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PE.550 Designing Your Life
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Lecture/Discussion 8: Connecting Hauntings, Traits, and Theories

Principle: The Big Picture. The Connection between Hauntings, Traits, and Theories.

You have traits. The traits generate theories. Hauntings are evidence of your bad theories. So your hauntings all highlight your traits. And our bad theories are our lessons in life that we need to evolve. Past every bad theory is the lesson that you are meant to learn. Think about it. What is the lesson? For example, Lauren's lesson is that she needs to believe.

This is also why it's hard to make new theories. Existing theories feel good for a reason. We have so much evidence. We need to clear up the evidence by seeing the truth in our hauntings. How we distort it.

Furthermore, it's not enough to just realize your role and your trait in each haunting. You need to clean up your hauntings. This is where therapy fails. All unresolved hauntings will keep you in a purgatory. It is amazing how much energy you get back when you clean up even one. Every haunting incident has a piece of your soul locked up. It is crazy how all of the feelings are still there. It's so wild.

Class Participation

Participant 1: I was supposed to confess to my dad that I was angry that he cheated on my mom. I didn't, because I was afraid that it was too volatile (chicken). But I did ask my mom, and she laughed and said that my dad wouldn't even claim to remember. I should have asked her how it made her feel to be asked about it.

Lauren: That's a good step.

Participant 1: I also was really upset that week because a friend of mine was diagnosed with Lou Gherig's disease. I don't know how to help him, and I'm scared.

Lauren: Tell him that. It's amazing how just saying the simple truth of how you're feeling will shift everything. Like a man who was avoiding telling his mother he loved her. He had the conversation, and then everything shifted. He could talk to his kids about love.

Participant 2: I took on three confessions. And for each one, I learned this lesson: that it seems scary, some confessions more than others, but that once you do it, it is way better than you have imagined.

Lauren: There are two main results of telling a confession. 1) You feel better in the world. At peace, in love. 2) How you feel about you. Confidence, maturity, wisdom. Something in you that is different. You feel more like you in your own body. Connection. Most of us are not on the court, but we are up in the stands, analyzing, spinning, plotting. When you confess, it puts you on the court. In the game. You can see clearly that there are really only two voices in your head: what you want in your life, and the fear that tries to talk you out of it. Everything is so much clearer.

Participant 3: I confessed to my girlfriend that I want to be open to seeing other people. She thought about it, and said no, and so we broke up. And I don't miss her that much. I am so glad that I opened this up.

Participant 3: I don't like my brother's wife. I am really close to my brother. So I confessed to my brother that I don't like her. But I haven't told her yet.

Lauren: Here is an assignment for you: a purge. Make a list of everything that is bothering you about her. It is not the truth. But every time you have something on someone, you need to get it out. Otherwise, you will prove it. We are theorists like that. But why would you want to prove that about her? Once your purge sees the light of day, we will start to know who you really are. Who knows what is really going on there. Is it her accent? Are you attracted to her? Once you have the purge, go in and find theories in there. Parent traits? See what is really going on for her.

In fact, this is a good practice for everything: career decisions, family, relationships, whatever. Get to know what is really going on there. Dare yourself to get the unedited version down.

Participant 3: This is scary. I have said "No" to things. Now I don't have a girlfriend, I have half a job. But I don't know where I'm going. It's taking a leap, not having a structure for what's next.

Lauren: That is the best place to be. I could wish nothing more for anyone.

Participant 4: I am working on my complaints about my husband. I made a list of things that I was holding against him. He knows about all of the items on the list, but in the past I have approached it from a stance of "here is why you are wrong" as opposed to "let's explore it together."

Lauren: You need to be forgiving. Forgiveness means that you forget why you were even angry in the first place. It's very human to hate someone so strongly so that you can remember 20 years ago as if it were yesterday. Grace, communication.

Participant 4: I am also having difficulties with my neighbor. She is condescending about my parenting style.

Lauren: You need to learn how not to care. She's not a family member, she's not your best friend. You need to not care. This is not saying hate them. But just let her be... at a distance. Write up the purge. What is really going on? She reminds you of your mother. After the purge, figure out the lesson that you are supposed to learn. And then create how you are now going to be. She is a nice woman who can be mean. You don't like her energy, so you keep your distance, and peacefully coexist.

Participant 5: I am all about balance these days. My research is going well, I am strengthening relationships with high school friends, my students, my husband. I really can do it all, it just takes structure and scheduling.

