

## **Course 6: The Synchronicity Socratic Process of Inquiry for Conflict Resolution**

### **Class 2: The Mechanics of the Synchronicity Socratic Process for Conflict Resolution**

**Phil ... Welcome ...**

Hello, and welcome to Class 2 in *The Synchronicity Socratic Process*. It's a process for inquiry for Conflict Resolution. Master Charles has given us a strong start in our course together. In his first session, he created the foundation for all of the classes to follow. In this session, we will begin developing the Socratic Process and how we can learn to apply it.

*But, before we begin the content of our class, let's bring our focus to balance. Throughout this entire series of courses on Modern Spirituality, we've emphasized experience right alongside concept. For every truthful teaching you've received, you've also practiced truthful balancing techniques. These techniques, which we term "Technologies of Now", are practical ways to emphasize and experience the true reality that comes from balance. By now, you've had extensive experience in the Balance Position. Master Charles begins each of his sessions with a call to balance and wakefulness. He then leads us in a practice of the Balance Position, a term that he originated. With the Balance Position, we experience a slowing and calming of the mind. We also notice an increase in quietness (or stillness). The two polarities of the mind are also negative and positive. They're active and still, full and empty, noisy and quiet. With balance, the two polarities are experienced as the Balance Position. We are aware of our exterior and interior at the same time. We hold the two polarities in simultaneity. We experience the activity of the exterior and the stillness of the interior. We are aware that they are the same one consciousness. With the Balance Position, our awareness expands. We experience ourselves as a witnessing consciousness watching the happening of consciousness in each moment. We find ourselves happy for no reason. It's delightful. We are peaceful and content. We are loving and blissful. This is true reality. You are now skilled in actualizing the Balance Position. Your challenge in this class is to maintain it in consistency and be the blissful consciousness that you are. So, hold the Balance Position as we move forward into our class material.*

We live in a relative reality. In our courses together, we have learned about relative reality. We also learned that the most important question one can ask is whether our reality (what we are experiencing) is truthful or not. We now know the process by which the One Consciousness experiences itself as other than the one consciousness that it is ... in other words, the experience of what we are not.

This experience -- what we are not -- is to actualize the primary intention in consciousness to fully be itself through the experience of itself. But consciousness is only One and, in order to fully experience itself, it must stage a vast act of pretending that it's not itself. For this to happen, illusion is necessary. Consciousness thusly creates the ego and ego-driven mind as the instruments through which this pretense occurs, through which illusion happens. So, the ego creates the virtual reality of humanity in its involutory cycle. In his first class, Master Charles led us through the awakening process, wherein consciousness shifts from illusion to truth, from a virtual reality to a truthful one. He developed the important principle of balance through which true reality is actualized.

And, he introduced the real reason for the Synchronicity Socratic Process: it's simply to challenge every thought and belief, every story by asking a simple question, "Is it true?" When we do, we learn (as did Socrates) that almost everything we think and believe is not true. Rather, what we think and believe is an illusory creation of the ego-driven mind. Only when we can see that our stories (about *who we are* and *what life is*) are not true can we begin to disempower them, to dismantle the virtual database and get to the source of our conflicts and eliminate our suffering.

So here we are in Class 2. In this class, we are going to reinforce and expand the material that Master Charles has so nicely begun. We will also begin developing a practical inquiry process, one that each of us can easily learn and employ in our moment-to-moment choices.

We begin with an illustration from previous courses. This illustration displays the relative field as a 4-quadrant model. It shows the dynamics of the two polarities -- positive and negative, subjective and objective, interior and exterior -- through the cycles of involution and evolution. It's in the left side of this illustration, the involutory cycle of human consciousness, that we create our virtual reality under the agency of the ego and the ego-driven mind. The habit of data accumulation is the work of the ego. The ego is absolutely incessant in its focus on data acquisition. This is revealed as our database -- what we believe, what we know, and it's almost entirely fraudulent made up of material knowledge. Because the ego is completely identified with its data, it can't know that it is illusion, that's it's a virtual reality. The ego is completely identified with the dream of virtual reality. And so, we live our lives entirely in our virtual reality created by our illusory knowledge.

