



Self-Coaching Lesson Plans

Lesson 4: Creating your internal order¹

Introduction:

The goal of this self-help coaching lesson is to help to think through different elements of your life, and to create and “internal order” of things. We invite you to work with the help of a popular fairy tale “Mother Holle” for this purpose, and follow the steps of the nice stepdaughter to reach the goal of getting a “gold bath” of Mother Holle. Working on ourselves through a story is an exciting task, but it is not at all straightforward. In a fairy tale, order is restored by the end, the hero of the tale takes a general journey and moves into a next stage of self-development.

This is our task too - to interpret the turns and 'codes' of the fairy tale for our own lives, to find the steps that will help us to become a golden daughter instead of a dirty one.

Before starting to work, assure that you have:

- enough time: at least 45-50 minutes of undisturbed time
- enough and safe space to work without interruptions and being disturbed in your process
- you can use this planning tool alone or if you have a person of confidence, you can also invite others to do it with you.

Objectives:

- ✚ To help you to think through different areas of your life
- ✚ To activate your internal care for yourself

Time needed: at least 45 minutes, depending on personal tempo and needs

Exercises:

¹ All pictures in the text are generated by Midjourney, inc. by the author, Eva Virag Suhajda

Exercise 1: Preparation for working with a fairy tale – setting the scene

When you work with a fairy tale, we invite you to prepare a nice space for you to work for. Maybe put some nice music in, light a candle, make yourself a tea. You are going to go to a journey into the tale, so it is nice, if you prepare a fairy tale-like atmosphere around you.

We also encourage you to prepare all tools you need to use for working with the questions raised later. You will need pen and paper, and you might use colouring pencils, pens, markers, etc.

Please read through all the steps to know how to proceed in the next steps.

Exercise 2: Preparation for working with a fairy tale – reading the tale

What do you bring out of the tale?

When we begin to work with ourselves through the Mother Holle fairy tale, let us first listen to or read the story, then sit back, close your eyes, and let the mood of the tale wash over us... and answer some questions. Read the questions before, and think about them after you read the tale!

Think about it!

- Can you find a colour from the tale? Bring it back with you!
- Can you find a smell from the tale? Bring it back with you!
- Where are you in the story? Who are there with you? What is your task at that place?

Write down your answers! How much does your task there relate to what you need to do in your life? Think metaphorically.

Mother Holle²

Once upon a time there was a widow who had two daughters; one of them was beautiful and industrious, the other ugly and lazy. The mother, however, loved the ugly and lazy one best, because she was her own daughter, and so the other, who was only her stepdaughter, was made to do all the work of the house, and was quite the Cinderella of the family. Her stepmother sent her out every day to sit by the well in the high road, there to spin until she made her fingers bleed. Now it chanced one day that some blood fell on to the spindle, and as the girl stopped over the well to wash it off, the spindle suddenly sprang out of her hand and fell into the well. She ran home crying to tell of her misfortune, but her stepmother spoke harshly to her, and after giving her a violent scolding, said unkindly, 'As you have let the spindle fall into the well you may go yourself and fetch it out.'

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The girl went back to the well not knowing what to do, and at last in her distress she jumped into the water after the spindle. She remembered nothing more until she awoke and found herself in a beautiful meadow, full of sunshine, and with countless flowers blooming in every direction. She walked over the meadow, and presently she came upon a baker's oven full of bread, and the loaves cried out to her, 'Take us out, take us out, or alas! we shall be burnt to a cinder; we were baked through long ago.' So she took the bread-shovel and drew them all out.

She went on a little farther, till she came to a tree full of apples. 'Shake me, shake me, I pray,' cried the tree; 'my apples, one and all, are ripe.' So she shook the tree, and the apples came falling down upon her like rain; but she continued shaking until there was not a single apple left upon it. Then she carefully gathered the apples together in a heap and walked on again.

The next thing she came to was a little house, and there she saw an old woman looking out, with such large teeth, that she was terrified, and turned to run away. But the old woman called after her, 'What are you afraid of, dear child? Stay with me; if you will do the work of my house properly for me, I will make you very happy. You must be very careful, however, to make my bed in the right way, for I wish you always to shake it thoroughly, so that the feathers fly about; then they say, down there in the world, that it is snowing; for I am Mother Holle.' The old woman spoke so kindly, that the girl summoned up courage and agreed to enter into her service.

² This story was taken from: The Red Fairy Book by Andrew Lang

She took care to do everything according to the old woman's bidding and every time she made the bed she shook it with all her might, so that the feathers flew about like so many snowflakes. The old woman was as good as her word: she never spoke angrily to her, and gave her roast and boiled meats every day.

