

THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN SUFFERING

Suffering on both an individual and collective level is pervasive in this world. Buddhism begins with the premise that life is filled with suffering. Those who ignore or deny the presence of human suffering are predisposed to further suffer by their ignorance of this basic truth.

The fact of suffering brings to mind an age-old question: If there is a God, and God is loving and benevolent, why does God permit so much suffering to occur on Earth? Why do the finest of people contract debilitating illnesses or die in random accidents? Why are innocent children

abused, tortured, or killed? What about innocent animals who suffer and die in natural disasters such as forest fires or floods? As a result of witnessing the horrific kinds of suffering that can occur in earthly existence, many people have either come to doubt the existence of a benevolent God or have reasoned that if there is a God, such a Deity must be indifferent to the earth and humanity. Such doubts are ancient and have been expressed in all religions. The biblical story of Job is well known for raising this question.

Notions of Deity being all-loving and all-powerful are difficult to reconcile with the existence of evil and suffering. Whatever our

conception of deity may be, if we entertain the idea of God as *not* being all-loving (or else indifferent toward humanity), we are left with the unsatisfactory idea that whatever we think of as God has negative, destructive, or indifferent attributes.

This might align with the Old Testament view of God as wrathful and punitive. Yet most educated people in the twentieth century have abandoned such a view and regard it simply as a human projection onto God. An unloving or indifferent God who allows suffering is unsatisfactory to most of us. The alternative, to regard God as *not* all-powerful or omnipotent, is equally unsatisfactory. If God rightfully is the

infinite Source of everything, what sense does it make to imagine that God is not all-powerful? Certain ancient religions such as Zoroastrianism (and some fundamentalist Christians) have actually proposed that there exists a dark, evil side to the universe that has equal power with God. The history of the universe is conceived as the history of a struggle between the forces of light and darkness, of God and Satan, which appear to be given equal power.

There is a fundamental contradiction in this view. If God *does not have more power than the dark side*, then God (or the Godhead) is no longer the infinite, omnipotent, boundless reality that it is ordinarily assumed to be. Moreover, we are

left with a fundamentally dualistic universe—
also a problem. Most religious and spiritual
traditions -- particularly those in the East, such
as Buddhism, Taoism, and Hinduism -- assume
that at the ultimate level the universe is an
undivided whole—a unitary, monistic Oneness
beyond duality. Duality, whether good or evil,
light or dark, male or female, or a condition of
matter versus spirit, occurs in a *relative* realm
(such as on Earth) and is transcended at an
absolute level.

So how do we resolve this dilemma?

Historically, a common way to do so is to
propose that 1) it is humanity, not God, who is
responsible for human suffering, and 2) God

permits such suffering to occur for a specific purpose. It might be said, then, that God *voluntarily* limits His/Her power and permits human suffering to occur because such suffering has some positive function in the overall scheme of things. Often associated with this self-limiting God is a basic assumption that God created human beings with *free will*, and that free will only makes sense if humans are given the opportunity to choose between good and evil. So the possibility of negative actions arising from greed, hatred, pride, prejudice, or intolerance is allowed because we live in a world where humans have been endowed with the “godlike” power to choose between positive or destructive action. Human freedom requires a

genuine choice between good or evil, so God “set it up” in the beginning that humans have the power to choose in accord with what is harmonious or to go astray.

Note that this account does not explain why animals suffer when attacked by their predators or humans.

Also, many animals die in natural disasters.

Much that could be thought of as “suffering” or even “evil” happens to innocent animals in the absence of free choice. More will be said about this later in this essay.

Why and how the world was set up with an inherent dualism of good and evil --and the existence of suffering-- are open questions.

There are many theories but no definitive answers. *The Book of Genesis* speaks of humanity going astray when Eve ate the apple that gave humanity the knowledge of good and evil.

Another biblical story speaks of the fall of Lucifer from Heaven and of Lucifer and his legions subsequently leading humans astray.

Neither of these mythological accounts is very satisfying.

One common contemporary account is that God sought to have a relationship with humans, and that our love for God would count for more if we freely chose it—if it is a free response—rather than automatic and strictly determined (as supposedly is the case with angels, who are

always in total alignment with the “will” of God). This account seems more plausible than the mythological ones, but there is no way to know for sure whether it is true.

