Aristotle’s four causes (10,000 experiments to create a tungsten filament)

1. material cause gives an outcome its substance; (tungsten)
2. formal cause determines an outcome’s structure; (molecular restructuring of tungsten)
3. sufficient cause makes an outcome possible; (anything without which the outcome is not accomplished)
4. efficient cause makes an outcome actual. (the correct molecular structure) (“tipping point” – “The Weight of a Voice” – “The Sacrifice”) Efficient cause is ultimately and always to be found in mind.

Causation is both from the bottom up and from the top down, as well as diagonal and lateral. Each thing is caused by everything else. To understand the nature of integral causation requires a perceptual makeover.

**The Year 2012 and the Fourth Awakening**

**(Disintegration←↨→Reintegration and the**

**Flowing Emergence of Optimal Well-being)**

Nature will not let us stay in any one place too long. She will let us stay just long enough to gather the experience necessary to the unfolding and advancing of the soul. This is a wise provision, for should we stay here too long, we would become too set, too rigid, too inflexible. Nature demands the change in order that we should advance. When the change comes, we should welcome it with a smile on the lips and a song in the heart.

~Ernest Holmes1

Times of general calamity and confusion have ever been productive of the greatest minds. The purest ore is produced from the hottest furnace, and the brightest thunderbolt is elicited from the darkest storm.

~Charles Caleb Colton2

Our present time of accelerating change is such that even the rate at which change accelerates is itself accelerating. This trend was initially brought to mainstream attention by Alvin Toffler’s 1970 book, *Future Shock,*3 in which he drew the conclusion that

The illiterate of the twenty-first century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.

Toffler’s conclusion was congruent with anthropologist Margaret Mead’s contemporaneous declaration that4

We now live in a world where all of us must know tomorrow what none of us knew yesterday and only a few of us know today.

At the time Mead made this pronouncement, the number of scientists and other “persons of knowledge” who were contributing to humankind’s information database was also doubling every few years, which has since then given rise to what is now called “info-glut.” In an endeavor to put this “knowledge explosion” in perspective, another report in the early 1970’s estimated that the information content of the Sunday *New York Times* was greater than the amount of information available to any person in the world in the year Columbus discovered America, with the exception, perhaps, of a very few scholars. [Fortunately for the world’s forests of trees and legions of readers, the Sunday *Times* is doubling the number of its pages far more slowly than the information it tracks, perhaps (and hopefully) because in an info-glut environment the process of natural selection favors a growing ability to communicate more with less.]

Mead also observed that the world was on the threshold of an era of what she called “pre-figurative culture,” a social structure in which the traditional enculturation process becomes reversed:5

Today, nowhere in the world are there elders who know what the children know, no matter how remote and simple the societies are in which the children live. In the past there were always some elders who knew more than any children in terms of their experience of having grown up within a cultural system. Today there are none. It is not only that parents are no longer guides, but that there are no guides, whether one seeks them in one’s own country or abroad. There are no elders who know what those who have been reared within the last twenty years know about the world into which they were born.

Mead saw only one possible way to meet the info-glut challenge, which she presented in an article entitled “The Future as the Basis for Establishing a Shared Culture.”6 She felt quite certain that in the midst of an increasingly chaotic information-saturated hyperreality of our own making, our species can fit itself for survival only as we become full-time learners with a new way of knowing that empowers our collective adaptation to the shared contingencies of a commonly unfolding global future. Her call for a planetary culture focused on the future well-being of humankind overall is even more persuasive today in the face of planetary extreme climate change, even should our only recourse turn out to be primarily one of accommodation thereto rather than any significant amelioration or reversal thereof.

Both Toffler and Mead were savvy that what is ultimately driving the acceleration of change is the hyper-acceleration of available information, which was to become far more widely recognized by the millennium. For example, a 1999 report by the UC Berkeley School of Information Management and Systems estimates that it took 300,000 years for humankind to produce 12 exabytes of distinct and unduplicated units of information – the sum total by then of all human knowledge represented via words, images and music – which is 12 quintillion (12,000,000,000,000,000,000) bytes, or 600,000 times the amount of information then stored in the Library of Congress. In the year this estimate was made, 1.5 additional exabytes of new information was being produced, which is the equivalent in that year alone of 250,000,000 megabytes of new information for each living person on the planet, which is far more information per capita than an individual human mind is capable of processing in conscious awareness during an average lifetime.

The 1999 report further calculated that the annual production of uniquely new bytes of information would double each year for the foreseeable future, not even counting the multiple copies that much information further generates. At the time of that report, accumulation of the next 12 exabytes of new information was expected to occur within a very few years. A follow-up report in 2002 estimated that 5 additional exabytes of new information was being produced in that year alone, 92% of which was stored on magnetic media, mostly on hard discs.

By now, eight more years later, it seemed that we might quite possibly have quadrupled in just eight years the amount of information it took 300,000 years for us to accumulate initially, and that we would soon be exceeding that 300,000-year total *each* year and conceivably be doing so daily within this century. Furthermore, those who took exception to this report tended to do so on the grounds that its estimate was too conservative, and that information is doubling by zetabytes (10 with 21 zeros) rather than by mere exabytes (18 zeros).7

It has recently been reported that, far in excess of that estimation merely nine years ago, 161 exabytes of digital data alone was produced in 2006, which is equivalent to 3 million times the information in all the books ever written. In that same year Google was processing over 20 petabytes (20,000,000,000,000,000 bytes) of data per day (i.e., nearly an exabyte every few months) and business emails alone amounted to 5 exabytes annually. Before the end of this decade our accumulated proliferation of digital data will approximate 988 exabytes. It has also been estimated that “unique, technical information is exponentially doubling every 2 weeks and will increase to every 72 hours”.8

A wireless speed-of-light networking technology whereby any number of computers can share all of their data with all other computers is being developed to cope with the information exaflood.9 Just think of it – even though we literally can’t: all but a miniscule mega-tillienth of what is now presently known is only known by computers, and much or most of it will never be known to any human mind, especially because computers generate internal data correlations (and thus new information) that no human mind will ever become aware of. When it comes to so-called “hyperreality”, therefore, we do qualify as its creators, though our relationship to the exaflood we are creating may be approximately as tenuous as that of the Sorcerer’s Apprentice to the wizard’s washwater.

This humongous exa-proliferation of data has produced what someone has called the “Big Bang explosion of content,” the creation of a human informational universe that is now undergoing inflation at a rate that, if it is unhindered, would seem eventually to make the total number of bits of data we generate equivalent to the number of atoms in the physical universe.10 And yet the floodwaters of new information continue to rise ever more mega-rapidly, due to the also ever-increasing proliferation of digitally networked computers and wireless communication technologies.

The exabytation of information in the past decade accompanies the startling revelation that our current cosmological paradigm accounts for a mere four percent of the universe’s matter and energy. The remaining ninety-six percent of physical reality that science has thus far overlooked is being attributed to so-called “dark” matter (23%) and “dark” energy (73%), about both of which science is mostly *in* the dark except for knowing that dark matter is the most likely explanation of why galaxies don’t dissipate at their fringes, and knowing that the dark energy hypothesis presents the most likely explanation of why the universe’s rate of expansion is also accelerating.11

Fast-forwarding to the present moment, amidst our current global pandemic of hyper-accelerating change, the year 2012 signifies the historical cusp of a world-wide phase transition between a waning era of planetary disintegration and a waxing era of planetary reintegration.

Because phase transitions represent differences in kind, rather than differences in degree, they differ from the progressive change that we are ordinarily accustomed to. For example, a one degree change of water from 33 to 32 degrees transforms it to ice, while a one-degree change from 211-212 degrees transforms it into steam. Similarly, relatively small lowering of the planet’s temperature brings on ice ages, while relatively small upward changes precipitate a planetary hothouse. Although we are at present immediately precipitating a planetary hothouse, this condition may ultimately the precursor of yet another ice age.12

In short: phase transitions are *trans*formative of an existing order, while ordinary change is merely *re*formative of an existing order. Transformations give rise to the emergence of new forms, while reformations merely rearrange existing forms. It may therefore be reasonably suspected, now that we live in an information-saturated environment, that new forms of communication and interrelationship will emergently evolve that naturally select for increased ability to rapidly and accurately exchange large amounts of information, one mode of which is called “telepathy,” as well as the increased ability to rapidly adapt to the corresponding challenges of physical movement in an information-saturated environment, two modes of which are called “telekinesis” and “teleportation” (i.e., self-telekinesis).

While the term “Fourth Awakening” signifies a phase transition of emergent new abilities in kind, such development is nothing new in terms of new abilities in degree. As Toffler’s and Mead’s contemporary, anthropologist Edward T. Hall, observed in his 1959 book, *The Silent Language,*13

Today man has developed extensions for practically everything he used to do with his body. The evolution of weapons begins with the teeth and the fist and ends with the atom bomb. [NB: as of 1971] Clothes and houses are extensions of man’s biological temperature-control mechanisms. Furniture takes the place of squatting and sitting on the ground. Power tools, glasses, TV, telephones, and books which carry the voice across both time and space are examples of material extensions. Money is a way of extending and storing labor. Our transportation networks now do what we used to do with our feet and backs. In fact, all man-made material things can be treated as extensions of what once did with his body or some specialized part of his body.”

Hall’s insight subsequently inhabited the title of Marshall McLuhan’s internationally best-selling 1964 book, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, which exhaustively elaborates Hall’s insight:14

After three thousand years of explosion, by means of fragmentary and mechanical technologies, the Western world is imploding. During the mechanical ages we had extended our bodies in space. Today [1964], after more than a century of electric technology, we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned. Rapidly, we approach the final phase of the extensions of man – the technological simulation of consciousness, when the creative process of knowing will be collectively and corporately extended to the whole of human society, much as we have already extended our senses and our nerves by the various media.

As *Wired* magazine columnist, Jennifer Cobb Kreisberg commented on McLuhan’s view,15

Through the discovery yesterday of the railway, the motor car and the aeroplane, the physical influence of each man, formerly restricted to a few miles, now extends to hundreds of leagues or more. Better still: thanks to the prodigious biological event represented by the discovery of electromagnetic waves, each individual finds himself henceforth (actively and passively) simultaneously present, over land and sea, in every corner of the earth." This simultaneous quality, McLuhan believed, "provides our lives again with a tribal base." But this time around, the tribe comes together on a global playing field.

As McLuhan himself similarly concluded, “In the electric age we wear all mankind as our skin.”16

Almost a half-century later, in today’s digital age we are thinking with all of humankind as our brain, a situation that was foreseen in physiologist George Wald’s xxx proclamation that17

Matter has reached the point of beginning to know itself…. [Man is] a star's way of knowing about stars.

Astronomically speaking, we are the universe’s way of being conscious of the way the universe works, as evolutionist Julian Huxley had earlier observed in xxxx: “We are evolution’s way of becoming aware and directive of itself.18

See also TGT’s #4-8

At about the same time I discovered George Wald’s statement, I encountered another by psychologist Barry McWaters (whom I then knew personally) in his 1982 book *Conscious Evolution: Personal and Planetary Transformation:*

We now enter a period wherein the goal of individual salvation is no longer appropriate. Our guidance calls for a collective transformation... The present recognition of our emergent collective consciousness represents a quantum transformation in human evolution…. While much of human consciousness is still caught in a separative, alienated condition, significant numbers of individuals and groups are consciously working toward critical mass. When just the right quantity and quality of catalytic influence is reached, the entire process will be affected.

http://www.amazon.com/Conscious-evolution-Personal-planetary-transformation/dp/0943408008/ref=sr\_1\_2/103-0688622-5624605?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1179240585&sr=1-2

In that same year (1982) Peter Russell similarly foresaw our emergence as a collective planetary consciousness in his book, *The Global Brain*, which cited a potential catalytic influence of an evolutionary coincidence:

It takes about 10 billion atoms to form a complex living cell, then 10 billion cells to form a complex self-conscious brain. As we approach the same number of human brains that are rapidly interlinking via global electronic networks, this could represent a similar clumping of the nerve cells of an emerging global brain.

A few years later visionary Ken Carey similarly observed

The field of collective human consciousness is now entering the final stages of the awakening process, congealing into awareness of itself as the organ of consciousness (similar in function to a brain) of *a single planetary being****,*** a being with internal organs of oceans, forests, ecosystems and atmosphere. Humankind is its system both for processing information and for directing its future development.

A decade or so later, with the advent of the Internet, *Wired* magazine columnist John Perry Barlow wrote:

The point of all evolution up to this stage is the creation of a collective organism of Mind. . . . With cyberspace, we are, in effect, hard-wiring the collective consciousness.

Unlike those I have cited, most of us have yet to recognize that our species is the means by which our planetary household is becoming mindfully self-aware of its evolutionary process and potentials. Our lack of such recognition is understandable, for Earth’s self-awakening isn’t occurring outside of ourselves where we can see it taking place. Earth’s self-awakening is taking place subliminally within ourselves, where it calls upon us to *be* the fruits of its self-awakening.

Such was the evolutionary vision of paleontologist-priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin in his 1959 book, *The Phenomenon of Man* (written from 1938-1940 and proscribed from publication by the Catholic Church; and published after his death in 1955 by those to whom he entrusted the manuscript):

Like the [planet’s] meridians as they approach the poles, science, philosophy and religion are bound to converge as they draw nearer to the whole.... The time has come to realize that an interpretation of the universe – even a positivist one – remains unsatisfying unless it covers the interior as well as the exterior of things; mind as well as matter. The true physics is that which will, one day, achieve the inclusion of man in his wholeness in a coherent picture of the world. (p. 35-36) Since the stuff of the universe has an inner aspect at one point of itself, there is necessarily a double aspect to its structure, that is to say, in every region of space and time – in the same way, for instance, as it is granular; co-extensive with their Without, there is a Within to things. . . The 'within', 'consciousness', and then 'spontaneity' [are] three expressions for the same thing." (p.56-7)

Author David Korten has signified the outcome of the human phase of today’s planetary transition in the title of his book, *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community.*4

Empire organizes by domination at all levels, from relations among nations to relations among family members. Empire brings fortune to the few, condemns the majority to misery and servitude, suppresses the creative potential of all, and appropriates much of the wealth of human societies to maintain the institutions of domination.

Earth Community, by contrast, organizes by partnership, unleashes the human potential for creative co-operation, and shares resources and surpluses for the good of all. Supporting evidence for the possibilities of Earth Community comes from the findings of quantum physics, evolutionary biology, developmental psychology, anthropology, archaeology, and religious mysticism. It was the human way before Empire; we must make a choice to re-learn how to live by its principles.

While the term “empire” signifies mutually contending self-isolated political unities, the term “Earth community” signifies mutually co-operative (working together) self-integrating natural unities, which are herein signified as the planet’s “common unity” and our own common unity therewith. The Great Turning may thus also be characterized as a movement from kin***g***dom consciousness to kindom consciousness, from consciousness focused on the control of life’s contingencies to consciousness focused on the co-operation (working together) of life’s contingencies – of our co-operation with lifekind in its entirety as well as with all that is supportive of lifekind overall, which is ultimately inclusive of the entire cosmos.

Nothing happens in the universe without the participation of the cosmos overall. As astronomer Carl Sagan once put it, “If you want to bake a cake from scratch, you begin by creating a universe.” Everything that ends up as a piece of cake – or as anything else – was also included in the original recipe for our cosmos, which scientists call “The Big Bang.” For example, the recipe for a human body includes trace amounts of all but two of the universe’s 92 chemical elements. Since each of us is thus approximately a whole-universe catalog, it takes a cosmos to birth and raise a child. Such is the extent of lifekind’s common unity, and of humankind’s participation therein. Earth’s evolutionary leading edge is lifekind as a whole, not humankind in particular, and it is this realization that underlies The Great Turning from empire to Earth community.

The year 2012 also signifies another threshold, a periodic planetary reintegration of the two modes of energy flow, dispersion and convergence, that jointly govern the dynamics of both cosmic and Earthly evolution. While energic dispersion (a.k.a. as “radiation”) and energic convergence (a.k.a. “gravity”) are dynamic opposites, they represent what spiritual philosopher Ernest Holmes signified as a complementary and co-operative dynamism of mutual both↔and “dual unity,” as distinct from a fractious and contending dynamism of mutual either→←or duality.

As Holmes portrayed the co-operative dynamism and common unity of the cosmos overall,

Everything in universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part…. It is the unessential only that is vanishing, that the abiding may be made more clearly manifest. xx

Cosmic joy and local pain.

What distinguishes the harmonizing dynamics of dual unity from the contending dynamics of duality is the tendency of dual unity to serve the well-being of the cosmic whole by optimizing the overall well-being of all its parts, rather than by maximizing the well-being of certain parts in particular. For instance, we all yearn for the best possible (and thus optimal) experience of our circumstantial reality, within which we endeavor to arrange our well-being accordingly. However, rather than optimizing our well-being as a whole, we often tend to maximize only one part thereof – such as our physical, mental, emotional or (most often) our financial state – as if having the most of something in particular is our ticket to the having best of everything in general.

Yet maximizing a single manifestation of our well-being tends to make a false god thereof, which we idolize as if it is the whole of our existence. When we thus specialize our well-being rather than optimize it, we limit the very life-enjoyment that we intend, because the best possible enjoyment of life emerges from our alignment with our common unity’s wholeness of being.

Just as physical well-being emerges from the appropriately aligned flow of our body’s multiple energic systems, so do the mental, emotional, financial and other expressions of our well-being emerge from the orderly energic flow of our psyche’s impressions and expressions. It is only as our body’s and psyche’s energic flows are appropriately aligned with one another, as well as with the energic flow of our circumstantial reality, that we are able to experience optimal well-being.

The Fourth Awakening is a phase transition that is roughly synchronous with the planetary phase transition signified by the year 2012. The Fourth Awakening is a phase transition of human awareness, in which local kingdom consciousness is giving way to cosmic kindom consciousness.

* (The Grand Reintegration.)

Golden Kite… Lillith

from empire to common unity

the cosmic pattern that connects

there is no absolute physical state of rest

1. Ernest Holmes, The Science of Mind (XXXX) , p. XXX
2. *Chicken Soup for the Soul Word-Finds* (Vol 5, 2007), p. 34
3. Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (Bantam Books, 1970).
4. Mead
5. Mead
6. Mead
7. This information was gathered from reportage at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exabyte> and at additional web-links therefrom. It is also important to acknowledge that all exponential growth curves eventually peak or fall off, and there is no essential reason to exempt the growth curve of information doubling from this principle. See, for instance, footnote # 7 below.
8. <http://lightfleet.com/?p=212#more-212>
9. <http://lightfleet.com/?cat=3>
10. Not to worry, however, because there are both thermodynamic and quantum-mechanical factors that make such an equivalent unattainable. [Bibliographic references forthcoming.]
11. These estimates vary by a few percentage points in different reports on the existence of dark energy and dark matter. [Bibliographic references forthcoming.]
12. The Complete Ice Age
13. Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language* (Doubleday, 1959), p. 79. See also, Jaques Houls, Paola Mieli & Mark Stafford, eds., *Being Human: The Technological Extensions of the Body* (Agincourt/Marsilio, 1999.
14. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (McGraw Hill, 1964), pp. 19-20.
15. Jennifer Cobb Kreisberg, *Wired* magazine, etc.
16. Mcluhan
17. Wald
18. Huxley
19. David Korten, *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community* (XXX, XXXX), p.xx

The only thing that goes with the flow

Is a dead fish.

Terry McBride (1997)

All of us yearn for the best possible (a.k.a. “optimal”) experience of our circumstantial reality, within which we attempt to arrange our well-being accordingly. However, rather than optimizing our well-being as a whole, we often tend to maximize only one part thereof – such as our physical, mental, emotional or financial state – as if the most of something in particular is our ticket to the best of everything in general.

Maximizing a single manifestation of our possibilities tends to make a false god thereof, which we idolize as if it is the whole of our existence. When we thus specialize our well-being rather than optimize it, we limit the very life-enjoyment that we intend, because the best possible enjoyment of life emerges from our alignment with the whole-beingness of our own inner flow.

Just as physical well-being emerges from the appropriately aligned flow of our body’s multiple energetic systems, so do the mental, emotional, financial and other expressions of our well-being emerge from the orderly energetic flow of our psyche’s impressions and expressions. It is only as our body’s and psyche’s systemic flows are appropriately aligned with one another, as well as with the systemic flow of our circumstantial reality, that we can experience optimal well-being.

Though some folks perceive optimal alignment as “going with the flow,” such flotation is contrary to the tendency of one’s own flow. For example, if surfers did no more than “go with the flow” they would be routinely dumped by every wave rather than ride it out. Flotation is passive, while flowing is active, as in the familiar musical prescription, “Row, row, row your boat, gently *down* the stream….” Many people miss this prescription’s point, that even when you are headed downstream, effective navigation involves rowing to the rhythm of your own flow in appropriate alignment with the flow of surrounding circumstances.

Just as fish alternate their undulations in appropriate alignment with their upstream, cross-stream or downstream orientation, we are likewise most effectively present in the world as we appropriately direct the emergent flow of our own inner being. Being fully present as one’s very own flow-ering of expression requires mindfully appropriate self-rowing, whatever may be the direction of one’s surrounding stream of circumstances or inner stream of consciousness.

An example of “mindfully appropriate self-rowing” is presented in Edgar Allen Poe’s story, “The Maelstrom,” about a shipwrecked sailor who becomes caught in the swirling waters of an infamous, gigantic North Atlantic whirlpool. The sailor escapes the whirlpool by swimming into its current in a direction that is outwardly tangential to its flow, thereby leveraging his own flow against that of the swirling water in an Aikido-like manner

My initial mindful experience of the flow state occurred during the first major turning point in my overall circumstantial reality at the age of five, when upon my single mother’s marriage to a farmer I was suddenly uprooted from what had been thus far (for me) our idyllic small-town life in my grandparents’ home to be summarily transplanted to the rural countryside. I had no siblings, nor were there any children on the neighboring farms. I felt far more attached to my grandparents and their home in town than to my mother, new stepfather, and new home that lacked electricity and plumbing. Having instantly gone from daily enjoying the company of many playmates to having none at all, I experienced the mental and emotional anguish of feeling utterly alone in the world.