So she stayed on with Mother Holle for some time, and then she began to grow unhappy. She could not at first tell why she felt sad, but she became conscious at last of great longing to go home; then she knew she was homesick, although she was a thousand times better off with Mother Holle than with her mother and sister. After waiting awhile, she went to Mother Holle and said, 'I am so homesick, that I cannot stay with you any longer, for although I am so happy here, I must return to my own people.' Then Mother Holle said, 'I am pleased that you should want to go back to your own people, and as you have served me so well and faithfully, I will take you home myself.'

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Thereupon she led the girl by the hand up to a broad gateway. The gate was opened, and as the girl passed through, a shower of gold fell upon her, and the gold clung to her, so that she was covered with it from head to foot. 'That is a reward for your industry,' said Mother Holle, and as she spoke she handed her the spindle which she had dropped into the well. The gate was then closed, and the girl found herself back in the old world close to her mother's house.

As she entered the courtyard, the cock who was perched on the well, called out:
'Cock-a-doodle-doo! Your golden daughter's come back to you.'

Then she went in, to her mother and sister, and as she was so richly covered with gold, they gave her a warm welcome. She related to them all that had happened, and when the mother heard how she had come by her great riches, she thought she should like her ugly, lazy daughter to go and try her fortune. So she made the sister go and sit by the well and spin, and the girl pricked her finger and thrust her hand into a thorn-bush, so that she might drop some blood on to the spindle; then she threw it into the well, and jumped in herself.

Like her sister she awoke in the beautiful meadow, and walked over it till she came to the oven. 'Take us out, take us out, or alas! we shall be burnt to a cinder; we were baked through long ago,' cried the loaves as before. But the lazy girl answered, 'Do you think I am going to dirty my hands for you?' and walked on. Presently she came to the apple-tree. 'Shake me, shake me, I pray; my apples, one and all, are ripe,' it cried. But she only answered, 'A nice thing to ask me to do, one of the apples might fall on my head,' and passed on.

At last, she came to Mother Holle's house, and as she had heard all about the large teeth from her sister, she was not afraid of them, and engaged herself without delay to the old woman. The first

day she was very obedient and industrious, and exerted herself to please Mother Holle, for she thought of the gold she should get in return. The next day, however, she began to dawdle over her work, and the third day she was more idle still; then she began to lie in bed in the mornings and refused to get up. Worse still, she neglected to make the old woman's bed properly, and forgot to shake it so that the feathers might fly about. So Mother Holle very soon got tired of her, and told her she might go. The lazy girl was delighted at this, and thought to herself, 'The gold will soon be mine.'

Mother Holle led her, as she had led her sister, to the broad gateway; but as she was passing through, instead of the shower of gold, a great bucketful of pitch came pouring over her. 'That is in return for your services,' said the old woman, and she shut the gate. So the lazy girl had to go home covered with pitch, and the cock on the well called out as she saw her:

'Cock-a-doodle-doo! Your dirty daughter's come back to you.'

But, try what she would, she could not get the pitch off and it stuck to her as long as she lived.

Exercise 3: Making an inner order - working with the fairy tale

Step 1: The blood on the splinter

The heroess of this story is the beautiful stepdaughter, who is hard-working and nice. Still, she is the one, who is cutting her fingers with the splinter so that the splinter gets bloody. The splinter – which is a tool to make yarn, which is on it – can here be understood as one’s “thread of life”.

The good girl is working hard, but even then her hard work is not appreciated. She is hurt, suffering, and / or hopeless, as well as tired.

Have you felt any time in your life the same feeling? Do you feel it also now? Think about it. What are those things that “cut your fingers”, “make you bleed”?

You can also sit down, and start writing everything that comes up. You can start writing with these sentence beginning:

“What makes me feel I am bleeding, is...”

“I am tired of”

“ I feel exhausted, because...”

After writing, give yourself time. Just close your eyes, and imagine, how it would be to wake up on a beautiful spring / summer field. Try to feel the breeze of the wind, the smells, imagine the colours.

You can spend as much time here as you can.



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Step 2: The breads and the oven

From the field the girl is going to the baker's oven, full of bread. Bread can be understood as the main resource for people. Think about it!

What kind of resources, things, tools do you have in your life! What do you own? What do you use? You can think of material things (like equipments, books, clothes, instruments or more), or other things which you consider important (like hobbies, plans, ideas) Put them into three categories:



- There are some bread, which are already overbaked. What are those elements of your list, which are actually not useful for you anymore? Maybe they were at one time, but right now they are just taking your space and time. You can get rid of these. Think it through.
- There are some bread, which are not yet ready, still need some baking. What are those elements of your list, which are not yet at their full potential? Which you still would like to develop further? How?
- And there are breads, which are just perfect. What are those material and nonmaterial resources, that you can build upon?

