

Path to Awakening

Testimonial Comments on Silo's Message

**An interpretation by Norma B. Coronel
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Introduction

These testimonial comments arose from a personal need to share my own experience and the discoveries and conclusions I have reached in working with Silo's Message. I hope my testimony can help others use this Message as the path toward freedom from suffering for themselves and others, as the path toward the meaning of life.

Silo's Message is not based on dogma; rather it is about free interpretation. That is also the framework of these comments, which are made according to the understanding and experience I reached after some time. This came about both through group practice during the weekly meeting of the Community in which I participate, and through frequent individual practice as well. The action of bringing this experience to my relatives, friends, neighbors, and others helped me comprehend and achieve a greater opening toward other people, enabling me to reach experiences previously unknown.

This work is a testimonial to an experience anyone can reach if they make Silo's Message their own. It is presented in deeply felt poems describing experiences that make up a process. The poems are followed by explanations written in everyday language that tries to show both a way to practice everything that is presented in the book, and the non-linear process that progressively developed. Even if I have read the book many times, I have never followed the meditations in sequence, but have accompanied them with ceremonies. The final part of this interpretation presents a short tale about this process and about The Message.

The message that Silo has kindly given us is a way to a life that is both coherent and transcendent. It leads us to justice, to reconciliation. Through it we can reach the Profound, ultimately unveiling the existence of a permanent Meaning that transforms life, illuminating it and breaking our enchainment to suffering. It is also possible to reach the unmistakable personal experience of what I call the divine.

For many years I was blind, but then I learned to see

Part I

The book *The Inner Look*

*From the darkest night of my existence
with the slow and careful pace of my steps
through the corners of my soul
and of the world of people,
I look with the non-habitual eye
at what I read and do here, and as I advance this way,
the inner skies become filled with stars
until dawn awakes with its radiant sun
Then, nothing is ever the same*

I reflected on this part of Silo's Message tirelessly, with attention, without haste, and with a strong intuition that this was the way that led to overcoming suffering and to true awakening. This kept me on a search for the "what for" of my existence, until I reached the experience of that other reality, of the full Meaning of my life and of all that exists.

Songs to Intention

The inner looking

*How is it that they say human beings
only store up what they perceive,
only reflect what they receive from their environment?*

*When I am attentive
or when I close my eyes, I manage to see you,
eye that regards the world dwelling in me*

*and by looking, I discover myself
What I believe, what I fear
but also what inspires and uplifts me
Noble ancestral look that leads to the essential
to knowing who I am and where I am going
what impels you, what is your powerful motor?*

*Beyond the stillness of my consciousness
From the center of centers
where lives that-which-has-no-name
you make yourself indubitably present,
sacred creator, and you illuminate me
Meaning at last!*

From the very beginning, the title "The Inner Look" made it clear to me that this had to do with a look unlike the usual one that goes toward the world of the senses. These words were an invitation to take a look within myself. I associated this with what I had been doing since I was a teenager: reflecting upon different issues that interested me. I recognized that when I did that, I "got into myself," looking at the issue from different angles, relating it to my experience from other moments, until I understood the issue further or fully. However, as I developed the meditation and practice given in the book, I progressively realized that this way of looking also allowed me to know myself more deeply. Thus, I could look at what I wanted by concentrating my attention on it, whether by reflecting on the sentences, remembering dreams or situations I had lived through, or planning a project. That is, relating what I had read to my recent and older experiences and my aspirations for the future. This recognition let me see an inner world I had had only the vaguest sensation of before.

On this journey it was quite easy to see how present, past and future intersect. I realized that I could recognize this because my inner I was capable of seeing all of that. Then, at some point during the journey, by looking at what was happening to me in certain daily situations and the experiences and comprehensions I was having, and comparing them with what was said in the book, it became clear to me that there was something that allowed me to recognize all of this that I am talking about, something impelling this look. In an instant I recognized that which is always present

behind all searches, behind all thought, behind all emotion, all illusion, all creation. This discovery made a great impact on my consciousness and changed my way of looking at and seeing reality.