Since my stepfather’s farm seemed to be as large as the entire town that I had left behind, I set out one day to explore what a farm is all about. I soon came to a creek, which was my first experience of water flowing in anything other than a faucet, gutter or river. I was utterly fascinated with the patterns being woven by water bugs on the otherwise still surface of the creek’s slowly flowing water. I marveled at the blend of overlapping circular waveforms that the water bugs’ scurryings set in motion on the water’s surface. I imagined how wonderful it would be if human beings were (as I would say today) just as mutually accommodating of one another’s “making waves.”

Although I knew nothing then about such quantum-mechanical dynamics as “entanglement”, “superposition” and “interference patterns,” my awe-filled contemplation of flowing water and mutually accommodating circular wave forms interfered with my feelings of aloneness to the extent that they were replaced by a feeling of deep belonging. From that day onward, whenever possible I always sought solace from inner angst by visiting the nearest creek.

I did so, for instance, some thirty years later during a quasi-homeless time in my life when my sense of aloneness was at once painfully immediate and cosmic in scope, as if I was an outsider to the entire universe. I faced an imminent divorce (of my own choosing yet very painful nonetheless) and my career was about to be terminated as well (not by my own choosing, per se, but in part a consequence of my choosing divorce). I therefore had no idea where I would be going, whom I would be with, or what I would next be doing for my livelihood. Not only was I between wife-times, I felt as if I was in between lifetimes as well.

What made my situation most tenuous was that my place of work was lodged in a fully functional house that served as the headquarters of my own non-profit educational foundation, from which I was now about to be displaced as well. The office’s reception area was a living room that was furnished accordingly, complete with the couch that was now serving also as my bed. The three colleagues with whom I worked were present only from nine to five on weekdays, so when they left for their homes I was left in mine. If my livelihood was not about to be withdrawn, I could have looked forward to living a rent-free lifestyle in the household of my quite literal "home" office.

During the mid-afternoon break of an environmental education workshop that I was conducting at a rural school in Saint Catherine, Kentucky, I took a walk along a creek in the adjacent wooded countryside. While strolling along the creek, I imbibed the atmosphere of a warm, hazy, splendiferous autumn afternoon - a riot of leafy smells and colors that distracted me from my "Dear God, now what?" inner turmoil.

As if in response to my "now what?" query, my attention was attracted to a place in the creek where its water glided over a rock with a gentle gurgling sound. The outer babbling of this steady gurgle induced me to turn my attention from my inner babbling uncertainties to the outer immediacy of the moment, and in my surrendered state I “heard” the gurgle "sing" to me. Its song felt like a long-forgotten melody whose lyricism erased my despairing sense of separation and alone-ment. For the duration of the song's three verses, I utterly ceased feeling one "l" of a way from being "all one.”

I returned to the workshop with the song's three verses, which I shared with the nuns and students even though I was unable to satisfactorily describe the experiential context of their origin. To my further delight a few days later, a poetic conveyance of the experience came to me when, while sleeping on the office couch from which I would soon be displaced, I was abruptly awakened by a pre-dawn flow of words that I felt compelled to put on paper, and to which I gave the subject/object of my creekside encounter as their title.

The Gurgle

I touched the endless thread of time one day

while sitting in the middle of a stream.

I had been enjoying the autumn countryside,

marveling at how gracefully the day

was ebbing into twilight,

and the summer into winter's time,

knowing that I, too, faced a coming darkness,

a cold passage in the journey of my soul.

A leisurely walk along the stream had loosed my mind

of churning over memories of doings and events

whose working out now tumbled me

toward the dreaded valley of the shadow.

My attention had been drawn

from past mistakes and future dread

to an island just my size,

a rock that was parting the waters of a wide place in the stream.

The presence of that stationary island made me wonder

where the flowing waters tended:

whence were they falling,

and where would they next arise to fall again?

The water made a gurgling sound

as invisible as a candle's flame is silent,

and I recalled a clear, dark night in early childhood

when I first realized that the burning of a star

is like the Earth beneath my feet,

becoming grass becoming cows becoming milk

becoming me becoming . . .

I made my way into the stream,

sat on the island just my size,

and fixed my eyes upon the place

where water was being tumbled over a rock

that rested next to mine.

I watched the gurgle for some time,

only to find it timeless –

it was just there,

in contrast to the ever-moving water that sustained it.

Gurgles are timeless

as long as water is on time,

ceaselessly flowing back to where it comes from.

I stuck my finger in the gurgle,

and modified its timeless tune somewhat,

but for no longer than the duration of one finger.

Like the water, I was passing through.

Yet something in me yearned to stay there with the gurgle,

so I replaced my finger with a large stone.

Now the tune was altered for the duration of a rock—

more enduring than my finger

but far less presumptuous than a pyramid.

As I contemplated leaving, never to return,

I wondered if the gurgle would ever be visited

by the same water twice.

And then I heard an audible silence

that was gurgling deep within:

“Don't ask me where I'm going, no one can really say.

Though I've already been there, I'm always on the way.

My journey's never finished as onward I ascend,

from end of my beginning to beginning of my end.

“Don't ask me where I come from, the answer's near and far,

as recent as this moment, as distant as a star.

My here is made of elsewhere that elsewhere flows through me,

some ashes from a far-off sun, destination: galaxy.

“Don't ask how long I'll be here, we'll never really know.

The only thing eternal is the now through which we flow.

If you look downstream to see what's passed, or behind for future's clue,

you'll miss the beat the heavens keep as they go dancing through.”

Four years later, while still between wife-times and only marginally employed as a part-time chef and coffee-house pianist in Aspen, Colorado, I once again sought solace along a creek that alternately tumbles and meanders down a mountain slope into the Roaring Fork River downstream from town. As I walked its course, I noted the stark alternations between its turbulent and smooth passages, a contrast that was suggestive of the stream of my own consciousness, as well as the uneven rhythm of my life’s alternately tumultuous and more tentative passages. Respecting an urge to fathom what this correspondence might indicate, I sat down with pen and paper in hand as if to take dictation, and solicited the creek’s advice: "If you were literate, what message would you have for me?"

The creek responded as if it were indeed literate, for this is what I “heard” it “saying” to me:

Be,

as water is,

without friction.

Flow around the edges

of those within your path.

Surround within your ever-moving depths

those who come to rest there—

enfold them, while never for a moment holding on.

Accept whatever distance

others are moved within your flow.

Be with them gently

as far as they allow your strength to take them,

and fill with your own being

the remaining space when they are left behind.

When dropping down life's rapids,

froth and bubble into fragments if you must,

knowing that the one of you now many

will just as many times be one again.

And when you've gone as far as you can go,

quietly await your next beginning.

This verbal “flow-through” so profoundly transformed my outlook on life overall that whenever I have since been in anguish and no flowing water is conveniently nearby, I can experience an equivalent healing by remembering my initial experiencing of the poem. And what I remember most of all is that what is ever emerging from my own flow is sufficient to get me safely through any turbulence that arises around or within me.

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emergence

the principle of reciprocal co-creation

patterning energies

optimization (as contrasted with maximization)

the ecology of spirit

self-awakening

multi-dimensional intersection

the kinship of all life,

cruciform reality

sacrifice

enlightenment

divine calling

surrender

the wisdom of limits

authenticity

boundaries

synergy

co-operation

antinomies

animus

anima

weakness

harmonious proportion

cosmologizing the human

Stay in the grace!

Rev. Noel

The study rated the climate performance of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. The countries were rated for the reduction/growth of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions since 1990, the percentage of their energy portfolio from renewables, and investment in clean energy technology. [U.S. is seven, behind China and ahead of Russia.]

The Need to Win

When an archer is shooting for nothing

He has all his skill.

If he shoots for a brass buckle

He is already nervous.

If he shoots for a prize of gold

He goes blind

Or he sees two targets –

He is out of his mind.

His skill has not changed. But the prize

Divides him. He cares.

He thinks more of winning

Than of shooting –

And the need to win

Drains him of power.

~Thomas Merton (*American Sports Poems*, Knudsen and Swenson, p. 143)

Dear colleagues in welcoming the Fourth Awakening,

Julie Clayton, a participant in the Wednesday evening New Thought Writers' Workshop that I also facilitate, submitted the attached paper on "Conscious Evolution", which I am forwarding with her permission in acknowledgment  of her insight that we are at an evolutionary "wobble point" (as distinct from those who might be inclined to signify it as a "tipping point." or "turning point".  (See  Malcolm Gladwell's 2002 book, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, 2004) and Fritjof Capra's 1984 book, *The Turning Point: Science, Society, and the Rising Culture*).

"Wobble point" is a powerful metaphor for our present pre-2012 window of time, in which (as I understand the dynamics of paradigm shifts) the "tipping point" has yet to occur, and only after which there can be a "turning point."

(I also find it somewhat synchronistic that one of the many groups that contributed to the onset of our current paradigm shift, the IWW (International Workers of the World), were called "Wobblies".)

In my own understanding of the year 2012, it signifies a global (and perhaps solar and galactic as well) tipping point, whose subsequent turning point will depend on how the tipping point is encountered in, by, and as humankind's collective consciousness. There are others, for instance, who have foreseen our times from the perspective of conscious DEvolution, as in William Yeats' 1919 poem , "The Second Coming", written in the aftermath of World War 1. Are we perhaps wobbling toward a 2012 tipping point  in a manner analogous to the poem's concluding line?  
    Turning and turning in the widening gyre   
    The falcon cannot hear the falconer;   
    Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;   
    Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,   
    The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere   
    The ceremony of innocence is drowned;   
    The best lack all conviction, while the worst   
    Are full of passionate intensity.

    Surely some revelation is at hand;   
    Surely the Second Coming is at hand.   
    The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out   
    When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi   
    Troubles my sight: a waste of desert sand;   
    A shape with lion body and the head of a man,   
    A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,   
    Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it   
    Wind shadows of the indignant desert birds.   
    The darkness drops again but now I know   
    That twenty centuries of stony sleep   
    Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,   
    And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,   
    Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

While the devolutionary tone of Yeats' poem may seem potentially redeemed via the image of a birth in Bethlehem, there is a strong suggestion that the poem's "beast" is the Anti-Christ.  
  
More redemptive, in any event, is the following excerpt from Christopher Fry's 1951 play, *A Sleep of Prisoners*. And even though this excerpt has been shared with you earlier, it bears repeating (and hopefully bares, repeating):  
  
The human heart may go the length of God.  
Dark and cold we may be.  
This is no winter now.  
The frozen misery of centuries cracks,  
breaks, begins to move.  
The thunder is the thunder of the floes,  
the thaw, the flood, the upstart spring.  
Thank God our time is now,  
when wrong comes up to meet us everywhere,  
never to leave us 'til we take  
the greatest stride of soul folk ever took.  
Affairs are now soul-size.  
The enterprise is exploration into God.  
But what are you waiting for?  
It takes so many thousand years to wake.  
But will you wake, for pity's sake?  
  
I sense that whatever we are waiting for will be determined by whether or not  humankind is optimally aligning with the Fourth Awakening.  
  
Stay in the grace!  
Noel

**FLOW: The Emergence of Optimal Well-being**

The only thing that goes with the flow

Is a dead fish.

Terry McBride (1997)

All of us yearn for the best possible (a.k.a. “optimal”) experience of our circumstantial reality, within which we attempt to arrange our well-being accordingly. However, rather than optimizing our well-being as a whole, we often tend to maximize only one part thereof – such as our physical, mental, emotional or financial state – as if the most of something in particular is our ticket to the best of everything in general.

Maximizing a single manifestation of our inner possibilities tends to make a false god thereof, which we idolize as if it is the whole of our existence. When we thus specialize our well-being rather than optimize it, we limit the very life-enjoyment that we intend, because the best possible enjoyment of life emerges from our alignment with the whole-beingness of our own inner flow.

Just as physical well-being emerges from the appropriately aligned flow of our body’s multiple energetic systems, so do the mental, emotional, financial and other expressions of our well-being emerge from the orderly energetic flow of our psyche’s impressions and expressions. It is only as our body’s and psyche’s systemic flows are appropriately aligned with one another, as well as with the systemic flow of our circumstantial reality, that we can experience optimal well-being.

Though some folks perceive optimal alignment as “going with the flow,” such flotation is contrary to the tendency of one’s own flow. For example, if surfers did no more than “go with the flow” they would be routinely dumped by every wave rather than ride it out. Flotation is passive, while flowing is active, as in the familiar musical prescription, “Row, row, row your boat, gently *down* the stream….” Many people miss this prescription’s point, that even when you are headed downstream, effective navigation involves rowing to the rhythm of your own flow in appropriate alignment with the flow of surrounding circumstances.

Just as fish alternate their undulations in appropriate alignment with their upstream, cross-stream or downstream orientation, we are likewise most effectively present in the world as we appropriately direct the emergent flow of our own inner being. Being fully present as one’s very own flow-ering of expression requires mindfully appropriate self-rowing, whatever may be the direction of one’s surrounding stream of circumstances or inner stream of consciousness.

An example of “mindfully appropriate self-rowing” is presented in Edgar Allen Poe’s story, “The Maelstrom,” about a shipwrecked sailor who becomes caught in the swirling waters of an infamous, gigantic North Atlantic whirlpool. The sailor escapes the whirlpool by swimming into its current in a direction that is outwardly tangential to its flow, thereby leveraging his own flow against that of the swirling water in an Aikido-like manner

My initial mindful experience of the flow state occurred during the first major turning point in my overall circumstantial reality at the age of five, when upon my single mother’s marriage to a farmer I was suddenly uprooted from what had been thus far (for me) our idyllic small-town life in my grandparents’ home to be summarily transplanted to the rural countryside. I had no siblings, nor were there any children on the neighboring farms. I felt far more attached to my grandparents and their home in town than to my mother, new stepfather, and new home that lacked electricity and plumbing. Having instantly gone from daily enjoying the company of many playmates to having none at all, I experienced the mental and emotional anguish of feeling utterly alone in the world.

Since my stepfather’s farm seemed to be as large as the entire town that I had left behind, I set out one day to explore what a farm is all about. I soon came to a creek, which was my first experience of water flowing in anything other than a faucet, gutter or river. I was utterly fascinated with the patterns being woven by water bugs on the otherwise still surface of the creek’s slowly flowing water. I marveled at the blend of overlapping circular waveforms that the water bugs’ scurryings set in motion on the water’s surface. I imagined how wonderful it would be if human beings were (as I would say today) just as mutually accommodating of one another’s “making waves.”

Although I knew nothing then about such quantum-mechanical dynamics as “entanglement”, “superposition” and “interference patterns,” my awe-filled contemplation of flowing water and mutually accommodating circular wave forms interfered with my feelings of aloneness to the extent that they were replaced by a feeling of deep belonging. From that day onward, whenever possible I always sought solace from inner angst by visiting the nearest creek.

I did so, for instance, some thirty years later during a quasi-homeless time in my life when my sense of aloneness was at once painfully immediate and cosmic in scope, as if I was an outsider to the entire universe. I faced an imminent divorce (of my own choosing yet very painful nonetheless) and my career was about to be terminated as well (not by my own choosing, per se, but in part a consequence of my choosing divorce). I therefore had no idea where I would be going, whom I would be with, or what I would next be doing for my livelihood. Not only was I between wife-times, I felt as if I was in between lifetimes as well.

What made my situation most tenuous was that my place of work was lodged in a fully functional house that served as the headquarters of my own non-profit educational foundation, from which I was now about to be displaced as well. The office’s reception area was a living room that was furnished accordingly, complete with the couch that was now serving also as my bed. The three colleagues with whom I worked were present only from nine to five on weekdays, so when they left for their homes I was left in mine. If my livelihood was not about to be withdrawn, I could have looked forward to living a rent-free lifestyle in the household of my quite literal "home" office.

During the mid-afternoon break of an environmental education workshop that I was conducting at a rural school in Saint Catherine, Kentucky, I took a walk along a creek in the adjacent wooded countryside. While strolling along the creek, I imbibed the atmosphere of a warm, hazy, splendiferous autumn afternoon - a riot of leafy smells and colors that distracted me from my "Dear God, now what?" inner turmoil.

As if in response to my "now what?" query, my attention was attracted to a place in the creek where its water glided over a rock with a gentle gurgling sound. The outer babbling of this steady gurgle induced me to turn my attention from my inner babbling uncertainties to the outer immediacy of the moment, and in my surrendered state I “heard” the gurgle "sing" to me. Its song felt like a long-forgotten melody whose lyricism erased my despairing sense of separation and alone-ment. For the duration of the song's three verses, I utterly ceased feeling one "l" of a way from being "all one.”

I returned to the workshop with the song's three verses, which I shared with the nuns and students even though I was unable to satisfactorily describe the experiential context of their origin. To my further delight a few days later, a poetic conveyance of the experience came to me when, while sleeping on the office couch from which I would soon be displaced, I was abruptly awakened by a pre-dawn flow of words that I felt compelled to put on paper, and to which I gave the subject/object of my creekside encounter as their title.

The Gurgle

I touched the endless thread of time one day

while sitting in the middle of a stream.

I had been enjoying the autumn countryside,

marveling at how gracefully the day

was ebbing into twilight,

and the summer into winter's time,

knowing that I, too, faced a coming darkness,

a cold passage in the journey of my soul.

A leisurely walk along the stream had loosed my mind

of churning over memories of doings and events

whose working out now tumbled me

toward the dreaded valley of the shadow.

My attention had been drawn

from past mistakes and future dread

to an island just my size,

a rock that was parting the waters of a wide place in the stream.

The presence of that stationary island made me wonder

where the flowing waters tended:

whence were they falling,

and where would they next arise to fall again?

The water made a gurgling sound

as invisible as a candle's flame is silent,

and I recalled a clear, dark night in early childhood

when I first realized that the burning of a star

is like the Earth beneath my feet,

becoming grass becoming cows becoming milk

becoming me becoming . . .

I made my way into the stream,

sat on the island just my size,

and fixed my eyes upon the place

where water was being tumbled over a rock

that rested next to mine.

I watched the gurgle for some time,

only to find it timeless –

it was just there,

in contrast to the ever-moving water that sustained it.

Gurgles are timeless

as long as water is on time,

ceaselessly flowing back to where it comes from.

I stuck my finger in the gurgle,

and modified its timeless tune somewhat,

but for no longer than the duration of one finger.

Like the water, I was passing through.

Yet something in me yearned to stay there with the gurgle,

so I replaced my finger with a large stone.

Now the tune was altered for the duration of a rock—

more enduring than my finger

but far less presumptuous than a pyramid.

As I contemplated leaving, never to return,

I wondered if the gurgle would ever be visited

by the same water twice.

And then I heard an audible silence

that was gurgling deep within:

“Don't ask me where I'm going, no one can really say.

Though I've already been there, I'm always on the way.

My journey's never finished as onward I ascend,

from end of my beginning to beginning of my end.

“Don't ask me where I come from, the answer's near and far,

as recent as this moment, as distant as a star.

My here is made of elsewhere that elsewhere flows through me,

some ashes from a far-off sun, destination: galaxy.

“Don't ask how long I'll be here, we'll never really know.

The only thing eternal is the now through which we flow.

If you look downstream to see what's passed, or behind for future's clue,

you'll miss the beat the heavens keep as they go dancing through.”

Four years later, while still between wife-times and only marginally employed as a part-time chef and coffee-house pianist in Aspen, Colorado, I once again sought solace along a creek that alternately tumbles and meanders down a mountain slope into the Roaring Fork River downstream from town. As I walked its course, I noted the stark alternations between its turbulent and smooth passages, a contrast that was suggestive of the stream of my own consciousness, as well as the uneven rhythm of my life’s alternately tumultuous and more tentative passages. Respecting an urge to fathom what this correspondence might indicate, I sat down with pen and paper in hand as if to take dictation, and solicited the creek’s advice: "If you were literate, what message would you have for me?"

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as water is,

without friction.

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This verbal “flow-through” so profoundly transformed my outlook on life overall that whenever I have since been in anguish and no flowing water is conveniently nearby, I can experience an equivalent healing by remembering my initial experiencing of the poem. And what I remember most of all is that what is ever emerging from my own flow is sufficient to get me safely through any turbulence that arises around or within me.

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Or he sees two targets –

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He thinks more of winning

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Drains him of power.

~Thomas Merton (*American Sports Poems*, Knudsen and Swenson, p. 143)

**The Sacred Union of Worldly Strength and Loving Service**

**(A Seminar for Those Who Care Enough to Be Fully Who They Are)**

Why have we been seduced into abandoning the timeless inner strength of woman for the temporal outer strength of man? -Anne Morrow Lindbergh

After over-valuing the masculine principle of worldly strength for 10,000 years, humankind is beginning to value as well the feminine principle of loving service, in amelioration of today’s most troublesome social and planetary developments.

Wherever loving service is deficient, worldly strength is divisively heartless. Wherever worldly strength is deficient, loving service is sentimentally fruitless. This seminar nurtures the deeply heartfelt and abundantly fruitful consciousness that is keeping our NTCSL spiritual community relatively free from divisive tendencies.

Assigned reading: Jean Shinoda Bolen, *Urgent Message from Mother*; Jim Garrison, *Civilization and the Transformation of Power*

Time and dates:  Seven Sundays at (??), 9:00-10:15 a.m. from September 20-November 1.

Tuition: The seven-week series is available by love offering to all practitioners and persons of any faith who have certified healing, counseling, therapist, MSW, ministerial or theological credentials. All former students of Rev. McInnis may register for a $50 tuition fee. For all others the tuition is $100. Couples may enroll at these same fees.

**Being for Something and Against Nothing:**

**Enlivening Our Common Unity with Spiritual Activism**

The new activist is one who wields power by standing for what could be rather than fighting what is.

Marianne Williamson

You never change things by fighting the existing reality.

To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.

R. Buckminster (Bucky) Fuller

This support group empowers us to honor Ernest Holmes’ prescription to “be for something and against nothing.” as we build an even more “loving, prosperous, creative, and inclusive spiritual community that serves the highest good of all.”