Give yourself enough time. You can print out the coloring page at the end of the lesson, and think over the questions while coloring.

Step 3: Apple-picking

The next step on the road of the hard-working girl is the picking of the apples. Let's think of apples as relationships now! Think through what kind of relationships you have with other people. List the most important 5-15 people who have the most impact in your life.

Then put them into three categories:

- There are relationships, which are rotten. They are not good, nurturing anymore, but at the same time they are destroying other relationships. Which one do you consider into this category? How much is it possible to separate or split them?
- There are relationships, which are just good as they are. It is also a pleasure to think about them, and rewarding. They fill you with joy. Put them into the second category, and think of them as resources when needed.



- c) There are those relationships, which are not yet mature. You have to provide them “sunshine” to ripe. Which are these relationships? How do you nurture them to get good and fulfilling?

Give yourself enough time. You can print out the coloring page at the end of the lesson, and think over the questions while coloring.

Step 4: Shaking out the feathers

The last place the good girl is reaching, the house of Mother Holle. There is still work to do: to shake the bed (duvets), until the feathers are falling, causing people joy.

Think about it!

- What are you doing to make others feel joyful? How do you shake the pillows of Mother Holle?
- What are you doing to make YOURSELF joyful? What feathers you need from Mother Holle’s pillow?



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You can also write these down:

“To shake things up around me, and spread joy, I need to...”

“To shake myself up and to feel joy, I need to...”

Give yourself enough time. You can print out the coloring page at the end of the lesson, and think over the questions while coloring.

Exercise 4: Walking out of the tale with golden cover

If you have been making all the steps of the internal order-setting, most probably you already feel better in your life. However writing down the necessary steps (to develop new resources, relationships, to get rid of old and rotten), is not enough. You have to walk the talk.

Therefore you may not get to the end of a tale too quickly. Sometimes it takes years before you can really take back the control of your life, and make up the new order.

The task here is to formulate the steps to get there, and to check from time to time that you are going into the right direction.

Feedback and evaluation

As a result of this lesson how do you feel:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) I have a more clear picture what next steps to make to tidy up my life | YES / NO / Don't know |
| 2) I feel more in control and mentally better | YES / NO / Don't know |
| 3) I am ready to shake the pillows of Mother Holle | YES / NO / Don't know |

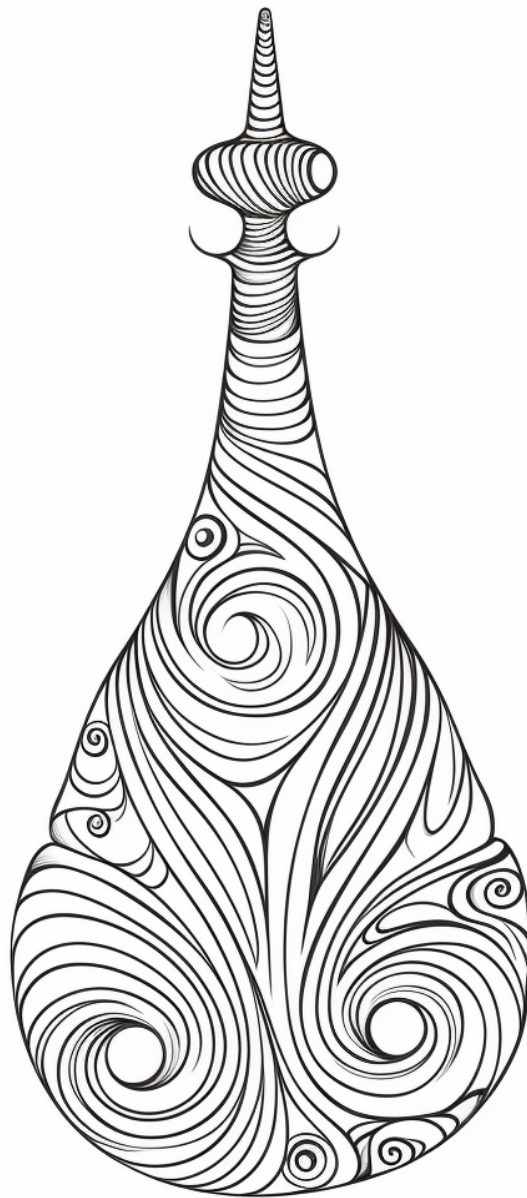
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The Spindle

“What makes me feel I am bleeding, is...”

“I am tired of”

“ I feel exhausted, because...”



The Breads in the Oven



The Pile of Apples



The Feathers of Nurturing