One problem is that such an account once again *casts God in human terms*, as “needing” or “desiring,” so to speak, to have a relationship with humans. The *ultimate* reason why humans have free will—the capacity to choose between light or darkness—is likely to remain a mystery to us mortals.

The Nature of Evil

What kinds of actions do we deem to be evil? Since we do not think of animals as evil, the notion of evil presupposes the possibility of

conscious choice and responsibility for action. The concepts of evil and “immoral” or “unethical” overlap but are not identical. We would not consider all actions that are immoral or unethical to be evil. Evil usually denotes an extreme degree of immorality. Petty vandalism or shoplifting may be immoral and against the law but are not thought of as evil. If a therapist hires a client to do work for him, or makes suggestions outside of his area of expertise, this is considered unethical but not evil.

Evil generally implies extreme malice and destructiveness in human behavior, such as premeditated homicide or malicious harm to a child or animal. At a collective level, genocide

and mass murder usually qualify as evil. When a destructive act is done impulsively in response to an attack, even if it's immoral and against the law, it is typically not considered evil. Cruel, sadistic, and unusually mean-spirited actions done in a premeditated and calculated way—not out of impulsive anger or passion—more often qualify for the designation of “evil.” What we think of as evil has a more mental flavor; it bypasses the heart and emotions of the heart such as passionate anger or rage.

So to sum up, actions labeled “evil” tend to exhibit a high degree of deliberate malice, sadism, cruelty or mean-spiritedness. Frequently the perpetrators of such actions take satisfaction

in exerting power over a powerless victim. Evil acts emerge from the mind (or from calculation) more than from emotional reaction and are without any concern or compassion for the wellbeing of others. No other creatures on Earth, including animals that kill members of their own species, meet these criteria.

At its root, the term “evil” implies a value judgment reserved for actions we evaluate as “very bad,” “cruel,” “sadistic,” or “mean-spirited.” But value judgments are something we humans make. If we could see through the eyes of Buddha or Jesus, would we make such a judgment?

At the time of his crucifixion, Jesus said of his executors, "Judge them not, for they know not what they do." He also counseled his followers to "turn the other cheek" when accosted by their enemies. Buddha advised his followers always to maintain compassion toward all forms of suffering. Gandhi defended the idea of nonviolent resistance rather than counterattack when faced with the brutal suppression and violence of the British colonialists. From the most spiritual or exalted perspective, can we really judge anything at all, or are we to look on everything that happens in the universe, even Auschwitz, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Hiroshima, with the eyes of divine compassion? A case can be made that, from the very "highest"

perspective, anything we judge to be evil could be redefined as mere *ignorance*. As horrible as deliberate homicide, pedophilia, or sadistic acts toward children and animals may be, calling such acts “evil” expresses our personal value-judgment of behaviors that, in the final analysis, result from a lack of clear seeing and understanding.

From this perspective, people who do such things are simply unconscious and misguided, acting out of highly warped beliefs and perceptions based on their heredity and/or defective personal histories. Heredity can play a role. For example, it is now known that sociopathy, the seeming lack of conscience that

some individuals exhibit, has a partially genetic basis. Even more often, personal history plays a role: it is widely recognized that child abusers were frequently severely abused themselves. Mean-spirited people who obtain satisfaction from hurting others may have at one time in the past been helplessly and brutally victimized. Their destructive desire to wield power over others may not only be an expression of their unconscious rage but also a misguided attempt to compensate for a deep-seated sense of powerlessness. This certainly does not exonerate their behavior, but it gives us a rational explanation of why they have gone astray.

So there is a choice. If we want to hold on to an evaluative stance toward the more horrendous examples of human behavior, we can retain the notion of “evil.” If we prefer to take a broader, more universal approach advocated by the master teachers of the world’s religions, we can choose to look upon such behavior, however destructive, as pathetically ignorant, unconscious, and misguided. “Forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

When we ourselves are the victims of destructive behavior, the latter is, of course, very difficult to do. Certainly it is difficult not to judge (and refrain from the term “evil”) when

our hearts react to the profound cruelties that occur in our world.