Current and newly proposed services, projects and programs for our spiritual growth and activism, both within and beyond the common unity of the NTCSL and WHCSL communities, are addressed from the each-for-all-and-all-for-each perspective of creating a world that works for the optimal well-being of all concerned.

Suggested reading: Bruce Sanguin, *The Emerging Church.*

**The Tao of What’s Happening Next:**

**The Global Emergence of Kindom Consciousness**

A human being is part of a whole, called by us the “Universe,” a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty. Nobody is able to achieve this completely, but the striving for such an achievement is in itself a part of the liberation and a foundation for inner security ~Albert Einstein

The consciousness of our NTCSL-WHCSL community and of humankind overall are presently moving into closer alignment with spiritual principles of co-operative and harmoniously inclusive common unity. Accordingly, current political, social, economic and planetary unrest is the “labor pains” of an emerging global awareness of humankind’s kindom with all that lives and is supportive of life.

This seminar series empowers participants to nurture and demonstrate their kindom consciousness in practical action and service to one another and the world.

Assigned reading: Wayne Dyer: *Change Your Thoughts, Change Your Life*; Bruce Sanguin, *The Emerging Church*

Time and dates:  Seven Mondays at (??), from ??-?? p.m..

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God is not found in the soul by adding anything, but by a process of subtraction. ~*Meister Eckhart*

To listen a soul into disclosure and discovery is the greatest service one human being can do for another. ~Quaker saying

His thoughts were slow,

his words were few

and were never formed to glisten,

yet he was a joy to all of his friends –

you should have heard him listen!

**A Map (Not the Territory) of Divine Order**

**A map of the G.O.D. principle of reciprocal co-creation, in which optimum well-being emerges**

**from the harmonious interrelationship of the masculine and feminine energy principles**

Spirit merges with matter to sanctify the universe. Matter transcends to return to spirit. The interchangeability of matter and spirit means the starlit magic of the outermost life of our universe becomes the soul-light magic of the innermost life of our self. The energy of the stars becomes us. We become the energy of the stars. Stardust and spirit unite and we begin: One with the universe. Whole and holy. From one source, endless creative energy, bursting forth, kinetic, elemental. We, the earth, air, water and fire – source of nearly fifteen billion years of cosmic spiraling. -Dennis Kucinich, “Spirit and Stardust” 1

More accurately stated, rather than merging *with* matter, spirit *e*merges *as* matter to sanctify the universe with the transcendent common unity that grounds and sustains the cosmic oneness of all existence. There is not spirit and something else that is elsewhere, there is only – and everywhere present – spirit *as* the emerging communion of G.O.D. consciousness, *i.e.,* the universally operational **G**uiding, **O**rdering, and **D**esigning principle of reciprocal co-creation that local consciousness everywhere individualizes,2 and whose cosmic implications are recognized in particle physicist Eugene Wigner’s observation that *every relationship is an interrelationship*: 3

**We do not know of any phenomenon in which one subject is influenced by another without [the other] exerting a [corresponding] influence thereupon.**

As the most immediate consequence of this universality of relationship, the only way to know oneself is in the context of one’s participation with an all-inclusive cosmic communion wherein full knowing of oneself is coextensive with full knowing of the cosmos overall, and vice versa.

The communion of self, world and universe is cited by astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson: 4

The very molecules that that make up your body, the atoms that construct the molecules, are traceable to the crucibles that were once the centers of high mass stars that exploded their chemically rich guts into the galaxy, enriching pristine gas clouds with the chemistry of life. So we’re all connected with each other biologically, to the Earth chemically, and to the rest of the universe atomically. That’s kind of cool. That makes me smile, and I actually feel quite large at the end of that. It’s not that we’re better than the universe, we are part of the universe. We’re in the universe and the universe is in us.

The G.O.D. principle (hereafter termed “co-creation principle” or “CCP”) is what spiritual philosopher Ernest Holmes called “The Thing Itself” and for which he had over a hundred synonyms. The CCP is the ever-present origin of the patterning energies that give emergence to all cosmic and local forms, events, circumstances and conditions, á la the Bible’s proclamation “Behold, I make all things new.”That the co-creation principle is also present every*when* is acknowledged in another Biblical statement, “I am alpha and omega.” In other words, the patterning consciousness from which reality emerges is ongoingly and dynamically ever-present in the substance and form of all that exists and happens.

The CCP initiates and sustains a state of optimum well-being (*i.e.,* the greatest well-being possible in any given circumstance) that is often signified as “divine order,” and sometimes also is signified as “god’s plan.” Yet as Holmes asserted,

We are evoluted by reason of the divine pattern and not the divine plan – there are no divine plans. That would be finite….5 No real thinker has ever taught a divine purpose or a divine plan. All, however, have taught the idea of divine patterns.6

In its human manifestation the reciprocally patterning co-creation principle becomes conscious of itself in increasing appreciation of how it works. This suggests that the laws which govern the universe are engineering their own self-comprehension,7 a conclusion that scientists and poets alike have forthrightly acknowledged:8

Biologist Julian Huxley: We are evolution’s way of becoming aware and directive of itself.

Physiologist George Wald: Matter has reached the point of beginning to know itself…. [Man is] a

star's way of knowing about stars.

Poet Kenneth Rexroth in “The Heart of Herakles”:

**Lying under the stars,  
In the summer night,  
Late, while the autumn  
Constellations climb the sky,  
As the Cluster of Hercules  
Falls down the west  
I put the telescope by  
and watch Deneb  
Move towards the zenith.  
My body is asleep. Only  
My eyes and brain are awake.  
The stars stand around me  
Like gold eyes, I can no longer  
Tell where I begin and leave off.  
The faint breeze in the dark pines,  
And the invisible grass,  
The tipping earth, the swarming stars  
Have an eye that sees itself.**

St. Augustine recognized the experiential implications of “the eye that sees itself” with hisobservation that whatever we are looking at and looking for is also the very thing that we are looking with, namely, the consciousness within which all things that are experienced are one with all things that are experiencing. The implications of this recursively self-similar ecology of spirit9 were elaborated by philosopher Henryk Skolimowski:10

Everything there is, is filtered by the mind, chiseled by the mind, sculptured by the mind. When the universe wanted the human to co-create with it, it invented the mind. And why would the universe do such a thing? Because we are part of the universe evolving itself. To contemplate itself, to see itself, the universe had to develop the eye and the mind.; and then the human eye and the human mind. We are the eyes through which the universe contemplates itself. the mind through which the universe thinks about its future and destiny. This is not a form of rampant anthropocentrism, but just the contrary: submitting the human to the overwhelming flow of cosmic evolution. We are not anthropocentrizing the cosmos. *We are cosmologizing the human.* Indeed, the cosmological and the anthropocentric are two aspects of each other. How could it be otherwise?

[On the fifth day – Each of us is one of the ways]

Concerning our human placement within the ever-emerging cosmic ordering of the omni-patterning co-creation principle, 17th century French philosopher Blaise Pascal mystically observed that each of us is11

A nothing compared to the infinite, a whole compared to the nothing, a middle point between all and nothing, infinitely remote from an understanding of the extremes; the end of things and their principles are unattainably hidden from him in an impenetrable secrecy…. Equally incapable of seeing the nothing from which he emerges and the infinity in which he is engulfed.

We may similarly observe in 21st century terminology that each human being is a self-awakening one-of-a-kind multi-dimensional intersection of all the energies that animate and are animated by the co-creation principle, and that each of us is thereby a unique intermediary of the cosmic whole. Although this reciprocal principle self-organizes the cosmic whole in the same overall way, it organizes itself locally somewhat differently in each of us, so that no two human fingerprints of the co-creation principle are alike:

Nothing new under the sun?

Each of us is proof this is not so.

No matter what has been done before,

and no matter what has been thought before,

it is equally true of all concerned

that you are the one doing and thinking

in the near and how of your own here and now.

Never before has the universe happened

in just the way that you do.

There is always something new under the sun

whenever someone new is doing it.

In your life and through your hands

the universe continues to shape itself

in forms that it has never before taken.

A well-known map (not the territory) of the co-creation principle is commonly drawn as a cross, which is one of the world’s most ancient symbols the preceded the emergence of Christianity by many millennia. The cross, like the equally ancient symbol of the circle – and sometimes in conjunction therewith – is a representation of the co-creation principle’s divine order, which in conventional religious intuitions of a personified God is almost always portrayed as a masculine deity that designs and maintains the universe as follows: 12

Divine order is simply the way God orders or arranges things. It is God's ordained arrangement according to His Divine logic and comprehension. It His methodical or prescribed arrangement of all things so that they function properly according to His Divine will. It is His determination of how things ought to be, which is the only way anything can work correctly. His Divine Order never changes because it is perfect and based on His perfection and unchangeableness.

This religious intuition is equally valid as a spiritual intuition when we revise such definitions of divine order by substituting “co-creation principle” for “God” and “its” for “His.”

The cruciform map of the co-creation principle’s divine order may be interpreted thus:

the masculine principle of dominion (form) co-reciprocates the feminine principle of service (substance)

the process of bringing form to substance co-reciprocates the process of bringing substance to form

the power of intellect & control (serpent) co-reciprocates the wisdom of limits & co-operation (Sophia)

the power of intellect and control+ the wisdom of limits and co-operation = Logos~Word~CCP

Substance

↨

↨

↨

Dominion ↔↔↔↔ CCP. ↔↔↔↔ form

↨

↨

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Service

This map of divine order represents the optimum interrelationship of dominion-as-form with substance-as-service. The “gold” standard for divinely ordered interrelationship is the self-generating service of life unto itself. Nowhere else is the integrally self-sustaining common unity of the co-creation principle more perfectly embodied than in the kinship of all life, for *the purpose of life is a life of purpose whose purpose is life itself*. Consciousness and life are ends in themselves (i.e., they exist for the purpose of their own self-dominion) as well as the servicing means to their purposeful ends. How this purpose becomes fulfilled is exemplified when the word “service” is substituted for “purpose” throughout the preceding sentence.

The sanctifying common unity that binds dominion-as-form with substance-as-service is sometimes further represented via a circle centered upon the cross’s intersection to additionally symbolize the harmonious interrelationship of material and spiritual energies. Yet with or without the embellishment of a circle, the cruciform map of intersecting spirit and matter signifies that no emergence or sustenance of optimally workable form is feasible without the support of harmoniously proportionate service (a.k.a. “maintenance”), nor can any optimally workable service be supported in the absence of harmoniously proportionate form. Dominion-as-form and substance-as-service co-exist in a state of dynamic tension, and it is from this transforming tension that emerges all worldly manifestations of the guiding, ordering, and designing principle of reciprocal co-creation.

Worldly power and spiritual power become thoroughly integral with one another only in cruciform tension, whereby worldly power is made sacred (a.k.a. “sacrificed”) via the energy of spirit. Spiritual service to material form is born out of the dynamic common unity of intersecting substance-as-service and dominion-as-form. It is only by one’s submission to the reciprocating co-creation principle that one can manifest what is commonly termed “god’s will” (a.k.a. “not my will, but thine be done”).

In other words, becoming an enlightened being is accomplished by aligning oneself with the divine order and common unity of the co-creation principle, an alignment most simply prescribed in Ernest Holmes’ proclamation that “We command nature by first obeying her.” Holmes elaborated upon this commandment in numerous other statements: 13

Evolution has brought man to a point of self expression and it can do no more for him until he consciously co-operates with it…. All nature waits on man's recognition of and co-operation with her laws, and is always ready to obey his will; but man must use Nature's forces in accordance with her laws, and in co-operation with her purposes—which is goodness, truth, and beauty—if he wishes to attain self-mastery….[A]ll scientific advance is based on the supposition that any law of nature will respond to us when we comply with it…. In such degree as our thinking is in accord with the original Nature, the same orderly procession of harmonious ideas will operate in our affairs that is already operating in that larger world which we experience but neither create nor control. This leaves us individual freedom within the law of universal harmony, individual will within a universal co-ordinating will.

The dynamic tension of intersecting dominion-as-form and substance-as-service, as symbolized by the cross, is the transformative energy that is signified as one’s ever-present “divine calling”:

I have a true companion

whose company I can never be without.

This companion,

not always sure just how to relate to me,

wavers back and forth between acceptance and rejection.

Sometimes my companion is a friend,

sometimes an enemy.

Sometimes my companion treats me lovingly,

sometimes hurtfully.

And sometimes my companion treats me with indifference.

So why do I consider this companion to be true?

And why do I treasure such fickle company?

Because there is one way

that my companion never ceases to be faithful:

everywhere I go,

here I am.

Each person is called to submit to the divine ordering of his or her own individualized destiny. Inherent in this submission is a paradox: there is no greater freedom than that which is born of such submission, for there can be no actual freedom without some *form* of limitation to which appropriate *service* is surrendered (literally “rendered unto”).

Such is *the wisdom of limits*, as exemplified in an essay on “Freedom and Fences” by poet James Dillet Freeman: 14

FREEDOM! The word rings like a bell, doesn't it? It lifts the heart and stirs the passions. But just what is freedom? How free is free? How free can I be? How free can anyone be?

I have a dog, a saluki, a large, beautiful, extremely active dog. I live in a house with a large yard, almost a couple of acres. My dog has free access to the yard at all times through her own swinging door, and in house and yard she lives a very free life, for the most part doing only what she wants to do, as my wife and I make few demands on her, probably fewer than she makes on us. She flies from one end of the yard to the other, chasing anything that happens to be going by on the street, or any squirrel, cat, rabbit, or bird that ventures into the yard and she takes it into her head to chase.

My yard is fenced, but much of it is not a high fence, mainly ornamental. The fence is more a mental limit than a physical obstacle. Any time she wished she could be over it like the wind and off across the city. Not the fence, but only her own acceptance of the fence keeps her in the yard.

My dog and her fence have made me think about what freedom really is in very different terms than I had ever thought about it before. I have come to realize that the fence does not keep her in bondage, it keeps her free!

For suppose she did jump the fence and go wandering off? Would she be free? Freer than she now is? Out in the streets is a world of laws against unleashed dogs, angry neighbors, unfriendly dogs, dogcatchers, and speeding cars. How free would she be skittering frightened and bewildered through the unfamiliar maze of the city's streets? Have you ever seen a lost dog?

In the world that lies beyond the fence, there is no way she could remain free for long; at best, she would be taken into the house of some kind person; at worst, she would be locked up in the dog pound or even run over. The fence does not limit her freedom as much as it guarantees it. It does not keep her freedom from her. On the contrary, it marks how far she can go and not lose her freedom – relative freedom, it is true, but which of us has any other kind?

What limits my dog's freedom is not that fence, but the fact that she is a saluki who has to live in Lee's Summit, Missouri, U.S.A. on the continent of North America and the planet Earth, in 1979. Similar limitations determine the freedom of us all.

Freedom is and always must be a relative matter. If I am wise, I do not insist on flying just because I would like to have wings. I walk when I have to. I may be free to step out of a window, but the moment I do, I lose my freedom. I am made captive and plummeted to earth by forces over which I have no control. I have asserted my freedom beyond my power to maintain it. I have gone beyond my fence.

I built my dog's fence. In the case of human beings, they themselves may have to build their fences. Not all, of course. Many of our fences have been built by wise and loving people who lived before us, examined the world as I have for my dog and realized where fences were needed if they were to preserve, and not lose, their liberty. If we are wise, we accept the fences raised for us by laws, by tradition, by religious belief, by the moral code, by good manners and consideration.

In short: One is free to the extent that one is free to be – and actually *is* –authentic.

It was also Freeman who wrote poem, “Do you need me? I Am There,” a copy of which was placed on the moon along with the American flag:15

Do you need Me?

I am there.

You cannot see Me, yet I am the light you see by.

You cannot hear Me, yet I speak through your voice.

You cannot feel Me, yet I am the power at work in your hands.

I am at work, though you do not understand My ways.

I am at work, though you do not recognize My works.

I am not strange visions. I am not mysteries.

Only in absolute stillness, beyond self, can you know me as I am,

and then but as a feeling and a faith.

Yet I am here.. Yet I hear. Yet I answer.

When you need me, I am here.

Even if you deny me, I am here.

Even when you feel most alone, I am here.

Even in your fears, I am here.

Even in your pain, I am here.

I am here when you pray and when you do not pray.

I am in you, and you are in Me.

Only in your mind can you feel separate from me,

for only in your mind are the mists of “yours” and “mine”.

Yet only with your mind can you know Me and experience Me.

Empty your heart of empty fears.

When you get yourself out of the way, I am here.

You can of yourself do nothing, but I can do all.

And I am in all.

Though you may not see the good, good is here, for I am here.

I am here because I have to be, because I am.

Only in Me does the world have meaning;

only out of Me does the world take form;

only because of Me does the world go forward.

I am the law on which the movement of the stars

and the growth of living cells are founded.

I am the love that is the law’s fulfilling.

I am assurance.

I am peace.

I am oneness.

I am the law that you can live by.

I am the love that you can cling to.

I am your assurance.

I am your peace.

I am one with you.

I am.

Though you fail to find me, I do not fail you.

Though your faith in me is unsure, My faith in you never wavers,

because I know you, because I love you.

Beloved, I am there.

True companionship, indeed!

Living in love is all about optimum relationship to boundaries, the *wisdom of limits* that is built into every level of the universe with the recursive self-similarity of so-called “fractal” patterning. The limits of these built-in boundaries are automatically enforced in the physical realm, as in the blood/brain barrier that prevents the passage of toxic substances to the brain. In the metaphysical realm, however, the wisdom of boundary limits is activated by mindfully conscious discernment and reinforcement like, for instance, that of parents who counsel their children on sexual matters by addressing their safety and security rather than so-called “being good” as the basis of their morality.

The underlying moral purpose of boundaries is to provide security via transactions that nurture us, and to minimize any transactions that undermine our security. As playwright and novelist Thornton Wilder accordingly proclaimed, “I thank God that my parents loved me enough to mark out the boundaries of the permissible.” We can be likewise thankful for the transcendent guiding, ordering and designing principle of reciprocal co-creation, by which we live in a universe that likewise marks out the boundaries of the permissible.

Thus it is that the value and wisdom of limits is best known only to those who have the serenity to appreciate the guardian boundaries that they had best not cross, plus the courage to transcend the transformative boundaries that they must cross if their destiny is to be fulfilled, and the wisdom to know the difference.

**The Self as a Multi-Dimensional Intersection**

**Is it the bell that rings,**

**is it the hammer that rings,**

**or is it the meeting of the two that rings?**

**Zen Riddle**

The raspberry within itself does not contain its sweetness, nor does the tongue.

It is in the interaction between the two that this divine manifestation resides.

Brian Josephson

It is we who make wine drunk.

Rumi

U]ltimate reality is encountered neither in our minds nor in the physical cosmos, but at the point where these meet.

Alan Smithson

Regarding the emergence of form from substance and the maintenance of substance in form, businessman and philanthropist Sir John Templeton inquired 16

Is it sensible to think that the vast cosmos was created for the purpose of producing happiness for a single species on one planet? Humans have not yet discovered any other species anywhere with the ability to plan for progress and for the expansion of information. Does this raise the question of whether we may have been created to serve as helpers in the acceleration of divine creativity?

Templeton’s intuition of our species’ creative evolutionary role suggests the harmonious union of form and service that is embodied in the CCP, recognition of which can be traced back half a millennium to the initial definition of the word, “synergy.” This all-but-forgotten term became newly familiar in English usage via its mid-20th-century resurrection by engineer-architect R. Buckminster (“Bucky”) Fuller, inventor of the geodesic dome. Fuller’s innovative geometry of synthesis, which he called “synergetics,” as well as the formative technologies he based thereupon, were exemplary of his understanding of synergetic dynamics: “those aspects of a whole that are greater than the sum of its parts.”

As an example of a synergetic “greater than,” the mere summation of the individual chemical properties of hydrogen and oxygen atoms does not add up to the properties of the water that results from their molecular combination. It is similarly the nature of *all* wholes – including, for instance, the family next door to you – that the manifestation of their wholeness cannot be derived from a mere summation of the manifestations of all their parts. Thus it is that no two families are identical in their overall dynamics, even if they are identical in the number, ages, and genders of their members.

It is commonly assumed that Fuller originated the term “synergy,” when all he actually did was coin its redefinition. As noted in the *Oxford English Dictionary,* when the word first appeared in the 16th century it was defined as “joint working, co-operation.” (Note that “co-operation” is hyphenated in this definition to signify the active working together of constituent parts, as distinct from the passive “cooperation” that signifies mere “getting along with one another.”)

The *OED* further documents that the term “synergy” was derived from the word “synergism,” which itself was initially defined as “the doctrine that the human will co-operates with Divine grace in the work of regeneration.” This is evidence of a half-millennium-old precedent for Templeton’s intuition of our role as “helpers in the acceleration of divine creativity.”

The cross also signifies the antinomial nature of deep reciprocity, which manifests as the co-operative (rather than competitive) polarity of opposites, as evidenced by electrical and magnetic energy flows. The term “antinomy” signifies an integral juxtaposition of seemingly contradictory yet ultimately co-reciprocating features of reality. In the realm of quantum physics, for example, the antinomial reality of reciprocating energies manifests as so-called “wave-particle duality,” a conundrum that was addressed in quantum physicist Niels Bohr’s observation that

The opposite of a correct statement is a false statement; but the opposite of a profound truth may be another profound truth.

The antinomial nature of cosmic reality-at-large underlies the irreducible “mysteries” of our local realities-at-hand (*i.e.,* of reality as experienced by us). Among our numerous experiential antinomies, the following are uppermost:

*No mapping of reality’s mysteries (including the cross) can embody its territory.*

This mystery is acknowledged in the Biblical statement (Hebrews 1:33) that “Things which are seen are not made of things which do appear.” The term “non-physical reality” accordingly signifies the presence of the intangible rather than the absence of the tangible.

*Reality is cruciform: all transformation of reality is by way of the sacrificial crucifixion of worldly power.*

This mystery is explored in breadth and depth in Jim Garrisons’ book, *Civilization and the Transformation of Power*, which you will be reading in the weeks to come. This book bears great testimony to the fact that adversity is the labor pains of spiritual liberation. Closely related to this antinomy is the one listed next.

