

JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT

REACTION, INTEGRATION, AND CREATIVE RESPONSE – THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER

Drawing explicit linkages between various ideas discussed in the course and your own personal experiences with the readings, discussions, and lectures is one of the fundamental tenets of forging an “effective personal sense of ethics.” To facilitate, in a structured manner, your reflections, critical self-analyses, and creative response development, you are asked to maintain a journal throughout the course.

The journal is an open-ended process. Thus, we can present seed questions from time to time, yet it is up to you to direct the path of your discovery and proceed at your own pace. Beginning questions include:

- I. What were my reactions to the readings? to the lectures? to the discussions?
- II. Why did I react in this way? Is it related to my Enneagram personality? What were my assumptions?
- III. How did I form these assumptions? Are they “right,” the “truth,” or ideology?
- IV. What are the sources of my justification? Where does this morality or ethic come from?
- V. How would an “average” person react to this knowledge? How would a “healthy” person grow from this knowledge?
- VI. How does my basic Enneagram fear influence or “create” my reactions, perceptions, thoughts, or analyses?
- VII. How does my basic Enneagram desire contribute to my reactions, perceptions, thoughts, or analyses?
- VIII. How do I feel today? after reading? after talking with my parents and/or friends?
- IX. Why do I feel this way? How is this related to my desires and fears?
- X. If I reread this article from a more evolved position, what would happen? What are my new reactions and how do I feel about them? What are my responses, and how do they differ from my reactions?
- XI. Why, for example, did I just have an argument or fight with someone? Did I feel judged? Did my fear become activated? How can I correct this? Can I trace step-by-step how and why I said or did what I did? Do I feel bad about it or good?
- XII. What ethical point of view from the readings would alter how I see X? What does X look like from another point of view?
- XIII. I remember reading about Buddhist ethics with regards to topic Y. Now we are encountering Y again but from perspective Z. What are the differences? the similarities? the connections between the two? Is there something “bigger” that these two approaches are trying to convey?

The questions are far-ranging and go from very personal to very academic, from concrete to abstract. Some questions are thought exercises, while others help you find, de-define, and re-define your “ethic.” Part of this exercise is to help you begin asking not just manifest questions, but latent, critical questions concerning personal ethics. Critical questions directed toward scholarship are already difficult to answer and we are providing the space for you to ask critical questions about yourself and the world—a much more rigorous and emotionally-invested process.

Write in your journal **at least once a week** and record the date for each entry. The length is up to you, as the goal of the exercise is to help you find and create your ethic, not impress. Write for how long it takes you to come to critical reflections and analyses. Please turn these in each week in discussion section. They will be returned and you should keep them chronologically in a separate binder. All written assignments will be considered confidential.