Songs of Dawn

Chapter I. The Meditation

*From so much searching for what gives meaning,
for my own destiny, and that of all existence
I learned that you find what you long for
if you calmly persist on this humble journey*

*When fearless and joyful the heart sings and loves
this world as much as the other, the eternal one
With an open hand, seeking without seeking
meditating timelessly and profoundly
I discovered the Meaning of the full life*

Even though the first sentence, "Here it tells how the non-meaning of life can be converted into meaning and fulfillment," and the last, "Here it tells of the inner revelation at which all arrive who carefully meditate in humble search," were the phrases that resonated most within me, I have reflected again and again on all that is said in this chapter. I kept relating it to my own life, to my placement in my life, and to my searches. Finally, I reached the following conclusion: Life is nothing but a pilgrimage in search of a profound and transcendent destiny, which is revealed little by little as one "carefully mediates in humble search."

Chapter II. Disposition to Comprehend

*Any pilgrim on the inner paths
seeking what they cannot define
comes to know that arrogance*

*does not lead you to the right port
Arguments affirming ones beliefs
are but pitfalls
You have only to predispose yourself
gently quieting
every noise that diverts you
coming from thought
or blind emotion
keeping your eye always on the path*

*Thus I predisposed myself,
following in the best way possible
the suggestions of the Guide
Well he knows every stone in the path*

This chapter makes it very clear that you cannot advance just any old way. When reading it I felt ambivalence; on one hand I was attracted by what was written there, it was beautiful, but on the other some phrases or words shocked me. I saw how the "I" tended to dominate, taking me out of what I had proposed to do. Prestige often came into play, distracting me from my vital search. Nevertheless, the phrase " *if you reply that you are busy with more urgent things, I will answer that since your wish is to sleep or to die, I will do nothing to oppose it*" helped me greatly to achieve the right attitude, and the need I was feeling helped me persist.

Chapter III. The Non-Meaning

*Scarcely had I seen the words
which began
with failures of the soul
when being that way myself,
with an empty life,
I felt it was to me,
and none other,
that Silo thus spoke*

*So determined was I
to discover the meaning
that does not die each instant
that day by day, without haste,
I reflected in silence
repeating a phrase
contemplating my daily life
in light of what I had read*

*I learned much about myself
following what was suggested
but my whole being resonated
with the last words read
"life has no meaning
if everything ends with death."*

In this way I kept advancing in the knowledge of myself and of the mysteries that continued to unfold, and every new reflection took me deeper. But the issue of my own death always appeared, closing off the future, as if that were the unavoidable fate of all existence. Death and the possibility of continuing beyond it has been a recurring theme for me since my early adolescence. Never have I accepted the idea that dying was unavoidable; I have always doubted that idea, and at a certain moment, the intimation that things could not end there came strongly to me. Even so, the fear of death was in me.

Chapter IV. Dependence

*I cast a new look
across the length and breadth of my life
Did I ever choose freely?
Beliefs and desires are chained together
formed in the distant past
like banners of truth
held aloft through time
You and others influence me,*

*everything does it all the time
I do what interests me
that is my limit
Then,
do I choose, or does life just happen?
If it simply happens
unrest and darkness
will win my heart*

From the beginning it destabilized me: "Nothing that I do, feel, or think depends on me." I did not understand what that was about. What do you mean, nothing I do, feel or think depends on me? When the dependence to which I was subjected became evident to me, I experienced a sort of enclosure, like an unfair trap set by fate. At the same time, a strong wish to really choose with complete freedom began to arise, a sort of rebellion that rejected that apparently inexorable determinism.

Chapter V. Intimation of Meaning

*Was it only intuition?
What happened in my consciousness
when I knew ahead of time
what would happen later on?*

*When in a surprise invasion,
comprehension and joy
took my whole soul?
How did it happen that then
hope rose in me again?*

A thousand times I have gone back to what is expressed here. I kept comparing this part to experiences I had forgotten, since I considered them strange, thinking I must be "weird" and that such things happened only to me. *"At times I have anticipated events that later took place... At times a perfect communion with everything has filled me with ecstasy... At times I*

have seen something for the first time, yet recognized it as though I had seen it before."

