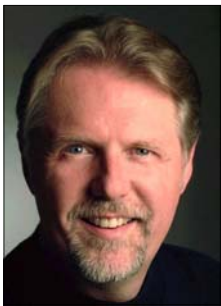


An open letter to Americans, their politicians, and their leaders from Alan Seale



I'm sitting in a very uncomfortable place inside. The last few days I have been incredibly aware of my fear about where we are headed in the United States and in the world. As I sit with that fear in meditation, I begin to consider that perhaps the fear does not belong to me, but rather that it

belongs to the collective American consciousness. And yet my experience of it is no less real. When the fear is especially strong, my heart feels heavy, I have difficulty concentrating, and I spend way too much time scouring the internet for news updates. It is only when I stop, breathe, and re-connect to my soul that I find stillness and peace once again. There I can lift above it all and release my attachment to political outcomes, my concern over environmental crises and global financial instability, and the day-to-day frustrations that we all have. From this experience it would be very easy to conclude that if I would just stay focused on my soul and let go of my ego attachments to all of that material world "stuff," I wouldn't have to worry about anything else. It would all work itself out, or not, but I would be fine. Yet I know that is not my truth. That is an escape.

At the root of the fear in the collective consciousness is the split we as a culture have created between ego and soul. The realization of that split and the desire by many people, conscious or unconscious, to heal it is sharply contrasted in the current U. S. presidential elections by those who are caught in fear of losing control, fear of change, fear

of something challenging their version of reality. While this split exists throughout the industrialized and technological world, nowhere is it more apparent than in the United States. We are a divided nation because we, as individuals, are divided at the core of our being. Healing that divide within us as individuals is no longer just our opportunity, but our necessity.

Soul and ego are the two fundamental aspects of our being. Soul is our essence, our core being. It lives both in the physical body and in the greater Consciousness. Soul engages the world through the intuitive mind (of which the rational mind is only a small part). It operates from a perspective of oneness – an understanding that everything comes from the same source, whether you call that source God or Consciousness, and therefore everything is related through that source. It has a very big-picture view.

Ego is made up of the body, personality, talents, abilities, and all things pertaining to the physical world. Its primary job is to ensure our survival. It thrives on safety, security, predictability, and guarantees. It has great attachment to the past because the past is what it knows. Ego engages the world through the intellect and the rational mind. In fact, it has no ability to see beyond its emotions and rational thought. Its awareness is limited to what it can analyze or intellectually explore. On the other hand, because talents, abilities, and intellect are components of ego, ego has great ability to get things done. It understands the "mechanics" of life, something about which soul has no clue.

Since the 17th century when French philosopher Rene Descartes declared “*Cogito ergo sum*,” or “I think, therefore I am,” the western world has increasingly placed more importance on ego’s rational and analytical approach to life than on the intuitive awareness and unseen fundamental nature of life that is soul. Our culture has cultivated the gap between soul and ego.

Today, we continue to cultivate a wide gap between our potential to be highly conscious and indeed cosmically-aware beings, and our attachment to who we perceive ourselves to be – a culture that primarily values knowledge and personal experience, intellectual thought, and scientific proof.

What is needed is a return to soul-ego partnership. When we combine soul’s big-picture view and its understanding of the web of connection between people and events with ego’s ability to get things done, forward progress is made. Innovation and creativity thrive, new relationships are forged, and there is greater awareness of an evolutionary unfolding of our global culture. Therefore, we experience greater openness to diversity of thought, values, and culture, we embrace progressive change, and life becomes much more rewarding and fulfilling for us both individually and collectively.

This soul-ego partnership is a fundamental key to healing the great divide in our country and in our world. I am not saying that this is the solution to all our problems. Our challenges are far more complex than that and I do not presume to have the knowledge and expertise that those solutions require. What I am saying is that until we close the gap between ego and soul within ourselves and in our culture, then our problem-solving efforts will have little more than short-term, band-aid effects. If we as a culture continue to feed the split between ego and soul, thereby ensuring that the soul-ego partnership cannot solidify, we will not survive.

There are fundamental questions before us: Do we continue down a path of separation from one another, each protecting our personal ego wants, desires, possessions, and boundaries, and as a nation standing ready to attack anyone who “does not have our best interests at heart?” Or do we recognize our connection and in fact oneness with all people and with all of creation? Do we choose to lift ourselves

Distinctions between Ego, Soul, and Soul-Ego Partnership

Ego = separation

Soul = oneness

Soul-Ego Partnership = recognition that we are all one, we come from the same source, and at the same time we are individuals with unique gifts, talents, choices, and abilities. We are each here to learn and to serve the common good.