*There can be no freedom without limits.*

Freedom co-exists with boundary conditions. For example: although we have freedom of choice, we do not have freedom of consequences. We are always bound by the consequences of our choices, hence Ernest Holmes’ observation that “We are bound because we are first free.” For another example, in our universe’s beginning matter and antimatter existed in almost equal proportion, thus cancelling each other out. Matter prevailed to form the universe as we now know it only because for every 500 million particles of antimatter there were 500 million plus one particles of matter. Had there instead been plus two particles of matter the Universe would have been free to expand. Talk about close calls! Freedom is finely tuned.

*One’s outlook depends on the one looking out.*

Most simply stated – and contrary to those who proclaim that “we create our own reality” – while we are not the creators of cosmic reality-at-large, we do create the way we experience our realities-at-hand. Reality happens to us in the manner that we allow reality to happen as us, because it happens *as* us in accordance with the limits that we place on how it happens *to* us.

*All that exists in the light is conceived and gestated in darkness.*

For example, seeds germinate when they are buried in the darkness of Earth’s soil, babies are conceived and gestated in the darkness of the womb, and knowledge emerges from the darkness of the unknown. Similarly, all enlightenment is by way of a “dark night” of the ego. This is a variation of the cruciform antinomy cited above.

*Although the only thing permanent is change, the more things change the more they stay the same.*

This mystery was brilliantly articulated in spiritual philosopher Ernest Holmes’ observation that “Everything in the universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part…. It is the unessential only that is vanishing, that the abiding may be made more clearly manifest.” 14

*What one resists thereby persists and grows stronger via the energy one is giving to it.*

As Penny Pierce has said, “You can’t see the gift in what you resist.” The alternative to resistance was acknowledged by Bucky Fuller: “You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.” Marianne Williamson similarly observes that “The new activist is one who wields power by standing for what could be rather than fighting what is.” As Ernest Holmes proclaimed, “It would be wonderful indeed if a group of people should arrive on earth who were for something and against nothing. This would be the highest good of human organization, wouldn’t it?”

*Only as something is released may one truly “have” it.*

Among the most profound understandings of this mystery are two of Jesus’ statements, “The first shall be last, and the last first” (m) and “you must lose your life to save it.” (m) He stated the latter antinomy more pragmatically in the *Gospel of Thomas*: “If you bring out what is within you, what you bring out will save you; if you do not bring out what is within you, what you do not bring out will destroy you.” Another pragmatic application of the losing~saving antinomy was revealed to me in a remarkably endearing statement by my lifelong partner, Heidy: “There is nothing I won’t do for you as long as you don’t expect it.” The wisdom of her statement can be understood only as one understands as well that every expectation takes some form of what one already knows and accordingly has defined, while expectancy is a quality of anticipation whose outcome is unknown and not defined. Expectations invite attachment, while expectancy is born of detachment.

These are the principal antinomies to be explored in these seminars, along with some others.

**The Common Unity of Temporal and Timeless Energies**

If there is anything I have learned about men & women, it is that there is a deeper spirit of altruism than is ever evident. Just as the rivers we see are minor compared to the underground streams, so, too, the idealism that is visible is minor compared to what people carry in their hearts unreleased or scarcely released. (Hu)mankind is waiting and longing for those who can accomplish the task of untying what is knotted, and bringing these underground waters to the surface. -Albert Schweitzer

While masculine energy gives birth to things via the fabrication, provision and maintenance of form, feminine energy gives birth to life via the caretaking, nurturance and maintenance of harmoniously ordered patterns of relationship that resonate with the PRC.

Carl Jung distinguished the masculine psyche’s ordering energy as “animus” and the feminine psyche’s ordering energy as “anima,” and he viewed the psyche of every man and woman,\ as a functional blend of animus and anima. Animus is competitive, and it aspires to manifest as the control of parts within their wholes, while anima is co-operative as it aspires to manifest as the harmony that interrelates all parts within their wholes.

When our blend of animus and anima is unbalanced, our psyche is proportionately dysfunctional. For example, when something isn’t working as expected, competitive animus – whether in men or women – endeavors to strengthen what isn’t working by controlling it, as for instance in the practice of allopathic medicine. Co-operative anima instead endeavors to healingly reconcile what isn’t working to its greater whole, as for instance in holistic medicine. Excess animus tends to put one in a dysfunctional “fix” (i.e., a state of fixation). Excess anima tends to put one in a dysfunctional “bind” (i.e., a state of co-dependency).

The *Tao Te Ching* prescribes the optimum balance of animus (yang) and anima (yin):

Who knows his manhood's strength,

Yet still his female tenderness maintains,

As to one channel flow the many drains,

All come to him, yea, all beneath the sky.

Thus he the constant excellence retains;

The simple child again, free from all stains.

*Tao Te Ching*, v. 26, James Legge translation

In other words, the optimum balance of animus and anima is like the sea level toward which all water flows, and from which water rises ever yet again into the sky from which it falls, nourishes and unblemishes the otherwise parched land once again. In our planet’s biosphere this optimizing balancing act is called “ecology.” In the body it is called “homeostasis.”

The present dysfunction of civilization via excessively controlling animus was diagnosed two-thirds of a century ago by the Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore: 15

Civilization is almost exclusively masculine, a civilization of power in which woman has been thrust aside in the shade. Therefore, it has lost its balance and is moving by hopping from war to war. Its motive forces are the forces of destruction and its ceremonials are carried through by an appalling number of human sacrifices. This one-sided civilization is crashing along a series of catastrophes at a tremendous speed because of its one-sidedness. And at last the time has arrived when woman must step in and impart her life rhythm to the reckless movement of power.

As an American Indian proverb similarly observes:

A nation is not lost as long as the women's hearts are still high. Only when the women's hearts are on the ground, then all is finished, and the nation dies. The women are the life carriers.

Two human generations have perished since aviator/author Anne Morrow Lindbergh inquired

Why have we been seduced into abandoning this timeless inner strength of woman [the feminine values] for the temporal outer strength of man [the masculine values]?

Yet only in our time is this question becoming prominent in the collective psyche of our species.

Perhaps no one has raised this question more poignantly than singer-songwriter Dory Previn: 16

When a man wants a woman he says it's a compliment,

he says he's only trying to capture her, to claim her, to tame her.

When he wants everything, everything of her –

her soul, her love, her life forever and more –

he says he's persuading her, he says he's pursuing her.

But when a woman wants a man he says she's threatening him,

he says she's only trying to trap him, to train him, to chain him.

When she wants anything, anything of him -

a look, a touch, a moment of his time -

he says she's demanding, he swears she's destroying him.

Why is it when a man wants a woman he's called a hunter,

but when a woman wants a man she's called a predator?

Co-operative loving care, rather than weakness, is the true polar opposite of competitive strength. All weakness represents the absence of harmony between animus and anima. Excess animus out of harmony with anima courts the weakness of violent resistance. Excess anima out of harmony with animus courts the weakness of subservient obeisance. It is thus by neither strength nor tenderness alone that we may live in freedom *from* the frictions of reality’s antinomies, even though we can never be free *of* them. It is only as we embody both strength and loving care in harmonious proportion that we may experience optimum well-being.

Poet Ranier Maria Rilke wrote:

Somewhere there is

an ancient enmity

between our daily life

and the great work.

The prescription for engaging that ancient enemy, on behalf of the great work of realizing the optimum well-being of all concerned was provided by Albert Schweitzer: 17

How are we to build a new humanity? Reverence for life. Existence depends more on reverence for life than the law and the prophets. Reverence for life comprises the whole ethic of love in its deepest and highest sense. It is the source of constant renewal for the individual and for mankind…. Until he extends his circle of compassion to include all living things, man himself will not find peace.

How is reverence for lifekind to be mustered? Where is reverence for lifekind to be found? 18

Men and women everywhere are being made acutely aware of the fact that something essential to life and well-being is flickering very low in the human species and threatening to go out entirely. This “something” has to do with such values as love…unselfishness…sincerity…loyalty to one’s best friend…honesty…enthusiasm…humility…goodness…happiness...fun. Practically every animal has these assets in abundance and is eager to share them, given the opportunity and encouragement.

Extending the circle of compassion to include all of lifekind is what Jewish tradition calls *tikkun,* which signifies “repair of the world.” As the *Talmud* advises 19

Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world’s grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.

How one may engage the great work is suggested by author Annie Dillard: 20

I would like to learn, or remember, how to live…. I don’t think I can learn from a wild animal how to live in particular – shall I suck warm blood, hold my tail high, walk with my footprints precisely over the prints of my hand? – but I might learn something of mindlessness, something of the purity of living in the physical senses and the dignity of living without bias or motive.

In the coming weeks of this seminar, we shall further map the territory of divine order’s common unity of universal well-being, on behalf of “cosmologizing the human.”

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2. For greater insight on the guiding, ordering, designing principle of reciprocal co-creation, see Gary Schwartz, *The G.O.D. Experiments: How Science is Discovering God in Everything, Including Us* (Atria, 2007).
3. Bruce Rosenblum and Fred Kuttner, *Quantum Enigma: Physics Encounters Consciousness* (Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 186.
4. Neil deGrasse Tyson, *The Universe: Beyond the Big Bang* (A&E Home Video, 2007 and The History Channel). Download from http://www.monova.org/search.php?term=The+Universe+-+Beyond+the+Big+Bang. Other Tyson videos: http://www.haydenplanetarium.org/tyson.
5. *Ernest Holmes* *Seminar Lectures* (Science of Mind Publications, 1980), p. 36.
6. Ernest Holmes, unpublished mimeographed lecture, 12/5/58.
7. Davies (citation temporarily misplaced).
8. Julian Huxley, *Evolution: the Modern Synthesis* (Harper Brothers, 1944); George Wald quoted in Peter Russell, *The Global Brain: Speculations on the Evolutionary Leap to Planetary Consciousness* (J.P. Tarcher, 1983), p. 37; Kenneth Rexroth: http://www.panhala.net/Archive/Heart\_of\_Herakles.html.
9. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritual\_ecology.
10. Henryk Skolimowski, *The Participatory Mind: A New Theory of Knowledge and of the Universe* (Penguin Books, 1994), p. 3. For more on spiritual ecology: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritual\_ecology
11. Blaise Pascal, quoted in Jim Garrison, *Civilization and the Transformation of* Power (Paraview Press, 2000), p. 238; also in Armand Delsemme, *Our Cosmic Origins: From the Big Bang to the Emergence of Life and Intelligence* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 1.
12. Quoted from the “Divine Order” web page at http://www.truthkeepers.com/divine.htm.
13. Holmes statements (sources to be traced)
14. James Dillet Freeman, “Freedom and Fences,” in Michael A. Maday and Philip White, eds., *Angels Sing In Me: The James Dillet Freeman Memorial Book* (Unity House, 2004).
15. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, “Do You Need Me? I Am There”: http://jamesdilletfreeman.wwwhubs.com.
16. Sir John Templeton, “Foreword,” *Purpose and Power in Retirement*, at

http://www.templetonpress.org/pdf/Purpose\_and\_Power.pdf.

1. Ernest Holmes, *What Religious Science Teaches* (Science of Mind Publications, 1978), p. 16.
2. Quoted in Gaurav Pradhan, *Rabindrath Tagore: Literary Concepts* (A.P.H. Publishing Corp., 2002), p. 62.
3. Dory Previn lyrics are at http://www.lyricsmania.com/lyrics/dory\_previn\_lyrics\_22773.
4. Albert Schweitzer, *Reverence for Life* (Hallmark Cards, 1971).
5. Jay Allen Boone, *Kinship with All Life* (Harper, 1954).
6. *Talmud* quoted in Anne Firth Murray, *Paradigm Found: Leading and Managing for Positive Change* (New World Library, 2006), p. 16.
7. Annie Dillard, *Teaching a Stone to Talk: Expeditions and Encounters*(Harper Perennial, 1988).

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See “Newer Thought Metaphysics”

as acknowledged in the world’s oldest book on the metaphysics of empathic inclusivity, the *Tao Te Ching*:

Matthew Fox’s story of Tristan’s death (in *Animals as Teachers and Healers*) concludes with Rilke on “ancient enemy.”

### The previous moment does not determine your future; it is your judgment of the previous moment that determines your future. -Michael Beckwith

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**Reading:**

Ending suppression of the feminine metaphysical principle: “Illusion and Reality, Part 1 and 2 at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsHlykQ_Pzk&feature=related>

Amidst today’s troublesome news is the heartening news that humankind, after over-valuing the divine masculine principle of strength for thousands of years, is beginning to equally value the divine feminine principle of loving care. This is in large part because New Thought has for well over a century been nurturing the practical emergence of the divine feminine in our worldly affairs.

When loving care is deficient our strength becomes cruelly heartless, and when strength is deficient our loving care becomes sentimentally fruitless. This seminar accordingly facilitates the deeply heartfelt and abundantly fruitful living that results when we are strong enough to care as well as caring enough to be strong, thereby assuring that we shall continue to be both sufficiently strong and caring to make troublesome news uncalled for in our NTCSL spiritual community.

Three centuries after the term “synergy” was initially coined, the presumption of our role as *individual* accelerators of divine impulsion was itself accelerated by the American Transcendentalist movement, and most notably via the essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson. An additional century of hindsight now reveals that Emerson’s perceptiveness of divine individuation was perhaps most profoundly signified in his assertion that “These roses under my window make no reference to former roses or to better ones . . .” It is only today, in light of our knowledge of the quantum physical realm, that the depth of Emerson’s rosy insight becomes fully apparent.

Every “greater-than” emerges from the synergetic co-operation (i.e., operating together) of co-participating parts. Thus far in the known universe, the ultimate emergent property of such co-operation is the “greater-than” that we call “life.” While there are some who disagree with this assessment by asserting instead that consciousness is the universe’s ultimate emergent property, with the emergence of life being a prior step, others maintain just the opposite, that the universe is itself the emergent property of a pre-existing consciousness, which they more often than not attribute to “God.” This difference of perspective and other aspects of “emergence” are addressed elsewhere in this text.

**The Sacred Union of Strength and Loving Care**

**(A Seminar for Those Who Care Enough to Be Their Very Best)**

Why have we been seduced into abandoning the timeless inner strength of woman for the temporal outer strength of man? -Anne Morrow Lindbergh

"What is as important as knowledge?" asked the mind.

"Caring and seeing with the heart,” answered the Soul

Most of us don’t have much to change, just a lot to get over.

-Bradford Brown

**Opening statement:**

Poet Ranier Maria Rilke wrote:

Somewhere there is

an ancient enmity

between our daily life

and the great work.

This seminar series is about resolving the enmity between our daily life and the great work. For me this resolution has come about in a manner that was conveyed in Donovan Leitch’s song, “First there is a mountain, then there is no mountain, then there is.” Donovan’s lyric is based on the comment of a Zen master: “Before I knew Zen, there was a mountain. As I studied Zen, there was no mountain. When I understood Zen, there was a mountain.”

This before-and-after scenario is also acknowledged in the statement, “after enlightenment, the laundry,” which is a shorter version of another Zen statement, “Before I was enlightened, I chopped wood and hauled water. After I became enlightened, I chopped wood and hauled water.” This is Zen’s way of acknowledging that the world is not served by those who become so heavenly that they are no longer of any earthly good.

**My Point of Departure**

Talk to yourself, not to the world.

There is no one to talk to but yourself,

for all experience takes place within. (SOM 291)

The shortest course of all was cited in the book, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, when the Great Gull told Jonathan that “Perfect speed is being there.” The Great Gull’s citation for perfect speed is an unaffordable ticket for those who take “there” to be a physical location rather than a place in consciousness.

“There” is very forever elusive.

* Gertrude Stein was so unimpressed by her visit to a city that will here remain nameless, that she reported, “There’s no ‘there’ there.”
* The Eagles’ name for “there” was “Hotel California” – the place that I can check out of any time I want, but can never leave: the near and how of my own consciousness.
* A Zen master once commented, “Before I knew Zen, there was a mountain. As I studied Zen, there was no mountain. When I understood Zen, there was a mountain.” A shorter version of this somewhat obscure wisdom simply declares, “After enlightenment, the laundry.”

Enlightenment does not make the world go away. The only thing that I may banish is my misperceptions of the world out “there”.

I once wondered out loud how the Zen perspective on mountains might relate to Jesus’ reference to “the faith that moves mountains.” Someone replied, “When you have the faith that can move a mountain, you realize that the mountain is already in its perfect place.” This recalled to me the wisdom of America’s first ecological sage, Aldo Leopold, who declared that if one wants to understand a mountain, one must think like a mountain.

Leopold’s mountainous prescription is a subtle variation of the Golden Rule, and becomes more obviously such in the light of a Native American version thereof: “Before tipping over your brother’s teepee, walk in his moccasins for three moons.”

Enlightenment is the ability to realize when mountains and teepees are already in their perfect place. Perfect placement is the province of those who have discovered the only “there” that anyone has ever been:

I have a true companion

whose company I would never be without.

This companion,

not quite sure how to relate to me,

wavers back and forth between acceptance and rejection.

Sometimes my companion is a friend,

sometimes an enemy.

Sometimes my companion treats me lovingly,

sometimes hurtfully.

And sometimes my companion treats me with indifference.

Why do I consider this companion to be true?

Who do I treasure such fickle company?

Because there is one way

that my companion never ceases to be faithful:

everywhere I go,

*here* I am.

In truth, I have never been “there.” “There” is a fiction. Everywhere I go, *here* I am. The only “there” that I may inhabit is my own here-I-am-ness. I can no more exceed my own here-I-am-ness than I can exceed the speed of light. Here-I-am is as constantly my location with reference to any there, as is 183,000 miles per second constantly the speed of light with reference to any observer.

Perfect placement is the realization of my right here-ness, and perfect speed is the realization of the everywhere-ness of right here-ness. Perfect speed is attained as I truly and fully be in my present here–I-am-ness. The end of all my explorations of “there” is to arrive at the starting place I can never leave, by realizing that right here is where it all takes place for me, however portable my here may be.

What I am, when and why I am, with whom I am and how – all these are relative to the absolute truth of where I am, of the constancy of my here-ness from which all there-ness is perceived. Of the six basic questions of existence, the who, what, when, why and how of it are subject to my free will.

Only where I am is an irrevocable given, a hotel in consciousness that I can pretend to ignore or deny, but never can vacate. To paraphrase a familiar complementarity, my hotel in consciousness is God’s gift to me; how I inhabit it is my gift to God.

Jean Paul Sartre once said “Hell is other people.” This is true only for those who make a prison of their here-I-am-ness by wishing to be elsewhere with presumably less “other” people, as did the Prodigal Son described in Hindu scripture whose story Jesus recounted almost verbatim.

When the Prodigal finally realized his perfect placement, it rushed to greet him as he returned.

*Here I am* is my eternally absolute point of departure, and the eternal destination of every departure’s arrival in further recognition of the place from which I begin.

Perfect speed is also called “reunion.”

“Power to move mountains”

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The movie, *He’s Just Not That Into You*, begins with a playground scene in which a little girl approaches a passing boy with a joyful offering of friendship, and is knocked down and called “garbage” and other bad names by the little boy. The crying girl’s mother attempts to console her with the argument that the reason the boy knocked her down is because he secretly likes her. The resulting look of confused sadness on the face of the little girl, who doesn’t know whether or not to believe what her mother is saying, is one of the most poignant facial expressions ever captured on film.

GARRISON: An overview of the contrasting implications of the world’s major religions.

**Class Session #4:**

What do you now know or better know than when the class began?

protagonism: take your experience elsewhere

tolerance of ambiguity

Do not be bound to any form – morality, etc.

The most flexible member of a system has the greatest influence.

Embrace ambiguity, mutability, uncertainty, impermanence, xxxx

Express Original Nature , xxx

The Tao of Friction-Free Relationships - Jonathan Strider's notes from the class

Tao is about being unbound by attachment to expectations. (Like Chinese Eckert Tolle?)

'Form' is symptomatic of a deeper pattern.

Dissolution of conflict goes beyond resolution. It is better dissolve conflict than to resolve it repeatedly.

Excellence is expression of form. There is no perfection of form.

Noel, this is a standard concept in science and engineering. We call this 'tolerance' or 'engineering fudge-factor'. We take advantage of it by actually building 'slop' into systems so they work better. As you pointed out, if the system is too 'tight', it will bind up and break.

"Build the bridge while you are working on it. Life is like fixing an airplane while it's in flight."

    Oh, Gawd Yes! It certainly is, Ollie ~ JS!

"Regret is born from avoidance of faithfulness to self."

"Relationships don't fail - They get used up."

    I'm going to paraphrase: "Relationships serve their purpose within space and time, regardless how

they continue or end."

"Growing on people is more influential than imposing on people."

    Again... we studied this in management class.

    Old-school management was about Forcing subordinates to do their work, assuming they will not

work unless beaten into submission.

    Modern management is about using positive reinforcement to Encourage talented workers to do

what they would do anyway.

    The whole thing is a shift of perspective by the manager. The workers are the same people.

    The professor summed it up by teaching us the difference between earning respect and

demanding respect.

We talked about right- or left-handedness. That idea seems alien to me. My observation is that so long as we are physically healthy, we can each learn to use either hand as a primary tool. I've done this twice in my lifetime. I've known others who have also. There are cultures that standardize on use of the left hand. It's a matter of learning and practice. Then, when ambidexterity is comfortable, more subtle things come out, such as different emotions being stimulated while doing artwork or writing. For me, it adds dimension to my inside insights and external expressions.

Rather than defining someone by the label of their Day Job, ask them,,,

    "What are you passionate about?"

    "What makes you life interesting?"

    "What gives you bliss?"

    "What's making your heart sing today?" (This one on a first date with a lovely lady? = )

Define things not by the hard-lined Boxes formed by Limitations, but by the loosely formed *Cloud*s of *Actualities* and *Potentials*. *~ Buck O'Kelly ~ Jonathan Strider ~*

Distinguish between cause and occasion.

Defuse your “mine” field.

Get out of your own way.

Let go of absence-mindedness.