Understanding these unusual experiences in this new light freed me from hopelessness, strengthening my faith in "something more," encouraging me on my search for the meaning of my life.

Chapter VI. Sleep and awakening

*They tell me nothing exists
beyond the concrete world
I perceive day by day
they say that is the whole truth*

*Reality shows you that,
so they say,
in what you see and hear
in what you touch, in what you smell*

*I believed it up to yesterday
but when I took a peep
at thought and feeling
using the look that sees,
I left belief behind
and saw differently what I perceived
Thus I began to know
and for the first time
I saw the real in another way*

It took me some time to understand that the senses deliver inaccurate and naive information. But when I did understand that, I started to doubt daily reality because of what I kept experiencing. This text served me more as a guide, as a pattern with which to measure my comprehensions and experiences. Finally, I was able to touch that other way of seeing so-called reality.

I took the following affirmation as my main guideline: "*There is a real way of being awake...*" – and it goes on, "*and it has led me to meditate profoundly on all that has been said so far. It has, moreover, opened the door for me to discover the meaning of all that exists.*" The key is in looking with the inner eye, calmly and attentively and in doing so with permanence. It truly is an awakening.

Song of Essence

Chapters VII - XII and XV - XVIII

Inner Force

*Force that moves my soul
Force that allows me to walk
sublime golden chariot
light and winged
lifting me to the skies
Essential experience
leading me to meaning*

*Oh, majestic Force
Gently intense is your presence
Oh, sacred your manifestation*

Various points are touched upon in the book regarding the experience of the Force: a procedure to feel its presence, the possibility of controlling it, the manifestations of that energy, the cases in which it is "lost" or "repressed," and the action and reaction of the Force.

I will not say here that I can completely manage all the possibilities mentioned regarding the Force; I will simply say that I have understood how important it is to be able to let it to flow freely, that it is easy for me to feel its intense or gentle presence even in different daily situations, and that I have learned to direct it. So far, this is enough for my purpose.

In the beginning I had a hard time following the steps for experiencing the Force as described in this chapter. Often I got distracted by images that came to mind, by some physical discomfort, or by sounds that reached me from outside. But as I continued to carry out the experience and tried to use the principles of valid action in daily life, something began changing inside me. During this practice, my mind quieted, my emotions became neutralized, and then it was quite easy to concentrate on the steps to be followed. Then I began to experience the circulating energy, the inner Force, that force that "moves mountains" and that can impel us toward "the heavens."

Song to Unity

XIII. The Principles

*Sacred inner unity
guide that guides my steps
in daily living
mind, heart and action
bound in full coherence*

*Lighter becomes
the contradiction that stops
the evolution of my life
that betrayal of myself
that my memory has kept*

*Almost without realizing
I've changed my way of acting
my focus in daily life
placed in such unity*

*It is not what I "should" do
that moves me as I walk my path
but instead that which liberates
from possessive desire
which in an enchainment
keeps the mind imprisoned*

From the very first time I read it, this chapter was one of the most relevant for me. *"...Following the steps slowly, meditating on what has been said and what has yet to be said, you may convert the non-meaning into meaning. It is not indifferent what you do with your life."* And then, *"I do not speak to you of liberty. I speak to you of liberation, of movement, of process. I do not speak to you of liberty as something static, but of liberating yourself step-by-step, as those who approach their city become liberated from the road already traveled."*