Evil as Estrangement

Whether labeled evil or simply ignorant, destructive behavior is out of step with recognized “higher” human capacities for love, kindness, generosity and compassion. In Christianity, this sort of behavior is called *sin*, which originally was defined as “missing the mark.” The idea of missing the mark is pretty similar to that of being out of touch, out of attunement with, or alienated from the better or “higher” aspects of human nature. In many religions, this higher nature is assumed to be the most essential or core aspect of who we are,

often labeled “soul” or “essence.” Such a viewpoint strongly assumes that human beings are *innately good* and that evil, destructive actions are a departure—an estrangement—from our innermost essence.

Along these lines, the theologian Paul Tillich defines “sin” in terms of three dimensions of estrangement. First, sin is estrangement from others born of self-centeredness. Second, it is estrangement from our true selves in pursuing alienated and inauthentic goals. Finally, it is estrangement from God, the “Ground of our Being,” according to Tillich, in the illusory belief that we are entirely self-sufficient and our ego’s goals are the measure of all things. A fourth type

of estrangement, especially pertinent in our time, is estrangement from nature by ignoring its intrinsic value and failing to recognize our fundamental interdependence (relationship) with it. The devastation of the earth's environment—from global warming to deforestation—is a clear example of humanity's estrangement from the matrix of its life and being—one with increasingly serious consequences.

Evil as Inherent

Note this viewpoint has been challenged by dualistic philosophies which propose a dichotomy between enlightened vs. instinctive, animal like tendencies. Some older ethical

philosophies of the 18th and 19th centuries proposed these types of views. The assumption was that human beings are innately both good and evil, and that in certain circumstances, especially ethical dilemmas, human beings often find themselves struggling between innately benevolent and malevolent tendencies. Some of these views based themselves in the Biblical notion of the “fall of man,” i.e., that ever since Eve’s eating of the apple in the Garden of Eden, humans were endowed with an innate dichotomy of good and evil tendencies.

In Judeo-Christian religions, we may be “punished” for our sins, although modern theologies have tended to move away from the

archaic notion of a punitive Deity and reframed “punishment” as the suffering we will experience sooner or later as a direct consequence of our own unenlightened actions.

Eastern Views

By way of contrast, in Eastern religions, actions that are *not in alignment with others or the Universe* create *karma*. Misdeeds that are out of alignment will eventually have to be “paid off” through reaping equally misaligned circumstances (or others’ behavior toward us) later in this life or in a future life.

Free Will and Moral Responsibility

Ethics has its origin in free will. Humans are faced with more ethical dilemmas than animals because human behavior is more subject to free choice. Both humans and animals have tendencies toward self-preservation, greed, and possessiveness (especially territorialism).

However, with animals these tendencies are acted out instinctively without much, if any reflection.

Not so with humans. If our impulse to greed has the perceived consequence of harming or depriving another, we may choose to limit our behavior. Or we may choose not to and allow ourselves to harm another, in which case our

behavior is usually judged to be morally wrong. Why? Because we failed to choose against the destructive consequences of our instincts. One bird will steal food from another hungry bird and we may call that one who steals “greedy.” However we do not think of the greedy bird as morally wrong, because we assume the bird did not have free will to make any other choice than its instinctive behavior. The bird is not immoral. On the other hand, if a human steals food from another human who is hungry, we call the former human a thief and evaluate his behavior as morally wrong, and perhaps even evil (for example, if the theft is large scale and results in the starvation of children). The human could have chosen otherwise. He could have made the

choice not to take food from someone in need, knowing that his action would have harmful consequences.

His behavior has moral import because it represents a moral choice.

What is free will? Why does it lead to moral choice and responsibility? It appears that free will, i.e., behavior that is freely chosen, implies *a relative degree of awareness of or independence from behavior that is entirely instinct-driven and automatic*. When a bird steals food or a dog protects its territory by barking, the behavior is not chosen but is automatically propelled by the animal's instinct. It is impulsive, not deliberate. To have free will, and therefore moral

responsibility, requires having some *distance*—in awareness-- from the automatic or impulsive aspects of one's instincts. As humans we are aware of our instinctive predispositions, and we can choose not to act on them if we perceive that doing so could have harmful or destructive consequences. This choice of not acting on instinctive/impulsive behavior that could lead to harm is also described as “knowing the difference between right and wrong.” A tiger capturing its prey does not have this separation of consciousness from instinct.