Ego believes it’s us against them.

Soul knows that we are all one.

The Soul-Ego Partnership looks for the way to live in integrity with respect and honor for one another.

Ego says, “This is mine and you can’t take it away from me because I deserve to have it and that’s all that matters.”

Soul has no sense of an ownership relationship to things, people, or spaces. Ownership is a foreign concept to soul.

In Soul-Ego partnership, there is the greater awareness that nothing belongs to anyone. Things, relationships, and places are just given to us to take care of and make the most honorable use of while they are in our stewardship.

Ego is committed to maintaining the past because that’s what it knows.

Soul is committed to learning, growth, and development, and exploring new territory.

Soul-ego partnership has respect for the past, yet recognizes that new times call for new ways of engagement, and seeks to partner with the greatest new potential waiting to unfold.

up and find our common ground, to find the greater potential for us as a nation that is a part of a human family and a world community? Or do we keep sinking deeper into the trap of separateness, looking out for ourselves in protectionism and fear?

Our candidates all stand somewhere between these two choices. None of them are fully living in the soul-ego partnership. Neither am I, and if I may be so bold, probably neither are you. Some candidates are much closer than others, just as some of us are as well. Our pool of candidates is simply a mirror of our mass consciousness. It is a reflection of us. The candidate pool will change when we change. Our potential leaders can only take us where we ourselves are ready and willing to go. Their statements and actions are a reflection of our thoughts, beliefs, actions, and deep fears – the messages we consciously and unconsciously put out into the mass consciousness.

There is hope, however. There is a growing call for leadership based on a higher awareness – an awareness that, for better or worse, we are now citizens of the world. An awareness of our interdependent relationship to one another. An awareness that the human spirit must be acknowledged throughout the world and that respect of diversity of ideas and beliefs are what leads to new alliances and possibilities for us as a human family. An awareness that soul must be engaged to lead the way from its eagle's nest perch.

I now realize that the fear that led me to write this letter does, in fact, belong to me. That is to say that it belongs to my ego when I let it become disconnected from my soul. And it belongs to your ego under the same circumstances. My soul doesn't own that fear. It doesn't even recognize it. But my ego knows that fear very well and can get caught up in it very easily. When I stand in my soul-ego partnership, I have the expansive awareness of my soul and the great skills and abilities of my ego working together. My soul sets the goal and my ego becomes its hands and feet. My soul becomes the captain of the ship that is my life and my ego becomes the crew that makes the fulfillment of my soul's desires possible.

In soul-ego awareness, I acknowledge the fear and recognize its reality on the purely physical, day-to-day level. *And* I recognize that I have a choice in how I respond to it. In my best moments, I choose to let soul lead the way. When I do, the fear dissipates, I can see the path of higher potential clearly, and I follow that path in my choices and

actions. Occasionally, like the last few days, I am not at my best and I get caught in the fear, my world gets smaller, and I become very protective of my heart and what I feel is mine.

Fear fed by ego disconnected from soul has increasingly been the overriding energy of the American collective consciousness. That fear has been the hidden force behind our recent leadership – a narrow worldview leadership that has not served us and never will. Yet there are more and more voices calling for a different way. We are so close to tipping the scale, yet the fears of ego in its disconnected state remain powerful and strong. Those great fears continue to feed the gap. The choice is ours. The time is now. It's time to bring soul back into the picture and close the gap.

What can you do? Notice where the gap between soul and ego shows up in you, in your conversations, in your opinions, in your beliefs, and in your actions. Notice where your heart knows one thing, but your mind wants to talk you into something else. Don't beat yourself up about it, just notice it and make an immediate shift. Bring soul and ego together into powerful partnership in your life and model that for others by how you walk in the world. Closing the gap and allowing the partnership is natural – it's how we were born to be. It's just that it's not our habit so it will take some practice. We lost the connection due to the powerful presence of fear in the collective consciousness, and that fear became our fear. We have a choice, and now is the time.

We are a human family with all the delight and dysfunction that comes with any family. We must rediscover the soul-ego partnership that was the original intention of the human plan, recognize ourselves as citizens of the world, and become active stewards for the great potential of humanity that is waiting to unfold. We must close the gap, stand in our soul-ego power, take action, and demand a different kind of leadership for ourselves, our country, and our world – a leadership that is grounded in the soul-ego partnership.