As I kept trying to apply the Principles of Valid Action, I saw clearly that they led directly away from the suffering produced by contradictory actions. This was a new observation that gave me a way of approaching important decisions I had to make. Then I started paying attention to what I felt inside when doing one thing or another that was important to me. Later, it was enough for me to imagine deciding on acting one way or another to accurately detect the register produced by each possible course of action. Obviously, I wanted to guide my actions according to the register of agreement between what I thought and felt, moving away from contradiction. Little by little this way of acting began to free me from a "weight." There was no more "tug of war" between knowing what I should do and not wanting to do it, no more doubts about whether what I did was right or wrong. Most importantly, my suffering over what I yearned to possess, over what I feared losing or failing to attain, over betraying myself in my deepest feelings, became less and less. Contradiction is a diabolical mix that leads to the abyss, both for ourselves and for those closest to us. For some time now I have been able to make decisions based on the register of unity or contradiction produced in me by one choice or another, even if others do not understand my actions.

As one attempts to put into practice these Principles and the suggestions in The Path (the last part of the book, containing phrases for meditation), coherence begins growing within one. Even if we do not think about them every day, they become more and more a part of our lives, and our lives become fuller and fuller.

Song to the Hidden City

XIV. The guide of the inner road

*My Guide wisely says
that the Force in me living
leads me to darkness or light*

*Certainly I recognize
revenge, possession, jealousy
and in the black of night
frustration and resentment*

*Then I've said to myself
May I leave behind
all that suffering
May I in this rough ascent
overcome the drag
of those heavy actions
May I manage to stay calm
impelling the Force
towards the sacred city of Light*

The first time I read the recommendations in this chapter, I felt a slight uneasiness. *"Now follow attentively what I will explain to you, because it concerns the inner landscape you may encounter when working with the Force, and the directions you can imprint on your mental movements."* It was saying that we should pay attention to the direction the Force might take, since it could lead us into negativity and dark feelings, but also to positive and luminous states. I told myself it was silly to get scared ahead of time, that my imagination was working against me. This part was describing the inner "path" that takes shape within every human being simply with the passage of life. Finally, by working repeatedly with this experience, I was able to overcome my reservations by concentrating in the words guiding the ascent. It was not long before I had that extraordinary experience of the Force, as smooth as a wave gliding gently toward the beach, as intense as the radiant sun, like that special Light high on the mountaintop, inspiring me in my daily routine, opening the future.

Song to the Path of the Ascent

XIX. The Internal States

*From the chaos of my mind
wrapped in shadows
I slip into a vicious circle
barely an attempt to escape
Two, only two paths I see
To live, I inevitably need to die,
to leave behind what impedes my flight
Lightening my backpack this way
placing in it only hope
bright banner of tomorrow
having made the decision to ascend*

*I am stopped by a trap of the mind
doubt enters my soul and I fall
It is only an instant of betrayal
weakness from desiring this or that
Strongly I return to the rise
My dreams stumble into each other
I despair, I weep, and then I see
the illusion of the sirens' song*

*With resolution I decide to pick up
the thread of a different life
My longing encourages my steps
I cross the threshold right at the center
Light and unstable I go forward
the path thin as a string
before me the intense unlimited space
the mind quiet at last, waiting*

*It is hard to keep myself calm here
Thoughts take on a life of their own
I persist in attending to a single "point"
consciousness blank except for that*

*With another "eye" I manage to grasp in a wink
that which is alike in one and all
and the sun, golden sphere, Light,
floods my whole soul*

*There is a wherefore of existence!
Sacred evolutionary intention!
Unnamable!*

I discovered that my intuition helped me "know" how to move forward every day on this journey through my internal landscape. But to that I must add the appropriate disposition, gentle attention, and a certain facility for recognizing those internal states, emotional states from the "lowest" to "higher" and sublime states, states of inspiration that come to every human being. It is precisely in those states that I have been able to see all of us truly linked to one another and to everything, all one and the same. The passage between states has not been linear. I have come and gone many times by the same paths, stumbling every now and then, going up and down from level to level until finally a sort of gentle leap happened. My internal energy was also an important element. I noticed that even if it was the same journey, it kept changing in quality after each leap.

It is certainly at the limits of our consciousness and even beyond, in the Profound spaces of the mind, that we reach the most significant experiences, capable of radically change our lives in an instant.

