

My personal exploration of kidney donation was triggered by reading our book group's choice - "[Adventures in human being](#)" - with its chapter discussing kidneys. The following "dialogue exercise" is one that I've used occasionally over many years. It's from Ira Progoff's work "[At a journal workshop](#)".

'dialogue' with kidney donation

'factual paragraph':

It's something I've briefly considered before, but not followed up on. The conversation – and lack of group knowledge – at the Book Group (3rd April) made me feel a bit impatient and gave me an internal push to stand up tall & check it out for myself. What I read suggested – on current knowledge – that kidney donation as a planned procedure in an expert hospital unit is relatively safe (1/3000 operations results in death and also, of course, there are a variety of more frequent complications. Longer term outcomes seem reassuring). I am likely to be a good candidate – most common '*non-directed, altruistic*' living donor is a middle-aged man in this country. Sixty six is possibly a little old, but biologically I'm a good deal younger than this. There is a clear and significant need that *a.)* I have good capacity to respond to, *b.)* on balance it makes my heart sing to consider (albeit a bit cautiously and quietly).

'stepping stones':

- probably some stuff around Christian (& Buddhist) self-sacrifice
- modelling from parents on self-sacrifice
- conscious, owned 'stepping into'/embracing the value & joy of 'universal' generosity/kindness
- this is a stage in my life – not too soon/not too late – when this kind of choice fits pretty well

'twilight imaging' with kidney donation:

A 'sobering' track to choose to walk down – values drive action that feeds back to reinforce values more fully. Cultivating/nourishing generosity & kindness. Gently daunting & scary and this vulnerability is likely to open me to others' care & love – '*giving to receive*'. And there's something mixed in here about doing this to say/and saying something like '*this is me – this is what I do – this is part of who I am*'. And how much is this to counteract doubting voices/people, and how much to please supporting voices/people, and how much to express what wants to emerge in response to learning more about the option of kidney donation. And all three are true but proving people wrong (about my self-centredness) or getting people's approval (for my generosity) – aren't the heart, not the real weight behind this decision – which is more because deep inside this feels to me a good, right thing that I'm choosing to do.

dialogue:

self: I feel touched & a little tearful re-reading what has been written here.

kidney donation: Well done. This is something you can do, that you're well-suited to do – a path you have a good ability to walk down.

self: OK – phone call tomorrow to the number on the NHS Kidney Donation website.