We commonly apply this line of thinking to children. Very young children, say one or two-year-olds, may steal their sibling's food or

actually hurt the other child, but we do not hold them morally accountable. We view them as having acted out of impulse and as having not exercised free will—as not knowing the difference between right and wrong. We try hard to train and educate the small child to refrain from such impulsive behaviors and learn to recognize when such behaviors are harmful to others. As the child grows older, say four, five and six, we hold him or her more accountable. We assume he has gained enough awareness to know that he can choose to act in a way other than based purely on impulse or instinct. He is capable of perceiving the difference between right and wrong.

This attribution of moral responsibility begins around age three to five and continues to increase as the child grows through late childhood, adolescence, and into adulthood. The fact that it may take two decades for the development of a full awareness of moral responsibility is borne out by the way the criminal justice system handles immoral behavior among adolescents. In the United States punishments for crimes become more severe after age 18, when the perpetrator of the crime is treated as an adult. More severe crimes, however, may carry significant penalties for children under eighteen yet older than twelve (i.e., teenagers). In some cases, a brutal teenage homicide may lead to a punishment

approaching that of an adult (eighteen and over) perpetrator. On the other hand, it is rare to see adult penalties meted out to children under ten, even if their crimes are quite serious.

In sum, it would seem that our judgment of behavior as good or bad, in short, moral responsibility, depends on at least two factors that are not present for animals. First, humans develop an *awareness or consciousness* that allows for some degree of *separation or independence* in their minds from instinct-ridden tendencies (instincts and impulses that automatically propel behavior without reflection). Second, humans seem to have a more developed perception of the difference between “right” vs.

“wrong” behaviors toward other members of their species (and usually other species as well).

While animals do have protective instincts toward both young, and in some cases, adult members of their species, again, these behaviors are primarily instinctive.

Instinctive behaviors do not involve making a discrimination between “right” vs. “wrong,” followed by a free choice between two courses of action that follow these separate standards.

Animals, such as dogs, may be trained to do what we consider to be “right,” such as going to the bathroom outdoors. We then say “good dog” to them to reinforce them for the correct response. However they are unaware of any

moral or ethical implications of their behavior.

At the very most, they may have a rudimentary awareness of pleasing us and knowing that they are deemed “good.” By the same token, a “bad dog” is not an immoral dog, just one who didn’t behave in accord with our standards and expectations.

Origins of Evil

What is the root or origin of evil? One common definition describes evil (or unenlightened behavior) in terms of “self-centeredness at the expense of others.” If the supreme moral injunction is the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” then the opposite of that is to mistreat others out of

selfish motives, whether greed, anger, envy, jealousy, or prejudice. We are always in the position to act in ways that are helpful or hurtful to others. Since at the deepest level we are all one humanity, what we do to others, we ultimately do to ourselves. This is sometimes understood to be the meaning behind Christ's statement "Even as you do it unto the least of them, you do it unto Me."

Is it only human beings who have this choice? As previously mentioned, it's clear that animals do not choose between good and evil, for they do not know the difference and have not fallen from grace. When we consider so-called "subtle" levels of reality beyond the physical

earth, it gets more complicated. Angels are believed not to choose between good and evil. They live in perfect harmony and alignment with the Godhead and are simply “messengers” of Divine Will, always acting in accordance with such Will.

However, what about so-called fallen angels? Many religious traditions, including Judeo-Christian, Buddhist, and Native American, make reference to dark forces, dark energies, or so-called devils and demons, that can tempt, influence, or even possess human beings. The literature on possession and exorcism appears to attest to the reality of such forces. Modern media and music vividly portray these forces,

even if in fantasy. When someone has already deliberately chosen darkness over light— has gone out of alignment with his or her innermost nature—is it possible that they become more susceptible to an “extra push,” so to speak, from dark energies and forces?

This is certainly the belief of many people all over the world. Popular expressions, such as “in league with the devil,” “courting the darkness,” “the devil got into him,” and “he seemed possessed,” reflect such a belief. The visionary mystic Emmanuel Swedenborg wrote at length about hell and the legions of demons that resided there. The contemporary psychologist Wilson Van Dusen, a follower of Swedenborg,

made a fascinating, if unsettling, case for the influence of demons or dark forces in schizophrenic patients based on years of observations of such patients in psychiatric hospitals. His initial discussion of this can be found in his book, *The Presence of Other Worlds*.

A detailed examination of the so-called “dark side” is beyond the scope of this essay. It can be an unsettling topic to explore. The interested reader might check out M. Scott Peck’s book *People of the Lie* (Peck, 1983) or books on de-possession by Edith Fiore and William Baldwin.

