Overview of the Personal Aspect

The Personal Aspect of Self refers to your relationship with the ‘parts’ that make up who (and how) you identify yourself as who you are in this life-time. In this sense, the elements are worked with in a way somewhat different than the other Aspects and Elements of the Self. You are invited to reflect on the elements of the personal self from what might seem at first to be an unusual point of view. Imagine that you are a watcher (one who watches) and you are watching the watcher watch. You are observing yourself, observing yourself, observing yourself. This kind of three times removed observation brings a level of objectivity and depth to a person’s ability to see what is really going on, to see the judgment and bias that might be involved and to have a much wider view of possibilities, potentials and options.

So wherever you begin in exploring this aspect, as you ground yourself in your safe place and your sacred space, imagine that you are watching yourself, watch yourself, watch yourself.

In the Personal Aspect of the Self, it is important to begin by looking at the hierarchy of control between the different components of the Personal Self. In our western culture, the Mind generally seems to be in the lead and dominate the other parts of Personal Self. Indeed, here is where our experiences get recorded and our beliefs about everything get formulated, interpreted and organized.

It is also true that stages of development impact which aspect of the personal self is organically in charge of the state of being of the body. When we are born, the physical needs of our Self dominate—later, the emotional body dominates. In some, the spiritual self will take on the role of orienting the personal self.

Begin the process of working with your personal self by getting a clearer picture of what part of the personal self has the primary role.
Organize your Personal Self Aspect by how you currently recognize the hierarchy of parts. Then re-organize by how you would like the hierarchy to look. There is no 'right way' but it will alter your life experience.

How do you know which one dominates? In some ways, we can only begin to hypothesize what it would be like to have one part dominate—or control the other elements of our Personal Self. Below are a few examples of the Elements hierarchy I’ve chosen one to show how there can be balance or imbalance in any hierarchy.

1. Mind  Body  Emotion  Spirit
2. Body  Emotion  Body  Mind
3. Emotion  Mind  Spirit  Emotion
4. Spirit  Mind  Body

Let’s look at the fourth column hierarchy: Spirit/Mind/Emotion/Body.

The unhealthy use of this hierarchy—what the person determines as their spiritual beliefs and orientation determines their behavior and choices for their daily life. Mind will be in service to the Spirit in gathering information and reinforced thought patterns necessary to keep the spiritual orientation intact. Shame, guilt can be the prevalent emotional state, although hatred rage and violence can be rationalized with the Mind in service to the Spiritual beliefs. An example of this is violence of one religious group against another. In the extreme of this hierarchy, the body is held in contempt, or endures excessive fasting, physical pain etc., to the detriment of health and one’s life.

In a healthy use of this hierarchy—what the person determines as their spiritual beliefs and orientation determines their behavior and choices for their daily life, but with life-supporting spiritual beliefs and vision, all actions, motivations and decisions come through or are directed by one’s spiritual orientation. The mind is a vehicle for discernment rather than rationalization. The emotional Self develops through the Spiritual orientation of the person, to feel deeply for oneself as well as all of life. The body is seen as home for the self and soul, a gift to be treasured, honored and cared for. The body then becomes in service to the Spiritual life of the person—but from the orientation of discipline rather than defamation.

These are two simplified and extreme/idealistic samples, but my hope is to give you an example of how, whether we are conscious of this or not, we each have our own hierarchy for the Elements of our self.
Spend some time reflecting on the difference between your idealized conceptualization and your current perception of the ‘real’ way you live your personal life. Is there a happy medium that would actually be more balanced and possible than your ideal?

YOUR THREE BRAINS
Somewhere in the course on my many mentors, I learned about the concept of ‘the three brains’. I’m not referring to the three types of physical brains found inside our skulls, but to the three distinct response mechanisms of the heart, the mind and the gut. Science has, in fact, sorted out the reality of what is called the ‘small brain’ of the gut (US NEWS) and its’ connection to the larger brain in the head. Differences in response patterns to same stimuli have been recorded between the heart, gut and brain (HEART MATH). These are the ‘brains’ of the body I refer to here.

When we experience consensus the information available to us from each of these three sources of knowing and information, our lives come into a state of balance and composure which greatly supports our health, wellbeing and our decision making process. Greg Braden in Walking Between Worlds writes about this referring to the feelings (heart), emotions (gut), and thoughts (mind) and the balance of these resulting in one’s ability to access deeply transformative knowing and growth. Unfortunately, in our western culture, the brain tends to dominate our decision making process, overriding the wisdom of the heart and the intuition of the gut. Working with your personal aspect is a chance to explore your own response patterns and change them if you wish.