The ancient Vedas state that knowledge is Maya (a term for illusion). The Shiva Sutras of Kashmir Shavism (9th – 11th centuries CE) state this another way when they say: "Knowledge is bondage". And 1,500 years before this revelation, Socrates made a similar

statement when he said, "All that I know is that I know nothing". He had devoted his entire life to proving that knowledge is only a limitation in consciousness. He simply said that everything in his database was not true -- all his knowledge was meaningless.

You understand the process of how our illusory database is constructed. You know why it's constructed. You know that egocentric identification with it colors our thoughts, forms our belief systems. It creates our stories, the stories about *who we are* and *what life is*. And when illusion is the basis of our thoughts, our beliefs and our stories, it results in our reality. And the reality that it creates is an illusory reality (a virtual reality), one that is not real.

This is a good time in our class for you to ask yourself a most important question. It is, "Who do you think you are"? Master Charles has posed this question to his audiences and then after a time answers his own question by saying: "The you that you think you are is not real." Master Charles is simply saying that we are identified with the illusory content of our lives and our reality reflects this. We create, we live in, we identify with the virtual reality of our ego-driven minds. So, if the "you" (*that you think you are*) isn't real, then *who are you?* This is the eternal question that is borne of the involutory process in consciousness when we are immersed in the experience of illusion (the experience of *who we're not*). And, when we ask ourselves this question, we signal our intention to know who we truly are.

When we ask this question ("Who am I?"), and when it is the experience whose time has come for us, we awaken from the dream -- from the involutory cycle into the evolutionary cycle of consciousness. We begin to confront our stories about *who we are* and *what life is*. Thus, this class begins with our stories, and our stories are always about wanting something to be other than it is.

*Let's put the information on pause and refocus on balance. Are you maintaining your balance through your experience of the Balance Position ... watching the interior and the exterior at the same time? If you are, you're watching this presentation happen in a spontaneous flow ... you're balanced and wakeful ... you're experiencing true reality as the experience that is happening. True reality is not stressful. It is contented and peaceful. You are blissful consciousness. Hold the Balance Position ... hold the experience of true reality ... be blissful consciousness as we continue.*

When we are born, we have a clean, empty slate. Then, we (and everyone around us) begin to write on it. We begin the process of building our database about our experiences of life. Soon the ego begins to assert its role of creating and investing in illusion -- the primary illusion which is that it's separate and different from everything else.

We are taught by our parents and families. We learn from our peers and our society. We absorb the knowledge of our world. And, from the ego's perspective, we can't learn enough because we also quickly learn that we can't trust. Everything in our world is a threat to our security. Any experience we have is immediately filtered through the database of the ego-driven mind. Everything is compared and contrasted. Everything is judged in reference to our existing data. So, the outcome that we identify with is not at all *the actual experience that happened* but rather *the story that we told ourselves about what happened*. We create stories. We believe our stories. We forget what really happened. Our stories about *who we are* and *what life is* flavors our experience of life, and we actually become our stories. It's not surprising then that our experience is an illusion. It's not real. It's virtual and we live our lives in a virtual reality of fantasy.

We tell ourselves stories every minute: "It's too cold" or "it's too hot", or "I'm tired" or "I'm upset", or "she's a real pain" or "he's impossible", or "I don't like my boss because he (or she) is controlling" ... and it's endless, every minute of every waking hour of every day. It's "I want this" or "I would be happier with that". This is life in a virtual reality. Is this fun? No, it's miserable. It's suffering. It leads to endless conflict within.

And in today's world we experience the Information Age and its endless stream of data blitzing us on television, computer, cell phone, and everywhere. We are given opportunities each moment to create new stories, and we do! And that's about all we do for about the first half of our life. We do this until our database is full. We can't take anymore. This is what is meant by "being full in the experience of who and what we're not". Then something happens -- when it's time. When the negative default-dominant polarity of illusion is maxed, when it's in its extreme, the non-dominant, positive polarity balances and actualizes. Remember that one polarity can dominate the other but not eliminate it. Therefore, when the negative polarity reaches its extreme in dominance, the opposite (positive polarity) actualizes and we experience awakening.

Awakening occurs through the agency of the authentic master. Awakening can take many forms -- from fantastic glimpses of the divine to no experience at all. And, once awakening happens, the evolutionary journey in human consciousness begins.

