## WHEEL #17: UNDERSTANDING THE ROOT CAUSES OF INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS

## **Need for Certainty**

- \* At the core of intrusive thoughts is the need for certainty, which often derives from the highly sensitive person's acute awareness of change and death.
  - \* When we can accepting our "fundamental human ambiguity", as Pema Chodron says, learn to accept uncertainty and the ego softens into the reality that we have control over very little.

**See**: Chart #15 The Fear of Death **Read**: Living Beautifully

The Roots of Intrusive Thoughts

## Empty Well of Self

- \* The intrusive thought is a flare from the inner Self calling you to slow down, turn inward, and give time and attention to reflecting on and exploring your inner world.
- Jung said, "What we don't make conscious emerges later as fate."
- When you have a solid adult at the helm you can provide your own solid reassurance.

## **Untrained Mind**

- When you hook into every thought and believe it as truth, you will fall down the rabbit hole of anxiety.
- \* **See**: Tool #1 in this section
- \* **Read**: The Untethered Soul

# Need for Accurate Information

- \* Cognitive element of intrusive thoughts. Many people don't know the truth about sexuality, anger, high sensitivity, death.
- \* The thought-flare may need to be doused with truth-water. After that initial douse, the work is to avoid giving the thought further attention through ruminating, reassurance-seeking, researching (no google).

## The Metaphor

- \* Jung: We pathologize because we have forgotten how to mythologize.
- \* We take everything at face value, what Jeremy Taylor calls "mistaken literalism."
- \* These thoughts are metaphors pointing the way to integration.

## Overload of Emotions

- \* Many children learn to retreat to the safety of their thoughts and heads in order to manage the big feelings that threaten to overwhelm them with nobody helping them through. It's what Daniel Siegel called "leaning to the left."
- When we don't attend inward and have spent a lifetime pushing down difficult feelings they have no choice but to boil over and pop out the top in the form of intrusive thoughts.

See: Tool #1 this section

Read: Mindsight by Daniel Siegel