The chapter closes in a descriptive and beautiful way: *"It would not be useful to develop these subjects further, because without experience they can only mislead by transferring to the field of the imaginary something that can actually be achieved. May what has been said here be of service to you. And if you do not find what has been explained here useful, to what could you object, since for skepticism nothing has any basis or reason—it is like the image in a mirror, the sound of an echo, the shadow of a shadow."*

Song to the Profound

XX. Internal reality

*Those who study
the human body-mind
may pronounce their cogent theories
I can only speak
about the path
I have managed to walk
following the unfolded inner map
of Silo's Message
in its infinite kindness*

As I meditated on a phrase or chapter of *The Inner Look* and practiced the experience of the Force, I kept going through different interpretations of this first part of the book. *"Remember what I have said, and learn to discover the truth behind the allegories, which on occasion lead the mind astray, but at other times translate realities that would be impossible to grasp without such representation."* In this way, little by little, with patience and dedication, I learned to grasp what was behind those words, behind what was said. As I have mentioned, intuition has made it much easier for me to understand the inner states described in this book. Every time I reread it, and as I practiced what I could, comparing what was said with what was happening to me in my daily life, things got clearer. In this way I kept going deeper and comprehending more.

I recognize that it has been the desire to stop suffering, the mystical search for those spaces that are far from the mundane, and the search for a transcendent meaning that does not end with death, that have served me as a foundation for transforming my existence, orienting it toward happiness and freedom.

Part II

The Experience

*Vital experience
that gives foundation to life
and in a sigh reveals the Meaning
from the depths of myself*

*The Greatest of the Poets said,
"whoever dies before dying will never die"
and that certainty was my guide and my incentive
for reaching at last that north
with undeniable certainty
Experience is evidence
that wipes away all doubt
It awakens within one
fully transforming existence*

*Light of the soul that lives within me
never abandon me, light divine
If in my delirium I may sometimes forget you
call to my heart to lead me back to you
And on the day I depart for other worlds
only let me enter within you,
oh sacred immortal Light*

Of the eight ceremonies included in this part of the book, those which moved me toward very significant experiences that strengthened the direction of change in my life have been the Service, the Laying-on of Hands, Wellbeing, Assistance and Death.

The first three allowed me to feel that enormous energy, the inner Force. Even if in the ceremony of Wellbeing we simply ask the best for loves ones *"who are facing difficulties in their emotional lives... in their relationships with others... or with their health,"* placing ourselves in a good attitude towards these people, many times on asking for them I have felt that intense energy.

Later on, with the practice of the Service and the Laying-on of Hands I learned how to manage it. The most relevant aspect, however, is that these experiences allowed me to open a "channel" of contact with the profound spaces of the mind, where meanings about themes I consider most important for existence – suffering, death, transcendence, the meaning of life – are found. Thanks to these ceremonies a door into another reality opened for me, as happens when we wake up from a dream.

The beginning of the ceremony of Assistance says: *"The memories of your life are the judgment of your actions. You can, in a short time, recall much of what is best in you. Remember then, but without fear, and purify your memory. Gently remember, and calm your mind..."* This is a guide for the person who is about to pass on, indicating a path leading to triumphant liberation of the mind. In the ceremony of Death, the intention lies in freeing those who suffer when a loved one dies, gently leading them to reflect upon their beliefs about these matters.

Both ceremonies have made me face my own disappearance, comprehending how ephemeral and wonderful a life is. When I carried out these ceremonies for people close to me, and also for people I did not know, who were facing this fundamental and moving fact of existence, feelings of love and compassion arose in me in a way I had never experienced before.

These experiences taught me the importance of valuing every instant, of considering that I can learn something even from the worst moments, of being joyful for the simple things in the seeming routine of daily life. But they also helped me to go deeper into the fundamental experience that makes it clear that nothing ends with death, that one can continue in another state.