**Relaxing into the design.**

**Substance:**

The causal source of all friction in your life is within you, not within anyone else. Other persons, the things in your life, and your life’s circumstances can at most be occasions of friction, not their cause. The first step toward reducing friction in your life is to cease confusing external occasions of your friction with its internal causation.

The only obstructions to your enlightenment are the twin internal causes of friction in your life: the structures of your self-image and of your knowing. Your key to both enlightenment and friction-free living is to get out of your own way by dismantling the structures of your self-image and knowing that keep you out of alignment with your Original Nature.

Aligning with your Original Nature requires the exercise of won’t power rather than willpower.

The only way I know how to transform whatever is not harmonious is to transform my relationship to it.

How many other ways are there to look at our disagreement that we haven’t thought of?

**THE DRAGON**

I felt like a prince as I rode on the back of the dragon. From this position high on his humped back, I noticed that the dragon's body was covered with old wounds. Whenever the dragon breathed forth fire to light the path in front of us, I noticed that the wounds glowed golden-red in the dark. . . .

[These old wounds aroused] my curiosity, and when I asked about them, the dragon replied, "Oh, my friend, I have been slain a thousand times, but I have always risen again. These old wounds are the source of my power and insight. [O]ur greatest and worst enemies are not the monsters who roam the forest or even wicked witches or evil wizards. No, it is our scars, our wounds and old injuries that we must fear. As we journey through life we all have been injured – hurt by parents, brothers or sisters, schoolmates, strangers, lovers, teachers . . . the possible list of the guilty is long. Each wound has the power to talk to us, you know. They speak, however, with crooked voices, because of the scars. . . ."

"All of us have wounds – old ones and new ones – and whenever the monster appears, when hell breaks loose, we know that our old wounds are talking, guiding us. It is these wounds that must be confronted and not us poor, innocent dragons."

"But," I said, "your wounds glow with great beauty, and you said they are the source of your power and magic. How can my wounds become a source of power?"

"First," replied the dragon, "you must not give in to the voice of your scars, the voice of the times you trusted and were betrayed, loved and were rejected, did your best and were laughed at. Do not give weight to the scars left because you were slighted or were made to feel less than others. Instead, when those voices call to you to react with envious or jealous feelings, do exactly the opposite. When they say, 'run away,' you must stay. When they whisper, 'distance yourself,' then come all the closer. You must transform their power, not destroy it! That, my friend, is really being involved in a quest."

From the book, *St. George and the Dragon and the Quest for the Holy Grail*:

**ATTUNEMENT**

Every so often a Celtics game would heat up so that it became more than a physical or even mental game, and would be magical. That feeling is difficult to describe, and I certainly never talked about it when I was playing. When it happened, I could feel my play rise to a new level. It came rarely, and would last anywhere from five minutes to a whole quarter or more. Three or four plays were not enough to get it going. It would surround not only me and the other Celtics, but also the players on the other team and even the referees.

At that specific level, all sorts of odd things happened. The game would be in a heat of competition, and yet somehow I wouldn't feel competitive--which is a miracle in itself. I'd be putting out the maximum effort, straining, coughing up parts of my lungs as we ran, and yet I never felt the pain. The game would move so quickly that every fake, cut and pass would be surprising, and yet nothing could surprise me. It was almost as if we were playing is slow motion. During those spells, I could almost sense how the next play would develop and where the next show would be taken. Even before the other team brought the ball into bounds, I could feel it so keenly that I'd want to shout to my teammates, "It's coming there!" --except that I knew everything would change if I did. My premonitions would be consistently correct and I always felt then that I not only knew all the Celtics by heart, but also all the opposing players, and that they all knew me. There have been many times in my career when I felt moved or joyful, but these were the moments when I had chills pulsing up and down my spine.

Sometimes the feeling would last all the way to the end of the game, and when that happened I never cared who won. I can honestly say that those few times were the only ones when I did not care. I don't mean that I was a good sport about it – that I'd played my best and had nothing to be ashamed of. On the five or ten occasions when the game ended at that special level, I literally did not care who had won. If we lost, I'd still be as free and high as a sky hawk.

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Carl Jung: Enlightenment is not a matter of imagining figures of light, but of making the darkness conscious.

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According to Ernest Holmes, we are in service to cosmic joy:

Life is an eternal givingness, the offering of the cosmic Self to the joy of Its own fulfillment. You and I are part of this joy and we find fulfillment only as this joy passes through us to others. Everything moves in circles. We short-circuit our own good when we refuse to pass it on.

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When you are not your natural self, you don’t do anything well. -Anonymous proverb [*Accountable,* pp. 11-12]

Do your work, then step back – the only path to serenity.  -Lao Tzu

The derivation of the word "music" means"the art of the muses." -Michael Benner

Our normal waking consciousness...is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different. We may go through life without suspecting their existence; but apply the requisite stimulus, and at a touch they are there in their completeness, definite types of mentality which probably somewhere have their field of application and adaptation. No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded. -William James

All truths are easy to understand once they are discovered; the point is to discover them. -Galileo Galilei

It is entirely possible that behind the perception of our senses, worlds are hidden of which we are unaware. -Albert Einstein

How are we to evolve a new humanity?

Change of form (a.k.a. “death”) is the universe’s way of maintaining its integrity. Every death is an extension of life.

**Class Session #2:**

**Opening songs:**

* Oh, How Lucky I Am
  + Xxxxx
  + Xxxxx
* Everywhere I Go, Here I Am.
  + Xxxxx
  + Xxxxx

**Orientation:**

The causal source of all friction in your life is within you, not within anyone else. Other persons, the things in your life, and your life’s circumstances can at most be occasions of friction, not their cause. The first step toward reducing friction in your life is to cease confusing external occasions of your friction with its internal causation.

**Self-Mastery Exercise:**

You are going to make an inventory of everything that is an *occasion* of friction in your own life.

At the top of a blank sheet of paper write “Occasions of friction in my life.” Make three columns beneath that headline with the headings “persons,” “things” and “circumstances”. In the left column list the persons who are the occasion of friction in your life, in the middle column list the things that are an occasion of friction in your life, and in the right column list the circumstances that are an occasion of friction in your life.

Prioritize each list. (Z, Y, X, W . . . A)

Your minimum objective in this seminar series is to become friction free from the top person, thing and circumstance on your lists. Your maximum objective is to become friction free from everything on all three lists.

**Class Session #3:**

**Orientation:**

I was regressed to my situation prior to my conception in my mother’s womb. I was told that I was signing up for a Spiritual Olympics – four lifelong hurdles.

The great nation is like a great man:

When he makes a mistake he realizes it.

Having realized it, he admits it.

Having admitted it, he corrects it.

He considers those who point out his faults as his most benevolent teachers.

The bad news is that bad things happen to everyone, and they have nothing to do with whether you are a good or bad person, how effectively you’ve taken charge of your life, or how carefully you’ve planned for your future. -Gerald G. May, M.D., *The Dark Night of the Soul: a Psychiatrist Explores the Connection between Darkness and Spiritual Growth* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2004), p.1.

I don’t know Who – or what – put the question. I don’t know when it was put. I don’t even remember answering. But at some moment I did answer Yes to Someone – or Something – and from that hour I was certain that existence is meaningful and that, therefore, my life, in self-surrender, had a goal. –Dag Hammarskjöld, Markings, p. 205, quoted in Gerald May, p. 3.

Sin and sin boldly, but believe more boldly still. -Martin Luther

[S]pirit is the principle of harmony in operation. It is the wholeness of the whole exerting its magnetic influence upon the entire field of activity of this whole. -Dane Rudhyar, *We Can Begin Again Together,* p. 172.

When one is ready for enlightenment, it cannot be withheld. Until one is ready for enlightenment, it cannot be given.

The most decisive actions of our life ... are most often unconsidered actions. -Andre Gide

Death is not the biggest fear we have; our biggest fear is taking the risk to be alive -- the risk to be alive and express what we really are. -Don Miguel Ruiz

Desire is the starting point of all achievement, not a hope, not a wish, but a keen pulsating desire which transcends everything.  -Napoleon Hill

**Thought Forms**

In New Thought we learn that thoughts are things insofar as they take actual form. Here are two perspectives on the power of thoughts as things that have formative power:

A thought form is the energetic embodiment of the idea on which a person dwells, consciously or otherwise, and it takes on an existence external to and independent of the thinker. By a process of which science knows little, our thoughts 'take wings'.... This psychic atmosphere or field of mind energy...interacts with the physical energy matrix sustaining the planet in space, and can influence it subtly but directly in either a positive or negative fashion, depending upon the vibratory quality of thought forms arising from the human level. Harmonious, loving mental states produce a stabilizing effect on the planetary matrix; disharmonious, hateful thoughts result in a destabilizing matrix. -John White, *Poleshift*

...all energy contrary to the evolutionary life-force is negatively polarized. It eventually transmigrates to lower and more destructive life and energy forms. The collective negative energy (of thoughts, words and actions) in its varying forms and degrees, descends to the appropriate vibratory frequency of less evolved forms. It can animate and energize bacteria or vermin, for instance, causing epidemics; weather, in the form of storms, floods and hurricanes; geographical upheavals within the Earth itself, and disturbances from the outer environment of space--all vehicles of negative karmic feedback. This is what Edgar Cayce meant when he said that many a land could be kept intact by the consciousness of its inhabitants. This is also why tampering with nature to modify and eradicate undesirable weather is so useless and dangerous. It's like dispensing drugs to treat symptoms which may not disappear, and creating serious side effects in the process. The negative energy will simply manifest more powerfully in another place at another time." -Moira Timms, *Prophecies & Predictions*

Ernest Holmes advocated the practical application of thought forms in support of well-being:

If we set up a vibrating point at the center of our own thought receptive to that which is good, to that which is beautiful and true, we shall irresistibly be attracting that condition into our own environment.

It is correspondingly true that if the vibrating point at the center of our own thought is receptive to that which is negative, we shall irresistibly attract negativity into our environment. Hence the practical value of nurturing only those thought forms that are receptive to our well-being.

**Scared to Be Alone**

**Dory Previn**

We never stop to wonder till a person’s gone  
We never yearn to know him till he’s travelled on  
When someone is around us we never stop to ask  
Hey, what’s behind your mirror  
Hey, who’s beneath your mask  
We never stop to wonder till a person’s gone  
We never yearn to know him till he’s packed and travelled on

Sweet Marilyn Monroe on the silver screen  
Platinum reflection in a movie magazine  
Well, did you ever have a headache  
Did your mama own a gramaphone  
Did you like to be an actress  
Were you scared to be alone

We never stop to wonder till a person’s gone  
We never yearn to know him till he’s travelled on  
When someone is around us we don’t know what we’re seeing  
We take a polaroid picture to find the human being  
We never stop to wonder till a person’s gone  
We never yearn to know him till he’s packed and travelled on

Sweet beautiful Jesus on a painted cross  
Polystyrene body with a superficial gloss  
Hey, were you jealous of your father  
Were you short when you were fully grown  
Did you like to walk on water  
Were you scared to be alone

I think perhaps tomorrow I’ll try to make a friend  
To really get to know him instead of pretend  
I’ll ask him if his feet hurt, has he burdens to be shared  
And if he doesn’t walk away  
I’ll ask him if he’s scared  
And if he doesn’t walk away  
If his eyes don’t turn to stone  
I’ll ask him if he’s scared

To be alone

**I Dance and Dance and Smile and Smile**

**Dory Previn**

I’m always loving someone  
more than he loves me  
Lord I wish just this once  
that's not how it would be  
I always try too hard  
when I find someone new  
God I wish just this once  
you'd need me more than I need you

I danced to please my father  
just to win once glance  
some sign of his approval  
I danced and danced  
and danced and danced

I smiled to make my mother  
proud I was her child  
to gain some small attention  
I smiled and smiled  
and smiled and smiled

My books and bikes I bartered

to try to buy a friend  
now I'm grown this heart I own  
is the currency  
I spend and spend and spend  
And in the end I'll give you everything I own  
sure you'd never want me for myself alone

How I hate the way I am  
always trying to impress  
Lord if I could love me more  
I could love you less  
And if I could love you less  
I would not confuse you  
dancing, dancing, smiling, smiling  
till of course  
I lose you.

**The Tao of Constant Excellence**

Toward whoever knows manhood's strength

yet womanhood’s loving care maintains,

does flow as if in one channel the many drains,

delivering all that lies beneath the sky.

One thus the constant excellence retains,

The simple child again, free from all stains.

*Tao Te Ching*, v. 26, (based on James Legge translation)

The “constant excellence” of aligned strength and loving care (a.k.a. “Original Nature”) is implicit throughout the *Tao Te Ching,* as well as in the writings of many others.

The thing is to stalk your calling in a certain skilled and simple way, to locate the most tender and live spot and plug into that pulse. This is yielding, not fighting . . . I think it would be well, and proper, and obedient, and pure, to grasp your one necessity and not let it go, to dangle from it limp wherever it takes you. -Annie Dillard

**Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities have crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day. You shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense.** -Ralph Waldo Emerson

Our Original Nature can be reclaimed as we honor three operational principles:

1. What you resist persists and grows stronger. [You can’t see the gift in what you resist. -Penny Peirce]
2. You can only be exactly as you are in the moment. [All difference is in the next moment.]
3. Anything you allow to be exactly as it is completes itself. [Nurturing and weeding are all that is required.]

**Tao, Te, and New Thought**

“Tao” signifies the principle that *being is the source all doing*, so that only harmoniously ordered being can become manifest as harmoniously ordered doing. Harmonious interrelationship of being and doing is signified as “Te.” Since disharmony of being invariably produces disorder of doing, Te is the “virtue” of consistently doing what is in harmony with being.

The principle of harmoniously interrelated being**~**doing was often articulated by Ernest Holmes:

* The Original Spirit is Harmony. (SOM, 53/3)
* [T]he Infinite is not divided, but multiplied. (WRST 21/1)
* [W]e have Spirit plus nothing, out of which all things are made. (WRST 20/4)
* This is the great mystery of the universe – that, which out of nothing, can make something. But its nothing is really the Substance of every something. (SOM 402/3)
* At first one has the feeling in [prayer] of wondering if anything is really happening,, *until he finally realizes that this apparent nothingness with which he deals is the only ultimate something out of which tangible things could be made.* (SOM 306/4)
* The thing that we look *with* is the thing we have been looking *for*. (SOM 364/2)
* Everything in the universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part…. It is the unessential only that is vanishing, that the abiding may be made more clearly manifest.. (WRST 16/3)
* We are evoluted by reason of the divine pattern and not the divine plan – there are no divine plans. That would be finite. (??)
* Here we have a dual unity – law and order, spontaneous choice, volition, conscious action, and automatic reaction. (SOM 42/6)
* Cause and effect are but two ends of one Unity. (??)

Holmes’ operational understanding of Tao was exquisite:

To those who can perfectly practice inaction, all things are possible. (SOM 289/3)

“Perfect inaction” is a harmonious state of being in which polarity functions as a co-operative dual unity rather than as a contending duality. As Holmes envisioned dual unity in practice:

It would be wonderful indeed if a group of people should arrive on earth who were for something and against nothing. This would be the highest good of human organization, wouldn’t it? (SBS ??/?)

Buckminster Fuller and Marianne Williamson have similarly noted:

Williamson: The new activist is one who wields power by standing for what could be rather than fighting what is.

Fuller: You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.

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The following operational understanding of Tao perspective, which appears on the back cover of The Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English translation of the *Tao Te Ching* (New York, Vintage Books, 1972) is also cited at http://shopping.msn.com/prices/tao-te-ching-25th-anniversary-edition/itemid2727900/?itemtext=itemname:tao-te-ching-25th-anniversary-edition.

The philosophy of Lao Tsu is simple: Accept what is in front of you without wanting the situation to be other than it is. Study the natural order of things and work with it rather than against it, for to try to change what is only sets up resistance. Nature provides everything without requiring payment or thanks, and also provides for all without discrimination – therefore let us present the same face to everyone and treat all men as equals, however they may behave. If we watch carefully, we will see that work proceeds more quickly and easily if we stop "trying", if we stop putting in so much extra effort, if we stop looking for results. In the clarity of a still and open mind, truth will be reflected. We will come to appreciate the original meaning of the word "understand", which means "to stand under". We serve whatever or whoever stands before us, without any thought for ourselves. Te – which may be translated as "virtue, or "strength" – lies always in Tao, or "natural law". In other words: Simply be.

**To Simply Be Is to Be Open**

**We started out being open.**

* Initial rules of engagement.
* A person is not a thing or a process, a person is an opening.
* Out of the mouths of babes comes wisdom.
* It is not what goes into a man’s mouth that defiles him, but what comes out of it. -Jesus
* If you would feed a man, fill his belly and empty his mind. -Lao Tzu

**Then we got hurt.**

* Stories of ain’t-it-awfulism and woundology.
* The hero’s and heroine’s journeys.

**Now we’re getting healed.**

* The way we get healed is the way we got hurt - being open.
* How we reclaim our Original Nature: Re-open our being and stay open, by the practices of emptiness and stillness.
* Let your walls down.

The walls I place between myself and others

have many textures:

blame,

self-pity,

busy-work,

competition,

self-righteousness,

saving the world,

cynicism,

the turn off,

the put down,

and so many more.

I erect my walls to keep out

criticism,

hurt,

disappointment,

let-downs,

and the like –

yet all to no avail.

My defenses meant to keep out others

only keep me in,

where I fester in fruitless flailing

to exclude from my awareness

others’ unwanted presences and points of view.

Though I may one day pound against my walls

presuming to get out,

nor likewise does this avail,

for such beholding of my walls is only half.

I shall liberate myself only as I understand

that my walls are most yielding from the other side.

There is no getting out

without a letting in.

Our Original Nature can be reclaimed as we honor three operational principles:

1. What you resist persists and grows stronger. [You can’t see the gift in what you resist. -Penny Peirce]
2. You can only be exactly as you are in the moment.
3. Anything you allow to be exactly as it is completes itself.

**Self-Mastery Exercise:**

* Make a list of everything that you associate with the word “friction.”

Examples: irritation, discomfort, rubbing wrong way, challenging, growth, heat, traction

* Sentence completions:
  + The way I feel about my life is determined by… [my results]
  + The greatest source of friction in my life is… [forgetting who I truly am] [all else is occasion]
  + I define friction as… [resistance to motion at points of contact]
  + Friction is caused by…
  + Friction is helpful when…
  + Friction is problematic when…
  + Being “friction-free” means…
* Debrief list and sentence completions:
  + Perspectives on friction.
  + How many listed dependency for your feelings on external circumstances?
  + How many listed external factors as the source and/or cause of friction in your life?
  + The most accurate completion of the first two sentences is a single word: myself. To depend on others and outer circumstances for how you feel, or to attribute the source of friction in your life to others is to give your power away. All externals are dependent variables, insofar as their effects depend on how we choose to experience them. One’s self is always and only the single independent experiential variable. One’s self is the sovereign creator of *how* one experiences one’s life, as recognized by many great spiritual adepts:

Ernest Holmes: Talk to yourself, not to the world. There is no one to talk to but yourself because all experience takes place within. Conditions are the reflections of our meditations and nothing else.

Thaddeus Golas: What you deny to others will be denied to you, for the plain reason that you are always legislating for yourself; all your words and actions define the world you want to live in.

Marcus Aurelius: It is our own power to have no opinion about a thing, and not to be disturbed in our soul; for things themselves have no natural power to form our judgments.

Rudolph Steiner: If it depends on something other than myself whether I should get angry or not, I am not master of myself . . . I have not yet found the ruler within myself. I must develop the faculty of letting the impressions of the outer world approach me only in the way in which I myself determine.

Gary Simmons: Is it possible that the experience of intimidation, threat, or adversarial relationships arises out of *how you are relating to the experience,* and *not how the experience is relating to you?” (*from *The I of the Storm)*

Ralph Waldo Emerson: It is easy in the world to live after the opinion of the world’s opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great [person] is [s/he] who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

Alice Gardner: [We are here to so live] that the flavor of the divine moves through us in the midst of every kind of circumstance, whether comfortable or not.

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**The one creates the two**, the diversity of experience.

**The two create the three**, the awareness of experience.

**The three create the ten thousand things**, the multiplicity of experience.

Our individual consciousness develops accordingly after birth. We are born into the diversity and multiplicity of experience with almost totally non-differentiating awareness, and we acquire our subsequent differential awareness via processes of discernment that function uniquely in each of us. If you would learn the essence of co-operation, mindfully conceive, gestate and give birth to a child, and raise the child to be its own person.

Being – the all

Becoming – the many

The one (experience of interiority) unity

The two (experience of exteriority) dual unity

The three (awareness of polarity) triunity

The 10,000 things (the many)

**Thank You for Being Such a Pain**

Self-knowledge as the starting point: The fundamental premise of this book is that spiritual development is about growing as a person and that difficult people teach us how to do this. By paying attention to our experiences with difficult people, we learn things about ourselves that wouldn’t otherwise come to our awareness. p. 239

We form relationships, and relationships form us. p.1

…adversity is our teacher, pushing past our resistance and teaching us what we would fail to otherwise learn. p. 1

A difficult person is anyone whose words or actions evoke unwanted and unpleasant emotions. p. 15

Difficult people help to reveal the spaces inside us that need remodeling. p. 24

You can’t choose the thoughts and feelings that come to you about a difficult person. You do, however, have a choice in how you respond. p. 31

…use the feelings that difficult people stir up in you to understand yourself. p. 44

A person should realize that conflict situations between oneself and others are nothing but the effects of conflict situations in one’s own soul. -Martin Buber p. 54

It is not possible to successfully predict and influence how another will act. It is possible, however, for us to influence how *we* act. p. 55

…changing ourselves starts with our feelings. p. 55

*Some difficult people aren’t* p. 60

*Some people are different, not difficult*  p. 61

*Some difficult people just don’t have a clue*  p. 62

Differences were meant by God not to divide but to enrich. -J. H. Oldham

*Some difficult people are stuck in the past*  p. 63

*Some difficult people are in emotional kindergarten*  p. 66

Emotional intelligence, p. 65

*Some difficult people have emotional wounds*  p. 68

*Some difficult people have low self-esteem* p. 69

*Nobody knows the troubles they’ve seen* p. 70

*The difficult believer* p. 71

*Some difficult people want too much*  p. 72

*Some difficult people are substance abusers*  p. 74

*Some difficult people are mentally ill*  p. 75

Any man who goes to a psychiatrist should have his head examined. –Sam Goldwyn

*Sick and tired*  p. 77

*With malice toward some*  p. 78

*A few are evil*  p. 79

*Giving difficult people the benefit of the doubt* p. 82

*The value of understanding why*  p. 84

*Suffering, Deprivation, Ignorance, and Compassion* p. 87

*Separating the person from the difficulties* p. 88

*Understanding why* (Exercise) p. 89

What follows is a further response to David’s question at our first session concerning how, in a whole, complete and perfect universe populated with whole, complete and perfect persons, children can be born with deformities. Heidy suggested that I share the following guided meditation that is cited in *The I of the Storm*, pp. 1-3, and at http://www.websitetoolbox.com/tool/post/barrybittman/vpost?id=995323:

Imagine for a moment a time before your birth when you were wandering the heavens as a discarnate soul. You were immersed in the beautiful and peaceful harmony of paradise when a call went out for volunteers to incarnate in bodily, human form. A small blue planet in the far reaches of the Milky Way galaxy was experiencing a crisis and was in need of souls who were willing to incarnate in a human body to help out in Earth’s time of need.