In great hope for our future,

Alan Seale

Soul Mission Profile—Paul Sherman

The Compassionate Dynamo

by Johnathon Pape



When you have a conversation with Paul Sherman, you can't help but notice the huge energy and creative drive that emanates from him. It is inspiring and infectious. Equally strong, if perhaps not as readily overt, is his big heart and the caring and compassion it holds. That dichotomy became crystal

clear to Paul in the summer of 2005 when he took the *Soul Mission * Life Vision* workshop in High Falls, New York. His soul mission - *I catalyze love and action* - perfectly underscores the two sides of Paul.

"Soul Mission really helps you find language around who you are," he explains. "Everything starts making sense. You look at the patterns in your life, the things you have been doing, and all of a sudden there's that resonance. And instead of unconsciously falling into things, you can make conscious choices to be who you are."

One of the things that Paul had fallen into was a career in business. His undergraduate training was in psychology and his master's degree was in Human Resources Education. "I was a liberal arts person that really didn't know what to do after college. I knew what career paths I *didn't* want, but not what I did want. So by the process of elimination, I ended up in technology implementation and strategy work - focusing on the 'people' side of how you implement large scale organizational change." But after 13 years working very successfully as an employee in business settings, Paul realized that something was missing. "Thinking of it in terms of my soul mission, there just wasn't a lot of love for me in the business world working for others by their rules - plenty of action, but not very much love."

Shortly after Paul left the business sector, he discovered the world of coaching. "In coaching I was able to find a place to combine those two aspects of myself...a deep caring about people AND creating tangible results." About two and a half years ago - not long after he discovered his soul mission - Paul co-founded a business called Team Coaching International. "What I'm trying to do in building this company is to bring the ability to synthesize love and action to others. At Team Coaching International we call it "productivity" and "positivity." And if I can do this in the workplace, then people are going to take it home to their families, their communities, and their geopolitical structures. So from a legacy standpoint, I know this is larger than me."

Johnathon Pape: *Your business sounds very interesting. Tell me more about Team Coaching International.*

Paul Sherman: I am one of the founders of the company, and my current role/title is Chief Relationship Officer. We are a globally distributed company with a network of over 600 highly trained team coaches. Our combination of best in class practices and our proprietary Team Diagnostic Assessment delivers state of the art coaching and long term follow up to significantly impact both the productivity and positivity of teams across the enterprise. Our reference base includes the successful coaching of 100's of teams from Fortune 1000 companies, many of them in the Fortune 100. Additionally our industry leading training in coaching teams as a system, coupled with certification in the use of the Team Diagnostic Assessment ensures that our continually growing coaching network remains at the forefront of global thought leadership. We have been privileged to work with teams from organizations including: Bank of America, Johnson & Johnson, Procter and Gamble, and the US Navy.

JP: *How does knowing your Soul Mission help you in this type of coaching?*

PS: Team coaching is all about creating high performance teams that are sustainable on a human level and have an esprit de corps so that people will be inspired – engage on a soul level. The reason why a client/sponsor is buying a team coaching initiative is because they are looking to achieve a specific measurable business result – launching a new product, merging organizations, implementing new strategies, and optimizing business processes. Something specific and measurable needs to happen, and that’s how you measure the success of the team coaching. As it relates back to my Soul Mission, that mission is very deliberately focused on love, which is all about relationship and respect, and action, which is about creating tangible results in the world. And in our three dimensional plane, action in the presence of love yields sustainable and inspired results. So in Team Coaching the idea is that you can achieve the result you need, but if it doesn’t take in the human/relationship idea, the results won’t be sustainable or inspired. My soul mission really captures both the relationship side and the results side.

JP: *A few months after taking the Soul Mission * Life Vision 4-day intensive workshop, you took the Manifestation workshop. How would you compare your experiences in those workshops?*

PS: I think the workshops themselves mirror my soul mission. The first workshop, *Soul Mission * Life Vision*, is about relationship, primarily with yourself. And *Manifestation* is all about action and results. And yet that love piece is still there. The 7th and 8th houses of the Manifestation Wheel – Surrender and Legacy – really resonated with me. My soul mission almost feels like a microcosm of the workshops.

JP: *So how has knowing your Soul Mission and living it changed your life?*

PS: In the midst of living in these hectic times, my Soul Mission “grounds” me and gives me a place to center. I live a more balanced and meaningful life and live from a place of choice. I know why I am on this planet when I get up every day.