And when I hear someone say, "I don't want to waste time on that," whatever that may be, I always try to comment about how nice it would be not to waste time on sadness, on anger, on the pursuit of this and that, on resentment, as it stops the advancement of life.

The possibility exists of continuing even after physical death and after the consciousness stops working. We can build our spirit, unifying our own energy, consolidating it by carrying out good actions, actions that bring internal unity, abandoning those actions that lead us in another direction.

These certainties were immensely important for my life, which at last was open to the future.

*I raise my cup to you, oh death
Every time you've crossed my path
I've looked away in fear
Why think of you now, so undesirable
I've told myself
anyway, sooner or later you will arrive
better busy myself now with other things*

How could I have been so blind!

*When I left my fear behind
I managed to talk with you face to face
Thus I've come to know you well, kind death
How could I have believed in your illusory cruelty?
No longer are you an enemy
but a friend*

*When the time is ripe
you will sever my ties
to this time and space
that my essence might soar light
toward the heights
into the Unnamable and eternal!*

The last ceremony, that of Recognition, has a perfect balance, blending meditation to improve oneself and action to improve the lives of others. This is a testimonial ceremony. It leads towards deep reflection on mental change and a stance facing the world and its events, which certainly condition us. In particular, the following paragraphs have had a strong influence on me:
"The pain and suffering that human beings experience recedes when good knowledge advances, not knowledge at the service of selfishness and oppression."

That is, to overcome pain and suffering at the root it is necessary to discover what good knowledge is, because the book only mentions "what it is not." And then, *"Good knowledge leads to justice. Good knowledge leads to reconciliation. Good knowledge also leads us to decipher the sacred in the depths of our consciousness."*

Here I faced a similar riddle. Nothing could be taken for granted. So, I went around and around with this many times, asking myself again what this good knowledge was, what the meaning of justice was, what it meant to reconcile. I began finding answers that satisfied me considerably, but later on when I would return to the matter, I noticed that the answers I was getting were deeper.

So I say that, as I understand it, good knowledge has to do with everything that leads to unity in oneself, in relationships and among people. If this were so in practice, both individuals and human groups would develop in peace and harmony. Regarding justice, therefore, I reached the conclusion that if there is no balance in a society, social contradictions arise. If social contradictions exist it is because violence is being exercised against the people. If there is violence, there is no justice. Social justice is equivalent to an act of unity because it liberates a people from pain.

I found no difficulty in understanding the importance of reconciliation. To achieve it without forgiving and forgetting has been something else. The word "forgive" is indelibly written in our being, whether or not we manage to do it, but it is not the same as reconciliation, a liberating act of the mind. To decipher the sacred within my own consciousness, I had to meditate often on that theme, taking the point and later letting it loose. That set me into that direction, until I came to achieve a specific experience that made exactly that, the sacred, evident.

Part III

The Path

*Ah, contradiction
you always get in my way
I do not trust you
It is only unity
that gives birth to my future*

*And when the sacred spark
at last illuminated for what,
why, and where I'm going
then I began to live*

*Trail that on this journey
leads me to my longed-for destiny
to being idea-feeling-action
to being one, just one within myself
keep me steady in your course*

The meditations proposed here make evident contradictory and coherent actions, meaningless and meaningful actions. They clearly set two directions in life and the possibility of choosing between them.

The first sentence says: *"If you believe that your life will end with death, nothing that you think, feel, or do has any meaning. Everything will end with incoherence and disintegration."*

Here the theme of death appears again. After meditating on this for some time I reached the conclusion that if I were to believe that I was born just to satisfy my needs and desires while passing from childhood to adolescence and so on, to finally end in nothingness, what kind of meaning could my life have?, absolutely none. If I were to believe that, it would be all the same to me whether I did one thing or another, because at the end of my life I would disappear and everything would definitely end. I used to believe that for a long time. To think that way left me with an almost bitter taste, without joy,

without meaning. However, something told me I was not born just to live like that until I died.