Lauren: Go you!

Participant 6: I want to clean up things with a friend, but she doesn't want to talk to me. What do I do?

Lauren: When I want to get a letter from someone, I write up what it would say. I even write it to me. And I believe it came from them. I then feel settled. I trust that they will write me the letter some day. It is like manifesting. Creating a premonition. It's already done.

Participant 7: I am working on a haunting where I got my parents to pull me out of summer camp. It was because the guys in my bunk were into girls, and I didn't like how they were talking about the girls. I just wanted to play basketball, but they weren't playing as much basketball.

Lauren: That is not the full story. This was your third year at the camp. It was a Jewish camp. I'm sure the men and women were still separate. There was plenty of basketball. What was really going on that would elicit such a strong response from you?

Participant 8: I don't want to tell my dad (conservative Muslim man) that I am dating. He doesn't want to know.

Lauren: He is stuck in the stone age. Give him the choice: do you want to choose stone age over getting to know me? Because I am going to do what I am going to do. So do you want to be a part of it or not? I want you to be.

Participant 9: I am killing people off with these confessions. I give it and they are really hurt. So I think I will stop giving confessions.

Lauren: How about this. Put \$20 on the table, and tell them that you are working on saying things nicely, and that if they leave feeling hurt or angry, they get the \$20. Please help me learn. And start by practicing with people who love you. Tell people what you are practicing.

Participant 10: I had a long-standing promise to resolve a haunting with a girl from middle school. I had predicted that she would be the first to get pregnant, and it turned out that she was, and I felt bad about it because it got back to her that I had said that. I apologized to her, and she said that it was a non-issue to her. She thanked me for caring, and told me that she hadn't been holding it against me. And that she was glad to hear from me, and would I please call again.

Gaby: And how did that feel?

Participant 10: It wasn't euphoric. There were a few tears around the eyes, but it wasn't like oh my gosh. It wasn't a surprise.

Gaby: Here is my advice. This is not about getting the euphoria. It's about seeing how what is a big deal for you is not a big deal for her. See how much time we spent convincing you to have this conversation? The lesson here is that you need to fix these things as they come up. Things that aren't attended to are like wrinkles in your sheets. If you get enough of them, they stop you from sleeping. The goal here is to straighten out your wrinkles so you can free up your energy. You had a lot of energy pent up in your hauntings.

We are stuck on having stupid conversations with people because we are chickens. This prevents us from having the even more important conversations. There is no free space. You are pent up. You can't communicate; there is no freedom.

Now that you've started, keep going. Follow this path, unwrinkled your sheets.

Participant 11: My thing is that I'm really guarded and don't share my feelings with people. I'm afraid for being rejected for who I am and what I feel. So at my 30th birthday party, I went around to each of the 22 people at the party, and announced to the group why I was thankful to have them in my life. It was an amazing moment. It was scary, and I almost backed out several times. But it was the most amazing experience. I am the luckiest girl in the world to have these people in my life.

Gaby: This is all so much bigger than the conversation itself. This is about you learning to put yourself and your ideas out there. To be vulnerable, to share yourself with others. Keep practicing.

Participant 11: Yes. Now I understand myself better. Why am I like this, how did I get to this point?

Participant 10: Do you think it made a difference in a community vs. one-on-one?

Participant 11: Yes. I think it made it even more powerful for me to do this in front of a group. It also helped people get to know each other better.

Gaby: There is something important about communities. It adds a whole other dimension. Other people witness what is important to you. Like at weddings. It also connects people at the event. Like you guys in the class are really connected to each other when one person shares and is intimate.

Participant 11: This opened up other doors to broach other topics with people. I'm now like "it's ok. I can do this."

Gaby: And what about your dad?

Participant 11: My parents have an interesting relationship. They have been married and divorced several times, twice to each other, and had fidelity issues. My dad lives in Texas, and I don't talk to him often. I called him last week, and started shooting the breeze, and then thought to myself "I can do this." I apologized for judging him for how he has been in relationships. I don't want to be that person. Then I asked him if I could ask him questions about his relationships, because I have formed a lot of how I feel about relationships by looking at him. He said I could, and to send him my questions in advance.

Gaby: When you do it, you want to make sure that you get through everything you want to get to. Maybe not in one conversation. Open up your relationship so you can approach him from now on.

Participant 12: So in other words, the key to resolving a haunting is to communicate openly and honestly. Is that fair? Sometimes the hauntings are caused by a lack of an ability to do that.

