



What's Happening to ME? Introduction

By Michael J. Lincoln, Ph.D.

This book is about what happens when you reach a place where it is necessary to reconstruct yourself. This process is enormously complex and pivotal, but ultimately it is a fully understandable undertaking. But be aware, unless you are going through this, it might all sound like Charlie Brown's mom on the phone "wa wa wa" not making a lot of sense to you.

Because of the nature of the phenomenon, we will start with a rather rambling but crucial overview of what is involved in our coming to a place where we have to take on the healing process. Bear with me; it *does* get us where we need to be to look at how the healing process works in its practical manifestations.

All of us grew up in, and subsequently went through, non-optimal environments, due to the way the world is set up at this point. There comes a time for almost every one of us where we arrive at a state of affairs where we can't continue in the pattern that we had to develop in order to survive and function in our formative environment.

This means that our home, the significant others in our life, the extended family ("the relatives") and the important people to our parents and later to us, as well as, all of the out-of-home influences such as the neighborhood, the school, the church, the community, etc. were all part of the design of our destiny.

These events, experiences, influences and enculturating processes then precipitate a whole set of developmental/formative phenomena that result in what we refer to as our "self" and our "personality."

Then we come to the place where we find that what we're doing, feeling, interpreting and experiencing slowly, and then more rapidly, begins to "not work anymore." What happens next is a complex but comprehensible sequence of events called the "healing process." We now know enough about this process of what happens when you have to make a change in who you are and how to work with it.

This transformational undertaking has a kind of life cycle process that it goes through. So we will trace this thing from the beginning to the "been there, done that" point of completion. The purpose is to provide a feel for what's going on when this occurs. Just remember, you're not falling apart when this happens. You're falling together for the first time.

The purpose of doing this work is to comprehend the intelligence of our human system, with a focus on our process of undergoing change and the traversing our recovery from our past damages, distortions, deprivations, devastations and the resulting limitations of our functioning.

The idea is to get an overview of what the various events in this process mean. It has the effect of clarifying this process so that it's not so confusing, demoralizing, enraging, and alarming. It also has the effect of accelerating the healing process when you have some sort of understanding of What's Happening to you.