In the next paragraph we read: *"If you believe that your life does not end with death, you must bring into agreement what you think with what you feel and what you do. All must advance toward coherence, toward unity."*

My first thought was: this is more or less where I'm at. I would like to believe that my life does not end with death. I kept asking myself: how is it that what I think is opposed to what I feel and do? How is it that my head tells me to go one place, my heart somewhere else, and I end up doing whatever? When am I not divided like that? As I studied myself this way, I discovered in time that my heart never deceived me but that my conflicting thoughts did. The trap was in my consciousness. What would be the best thought, the most valid thought to follow? I discovered that if I first clarify what I really wanted, I had to observe what I felt if I chose one thing or another. This way it became easy to carry out unifying actions. Over time these unifying actions began to accumulate; something good was consolidating in me. Then I started to believe that not everything ended when death and, at one moment I became completely certain, above and beyond my belief system, that life does not end with death, that there is something in me that continues.

This happened after the ceremony of the Service where I experienced the inner Force. When I finished the ceremony, in a clear state of mind, I suddenly recognized that there is no separation between life and death. And even if I could not explain that affirmation, I had no doubt whatsoever that it was true.

During the following days, I often reflected upon this. Then I arrived at the following realization: before I was born, the Essential, the immortal spirit, already existed and it is also part of us. Contradiction progressively "de-unifies" us, and good actions, coherent actions, progressively strengthen our internal unity. When we pass on, if we have unified our energy, the spirit is once again formed. Thus we "go back" to that which is where we "come from." The spirit just exists and, in a moment, it materializes, it becomes solid in a human being. When both the "I" and the body dematerialize, the spirit continues being because it has neither beginning nor end. It is an eternal flow that has different moments and manifests itself in different ways.

"If you are indifferent to the pain and suffering of others, none of the help that you ask for will find justification." Absolutely, how could I justify my asking for help if I think only about myself, about what happens to me, if I am the center of everything? Why should others lend me a hand if I do not care when they feel sad or are in need?

"If you are not indifferent to the pain and suffering of others, in order to help them you must bring your thoughts, feelings, and actions into agreement." I have sometimes found myself doubting as I helped someone, not being fully convinced of what I was doing. Then, even if you are not indifferent to the sorrows of others, perhaps you end up helping without unity, even compulsively, without being clear whether what you are doing is what the other needs. To give with coherence seems to be of greatest importance.

The phrases beginning with *"learn to"*, point out the fact of the interconnection that exists between myself and others, between the individual internal world and the world in general. Not only that, they also indicate what it is necessary to learn in order to advance in self-knowledge and in coherent action in the world: *"Learn to treat others in the way that you want to be treated. Learn to surpass pain and suffering in yourself, in those close to you, and in human society. Learn to resist the violence that is within you and outside of you. Learn to recognize the signs of the sacred within you and around you."*

Of the last set of phrases I will mention this one, *"Do not let your life pass by without asking yourself: Where am I going?"* – a recurrent theme for me for a long time. I said to myself at one point that I should also ask what I was born for. That if I found that answer it would become obvious where I was going. I was not completely clear why I linked the two points, but I had no doubt that this approach was right. Reflecting on this over time, I found different answers to both questions. I kept alternating between the two questions, discarding one answer and then another, until, thanks to my persistence and to my practice of the Service, the answers were revealed suddenly and synthetically, shocking my consciousness, strengthening me. I was born to help with human evolution. This means helping overcome pain and suffering in myself, in others and in society and, therefore, contributing to overcoming the violence that generates both pain and suffering. Carrying out actions in this direction, in turn, allows me to evolve, since they are

actions that give unity. But I also came to this space and time from somewhere else, and I have the possibility of returning there when I die. However, despite these experiences and sudden comprehensions that were important for my life, coherence as a consolidated style of life is still an aspiration and a challenge to achieve.

Like the Principles in the first part of the book and the ceremony of Recognition, these meditations – which present seventeen themes – have been a reference and a guide toward achieving internal unity and a behavior of growing coherence in actions in the world.