The point of view offered here is that the existence of dark forces and their possible influence on our consciousness or behavior

ultimately does not matter. Such forces cannot possess us without our willingness.

Only our fear of them or fascinated entanglement with them can give them more power. Even if we are led astray or get temporarily tangled up with dark forces, the choice still always remains, in each and every moment, to free ourselves by choosing (and affirming) light over darkness—affirming the value of love over hate, violence, and fear. The assumption here is that *we ultimately have dominion over the powers of darkness* and can always choose to go toward the light.

This truth is reflected in the Old Testament's 23rd Psalm: "Even through I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil." Also in

the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Remembering Our Potential for Protection

The worst case scenario is our sustained fear of the dark. The fear lasts only as long as we are stuck in it.

The key point is to bring to mind the idea that each of us always has a choice to go toward light and affirm our faith in "protection" by the higher forces (Jesus or angels in Christianity, and other protective deities in other religions). Just knowing this, and affirming the power of light, love and peace over dark, is very important for anyone who might fear the powers of the darkness. If there are indeed dark

forces, we can remember that we have protection that is always available to us, if only we also remember to seek it out through prayer, meditation, and affirmation. For those hapless souls who appear to be defeated by darkness in their present lifetime, this defeat cannot be permanent or eternal in an *evolutionary universe*. In an evolutionary universe, consciousness is evolving, not perpetually static. (More is said of about this in the essay on the afterlife.) If we are ultimately are, each of us, “parts of the Godhead,” why would God ever cast out any part of Him/Her/Itself for all time?

Finally, if dark forces do exist, they could not have ultimate status in the overall scheme of

things. At the highest level of reality *there is no duality*, only the perfection of the One Source of all. Dark forces, if they exist, are part of a dualistic arena where beings (including humans) get the opportunity to evolve through having free will to choose between light and darkness. Soul evolution would be meaningless or impossible without a choice between positive and negative. So the classroom in which we grow and evolve—planet Earth—may have a dualistic format, but it is not our final home or destination, which is beyond duality. The darkness may be, so to speak, an educational “tool,” but it has no ultimate status. It may play its role in providing us with a choice, perhaps even in the playing out of our karma, but in the

final stages of our soul's evolution, we will outgrow its usefulness.

The Suffering of Animals

Why do animals suffer, even though they cannot be said to have free choice between good and evil? Is suffering built into the fabric of evolution for all sentient beings?

Only a tentative answer can be suggested here. If we assume for a moment that animals have souls,* then does it make sense to further assume that their souls undergo evolution and growth in some ways analogous to that of human souls, even though they do not make moral choices? In order for the soul to grow, perhaps it is necessary to enter the realm of

duality and experience --- both pleasure and pain, both joy and suffering. Suffering is simply an inherent characteristic of our dualistic world, and to be born as *any* sentient being into duality is to be born into the potential for suffering. In brief, we might speculate that animals are born into this world to endure suffering and joy *for the sake of their own soul evolution*, just as we humans are. If you are born on the earth at all, suffering and duality are just part of the package.

To sum up, the earth is a kind of school where all sentient beings acquire lessons through their experiences, including hunger and seeking out food, affiliation with other members of their species, and suffering at the hands of predators

or accidents. Animals feel physical pain in manner similar to the way we do, however they do not fear physical death because they do not anticipate their own demise.

*[Footnote]The question of what a “soul” might be and whether all types of animals have souls is open to considerable debate. While many would agree that vertebrate animals, by virtue of their uniqueness and capacity for self-determination, have souls, the question gets fuzzier for simpler forms of life? Where do you draw the line? Does a sponge have soul? A bacteria or a virus? Perhaps at some point going “down” the evolutionary scale there is a transition from individual souls to group souls.

Suffering and Natural Disaster

Mass deaths in natural disasters are difficult to understand. When twenty thousand people die quickly in an earthquake or tsunami, the first impression is that this is a completely random, capricious tragedy. The death is indiscriminate and affects people of all ages, all walks of life, all levels of relative value to society, and all levels of spiritual consciousness.

Explaining suffering in natural disasters in terms of the individual karma of each person involved is unsatisfactory, because it seems implausible to imagine thousands of people all share the same individual karma just by virtue

of living in the same place at a particular point of time.