You made the decision to volunteer. You next met with the Incarnation Committee to discuss with its members the part you wanted to play and the work you wanted to do. You made a covenant at that time to do the work you agree to do. But there was a catch: not only were you to serve, you were also required to *grow*. It was your job to increase the intensity of your light and to grow in wisdom and in stature as well as to serve. You next had to make a series of decisions that would perfectly situate you to be of maximum service and to develop a custom-designed learning curriculum for your soul to assure its maximum learning potential.

You had to decide what particular set of gifts, talents, and abilities you wished to bring with you to contribute to life on Earth and to the human family; the dreams and aspirations that would lead you to your destiny to fulfill your earthly covenant; a date of birth determining an astrological that would give you clues to your soul’s earthly purpose and destiny; a place on Earth, a climatic zone, a region in which to reside; a racial and ethnic form that would enable you to best express yourself; a socioeconomic class that would provide you with the challenges and benefits you need in order to learn and serve; a spiritual tradition with its particular set of rituals and practices that would support you; a gender with its attendant opportunities and challenges; a particular set of parents that would provide you with their particular strengths, with qualities you could draw upon and with a designed set of difficulties that you would experience with them in order to learn, grow, and to prepare you for the services that you would perform; your siblings and your relationship with them in age, plus the companionship and the conflicts with them that would provide you with important lessons and resources; and finally, a name for yourself.

Once the decisions were made, you were free to incarnate and begin your earthly mission, forgetting all that went on before, but with time, you would surely begin to rediscover why you are here and how wisely you chose because every factor in your life has perfectly positioned you for the service you are to perform and has maximized your potential for learning and growing.

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In last week’s attached reading I cited Bucky Fuller’s statement in the 1960’s that “there’s no such thing as genius, some children are less damaged than others.” If you haven’t read it yet, I urge you to do so before reading what follows, which thereby will make much more sense.

Among the materials I’ve collected on how children become damaged is the following report, also from the 1960’s, and reproduced at http://www.schoolarttherapy.com/on\_education.htm.

He always wanted to explain things, but no one cared. So he drew. Sometimes he would draw and it wasn't anything. He wanted to carve it in stone or write it in the sky. So, he would lie out on the grass and look up in the sky. And it would be only him and the sky and the things inside him that needed saying.

And it was after that he drew the picture. It was a beautiful picture. He kept it under his pillow and let no one see it. And he would look at it every night and think about it. And when it was dark, and his eyes were closed, he could still see it. And it was all of him. And he loved it. When he started school he brought it with him. Not to show to anyone but just to have it with him like a friend.

It was funny about school. He sat in a square, brown desk. It was like all other square, brown desks. And he thought it should be red. And his room was a square, brown room, like all the other rooms. And it was tight and close, and stiff. He hated to hold the pencil and chalk with his arm stiff and his feet flat on the floor; stiff, with the teacher watching and watching. The teacher came and spoke to him. And she said it didn't matter!

After that, they drew. And he drew all yellow and it was the way he felt about morning. And it was beautiful. The teacher came and smiled at him. "What's this?" she said. "Why don't you draw something like Ken's drawing… isn't that beautiful?"

After that, his mother bought him a tie. And he always drew airplanes and rocket ships like everyone else. And he threw the old picture away. And when he lay alone looking at the sky, it was big and blue and all of everything, but he wasn't anymore. He was square inside, and brown. And his hands were stiff. And he was like everyone else. And the things inside him that needed saying, didn't need it anymore. It had stopped pushing. It was crushed. Stiff. Like everything else.

[This was reportedly written by a high school senior, two weeks before he committed suicide.]

In response to my 1960’s students’ discussion of how they became degeniused, a similar statement was written by one of them who shared it with us:

Feel you a wasteness in your soul, an empty part you do not understand? Come back to long ago when a child you were all there still.

Rock, slide, gurgling baby rolls his eyes to swing the room out the window letting sunshine warmth in. Smelling mother smiling near, he rolls over toys of sound then laughs. Later, he becomes aware of playing. He watches, listens, smells tastes, touches. Mommy and Daddy loom into sense, and he knows what play interests them. As he grows, his awareness of pleasing his parents becomes him. He practices for them when the time is for play.

Halfway between, the child goes away to school. Teacher dwells on sight of number, sound of word, hearing to understand. One day he eats paste to find that tasting is for meals. The window is closed to fresh air. Smell is outside learning.

The older, the farther play becomes. No longer does the child explore the world through his senses and imagination. The child drops the sound of real his words and haunts books of others’ written words. No more does he listen to subtle whisperings outside but only the authoritarian which he repeats back. Adapting, he never realizes.

The child has lost his senses. He isolates his mind from his body and relies on his “intelligence.” The tragedy is that intelligence now means working with materials given from others and proceeding sequentially. With the senses out of use, the child loses the ability to discover. As he grows older, he feels he has lost something. He feels empty, but he can’t see what it is. He has stopped really seeing. -Kathy Smith

In support of the class’s principle objective of ultimately viewing every downside in terms of how to resolve it, get over it, go beyond it, rise above it, or otherwise redeem it, another student named Sky Garner shared with us the most lovely student paper I’ve ever received:

LET US WALK GENTLY AMONG EACH OTHERS’ MINDS, CULTIVATING DELICATE RHYTHMS

State of Being for Sky

Know, that things are not so comprehensible or expressable as we would have them be. But come with me to the depth of my mind, to the place of my being and we shall walk together through the labyrinth. Do not look only at this feeble structure, but feel what lies between. Herein lies my being.

I have felt, have you, like some small creature just set free from the bonds of an encircling cocoon to stretch out its newly found wings, to dry them in the warm and penetrating sun and then to lift them with the lightness of vapor and become the very air that surrounds you – free. But suddenly there are the nets of style, tradition, crying judgment and rules that confine and swallow all emotion. You struggle against the invisible that engulfs you only to realize that you have become a collector’s item for those who collect the dead. At first there is fear, then hate as you become the very things that pursue you. This hate would grow and nourish itself on your fear if it weren’t for the blanket of pain that slowly numbs your senses until you drop from exhaustion. And then through some melting process you and your enemies become one. It is your own self that you are fighting, your own ego that must lose if you are to win.

The eternal tragedy of living becomes the eternal joy. Is this the psychology of being – when birth and death unite?

I become simpler in my contemplation because the complexities of good and evil, black and white no longer exist. Not because there are answers, but because there are not.

It seems that we endure because we suffer and that we suffer because we endure. We endure as a cosmic organism, one day to become liquid in a glass, the flame in a candle or the very soil we walk upon; to have the feeling of ‘treeness’ and to feel the roots stretch with growing in the damp earth.

Fear is still present. More than anything I fear the straight world. Because straight implies rigid and rigid implies static death. Yes, sometimes I hate them, too. This is my hang-up. What’s yours?

Pain? It becomes a beautiful growing thing, because growing is lonely and solitude is cherished.

Last night, I saw you, all of us dancing the dance of life, being innumerably many things at once. Each smile was an infinite touch and infinity became the eternal and ever-present now. Reasons, we put in a jar as we talked about nothing and sang about everything we loved about each other and I love you.

Each of us represents a unique convergence of our whole-self being’s innate capacities for love, joy, etc., with numerous worldly manifestations such as atoms within molecules, families within cultures, etc. Each of us also forms an acquired role-self that emerges from our experientially individualized relationship to our surrounding world. Each acquired-self’s personality corresponds to its unique local vantage point in space, time, culture, individual temperament, etc.

The eclipse of our whole-self’s Original Nature (a.k.a. our “Authentic Self”) by our role-self’s adaptive nature is ongoingly (and on*grow*ingly) mediated by our experientially custom-tailored self↔world interrelationship, which emerges as was suggested by philosopher Alan Watts: “Flowers blossom, trees branch and Earth peoples. We don’t come into the world, we come out of it.” However, it is only our bodies that actually come out of the world, while our embodied Original Nature comes *into* the world that our bodies come out of. Our Original Nature is thereafter filtered through the experiential lens of our acquired-self↔world interrelationship.

eclipses our beneficial expression of whole-self being. to the point that what we’ve eclipsed has to be mindfully recovered.

Our acquired doings become incongruent with our innate being.

Emptiness and stillness.

As is- whole, perfect, complete and unfinished.

There is only one journey. Going inside yourself. -Ranier Maria Rilke

There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle. -Albert Einstein

Re: NdG Tyson:

You issue from God’s attributes first;

Return again back to those attributes with all speed!...

You begin as part of the sun, clouds and stars.

You rise to be breath, act, word and thought! -Rumi

I can’t do anything about the thoughts that come into my head, but I *can* do something about the ones that stay there. -Penny Peirce

You can’t see the gift in what you resist. -Penny Peirce

The degree to which one understands Three is a fair indication of the degree to which he or she is civilized. -John Anthony West.

If the cause is right, the means will come. -Mohandas Gandhi

Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world’s grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it. -The Talmud (*Paradigm Found*, p. 16)

**What Tao Does:**

* **The Tao creates the one.** “One” signifies **common unity**, the **at-one-ment** of all formed substance, i.e. the all-encompassing, comprehensive unified existence (in content, structure and function) of all that has been, is and will be manifested in form or happenstance, as well as all expressions and experiencing thereof.
* **The one creates the two.** “Two” signifies **dual unity**, the **polarity** (contrast) of relationships.
* **The two create the three.** “Three” signifies **triunity**, the **awareness** of contrasting relationships.
* **The three create the ten thousand things.** “Ten thousand things” signify **multiplicity,** the many-ness of contrasting relationships.

The words “common unity” – an extension of the word “community” – signify the commonwealth of all that lives.

The word “commonwealth” signifies whatever contributes to the well-being of all that lives.

The word “being” signifies enfolding embedment in common unity.

The word “becoming” signifies unfolding emergence (a.k.a. “development”) of dual unity.

The word “consciousness” signifies awareness of being and becoming via experiencing thereof.

The word “experience” signifies expressive embodiment of awareness.

This developmental sequence of one to 10,000 is exemplified in our own experiencing of being and becoming. We are born into the realm of multiplicity with almost totally non-differentiating awareness, and we acquire differential awareness via triune discernments of this-and-that-relative-to-me, whose triunity is unique to each individual.

“Right” relationship to Tao is whatever harmoniously supports and preserves the integrity, resilience, and beauty of the commonwealth of life, while “wrong” relationship is whatever does not. If you would learn the essence of right relationship, with Tao, harmoniously conceive, gestate and give birth to a child, and then harmoniously raise the child to fully realize its own unique personhood. Relationship is harmonious insofar as one is mindfully will*ing* rather than will*ful*.

**The Way Tao Works:**

Tao works as we raise our allowance, our allowance of our original nature’s expression in, through, by and as us.

* **Wu** (non-being): emptiness that awaits pre-manifest emergence of form in consciousness and manifest emergence in physical form. (Dwelling up.)
* **Wu wei** (non-doing): stillness that awaits pre-manifest expression of form in consciousness and manifest expression in physical form. (Welling up.)

The stability that you look for in the world is created from inside your being. The creativity that you want in your experience, so that you can open to the new awarenesses that are available, come directly from creation. -TNO, October 6, 2008

The Japanese Samurai code of combat forbade a warrior from doing battle while in a turbulent emotional and mental state. This prohibition was in recognition that a troubled emotional and mental state distracts one from fully mindful engagement with an adversary, and thereby renders one correspondingly unbalanced and vulnerable in battle. Above all, therefore, a Samurai warrior was not to engage an adversary while in a state of anger. Though not all Samurai lived up to this code of combat at all times, such was their code in any event. Its faithful application on one occasion occurred when a warlord was murdered by the Samurai bodyguard of a rival warlord, whereupon the dead warlord's own Samurai bodyguard went forth to take the murderer’s life in retribution. He engaged his master’s assassin in a sword fight, and was about to deal a lethal blow when his adversary spat in his face. This so enraged the avenging Samurai that he was obliged by his code of combat to sheathe his sword, withdraw from doing battle, and resume his mission only after his anger had subsided.

The Samurai ideal of being perfectly centered in harmonious right action is epitomized in a 14th century Samurai prayer that translates into English as follows:

I have no parents, I make the heavens and Earth my parents.

I have no home, I make awareness of being my home.

I have no life and death, I make the tides of my breathing my life and death.

I have no miracles, I make right action to be my miracles.

I have no tactics, I make emptiness and fullness my tactics.

I have no armor, I make benevolence and righteousness my armor.

I have no castle, I make immovable mind my castle.

I have no sword, I make absence of self my sword.

I have no guidance, I make fidelity to being my guidance.

And I have no enemies, unless I make self doubt my enemy.

The last two lines were additionally composed an d added to the prayer by me.

In my own understanding of this prayer, I replace the word “make” with the phrase “let,” which more accurately reflects my own understanding that harmony with Tao is not something that we make to happen, it is something that we allow to emerge. Thus the prayer reads instead

I have no parents, I let the heavens and Earth be my parents.

I have no home, I let awareness of being be my home.

I have no life and death, I let the tides of my breathing be my life and death.

I have no miracles, I let right action be my miracles.

I have no tactics, I let emptiness and fullness be my tactics.

I have no armor, I let benevolence and righteousness be my armor.

I have no castle, I let immovable mind be my castle.

I have no sword, I let absence of self be my sword.

I have no guidance, I let fidelity to being be my guidance.

And I have no enemies, unless I let self doubting be my enemy.

However one may choose to word it, the Samurai prayer’s intent remains the same, the raising of one’s allowance to an optimum level.

Many say that the Samurai code of co-operative action in combat is impossible to live up to with consistency. The same persons are just as likely also to maintain that the Golden Rule is impossible to honor with consistency. Poet Robert Browning's view of such skepticism was that “A man’s reach must exceed his grasp, else what’s a heaven for?”

Tao’s supreme principle of universal co-operation is the context from which emerges all centeredness, right thinking and right action. So long as we attribute any off-centered and non-co-operative feelings or actions on our part to some outer circumstance or other person(s), we are distractedly at the effect of that circumstance rather than in command of it.

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Because Tao is the supreme context from which emerges all that is pre-manifest and manifest, Tao is evidenced in and *as* all pre-manifest and manifest process, action and content, while never being distinguished *from* or absorbed by whatever is pre-manifest and manifest. Tao is always more than what is, yet never other than what is.

Tao’s emergence *as* all manifest process, action and content is evident in all things, situations and occurrences, while yet being none of the things, situations or occurrences that become evident. For instance:

* Tao Te Ching, Sutra # 11. [That-which-is provides benefit. That-which-is-not provides usefulness.]
* What makes a guitar useful? [The opening in its sound board to the emptiness within.]
* What makes a flute useful? [The openings beneath its keys to the emptiness of the shaft between its mouthpiece and its other end.]
* What makes a computer punch card useful? [Its openings to emptiness.]
* What makes a pencil useful? [The opening (emptiness) in the wood shaft that holds the lead.]
* What makes your notebook paper useful? [Its blankness (emptiness).]

Although usefulness depends on the substance, structure and form of what is utilized, utility is other and more than substance, structure and form. Utility is the openness that is created by substance, structure and form, and usefulness is manifest in the openness. Merely benefitting from substance, structure and form is the essence of what we today call “consumerism”. Fully utilizing substance, structure and form is the essence of what has in all ages been called “service”.

Jesus distinguished between benefit and usefulness when he acknowledged the dynamic of our openness: It is what comes out of our mouths that defiles us, not what goes into our mouths. (*Matthew* 15:11)

**How to Manifest Tao:**

* Honor the thing-ness of all that manifests, via harmonious relationship to its benefits.
* Honor the no-thingness of whatever manifests, via harmonious relationship to its utility.

Mark Twain: I am an old man and have known many troubles, but most of them never happened.

Søren Kierkegaard: He who has learned rightly to be in anxiety has learned the most important thing.

Marie Curie: Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood.

Swedish Proverb: Worry gives a small thing a big shadow.

Stephen Stills: One thing the blues ain’t, is funny.

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We are living in a time of evolutionary correction, planetary transition and cosmic turn-around that amounts to a global transformation (a change in kind rather than of degree.)

From self↔world destabilization to self↔world harmonious alignment

Some of the good news I shared last night is that

* so-called “bad” news is the exception, not the rule;
* the bad news of planetary turbulence (political, atmospheric and geological) is the growing pains of a positive life-enhancing evolutionary correction, planetary transition and cosmic turn-around currently underway;
* we have the essential natural resource base and informational, technological, industrial and personnel requirements that are required to end starvation throughout the planet in a few years, and lack only the political will to do so. For example, the planet is at this very moment growing several tons of edible vegetation per person presently alive. All that is required is an expanded awareness and acceptance of what is edible, and the willingness to create an effective distribution system.

*Working with You Is Killing Me*, Katherine Crowley and Kathi Elster (Warner Business Books, 2006).

A bunch of weak people, even in numbers, aren't strong. Get a whole bunch of confused people together and see how much clarity comes out of it. In other words, you just can't add one more confused person to the pot, and expect to get any more clarity… One – standing outside of the confused group – who is clear, is more powerful than a million who are confused. -A-Hicks

# A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops. -Henry Adams

* Infinite Spiritual Eternal Now
* Anatomy of experience = structure; physiology of experience = process.

**If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything; it is open to everything. In the beginner’s mind there are many possibilities; in the expert’s mind there are few. -Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind***

You can learn new things at any time in your life if you're willing to be a beginner. If you actually learn to like being a beginner, the whole world opens up to you. -Barbara Sher

One of the reasons, I believe, that knowledge is in a state of useless overproduction is that it is strewn all over the place, spoken in a thousand competitive voices. It's insignificant fragments are magnified all out of proportion, while its major and world-historical insights lie around begging for attention. -Ernest Becker, Pulitzer-Prize winner, "The Denial of Death"

Most technology, on balance, has improved things. I think that sitting in an air-conditioned room watching C-SPAN on a color television set beats being next to a primitive fireplace outside a cave. –Newt Gingrich

From Scott Olson

Thanks Rev. Noel.  I will look into the material with enthusiasm.

I know I also promised you an email some time ago regarding the Sanskrit phrase from the Bhagavad Gita: Yogastra karukarmani, In the fullness of time, and for what it is worth after all this time, here is that email.

The book you recently returned to me (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's commentary on chapters 1-6 of the Gita) was a book that I thought had that Sanskrit phrase in it.  However, upon my cursory examination of it, I came to believe that it only had the English translation, which is to the best of my recollection. "Established in Being, perform action.".

I know the Sanskrit phrase and the English translation have been with me for a long time.  I believe I first heard them back in the early 70's when listening to Maharishi expound for hours on what he called "The Science of Creative Intelligence".  It so happened that you returned the book on the very day of Rev. David's message on the final chapter of the New Earth, which was about Inner Purpose versus Outer Purpose.  Rev. David mentioned that Outer Purpose is about our "Doing" and Inner Purpose is about our "Being".  After receiving the book back from you, I was again contemplating Yogastra karukarmani and I had a confluence of ideas that all made sense simultaneously and congruently. Furthermore, it dissolved what I have come to call "the fundamental spiritual seeker's dilemma", that dilemma being that eventually all seekers come to the point of realizing that there is not a damn thing they can DO to effect their spiritual growth/evolution/being.  The summary of the confluence of ideas is that all evolution is a flow from Being to Doing.  This, I think is the point of Yogastra karukarmani - Established in Being, Perform Action.  This I think is the seminal message of the Gita.  It is also, in my mind, the seminal message of the book "Doing Nothing".  When we attempt to go upstream against the natural flow by doing something (anything) in order to be something (anything), we struggle and suffer needlessly.  Being is always effortless, and doing can be effortless also insofar as we allow our actions to flow in the natural direction of coming from our Being, rather than doing something in an attempt to Be something we already are.

Thank you for Being who you are, among many other things, one of the few persons I could send this to and would actually read it.

Peace,  
Scott  
  
>> I can never have what I am praying for,

>> But I am always exactly what I pray as.

**The Tao of Self-Cultivation**

**Fear is the cheapest room in the house.**

**I would like to see you living in better conditions.**

-Hafiz

“Tao” signifies the presence (the benefit of nearness) and power (the utility of how-ness) of the immediate moment.

“Te” signifies being fully and freely available to the presence (nearness) and power (howness) of the immediate moment.

Cultivating one’s Original Nature is like cultivating a garden – replenishing and weeding the soil. The Original Nature of personhood is the soil (a.k.a. “soul”) of our personality’s acquired nature.

Our Original Nature’s cultivation consists of replenishing ourselves with authenticity via the emptiness of non-being, and weeding ourselves with cessation via the stillness of non-doing. By empting ourselves of inner contradiction, and stilling ourselves from outer distraction, we allow our Original Nature to have its way as us by growing up rather than making up.