Gaby: Yes. The goal here is not to dwell on the incidents themselves. It's to learn about traits, and see how you are stuck in patterns. And then evolve them. Like participant 2 began to wonder why she was this way, traced it back, and can now evolve differently.

Participant 13: I had a conversation with my father, and he point blank told me he didn't want to talk about it. He wouldn't go there. I explained why, told him I wanted to know more about him, and he said no. What do I do? Do I just leave it?

Gaby: Tell him that's not only that I want to know about you and your history, but that it's also about understanding mine. So I am always here, the door is open. Please forgive me if I ask again, because I love you and I care about your life. The goal is to be light, so it's not such a burden.

Gaby: (moving on) Would you really design a life that has these hang-ups from your past, if you were designing from scratch? Of course not. So part of designing your life is clearing up the past so you can be free of them. Forgive and forget. If you don't address the hauntings, you are stuck with bad theories that you developed from the incident. And the chicken and the brat give you all sorts of justifications for continuing to believe the theories, and not take on the haunting. There are two worlds: the world of the bad theory and chicken and brat and haunting, and the world of being free and moving on.

Participant 14: I believe that I can't find the one. (lots of fear, justifications).

Gaby: You need to get all of this out. Write a letter to your last girlfriend. You won't be sending it to her, but get it all out. We need to see what you are dealing with.

Participant 15: I had a family reunion, and I didn't feel like it was the right moment to bring up this stuff with my parents.

Gaby: This is the chicken. Did you call your friend who was diagnosed with LG disease?

Participant 15: Sort of. Not really.

Gaby: You are robbing him of you, and the connection with you. You get to stir up some courage for you, and then give some of this for him. This man is going to experience things you don't even know about. Tell him you can be there for him. What are you taking on, concretely?

Participant 15: Ok, I promise to have a meeting with him in person this week.

Gaby: Freedom is on the other side, I promise.

Participant 16: I am trying to make amends with my brother. We talked and decided to alter it. But I find that I am the only one calling— he doesn't call me. So I find myself going back to the same place I was in. I want a two-way street.

Gaby: This is all about being in integrity with your dream. You need to keep being open to your brother because that is your dream. Unconditionally loving. You can communicate with him and tell him that you are hurt that he isn't calling. This is all part of building and growing and designing a relationship. Make a request of him and design it with him.

Participant 17: I have realized that what I used to think was a bad memory is now a good one.

Gaby: Nicely done. That is what happens when you clean something up.

Participant 18: When I cleaned up one of my hauntings, I realized that I wasn't the center-stage star of the event. I thought it was all my fault. But when I cleaned it up, I realized that there was so much more going on that I had no idea about.

Gaby: So much of the story we tell about our life is delusional. By resolving hauntings, we can finally get the truth. The faster you are at resolving your hauntings, the less you need to carry this awful energy around with you.

Participant 19: I have a sister who is an alcoholic. I just read a book about codependence, and realized that I try to control people. I have been judging her and trying to control her. I need to stop this.

Gaby: This is a diversion. You are being a chicken who doesn't speak up. Instead, you are a silent judge. Now this whole "I am controlling" thing is yet another excuse to keep your mouth shut. Your lesson to learn is how to have yourself known in the world. Put the real you out there. Coming with an open heart and expressing how you are. And people can accept you for who you are or not.

Participant 19: But my sister has told me that she doesn't want to talk about it, and that she will cut me off if I try to.

Gaby: You need to get permission. People will not let you in if you are coming at them with a hatchet. You are used to judging her, and she can feel that, whether it's in your head or on your lips. She doesn't want the hatchet, so she's cutting you out. You need to write her a sister letter.

Homework

1. Continue making and keeping promises, reporting in every Sunday. Report on whether you kept or did not keep your promises. Suggested format:
 - a. Describe the promise
 - b. Write for each promise "KEPT" or "NOT KEPT"
 - c. Describe the consequence
 - d. Write if you paid the consequence or not. IF no, by when will you pay it?
 - e. What are your stats on keeping the promise (e.g. I kept 5/7 days).
 - f. What did you notice about yourself? Where did you stop yourself? Where were you a chicken or brat, and where were you great? You can include this for any promise, but ALWAYS do this for every promise that was NOT KEPT.
2. Hauntings.
 - a. Pick one of your haunting and make a list of direct actions to take to heal this haunting.
 - b. Take one action each week and write up the results.