The idea of collective karma, as was advanced to explain the deaths of 3000 people in the 9/11 disaster, is not very helpful either. The people involved were not connected by any demographic category such as race, ethnic status, socioeconomic status or religion. It's possible to conceive of the "collective karma" of groups such as the American slaves in the 19th century or the Jews in WW II, but the people who die in most natural disasters are not linked by any particular demographic identity, other than all residing in the same place at the same time. Some have argued that a particular natural

disaster pays off the “collective karma of the particular country” in which it occurs. Such an idea seems very far fetched, to say the least. To think of the three thousand people who died in the Sept 11 tragedy to paying off some kind of collective karma of the United States stretches incredulity.

To our mortal minds (and this author), the “meaning” of large-scale natural disasters remains a mystery. For example, the Sumatra earthquake and tsunami killed over 200,000 people on December 26, 2004. Why should thousands of small children, who have barely embarked on their lives, die suddenly by accident? If we assume that there is no meaning,

and the deaths are random and without any larger import, we are left with a pretty scary and empty world. For theists, the ultimate meaning of such disasters is incomprehensible and implies a Deity whose ways are inscrutable. We are back to the idea, expressed earlier in this essay, that if a Deity exists, then its ways are inscrutable to humanity (or even possibly indifferent). The idea that there is *some* ultimate or higher purpose for large-scale natural disasters is necessary to preserve the idea of a meaningful Cosmos. What that meaning might be remains elusive. If there is a higher purpose for all the victims and survivors of a major disaster, it is difficult to see. We are left with the notion that, in the grand scheme of things, the

physical body must count for less than the soul. If so many bodies can be snuffed out so quickly and purely by accident (but the souls of those bodies presumably live on), then human earthly existence has only a very relative significance by comparison with the soul.

Conclusion

To sum up, suffering is an inherent part of earthly existence for all creatures. It consists of mental, emotional and/or physical pain.

According to Buddhism, suffering arises out of the loss of something with which we are identified—material goods, other people, habitual comforts, and the physical and psychological integrity of ourselves.

Theoretically, suffering would cease if our consciousness could *disidentify* with everything out of which we construct our self-concept—our sense of “me.” In practice and in real life existence on earth, this is obviously very difficult for most of us, including saints past and present. Even Jesus, prior to his crucifixion in the Garden of Gethsemane, beseeched God to lift the burden from him.

Evil commonly results in suffering but is largely an independent concept. “Evil” is a judgment made about human actions that are born of ignorance (lack of awareness) while being deliberately destructive toward other humans or creatures. Humans alone are capable of evil

when they make a conscious choice to act, usually for self-gain, in such a way that leads to harmful, destructive consequences for others.

Societies throughout history have tried to limit evil actions through cultural precepts dictating what is moral as well as legal. Laws have been issued and penal codes upheld (with severe consequences for transgressions). Such precepts and codes tend to reduce the number of actions that are grossly and blatantly destructive.

However, there remain thousands of more subtle types of destructive behaviors-- outside of normal cultural mores, laws, and penalties—that humans continue to visit on each other and animals as well. Generally the more deliberate

and pre-meditated such destructive actions are, the more they tend to be judged as “evil.”

The history of evil is as old as that of humanity itself. The most common “solution” to evil that has been proposed is equally ancient and verbalized in almost every religion as a foundation for ethical behavior: TREAT OTHERS LIKE YOU WOULD YOURSELF WISH TO BE TREATED. The basic idea has been referred to as the “Golden Rule.”

Cross-cultural study of the Golden Rule, as can be found in the Wikipedia article on it, indicates it has been expressed and affirmed in many ways throughout all of the world’s religions. A similar idea is present in the Christian

injunctions: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” and “Love one another.”

Clearly this requires a major shift in human perception. *Only when we perceive one another as equals in a shared human community (where everyone is valued) can we foreswear self-interest for the sake treating every other human (and animal) with dignity, respect, and care.*

References

Fiore, Edith. *The Unquiet Dead*. New York: Ballentine, 1995.

Peck, M. Scott. *People of the Lie, Second Edition*. New York: Touchstone, 1998.

Tillich, Paul. *The Courage to Be*. New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1952.

Von Dusen, Wilson. *The Presence of Other Worlds*.

West Chester, PA: Swedenborg Foundation,

1985.