. It’s about finding one’s true identity, and seeing it blend with the true identity of others. It’s not therapy. It’s much better than that. *And when it’s working, it feels magical!*

⁴ **Don & Martha** live at West Corinth, Vermont. They hold a powerfully effective workshop - not just for **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE** types. See a movie we made about them at: <http://www.awakeningtogether.com/videos.htm>

Getting Free of a Lifelong Defensive Stance

The **Rosenthals** found that it wasn't all that easy to forge a life of *full self-expression* and *openhearted listening*. So they rely on the immediate *lightness-of-being experience* one gets when one is *fully self expressed*, or when one has *fully opened oneself to listen nonjudgmentally* to one's mate. The comments that follow are my own experience of working with **Don** and **Martha**, rather than explanations they have given. If I'm wrong, I hope they'll understand.

The origins of *lack of full self-expression* and *the tendency to listen judgmentally* are, as suggested above and elsewhere, during the *rapprochement phase* of self-development, which starts at about 18 months of age. It is rare that anyone has a memory of this time in one's life, which is part of the reason that therapy cannot be used to go back and retrace one's early decision-making. But even worse than that, the fear that arises when we break away from mother for the first time, sets up a defense against the feeling of aloneness. So any feeling of aloneness will be defended against from this time forward. This makes it difficult or impossible to feel our *Personal Essence*, our unique sense of being an autonomous person. This is both good news and bad news the same time. The good news is that each time we newly feel our *Personal Essence*, we feel vitally alive, and life feels delicious. The bad news is that unless we free ourselves from the defensive posture created at age 2, we will never know the truth about life.



So let me set it up that I am an *Instinctual Resource person* going to one of **Don** and **Martha**'s sessions with my wife and partner **Nancy**. It's not long before I am offered the opportunity to practice one of the two skills in a verbal interchange with **Nancy**. I choose to be **fully self expressed** in this exercise. **Nancy's openhearted listening** role will be to paraphrase everything I say, so that we both understand what I am expressing in the same way. I get to correct her if I think she has misinterpreted what I just said. This will not be easy, as I will tend to *withdraw* when I anticipate that what I am about to say will be rejected, and because **Nancy's** understanding of what I say is her understanding, and often not what I meant to express. I notice my awkwardness as I begin. I am torn between doing the exercise correctly and risking that I will offend **Nancy** with what I say. I begin to notice that I feel *guilty* when I have something to say that might offend her. I reach the choice point of acting out my guilt and thus modifying what I say, or enduring my discomfort, and thus revealing exactly how I am feeling. When I can bring myself to tell the truth, I feel myself lightening up, paying less attention to how she responds and more to being fully revealed. By the end of the exercise, I have begun to lighten up. After a few moments, I feel what I might call my **Personal Essence**. By the time I come to the next exercise, where I will play the other role of the *openhearted listener*, I already feel that I am bringing a bit of my **Personal Essence** with me. I will need it, as what I hear soon makes me feel unheard and unappreciated, and I begin to feel angry. But as the openhearted listener, there is no room for my anger to be played out. If it is, I will not be able to paraphrase what **Nancy** is saying - and that's my job for the moment. I find a way to keep my anger in check, and concentrate my attention on listening intently. I struggle through doing it wrong at times, and my feelings soar when I get it right. I am not withdrawn. Even my intent listening has a spontaneous feel to it, as I am less self-conscious, less hypersensitive and more simply wanting to see the exercise turn out well.

Once we have been through about three more opportunities the same day to play each of the roles, we finish off the day giving each other a massage. As I reflect on the day, I realize that the more that I express my **INSTINCTUAL** self, the more I can see ways to free myself from my role in making our relationship difficult. Normally I would be focused on **Nancy's** role. Normally I would be moiling over what she was doing or not doing, but by not acting out the more difficult feelings I have, aspects of myself that I would never have dreamt of have begun to appear. I notice that in these moments I like myself better. I am less self absorbed, more present and more committed to the truth.

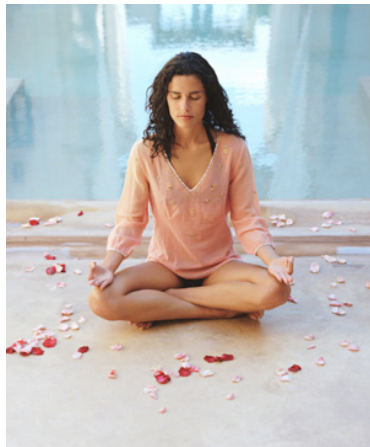
Practice Makes Perfect Or Almost Perfect

Don't be harsh on yourself if it takes you some time to be acting **INSTINCTUALLY** most of the time. With only 2 of the 3 layers of your brain being used to interpret your reality for so many years, you have, at best, been seeing a partial view of it, and that view of it has been used to defend yourself, even in those times when, if you'd had a full and accurate



view, you would have seen that reality is friendlier than you think. You can create *Awakening Together* exercises of your own, even if it's only you who is participating. **Don Rosenthal** is famous for inviting people to "*Play your edge!*" - which is tantamount to saying that when you see an opportunity to be *fully self expressed*, take it without reservation. When you see an opportunity to *listen open heartedly*, take it - knowing that something of the unexpected will emerge from you. Soon you will realize that the result will be something that you like, once you have enough of these experiences under your

belt. The big difficulty here is that you've been playing in the game of life, thinking you knew the rules, and thinking that the way that you saw things was all there was to see. It hasn't helped that you were partly right. You've played life close to the vest, when life was inviting you to be spontaneous, vulnerable and in contact with the world around you. Instead you felt guilty about your spontaneity, frightened by your vulnerability, and have reflexively withdrawn when contact with the world around you would have enhanced your life. *This will change!*



The reason that practice tends to make perfect, is that when we experiment with testing our fundamental beliefs, the resulting evidence often allows us to change and expand those beliefs. But no single incident is likely going to be a game changer. Maybe one in a hundred is. But, by experimenting, we can expect to reach a plateau, at which time and place we are no longer feeling stressed. We may be happy at this level for some time, but not being stressed is not the highest peak we can reach. We will not know that until we get there. Often after coasting for a while, we realize that "normal" it is only a way station on the journey we have taken. We want to go further and higher. Sometimes we will find a way to extend our practice on our own, or our newfound intelligence and competency will cause us to discover some practice or experience which is capable of taking us to another level. One of the possibilities here, is to have an **AcuDetox** tuneup. We do it - and this expands the playing field even further. It would seem that the sky's the limit.

Josias and **Beverly** were two single friends of mine when I was single too. After marrying they disappeared from sight. I even thought they'd moved away. Then one day they burst into my office, desperate to see me, having fallen into a big fight in a music store where **Beverly** was insistent on buying a grand piano. Here were two well-rounded **INSTINCTUAL RESOURCE** people who had socially acceptable outlets for *withdrawing* when they were single ("*I have to go to work now*") but once they got married the only avenue they had for *withdrawing* was to fight. When they met at the end of a working day, something one would say about their day would spook the other into *withdrawing*, which was then mirrored by the other - ending in each spending the evening alone. **Beverly** retreated to play her flute. They never really argued, but they never really found a meeting place either. Once it was apparent to me what was going on, I asked them not to share their day with each other until they had sat down, made eye contact, and until one of them stated that whatever occurred he or she would not *withdraw*. It worked! The key for an **instinctual resource person** is to welcome but not to act out strong feelings. *Then good things happen!*