Below is an incomplete index to the 82 verses of the *Tao Te Ching* as they address the various facets of self-cultivation practice. As you read Wayne Dyer’s book on *Living the Wisdom of the Tao*, you can enlarge this index by citing additional verses that apply to each practice, as well as additional practices.

**Cultivating Authenticity (emptiness/non-being): Uncovering Our Original Nature and Allowing It To Be**

To restore one’s Original (and equally feminine~masculine) Nature is the art of

* Flowing (as does water) – 2, 43, 78
* Self-Mastering – 33
* Serving – x
* Emptying – 11 (plus “Cultivating Cessation” below)
* Letting Go – 55 (plus “Cultivating Cessation” below)
* Bending – 76
* Returning and Yielding – 40
* Decreasing – 48
* Trusting providence – x
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultivating Cessation (stillness/non-doing): Discovering Our Acquired Nature and Allowing It to Be**

To discover (rather than make up) one’s acquired nature is to cease

* Self-imaging – x
* Looking at oneself – x
* Looking from one’s past – x
* Clinging (deactivating your “mine” field) – 19
* Contradicting – 28
* Striving – 20
* Forcing– 30, 31, 57, 69 –
* Efforting – 63
* Seeming – x
* Expecting/anticipating – x
* Yearning – x
* Interfering – 18
* Accumulating – 24, 81
* Increasing – 48
* Suffering – 71
* Demanding/mandating – 75
* Resenting – 79
* Believing/disbelieving – x
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**The Tao of Friction-Free Relationship: Class Session #1**

**Reclaiming Our Original Nature**

Wholes exemplify being. Roles exemplify doing. Thus every difficult situation is a spiritual opportunity

to exchange our role-self’s doings and havings for whole-self being. -From *The Gospel of Not Yet Common Sense*

**Opening song: Oh, How Lucky I Am**

* Hold hands. Both neuro-physiologically and quantum-mechanically, we don’t actually feel whomever we touch, we feel our own skin touching theirs. In other words, we can feel ourselves only as we are touching another person. Other persons are the mirrors that we require in order so see ourselves.
* We are all the same person trying to shake hands with ourselves. -Hugh Romney (a.k.a. “Wavy Gravy”)

**Seminar Terminology:**

In this seminar the word “spirit” signifies our innately authentic Original Nature as godly whole-self beings; the word “soul” signifies our incarnation of spirit’s godly whole-self being; the word “ego” signifies our worldly role-self and its doings and havings; and the word “divinity” signifies godliness. None of these words is capitalized because none of them is more godly – or is less godly – than any of the others.

Everything in the physical universe *emerges* from the same godly source, as an *unfoldment* of the universally enfolded godliness of all that is. Therefore, however non-godlike (a.k.a. “evil”) any person, thing or circumstance seems to be, its essence is never ungodly. Whatever we experience as being unlike god is no less godly in its essence than whatever we experience as being like god. This is the meaning of the axiom that “God is all that is, all that is not, and more.”

The term “friction-free relationship” signifies our being free *from* friction, not being free of it. If we were free *of* friction we would slide rather than walk, because friction mediates the interaction between gravity and motion. Without friction, gravity would let us all the way down at every move. As Ernest Holmes observed, “we walk by falling forward.” Were it not for the friction that empowers us to remain upright rather than slip each time we take a step, we would tend to fall down rather than forward. Friction empowers us to move when, where and as we chose. Without friction we would still be moving, but not under our own command.

The friction *from* which we can be free, even though we cannot be entirely free of it, is the interpersonal friction that inevitably results from there being many persons on the planet, not just one person. Differences of perspective, disposition, and other experiential distinctions make interpersonal friction as inevitable as the impartial physical friction that treats all alike. Yet we are far from being totally at the *effect* of interpersonal friction. We can be free from its effects even in situations where we are far from being free of its presence.

**Orientation:**

This seminar’s mission is to support the reclamation of our Original Nature as spiritual whole-self beings (a.k.a. “souls”) endowed with godliness (a.k.a. “divinity”). We are gathered in this seminar to facilitate our cultivation of spiritual self-mastery via the reclamation of our innate godliness from our ungodlike behaviors and circumstances.

Each of us is a seedling of godliness that requires weeding and spiritual nurturance if it is to flourish in full bloom. In establishing a foundation for your own full-blooming spiritual self-mastery, I would like you to do two things:

* Write down the address of your home.
* All together, on the count of three, read out loud what you’ve written down.

Here is a metaphysical perspective on the address you just wrote down:

Shortly after World War Two, when many Eastern Europeans were immigrating to the United States as “displaced persons,” a little girl was sitting on a pile of suitcases as her family was waiting to be being processed by immigration officials at New York’s Ellis Island. When a passing social worker remarked sympathetically, “It’s too bad you don’t have a home,” the little girl brightly replied, “Oh, we have a home, we just don’t have a house to put it in.”

This little girl knew what most so-called “grown-ups” have long forgotten, that our ultimate home is a spiritual state of being. A house is merely a local and temporary place in which we may be spiritually at home, unless we have forgotten what that means. Accordingly, when we cite the address of our spiritual home, rather than the address of the house in which we lodge our spiritual home, we all have the same address:

[Song: Everywhere I go, here I am]

[NOTE: Capital “I” signifies spirit rather than ego (lower-case “i”).]

Acknowledging and cultivating spiritual self-mastery begins with knowing our ultimate home address, and it comes to fruition only as we cease confusing our “I am” location with that of the house where we lodge our “I am.” We are *at* home only in the realm of “I am’s” spiritual eternity, while the bodies and buildings in which we may (or may not) experience being at home are in the realm of physical impermanence. Expecting our physically impermanent circumstances to produce the fruits of “I am’s” spiritual eternality, and endeavoring to satisfy our yearning to experience this permanence via means of physical forms and formalities, is the basis of every problematic experience.

At the heart of every problem is a failure to realize that we are spiritual beings who are everywhere here to enjoy a physically embodied human experience, while proceeding instead as if we are human creatures striving to have a spiritual experience. To “realize” something is to make it real *in* our experiencing *as* our experiencing. Perhaps no one has more poignantly portrayed the failure to realize the distinction between our spiritual home and our earthly abode than singer-songwriter Dory Previn, a former wife of pianist and conductor Andre Previn, in her song “Mythical Kings and Iguanas”:

I have flown to star-stained heights on bent and battered wings

in search of mythical kings, mythical kings,

sure that everything of worth is in the sky and not the earth

and I never learned to make my way

down, down, down where the iguanas play.

I have ridden comet tails in search of magic rings

to conjure mythical kings, mythical kings,

singing scraps of angel-song, high is right and low is wrong,

and I never taught myself to give

down, down, down where the iguanas live.

Astral walks I try to take, I sit and throw *I Ching.*

Aesthetic bards and tarot cards are the cords to which I cling –

don't break my strings

(I wish you would)

or I will fall

(I wish I could

I wish I could).

Curse the mind that mounts the clouds in search of mythical kings,  
and only mystical things, mystical things.  
Cry for the soul that will not face the body as an equal place,     
and I never learned to touch for real  
or feel the things iguanas feel  
down, down , down where they play.

Teach me, teach me, teach me,  
reach me.

Relating to our souls and bodies as unequal places can take either the form of our being so worldly in our role-self’s doings and havings that we become non-godlike, or of our being so presumably godlike in our role-self’s doings and havings that we are of little earthly good.

If you wrote down the temporary street address of the worldly house in which you lodge your spiritual home, now cross it out and replace it with your spiritual home’s permanent address: *Here* I Am. While everything that is beyond my body is “there,” all experiencing thereof and of my body itself is “here.” Even when I have a so-called “out-of-body experience” in which my body also becomes “there,” the experiencing thereof is nonetheless always and only “here.” My experiencing is never untimely, for even though I may not always be on time in the process of getting “there,” I am always timely (never even so much as a nanosecond early or late) at my being “here.”

In 1953 a notorious madam named Polly Adler wrote a book, recently republished, entitled *A House Is Not a Home*. Her title’s insight is as true of our physical bodies as it is of any building in which we choose to lodge our bodies, be it a brothel, convent or monastery. Yet most of our lifetime is spent maintaining our physical housing – our bodies and the buildings in which we lodge them – rather than maintaining the spiritual beings that our bodies and buildings house.

When we routinely pay more attention to what we are physically doing and having than to our spiritual being, we confirm Albert Einstein’s maxim that "We can't solve our problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." Our problems are created by our presumption that they are ultimately physical in nature, rather than co-incidentally physical and spiritual. Jesus addressed the alternative to such problematic thinking in his commandment to be *in* the world yet not *of* it – to fully be the spiritual whole-self beings that we already are, rather than role-playing human selves who are in search of spiritual fulfillment.

Philosopher Alan Watts proclaimed that “We don’t come into the world, we come out of it. Flowers blossom, trees branch and Earth peoples.” Yet it is only our physical bodies that come out of the world, while our Original Nature as spiritual whole-self beings does come *into* the world that our bodies come out of, hence Jesus’ commandment to be in the world so mindfully that our way of being in it is not of it.

The world is no less spiritual because it is also physical. Nor are the world’s problems any less spiritual because they manifest in physical form. We are ultimately spiritual beings who are here (everywhere we go) to make ourselves at home in an equally spiritual world. There is no secular world, only the presumption of a secular world in which everything remains no less sacred. A friend of mine celebrated this realization in a song whose chorus affirms:

I am a spiritual being, living in a spiritual world,

I am a spiritual being, living in a spiritual world,

I am divinely guided, in all I think, say and do!

I am divinely guided, I know it is true.

Whenever it seems that we are not divinely guided, it is we who are ignoring divine guidance, not divine guidance that is ignoring us. For example, when God called out in the Garden of Eden, “Adam, where are you?” it was not God who had gone into hiding.

Every experience is a divinely guided spiritual experience in worldly guise, because our Original Nature endows us as spiritual beings whose eternal homestead is *the commonwealth of all life.* Our spiritual homestead is *the universal common unity of all that has life and is life-sustaining.* Our current pollution, contamination and other corruption of our earth-binding common unity is a matter of our own self-misguided role-self doings and havings. The alternative is to actualize our accountability to our spiritual homestead amidst every worldly condition and circumstance we encounter with the spiritual self-mastery that Ralph Waldo Emerson prescribed:

It is easy in the world to live after the opinion of the world’s opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great [person] is [s/he] who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

This seminar facilitates our development of such “Here I am” spiritual self-mastery.

As cited above, Einstein’s maxim and Jesus’ commandment both recognize that so long as we spend most of our time and energy maintaining ourselves as physical creatures *of* this world, rather than as spiritual beings *in* this world, we are not effectively fulfilling the purpose of our earthly incarnation. We always fall short of fully realizing our spiritual destiny whenever we fall short of recognizing that *every worldly problem is an occasion for spiritual unfoldment.*

We cannot “home in” on our spiritual self-unfoldment and maintenance when we are instead addictively preoccupied with the physical unfoldment and maintenance of our worldly bodies and buildings, yet most of us nonetheless become experientially addicted to some aspect of our physicality. Effective self-mastery of our physicality requires the sobriety of addiction-free consciousness, while effective self-mastery of our godliness requires the *mindful higher sobriety* of friction-free consciousness, whose facilitation this seminar serves.

No matter what forms our problems take, whether as difficult situations, difficult people, or both, we tend to make our problems at least habitual if not addictive. Our habits and addictions create a deforming mirror that grossly distorts our experiencing and expression of our innate godliness. Fortunately, these habits and addictions are not something with which we are born, they are rather acquired by us as we grow presumably upward. Yet because our habits and addictions are adopted by us rather than innately endowed, we are also capable of releasing them on behalf of reclaiming our Original Nature. As diarist Anaïs Nin asserted:

One discovers that destiny can be directed, that one does not need to remain in bondage to the first wax imprint made on childhood sensibilities. One need not be branded by the first pattern. Once the deforming mirror is smashed, there is a possibility of wholeness; there is a possibility of joy.

Wholeness and joy are the default settings of our Original Nature’s godliness, and they are forever subject to reclamation even when – and however – we go about losing touch with them. Accordingly, this seminar’s objective is the reclamation of our Original Nature as godly beings.

And what is our Original Nature like, and how does it become polluted and corrupted? That question is addressed in the following pages.

**The Tao of Friction-Free Relationship - Class Session #2**

**Stillness as a Place to Come from and Emptiness as a Person to Be**

Joy comes to those who have the heart to make their pain a work of art.

John D. Engle, Jr.

What wisdom can you find that is greater than kindness?

**Opening song: Everywhere I Go, Here I Am**

* I am the only person I can never get away from.
* xxxxx

**Seminar Terminology:**

In this seminar the word “stillness” signifies emptiness of being; the word “emptiness” signifies stillness of doing; the words “contingent” and “contingency” signify dependency upon; the word “self-dominion” signifies our ability to determine our relationship to circumstance, as follows:

*I cease choosing for others and allowing others to choose for me.*

Though I do make the choice to have others in my life, I do not make their choices for them (children sometimes appropriately excepted). All of my choosing is self-choosing, by myself, for myself, as myself. Since this is the ground of every person’s dominion, I respect the power of choice in others accordingly. Thus rather than presume to advise them, I instead assist them in clarifying the options that are available for their own choice.

*I cease holding others accountable for the quality of my own experience, and holding myself accountable for the quality of their experience.*

Even though I am constantly surrounded with circumstances that have been generated by others, it ultimately matters not who, how many or whatever else is generating these circumstances because the quality of my experience thereof is entirely self-regulated in accordance with the forms I give to it. I am the sole (some would say “soul”) proprietor of both the meaning and the immediately contingent consequences of my experience, and I honor that same sole proprietorship in others.

*I cease making others responsible for the consequences of my experience, and likewise refrain from holding myself responsible for the consequences to others of their experience.*

I am responsible for others' consequences only in the way that I allow their consequences to influence my own. Since this is likewise the case for others in their interrelationship with me, I do not make others wrong when their ways do not agree with mine. I instead let them know (and only when necessary) that what they experience as workable for them is not workable for me. The simple statement, “That doesn’t work for me,” is a blameless, no-fault communication that makes no one “wrong”.

*I cease denying the effects on others of my own choices and consequences, and cease discounting the impact that their choices and consequences have on me.*

I hold myself accountable only for and to the realm of my own consequences, which includes their impingement on others and the impingement of their consequences on me, and I support others in being likewise accountable. I also hold myself accountable for seeing the constructive potential in every consequence, whether it be the consequence of my own or another’s outcome, and however unwanted the consequence may be.

*I cease blaming others or myself.*

Blame, no matter of whom or by whom, is denigration or denial of my own or another's ability to respond. Since the only way to obtain responsibility at discount is to discount someone’s ability to respond, I fully and blamelessly assume my own response-ability, and relate to others’ response-abilities accordingly.

**Orientation:**

The greatest source of friction in your relationships is your own activity whenever you are depending on others and outer circumstances for how you think, feel and behave. To attribute the friction in your life to others and to outer circumstances is to give your power away, because even though other persons and outer circumstances are often a resource of relational friction, and are never the primary source of your own experience of relational friction. Since they are externally contingent to your being, and thus not internally central thereto, they are experientially dependent variables. As such, therefore, their effects on your thinking, feelings and behavior are determined by (and thus dependent upon) how you are choosing to experience them. Your own self is always and only the single independent experiential variable in your life, because your are the sovereign creator of *how* you experience your life. This primacy of your own self-dominion has been recognized by numerous spiritual adepts:

Ernest Holmes: Talk to yourself, not to the world. There is no one to talk to but yourself because all experience takes place within. Conditions are the reflections of our meditations and nothing else.

Thaddeus Golas: What you deny to others will be denied to you, for the plain reason that you are always legislating for yourself; all your words and actions define the world you want to live in.

Marcus Aurelius: It is our own power to have no opinion about a thing, and not to be disturbed in our soul; for things themselves have no natural power to form our judgments.

Rudolph Steiner: If it depends on something other than myself whether I should get angry or not, I am not master of myself . . . I have not yet found the ruler within myself. I must develop the faculty of letting the impressions of the outer world approach me only in the way in which I myself determine.

Taking responsibility and accountability for your own experiencing begins with being responsible for your own perceptions. The word “responsibility” signifies your having the ability to respond, to be response-able as the mindful rather than unnoticing (*i.e.,* unconscious) cause, agent and source of your own experiencing.The word “accountability” signifies holding yourself answerable for preserving the value of all to which you are able to respond.

Your greatest self-generated source of friction is the structure of your own self-image, and your second greatest self-generated source of friction is the structure of your knowing. To the extent that you rigidly conform your relationships to the structures of your self-image and knowing, your relationships will tend to be fraught with friction. The antidote to self-generated friction is to be empty and still, which empowers you to access beginner’s mind by dismantling the structures of your self-image and knowing, thereby freeing yourself from the known and allowing yourself to live beyond your beliefs. Emptiness and stillness empower you to release self-generated friction in accordance with the following prescriptions:

* Cease looking *at* who you are, and instead look *as* who you are. Stop looking at the structure of your self-image. Be the imagining self that you actually are, rather than the imagined self that is only who you think you are.
* Cease looking *at* what you know, and instead look *from* what you know. Dismantle the structure of your self-knowing, so that your self can freely express (*i.e.,* press out) *from* its knowing without being impressed by (*i.e.,* pressed into) its limited perspective on *what* it knows.
* Be only what is yours to be.

Ralph Waldo Emerson: Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of our own mind. . . . No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature.

William James: Seek out that particular mental attitude which makes you feel most deeply and vitally alive, along with which comes the inner voice which says, ‘This is the real me,’ and when you have found that attitude, follow it.

* Have only what is yours to have, by relying on the providence of your given nature:

The universe delivers to those who create a receptive opening. Everything you desire will come to you when you are prepared with willing expectancy to receive it in the form that it shows up.

To be fully rich is to be fully alive, fully healthy and fully engaged in being only as you can be and doing what only you can do.

* Do only what is yours to do: your noble purpose and vocation of destiny. How does one determine one’s noble purpose? In addition to the prescriptions provided for such determination in the book, *Noble Purpose*, the following prescriptions are likewise quite helpful:

Martha Graham: There is a vitality, a life-force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you...and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium, and will be lost. It is not your business to determine how good it is, nor how valuable, nor how it compares with other expressions. It is your business to keep it yours clearly and directly, to keep the channel open. You do not even have to believe in yourself or your work. You have to keep open and aware directly to the urges that activate you.

KEEP THE CHANNEL OPEN!

Howard Thurman: Don't ask yourself what the world needs, ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go do that. Because what the world most needs are people who have come alive.

Diane Sawyer (from her father’s vocational advice, “Find the place where your greatest love meets the world’s greatest need,” she fashioned three questions): “What is it that you love? Where is the most adventurous place you could do it? And are you certain it will serve other people?”

Marcus Aurelius: [D]iscard the thought “How do I look to others?” Be content if you can live the rest of your life as your nature demands. Consider what it wants. And let nothing else distract you; for you have experienced endless searching and not found happiness anywhere, not in logical thought, not in wealth, not in fame, not in self-indulgence – not anywhere. Then where can I find happiness? In doing what my nature requires. How can I do this? If I allow my impulses and actions to spring from my principles. What principles? They are about good and evil, that nothing is good for me that does not make me just, modest, courageous, and independent; and nothing is evil that does not produce the exact opposite.

Viktor Frankl: We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything may be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way. -*Man's Search for Meaning*

* In your interrelationships with all others,
  + assist them in staying out of each other’s way,
  + stay out of everyone else’s way as you do so, and
  + spend the remainder of your time and energy doing what only you can do.
* Be grateful for all that is and all that is not, for all that has been and for all that hasn’t been, for all that will be and for all that won’t be.
* Be faithful to the person you see in the mirror.

Shakespeare: To thine own self be true, and…thou canst not then be false to any man.

Anthony DeMello: “If you are not yourself deceitful, you will not be deceived.”

Self-fidelity insures one’s consciousness with what author Ernest Hemingway called a built-in “crap detector,” a fidelity meter that works on all concerned.

* Cherish honest criticism.

Franklin P. Jones: Honest criticism is hard to take, particularly from a relative, a friend, an acquaintance, or a stranger.

Your taking of these prescriptions is facilitated by the exercise on p. 24-27 of *Thank You for Being Such a Pain.*

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Freeing your relationships from friction empowers you to experience your wholeness, and you will know that you’re experiencing wholeness when you feel better all over than anywhere else.

Here are some additional perspectives on friction-free relationships:

The Original Spirit is Harmony. -Ernest Holmes

[S]pirit is the principle of harmony in operation. It is the wholeness of the whole exerting its magnetic influence upon the entire field of activity of this whole. -Dane Rudhyar (p. 172)

The greatest weapon against stress is an ability to choose one thought over another. –William James

I have learned through bitter experience the one supreme lesson: to conserve my anger, and as heat conserved is transmitted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transmitted into a power that can move the world. -Gandhi

If we listened to our intellect, we'd never have a love affair. We'd never have a friendship. We'd never go into business, because we'd be cynical. Well, that's nonsense. You've got to jump off cliffs all the time and build your wings on the way down. -Ray Bradbury

Love is not something you do,

It is not how you behave.

There's nothing you can do that constitutes loving another,

No action that is of itself loving.

Love is a way of being.

And more than that.

It is simply being,

Being with another person, however they may be.

Holding no judgments, having no agendas,

No need to have them experience your love,

No desire to demonstrate love,

No intrusion upon their soul.

Nothing but a total acceptance of their being,

Born of your total acceptance of yours. -Peter Russell

If you've come here to help me, you're wasting your time. But if you've come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together. –Australian Aboriginal Elder Lilla Watson

Every person who allows others to treat him as a spiritual leader has the responsibility to ask himself: Out of all the perceptions available to me in the universe, why am I emphasizing the ignorance of my brothers? What am I doing in a role where this is real? What kind of standards am I conceiving, in which so many people are seen to be in [lack], while I am the enlightened one? -Thaddeus Golas

The way to be safe is never to be secure. -Benjamin Franklin

**If you know what, you know how. -Thomas Hora**

An entire book about Franklin’s proposition, written by Alan Watts, is entitled *The Wisdom of Insecurity*.