Reflecting upon them one by one and over time, I have been noticing that I have been incorporating them into my life almost without trying, even though one can always find something new in them and keep learning constantly.

In addition, by returning again and again to each phrase, one can keep evoking new comprehensions and registers that go deeper and deeper. Coherence subtly begins to set in and one's way of living takes on a very different shade.

Song to the new times

Awakening

*There is a love within
that begins revealing itself
no longer able to stay hidden
Love for one's fellow human
Love of the internal god
And in the longed-for return
that which is faithfully captured
like stardust
washes ones whole life*

*Original creative breath
sacred fire, intense Light divine
that drives the endless thrust
Existence in itself and in me
Significance and direction, Meaning
Immortal, you and my essence!*

I came across Silo's Message during a period when I was closing one stage and needed to start a new one. It was like a light coming on in the middle of a dark and stormy night, providing warmth and hope.

During those years, my desires for prestige and recognition from others, as well as a chain of ambiguous and negative feelings towards myself and others, began transforming. All those things that were blocking my forward movement were progressively left behind. Instead what arose was the desire to improve myself without comparing myself to others, to be as joyful about others' achievements as I would be if they were my own, to see the stupidity of getting even, and to understand the importance of reaching a life of growing coherence.

It became evident that giving without expectation of return is the best thing one can do, that the only important thing is to treat others as I want to be treated; that I want to be treated with kindness, with complete freedom to

choose one thing or another. And if I receive, may it be just what is necessary.

As I advanced from experience to experience, from meditation to meditation, the fear of death began to vanish and the construction of my spirit in order to transcend became a wonderful need, radically changing my life. So, I can say that I went from the non-meaning to full meaning when in an instant I heard the signal of the Profound, where what we unknowingly long for dwells.

Looking back, I see myself today with a different placement regarding difficulties and regarding life in general. Even if sometimes some of my beliefs still generate suffering in me, I am able to overcome that suffering faster and faster. It's been quite a long time now since I came across this Message. The space that suffering occupies within me has been emptying out considerably, leaving room for a gentle joy and interesting neutrality. And this happens when I am able to place myself in a deeper internal space. When I am there I remain calm, joyful and aware.

I recognize that, despite the suggestive and sudden experiences I've had, it has been thanks to my frequent study and reflection on the paragraphs of the Inner Look and the Path, thanks to the Ceremonies, and thanks to my gratitude for the good things that have happened to me, that I have been able to advance.

It is clear to me that the practice of the Service (which enables contact with the Profound), the reflections proposed in the book, and acting with unity are inseparable. They are indispensable if we want to advance in the comprehension of all of that, if we want to develop a process that liberates us from suffering, a path toward a Meaning that does not end with death. This humble and profound Message invites us to overcome pain and suffering in ourselves, in others and in society. Its daily or frequent practice leads us to the awakening of the consciousness, to a true spiritual birth and also to the possibility of experiencing the divine. Thus my daily living has become full, with a background of gentle joy accompanying me in this new dawn of my life.

The task of bringing the Message to others has placed me in a certain mental disposition with an emotional opening that suits the task quite well. This extraordinary gift we have received cannot be just for ourselves. Because the pain and suffering of others are not indifferent to me, it is also coherent to oppose all discrimination, all lack of equality and all injustice. I aspire for my profound intention to lead me constantly to bring others this Message of hope.

In these confusing and violent times it is necessary to give a clear signal pointing the way out. Thus, may the signal of the Message reach very far. Experience shows that it makes the human being happy and free.

*I want to bring the news to every house
to those who search and do not find,
to hearts waiting and despairing,
that the guide of guides has at last arrived
bringing his song of hope*

*I want to be just a voice
to set his message in motion
I want to be the living book that contains the word,
the word that makes happy and free all who hear it
in the silence of their inner night*

*I want to bring to my fellow human beings
the experience that illuminates the soul
I want to be a humble messenger
singing to the times to come
that already Silo has gently announced*

Translated by Trudi Lee Richards and Puchi Pellegrini