This point signals the beginning of the second stage in life -- the evolutionary cycle in human experience. But this is also the densest part of our human experience because we are still identified with our illusory database, and our reality is virtual. Returning briefly to our 4-Quadrant model, focus on the right lower quadrant. This is where we are: Imbalance and Virtual Reality.

Here, we're imbalanced to the negative default-dominant polarity but, at the same time, we've awakened and are driven to fully be the truthful consciousness we are. What happens next? We begin to bring balance to our imbalanced state. Initially, the ego is in full control. It fights to maintain control. It even plays along with our evolution. It does so to stay in the game. It really has one create "hope", and that's for a turnaround so it can win. After all, it is playing by house rules in this quadrant, and the odds are in favor of the house. After all, the individuated consciousness is imbalanced in an imbalanced world.

Our initial focus is balance in our dense dimensions -- the Physical, Emotional and Mental Dimensions. The mind is the most difficult. Yet, with perseverance and ultimate balance in our dense dimensions, our subtle dimensions actualize. We experience witness consciousness. Only when we develop witness consciousness, which is also termed "wakefulness", do we begin to develop truthful awareness. This is where the Socratic Process becomes both effective and important. This is where we are beginning to have the requisite self-awareness to truthfully see that we are experiencing a virtual reality. In other words -- trying to suggest to someone in the involutory cycle (or even in the immediate post-awakening process) and suggesting that they truthfully look at their data and see it that it's illusion -- it just won't happen. It can only happen when we are self-aware, when we have enough wakefulness to be aware of our illusory data (that is, our stories). It has been truthfully said that "transformation is through awareness". Self-awareness is most important. However, there are other helpful tools to assist us in dismantling our vast illusory database. And this is what the remainder of our course is about.

*And now it's time for a balance break. Let's again focus on wakefulness ... take some deep breaths ... with awareness and relax. You should be in the Balance Position. Hold it while watching the breath ... just watch the in-breath and the out-breath ... watch the natural flow of your breath ... watch your breath and see that it's just happening. Your mind is not thinking about breathing. Your breath simply happens as consciousness orchestrates life as breathing. Watch the mid-points of balance between the breaths ... between the in-breath and the out-breath ... between the out-breath and in-breath. You can choose to just watch the breath ... or you can choose to pause in the mid-points of balance. You can choose to equalize the two breaths, just as you would balance the two polarities of the relative field. All of these are possibilities as you watch the breath. In this simple exercise, you're watching your awareness expand, you're becoming more wakeful ... you're experiencing a reality that is truthful. What is your experience? The true nature of consciousness is bliss ... true reality is a blissful experience. Stay with this experience ... maintain the Balance Position as we proceed.*

Now let's begin to focus on our stories. Master Charles often begins with the simplest of examples to illustrate this point. He invites someone to join him on stage, he welcomes them and asks, "How are you?" Place yourself in this situation. You've been invited, by Master Charles to join him on stage and he asks, "How are you?" What is your answer? You might say, "I am OK." Or ... "I am fine." Or ... "I am excited" ... or "I am nervous" ... and, of course, the list can go on and on.

If you were responding like this to Master Charles, he would simply say, "You just told me a story", to which you might respond, "What?" or "I don't understand." Master Charles would then ask the same question again, "How are you?", and he would receive your response. And as long as it was like any of the above answers just given, he would respond as he did the first time, until you understood that anything you say after "I am," is a story. It's your ego-driven mind responding to a question considering the situation and its database, and it presents an image of itself. If you've been to a Landmark Forum, you remember that the ego always is focused on "looking good." If it can't look good, it will focus on "not looking bad." Incidentally, we highly recommend the Landmark Forum and Advanced Course. Very basic to better understand oneself.

But in this first example, let's continue to pursue how you responded to the inquiry, "How are you?" What did you say? Was it anything like some of the examples just mentioned? You likely began with, "I am ..." and then followed by your story which was unique to you and whoever asked the question. When someone asks us such a question, everything in the moment is filtered through our database. And we accordingly respond. Our response can be superficial, it can be friendly, it can be terse, it can be happy, it can be sad, frustrating, angry, a put-down, an opportunity to score ego points. It can be neutral and meaningless. Think about this most common form of storytelling and journal your experience of it. Mostly, I want you to realize just how pervasive stories are in our lives. Begin to pay attention to how many stories you create, how many you tell in an hour or even in 10 minutes. Stories are the language of the ego-driven mind.