JP: *What is a specific way that your Soul Mission has come into play recently in your daily life?*

PS: I was facilitating a coaching session with a team inside an organization. The team was not achieving its goals and there was a hostile and distrusting atmosphere in the team. Instead of being daunted by this challenge, I embraced it, knowing that if I lived my Soul Mission, that this team would end up where it was supposed to be. In my coaching, I balanced relationship (“love”) and results-orientation (“action”). I embodied these qualities for this team. They did their work with me as catalyst and turned around their performance and their culture.

JP: *What are some of the tools and processes that you carry with you from Soul Mission * Life Vision and/or Manifestation?*

PS: Several things, really. First of all, returning to my point of stillness is very powerful for me. I like it because there is a destination. I had tried for many years to meditate – very unsuccessfully – but having that destination helps me find the resonance in my soul mission and then I am capable of grounding in that very solid state.

Secondly, the understanding of the role of the ego vs. the role of the soul is very important and so useful in my work and my life.

The role of surrendering has also been powerful for me. Surrender and fear for me are very inter-related. When I am feeling fearful, I ask myself the question “what is it that I need to surrender to in order to quell that fear and transform it from depleting energy to life-generating energy?” If I find myself in a fear state, I use the concept of surrender to recover to a more empowered state.

And finally Alan’s work with personal jet stream was very empowering for me, because if I’m on my personal jet stream, I know that I am bringing the best of who I am to myself and my surroundings, and that it helps me. The whole personal jet stream is two-fold: part of it is self-care, showing self-love in the knowledge that I’m going to live the way I’m going to live, and then in doing so it makes me be the best and most available that I can be for the rest of the world. A lot of the work that I do is helping the business

world question “business as usual.” So if I walk into a meeting or coaching on my personal jet stream, I can impact that team. If I’m in my flow on my jet stream it brings a certain kind of energy to the team that they are somehow wanting.

JP: *What are you currently manifesting in your life and how does it relate to your Soul Mission?*

PS: What a wonderful question! My long-term intimate relationship has never been better. And despite trying economic times, my business is thriving and I’m enjoying the hard work. I’m truly feeling at peace.

JP: *What is the most important thing you’ve learned about yourself since claiming your Soul Mission?*

PS: The word that you use here “claiming” is absolutely critical. My Soul Mission is something that I must live both for my own sense of purpose and for the world as a whole. It is a power that I need to claim and own. It gives me confidence to go forth into the world and live and act from a strong place of identity and calling.

JP: *As you have encountered challenges, doubts, or setbacks, how has knowing who you are at the soul level gotten you back on track?*

PS: Living from Soul has me always return to the questions of “why” and “for the sake of what.” When setbacks or challenges occur, I weather them by returning to the essence level of why I am here...that these challenges are only occurring on a physical level and that they are somehow calling me forth to live even more deeply from Soul.

JP: *What has been your greatest challenge to living your Soul Mission?*

PS: I have been working very hard on building Team Coaching International for the past two and a half years. The nature of the business is completely aligned with my Soul Mission. All of the money earned in the business has been invested back into the business. I had been living off savings which was quite scary. When starting the business, I had set a financial plateau that said, “I will not dip below this amount in my savings. When I do, I will leave this startup and take a more financially stable

job. I did, in fact, hit that financial plateau. But after careful consideration I continued on with my business, as I felt that to abandon it was to abandon my Soul Mission. I’m happy to report that staying the course has worked out for me financially.

JP: *So how did you find the gift in that scenario and transform the energy around it?*

PS: When I considered abandoning my business and started looking at other jobs (e.g., going on interviews), there was something at a gut level that told me that I would literally be abandoning my soul if I took one of these positions. I weighed the fear associated with the financial situation with the gut feeling of abandoning my soul. The financial fear was nowhere near as powerful as the empty feeling that I knew I would have if I abandoned my business. The fear was then turned into motivation.

JP: *What would you say to someone who is considering doing Soul Mission * Life Vision and/or Manifestation?*

PS: Embarking on this work is a life changing experience. It is a process that requires rigor, discipline, and commitment. If you are “ready” to do the work and have the motivation to do so, you will put your life on a whole different trajectory and find meaning in every day that you live going forward...even the bad days!

To learn more about
Team Coaching International, visit
<http://www.teamcoachinginternational.com>

info@alanseale.com
www.alanseale.com
(585) 473-9793