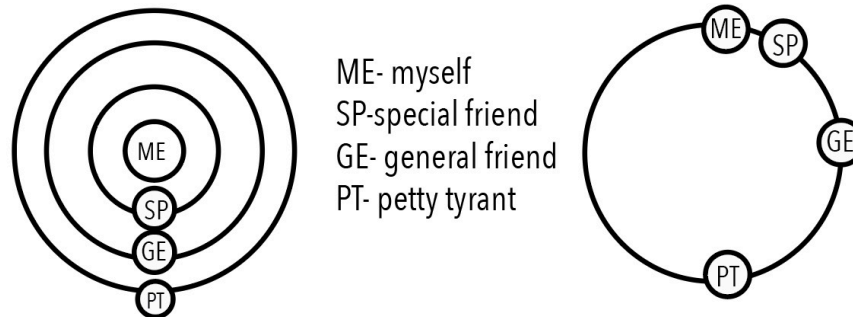


Circle of Friends Imagination

The following imaginative exercises are designed to explore feelings about others that are often the source of conflicts about autonomy and relatedness. The idea is to use the imagination to create feelings that can support gradual change from anxiety to a sense of forgiveness for self and others. The creation of an imaginative, workable soul space is the basis of the work.



In the diagram on the *left* ME in the center is myself. The SP special friend represents a confidant close to you who you trust. The GE is an acquaintance or colleague who you have regular contact with but is not a confidant who you would trust with intimate sharing. The farthest out PT is a petty tyrant. A petty tyrant is someone past or present who represents a source of anxiety for you. This arrangement of concentric circles is an inner map for you to assess feelings about people who you interact with. Special friends and acquaintances are closer in soul mood than an anxiety producing petty tyrant who can dominate soul life either in the present or from the past. In the diagram on the *left* the PT is farthest away from ME because they cause me to feel anxious. They amplify my anxiety. We can bring PT closer to ME in order to release the anxiety but we need another arrangement to do that.

In the diagram on the *right* the same people are all on one circle. In Christian iconography a circle represents the Christ principle that unites all humans. The special friends and general friends are *within* an angle of 90° to ME.

Exercise 1: As an initial exercise imagine that all of these people are on sliders that can be moved along the circumference of the circle. Imagine that you are communicating to a general friend in a meeting. In the course of conversation you find out that you both went to the same grammar school when you were children. Imagine sliding them from a GP angle of 90° closer to an angle of 45°. This is possible because you now experience the healing magic that you are both on the same circle. That magic is the opening of the heart that draws you closer together. In the language of Christian esotericism this is the Christ principle. The opening of

the heart to allow a person to come closer to me is a healing force that overcomes anxiety. Try to recall an event in your life that provided that kind of soul move towards empathy with another person. Write something about how your feelings changed with that realization.

Exercise 2: In another exercise recall a time when you and a special friend had a falling out over something. Imagine both of you standing on the circle and you sliding them away from a more intimate angle to a more remote position. We would say they have become distant. Write something about how that felt to you. These movements that are done in the imagination are actually a good way to review past emotional changes that you encountered in your life interacting with other people. The imaginary slider allows us to make an unconscious emotional impulse more conscious.

Exercise 3: In another exercise imagine that you and a petty tyrant are fixed at opposite ends of the same circle. There may be many good reasons for this fixedness but over time it takes an emotional toll that dissipates creative forces. It takes a lot of psychic force to change an emotional relationship with an inner petty tyrant. They are a tyrant because they demand that you worry about them. Native peoples say that worry is praying for something you don't want to happen. The tyrant is petty because their presence in your soul life is completely dependent upon your worry. That means that you are the one with the power to change that relationship.

Imagine standing on the circle opposite to them. Then imagine that you move them along the circle one degree from the 180° position. Allow the feeling of that to resonate in your soul for a bit and write something about how your will has the power to shift something in the relationship. You may need to move them back to 180° after the exercise and that is fine but for a brief moment you have introduced a healing will force into your soul. You have overcome a kind of paralysis in the soul that is a deep source of anxiety. Repetition of this kind of exercise can eventually lead to the release of even long held dread and anxiety about a problematic relationship to another human. All people on the circle surrender their fear and anxiety to Christ.

IN CHRISTO MORIMUR - WE ARE CONTINUALLY DYING IN CHRIST