Once you begin to see the process of storytelling, remember that through the process of wakeful, self-aware examination, you will find that the ego-driven mind has but one dominant story, "It should be other than it is". Let me repeat. The dominant story of the ego is "it should be other than it is." For example, I should be other than I am, she should be other than she is, he should be other than he is, it should be other than it is, they should be other than they are. Whatever it is, it's not okay the way it is. It should be other than it is.

Let's share another example. In fact, I will use myself as the example. Let's say I have a friend named Bill, and he is very intelligent. He's knowledgeable and very informed. In fact, Bill knows something about everything and, even if he doesn't know, he thinks he does. Furthermore, he does not hesitate to express his opinions and perspectives in any conversation. No matter the subject, he quickly dominates it. Bill knows how to present himself. He is skilled at it. He has a lot of knowledge. He also has a lot of opinions. And, invariably, in any conversation in which he is a part, he takes over. It becomes his forum and he's in charge. He's in center stage. I tell myself that Bill is aggressive and forceful, that he is even rude, that he should be a better listener and certainly less outspoken. Do you see what's happened? I've just created a story about Bill. I would like for him to be other than he is. Truthfully, he is outspoken and dominant in conversation. My story won't affect Bill in any way, but it will affect my experience of Bill because I'm thinking he should be other than he is. When he's on his stage, I want him to be something else. Everything he says will likely be negated by me. In truth, he's one way and that's the way he is. Furthermore, he's the way he is because that's the way he is. Truthfully, he's not the way I project him to be as "other than he is". Therefore, I must examine my story. I must ask if it's true or false that Bill should be more considerate, less forceful with his knowledge and opinions, that he should be a better listener. Is he this way? No, he's not. My story -- about wanting him to be other than he is -- is false. It's a story. Truthfully, I simply say Bill is the way he is. He's dynamic and forceful. He's a brilliant conversationalist. He's not the way I think he should be. To be truthful in my experience of Bill, I simply allow him to be the way he is, and I flow with it. I don't fight it.

Two key points: Inclusion of Bill being *the way he is*, is a truthful, non-stressful experience. Exclusion of Bill being the way he is -- and wanting him to be other than he is -- is a fraudulent, stressful experience. When I allow Bill to be the way he is, I've not created a story about him. Remember that my story affects only me and no one else, particularly Bill. If I have a story about Bill, as shared above, then my task is to see it for the story that it is and to bring awareness to it and disempower it. I see that it's a story. It's not truthful, so I remove it from my database.

*Before we complete this class, let's again return to the awareness of our balance and the experience of true reality ... just watching the play of consciousness as it unfolds in this presentation ... two polarities oscillating in relationship ... the active exterior and the still interior ... just happening as we watch in balance and simultaneously watch our experience of balance in duration. What is that experience for you? And now, let's proceed.*

In conclusion, we have reviewed many of the points Master Charles made in his first class. In addition, we have started the Synchronicity Socratic Process. You've been introduced to some basic information in how we begin to look at our stories. For the next week, I have an assignment for you. I want you to journal your experience of asking yourself, "Who do I think I am" and also the answer, "The me that I think I am, isn't real." Journal why this statement is true. Then journal your experience of why anything following the statement, "I am", is a story. Then, I want you to create a list of who in your life should be other than they are or what in your life should be other than it is. This may be a big list! Be as detailed and complete as it is possible for you to be. I encourage you to share your experiences of these questions in our online discussion site. Remember, this is why we are in this class together -- to identify and disempower our stories. Also remember that your egocentric self-worth will try to sabotage your process. Don't succumb to this illusion. Now's the time to get it out, get your stories into the open and watch your self-awareness disempower your illusory database.

In our next class, we will take the Socratic Process of Inquiry even deeper. You will gain greater understanding and confidence in the process.

And finally, "thank you" for participating in this course, *The Synchronicity Socratic Process, a Process of Inquiry for Conflict Resolution*.