As to Hora’s proposition, how to go about accomplishing cannot be known until you have decided what to do. Only the conscious mind has the power to mindfully choose what to do, after which the subconscious mind alerts you to whatever knowing is required to accomplish it. In the absence of conscious choices, your subconscious mind takes charge both of what you do and of how you do it.

**Honoring the Cosmic Kindom and Common Unity of Our At-One-Ment,**

**The Tao of Friction-Free Relationship – Week Two**

Our Original Nature can be reclaimed as we honor three operational principles:

1. What you resist persists and grows stronger. [You can’t see the gift in what you resist. -Penny Peirce]
2. You can only be exactly as you are in the moment.
3. Anything you allow to be exactly as it is completes itself.

According to *A Course in Miracles*, there are only two emotions, love and fear. All other emotions are derivative of either love or fear, and whatever is unloving (and thus fear-full) is a call for love. At any given moment, therefore, we are experiencing either love or a call for love.

Unwanted experience is a call for love, a call for the one who is having the experience to love the experience itself – not necessarily to love the person, thing or circumstance that one is experiencing, rather to love the existence of one’s experiencing, however it presently is. As Thaddeus Golas proclaimed in *The Lazy Man’s Guide to Enlightenment*, when you feel unable to love yourself (or anyone/anything else), then love the experience of being unable to love.

For example, loving the experience of being in hell is the fastest way out of it, because doing so consists of being grateful for experiencing something that is surely passing (as everything eventually does), so that you don’t have to stay there – as advised in the 23rd Psalm (Revised Slandered Version): “Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I need not pitch my tent there.” As spiritual philosopher Ernest Holmes put it, although we can’t totally avoid having negative experiences, we don’t have to entertain them. Negativity can prevail in our experiencing only for as long as we entertain negativity by dwelling in it.

When we lovingly accept the way we are *presently* experiencing someone(s) or something(s), and are mindful that all current experiential states are transient rather than permanent, we free ourselves to differently experience he/she/it/them.

**Experiencing Reality and the Reality of Experiencing**

Our experiencing is something that we ongoingly do, while each distinct experience (the content of our experiencing) occurs within a limited time frame. Our experiencing flows like an endless stream, while each specific experience is fixed within a finite window of time. Thus unless we fixate our attention (and thus ourselves) in a particular experience, our experiencing moves us right along.

Accordingly, when others are inclined to employ the noun “experience,” which signifies a particular outcome of our participation in reality’s milieu, I often use the verb-form “experiencing” to signify the ceaseless dynamism of our ongoing participation. Our experiencing is a perennially dynamic interface with reality’s milieu, and is therefore mutable and subject to change.

The moment you are at-one-with a feeling that you don’t like, rather than resisting it, the feeling is freed to change. Changing your relationship to a feeling changes the feeling itself, because every relationship is an interrelationship in which all things concerned are affected by each thing concerned, and vice versa. Therefore, whenever you change the way you relate to something, the something to which you are relating changes as well.

Spiritual enlightenment begins with having a fear-free relationship with oneself and then correspondingly with other selves and one’s entire life in general – hence the commandment to “love thy neighbor *as* thyself.” Anything that frees us from the effects of experiential friction is a “spiritual” practice.

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This series of seminars is about the artful science of friction-free self-management, which honors a principle pronounced by Winston Churchill at the conclusion of World War 2 when the bombed-out House of Commons was to be rebuilt. Churchill insisted that its former structural state be restored to assure the continuity of England’s established traditions. His rationale was a classic statement of conservatively informed self-management: “We shape our dwellings, and then our dwellings shape us.”

It is the same with our relationships. The shapes we give to our relationships shape us correspondingly in turn. Our relationships always show up in the form of our own participation therein. When our participation is discordant, our experience thereof is correspondingly discordant. Yet it is always and only our own discord that we are experiencing.

We fortunately have the power to experience discordant harmony, rather than discordant dissonance, as those who appreciate modern jazz and modern symphonic music so well know. When our participation is in harmonious accord (a chord) with the principles that govern friction-free relationships, the consequences of our participation are correspondingly harmonious.

What is true of our dwellings and our relationships is likewise true of the ideas on which we dwell: We give shape to our thinking, and then our thinking shapes us. When our thinking is friction free, our experiencing is accordingly friction free. Thus all unnecessary friction in our lives is a consequence of something we tell ourselves is so, that actually needn’t be so. Nobody was more aware of this than Ernest Holmes when he offered one of his most profound metaphysical prescriptions:

Talk to yourself, not to the world. There is no one to talk to but yourself because all experience takes place within. Conditions are the reflections of our meditations and nothing else.

In other words, our perceptions of the outer world are projections of what we are telling ourselves within. As the Talmud notes, “We don’t see things the way they are, we see things the way we are.” And as Nobel Prize novelist Herman Hesse similarly noted:

If you hate a person, you hate something in him that is part of yourself. What isn't part of ourselves doesn't disturb us.

Each of us is a self-bordered island universe in a cosmic ocean of consciousness, which Ernest Holmes described as follows:

We are surrounded by an Infinite Possibility. It is Goodness, Life, Law and Reason. In expressing Itself through us, It becomes more fully conscious of Its own being. Therefore, It wishes to express through us. As It passes into our being, It automatically becomes the law of our lives. It can pass into expression through us only as we consciously allow It to do so. Therefore, we should have faith in It, and Its desires and Its ability to do for us *all that we shall ever need to have done.* Since It must pass through our consciousness to operate for us, we must be conscious that It is doing so.

Because our every expression is a self-expression – a pressing outward from within – so it likewise is that not only does all our talking originate as self-talk, even what we write is first and foremost a message to ourselves. Novelist Marcel Proust acknowledged the prevalence of our self-talk in what we write when he described what happens as we read what another has written:

In reality, every reader is, while he is reading, the reader of his own self. The writer’s work is merely a kind of optical instrument which he offers to the reader to enable him to discern what, without this book, he would perhaps never have experienced in himself. And the recognition by the reader in his own self of what the book says is the proof of its veracity.

As Hugh Romney so aptly acknowledged, it is because every expression is a self-expression that “We are all the same person trying to shake hands with ourselves.” (Hugh Romney is more widely known as the clown, “Wavy Gravy.”) It is in this “we are one” spirit of common unity that we assemble in this weekly seminar as a learning community that consists of eavesdroppers on one another’s self-talk, for the purpose of overhearing and mutually amplifying our common unity’s self-revelations from each to all and from all to each.

I advise all who would enjoy a friction-free relationship to heed C. V. Cavafy’s poem, “The City”:1

You said, “I’ll go to another land, go to another shore,

find another city better one than this one.

Whatever I try to do is fated to turn out wrong

and my heart lies buried like something dead.

How long can I let my mind moulder in this place?

Wherever I turn , wherever I look,

I see black ruins of my life, here,

where I’ve spent so many years, wasted them, destroyed them totally.”

You won’t find a new country, won’t find another shore.

This city will always pursue you.

You’ll walk the same streets, grow old

in the same neighborhoods, turn gray in these same houses.

You’ll always end up in this city. Don’t hope for things elsewhere:

There’s no ship for you, there’s no road.

Now that you’ve wasted your life here, in this small corner,

You’ve destroyed it everywhere in the world.

This poem reflects the downside of our weekly opening affirmation, “Everywhere I go, here I am (talking to myself).” Only as I change my experiencing of myself by telling it something different while moving my “here” from one place to another, can I experience life newly rather than repeat my former experiencing.

For example, it is commonly estimated that the average person has 60,000 thoughts a day, which is 2,500 thoughts per hour, 41.666 thoughts per minute, and .69444 thoughts per second. The person who made these calculations comments:2

I guess the two-thirds of a thought every second is a full thought that got interrupted and cut off by another thought, which is kind of depressing when you think about it (whoops, there’s another thought!). Our thoughts are like a bunch of gibbering monkeys climbing all over each other, vying for attention. This is why the Buddhists call it “monkey mind.”

Of each day’s potpourri of 60,000 churning thoughts, it is further commonly estimated that from 80-95% of its thoughts are reruns of our earlier thoughts. Thus even though we are always experiencing whatever we are aware of as if it exists *in* the present, we nonetheless live mostly *from* our awareness of the past. Hence historian James Harvey Robinson’s quip: “Most of our so-called reasoning consists in finding arguments for going on believing as we already do.”

The upside of “everywhere I go, here I am (talking to myself)” is that there are no difficult people in the world. There are instead only difficult ways to relate with other people. Thus the further upside is that every problem in my life is my own(ed) problem rather than someone else’s. On the day that this insight on self-ownership became clear to me I wrote the following I-opener to myself:

I am the source of all the problems that I have ever had,

ever do have,

ever will have,

ever can have.

Each person is his or her own problem (if any) to be resolved.

Other persons cannot be "my" problem.

Only the way I interact with other persons can be problematic for me,

because problems exist in the way that persons relate, not in who they are.

Problems reside in the unworkability of relationships,

rather than in the persons who are relating.

It is only as I participate in the unworkability of a relationship

that I insure the perpetuity of "my" owned problem with it.

Nor can my job be "my" problem.

Only the way that I relate to my job can be problematic.

So long as I relate to my job as if it were "my" problem,

it is I who am perpetuating its problematic ways.

For each of "my" problems there is the same solution:

to cease my participation in whatever is unworkable for me,

and to participate instead in what does work.

As long as I am participating in what is working for me

I know not even what a problem is like.

No condition of the world is a problem that is resolvable by me.

Only my condition *in* the world is subject to my resolution.

The only conditions that are truly mine to deal with

are conditions that I can master,

and only one condition is available for mastery by me:

the conditioning of my own being.

The prerequisite for self-mastery is everywhere the same:

No blame.

In other words, the secret of friction-free relationship is never to be so distracted by an occasion of friction in your life that you mistake it for the source. To become thus distracted is to become the victim of your own hopes and expectations. Therefore,

Please do not believe me

if ever I should say that you've upset me.

Sometimes I forget the true source of my feelings.

You cannot make me sad,

impatient,

angry,

or otherwise dis-eased.

Only a hope or expectation of you on my part,

which you have not fulfilled,

can move me thus.

I am too human

to be without hopes and expectations,

and I am also much too human

to live always in the knowing

that my hopes and expectations

have no claim upon your being.

So if I say that you've upset me,

please forgive me for attempting

to disinherit my own self's creation of my pain.

And please do not ignore my deeper message:

I care enough about you to include you in my hopes and expectations.

1. C. V. Cavafy, *Collected Poems*, George Savidis, ed. (Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 51
2. From http://onesanctuary.com/inspiration/forrestmcdowell/drnobodymeditation.pdf. A Google search for “thoughts per second” (including the quotes) on 10/19/2008 turned up 2,890 web pages that address this concern, which is further evidence of how repetitious is even our concern over repetition.

**The Tao of Friction-Free Relationship – Week Three**

**ABSTRACT**

*We are born with an innate self of divine personhood, whose Original Nature (Tao) becomes masked by our acquired self’s worldly personality. Since our Original Nature is merely masked rather than diminished, its expression is subject to recovery.*

Each of us represents a unique convergence of our innate-self’s divine personhood of love, joy, etc., with numerous worldly manifestations such as atoms within molecules, families within cultures, etc. Each of us also forms as acquired-self personality that emerges from our experientially individualized relationship to our surrounding world. Each acquired-self’s personality corresponds to its unique local vantage point in space, time, culture, individual temperament, etc.

The conjunction of our innate-self personhood’s Original Nature (a.k.a. our “Authentic Self”) with the personality of our acquired-self’s adaptive nature is ongoingly (and on*grow*ingly) mediated by our experientially custom-tailored self↔world interrelationship, which emerges as was suggested by philosopher Alan Watts: “Flowers blossom, trees branch and Earth peoples. We don’t come into the world, we come out of it.” However, it is only our bodies that actually come out of the world, while our embodied Original Nature comes *into* the world that our bodies come out of. Our Original Nature is thereafter filtered through the experiential lens of our acquired-self↔world interrelationship.

[The previous two paragraphs are so densely packed that you may reread them thoughtfully a few times until it feels like you’ve “got” their distinction between our innate and acquired selves.]

At birth the Original Nature of our innate-self’s divine personhood is as yet unmasked by our subsequent acquisition of a worldly personality, which is why our personhood at birth and immediately thereafter is felt by others to be precious. Each of us is born as a beneficial presence of divine personhood – not to *become* a beneficial presence, rather *as* a presence that is already beneficial. Yet as we grow presumably “up”, the veneer of acquired personality eventually masks and more or less eclipses our beneficial expression of divine personhood, to the point that our beneficial presence has to be mindfully recovered.

The innate-self personhood with which we were born is friction-free, as evidenced in the way each of us greeted everyone who placed his or her finger in our hand. Our innate-self’s Original Nature is to be unconditionally accepting of all others. Every newly arrived infant welcomes everyone else into its beneficial presence, which is as yet unspoiled by the grievances, grudges, resentments and other friction-generating feelings of the acquired-self’s personality.

When we were newborn infants, the evidence of our innate-self’s unspoiled Original Nature was immediately at hand. When someone else’s finger was put in either of our palms – regardless of the person’s color, race, creed, gender, ethnic origin, size, appearance – we gently clasped it with our own fingers. We were tenderly and unconditionally acknowledging, accepting, and allowing of every finger that came to rest in either of our hands, for however long our gently enfolding clasp was invited, and we just as unconditionally surrendered to the finger’s passage at the instant it was removed. No matter whose finger, which finger, or how the finger was given, we unconditionally and trustingly welcomed it and then willingly respected its passage by gently surrendering to its departure.

We didn’t grab the presented finger, nor did we obsessively clutch, cling or otherwise persist in possessively holding on to it. We exercised no control over the offered finger, nor did we attempt to impede its departure. We gracefully enfolded its presence for the duration thereof, and we just as gracefully relinquished it.

This finger-clasping gesture is our innate-self’s primal “hug” of embracement and release, an expression of our original nature that someone has called the “Ur hug.” That its innateness precedes our arrival was evidenced in an incident reported by Gregg Braden in his book, *The Isaiah Effect*: Braden quotes a father who had been midwife to all four of his children’s births, the youngest of whom was named Josh:

Everything was going fine, just the way it should. My wife’s water had broken and her labor had progressed to the point where we found ourselves having our fourth home birth. Josh was in the birth canal when suddenly everything stopped. He just stopped coming. I knew that something was wrong. For some reason I thought back to a police operations manual that I had read years earlier. There was a chapter on emergency births, with one section dedicated to possible complications. . . .

The manual said that every once in awhile during birth, the baby may become lodged against the mother’s tailbone. Sometimes it’s the head, sometimes the shoulder that gets wedged. It’s a relatively simple procedure to reach inside and free the child. This is just what I believed was happening to Josh.

I reached inside my wife, and the most amazing thing happened. I found her tailbone, moved my hand upward a little bit, and sure enough, I felt Josh’s shoulder blade, lodged up against the bone. Just as I was about to shift him myself, I felt a movement. It took a moment for me to realize what was happening. It was Josh’s hand. He was reaching up toward his mother’s tailbone *to free himself*. As his arm brushed my hand, I was given an experience that I believe few fathers have ever had….

As his arm brushed my hand, Josh stopped moving, just for a couple of seconds. I believe he was trying to understand what he had found. Then I felt him again. This time he was not reaching up to free himself from his mother’s tailbone. This time he was reaching for me! I felt his tiny hand move across my fingers. His touch was uncertain at first, as if he were exploring. In just a matter of seconds there was a strength in his grip. I felt my unborn son reach out and wrap his fingers around mine confidently, as if he knew me! In that moment I knew that Josh would be okay. Together, the three of us worked to bring Josh into this world, and here he is today.

As this father’s testimony reveals, our innate-self’s birthright is to be an inclusively co-operative beneficial presence. This birthright long precedes each birth’s rite of passage., as was evidenced during an *in utero* operation on a 21 week-old-fetus to correct a potentially fatal birth defect. During the operation the baby reached through the incision in the mother’s uterus and clasped the surgeon’s finger, as if to say “thank you.” It is reported that the surgeon had to pause to wipe away the tears that welled up in his eyes.

I suggest that at every opportunity to place a finger in a newborn infant’s hand, you allow yourself to experience the utter synchrony with which *you* are welcomed (*your* presence, not just that of your finger), and are just as gracefully released when you take your finger away. As it was for Josh’s father and the surgeon, a fully appreciated experience of this mutual exchange of grace is worth a thousand descriptions thereof.

This finger-clasping gesture represents our innate-self’s rules of engagement, our Original Nature of unconditional regard:

When you come, we welcome you.

When you stay, we do not hold on to you.

When you leave, we do not pursue you.

Although these three rules of engagement were not consciously known by us at birth, we instinctively and unerringly embodied them. Such is the beneficial presence of every newly born human being. Yet our innate-self’s beneficial presence, thus evidenced in our offering of primal hugs, is exchanged instead for an adult-erated presence as we grow up – an adaptively acquired presence whose clingingly possessive rules of engagement constitute our culture’s rite of passage into so-called “maturity.”

**The Loss of Our Personhood’s Innocence**

According to psychologist Abraham Maslow, “If our true nature is permitted to guide our life, we grow healthy, fruitful and happy. [Yet] ninety-eight percent of us die before we taste the nectar of our magnificence.” Our self-alienation from the nectar of our magnificence was acknowledged nearly a century ago by poet Christopher Morley:

The greatest poem ever known  
Is one all poets have outgrown:  
The poetry innate, untold,  
Of being only four years old.

Still young enough to be a part  
Of Nature's great impulsive heart,  
Born comrade of bird, beast and tree  
And unselfconscious as the bee--  
And yet with lovely reason skilled  
Each day new paradise to build,  
Elate explorer of each sense,  
Without dismay, without pretense!

In your unstained, transparent eyes  
There is no conscience, no surprise:  
Life's queer conundrums you accept,  
Your strange divinity still kept.

Being, that now absorbs you, all  
Harmonious, unit, integral,  
Will shred into perplexing bits --  
Oh, contradiction of the wits!

And Life, that sets all things in rhyme,  
May make you poet, too, in time--  
But there were days, O tender elf,  
When you were poetry itself.

Because the eclipse of our childhood wonderment is so prevalent by the age of eight or nine, I asked a third grade teacher if her grade differed from the previous two. “Well of course,” she proudly proclaimed. “In the third grade we stop all the fun and games and get down to the serious business and hard work of learning.”

In other words, children’s integral nature ceases to be honored as their minds are stuffed with the adult world’s dis-integral paradigm of “here’s the way it is.” The consequences of this dishonoring were acknowledged by architect-engineer R. Buckminster (“Bucky”) Fuller when he was asked if he was a genius:

I am convinced that neither I nor any other human being, past or present, was or is a genius. I am convinced that what I have, every normal child also has at birth. So there’s no such thing as genius, some children are less damaged than others.

As an example of how some children are less damaged than others, a six-year-old-boy eagerly agreed to donate an urgently required blood transfusion to his four-year-old sister when it was determined that his blood had the closest match. Some minutes after the transfusion process began, he asked the attending nurse “how long will it be now?” When the nurse asked what he meant, he inquired how long it would be until all of his blood was gone and he would die.

Having not been fully informed about the procedure, his Original Nature nonetheless demonstrated the true meaning of the term, “ignorance is bliss.”

As Maslow described the process by which our Original Nature becomes “damaged goods”:

I find children, up to the time they are spoiled and flattened by the culture, [to be] nicer, better, more attractive human beings than their elders . . . The 'taming and transforming' that they undergo seems to hurt rather than help.  It was not for nothing that a famous psychologist once defined adults as 'deteriorated children.'

Those human impulses which have seemed throughout our history to be deepest, to be most instinctive and unchangeable, to be most widely spread throughout mankind, i.e., the impulse to hate, to be jealous, to be hostile, to be greedy, to be egoistic and selfish are now being discovered more and more clearly to be acquired and are not instinctive. They are almost certainly neurotic and sick reactions to bad situations, more specifically to frustrations of our truly basic and instinct-like needs and impulses.

Maslow's perspectives on adult-erated children were shared by one of his well-known contemporaries, anthropologist Ashley Montague, who likewise felt that the eclipse of our innate-self’s beneficial presence is the consequence of our entrainment to "bad situations," and is not genetically or characterologically preordained. Montagu noted that even though our way of being in the world is to a great extent genetically preordained, our environmental and cultural circumstances select for which of our endowed hereditary potentials are actually developed. Nature and nurture are jointly empowering and selective of which genetically programmed potentials are ultimately developed. Accordingly, whether and how our hereditary *pre*dispositions are activated depends on the current dispositions of the world around us.

For example, if human beings were genetically programmed with an automatic predisposition to proliferate bad situations regardless of our environmental circumstances, whether physical or cultural, our species would long since have become extinct. And if we instead were genetically programmed with an automatic predisposition to proliferate good situations, violence would rarely occur regardless of how stressful our surrounding circumstances may be.

Fortunately for all concerned, our negative predispositions are amenable to remaining dormant in environments that do not nurture their development, and our positive predispositions are amenable to fulfillment in environments that select for their expression. And in either case, the “environment” most important to their development and expression is one’s inner mental and emotional condition, as illustrated in the story of two wolves.

A man who lived close to nature counseled a grandson who was seething with rage against another youth who had wronged him.

“I’m quite familiar with the way you’re feeling,” the grandfather said. “It’s as if an ongoing battle is taking place inside of me, a fight between two wolves. One wolf is filled with hateful, unforgiving feelings, feelings of anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, false pride, judgment, suspicion, blamefulness, and such. The other wolf knows only the goodness of forgiving feelings, feelings of joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, trust, compassion, faith, and the like.”

The grandson thought about this for a moment, then asked, "Which wolf is winning?"

His grandfather replied, “Whichever one I feed."

**The Tao of Self-Recovery**

Our only remedy for the adult-eration of our Original Nature is a mindful recovery of our innate-self’s initial rules of engagement, as represented in the primal hug of embracement and release that each of us instinctively embodied and subliminally expressed as newborns. Fortunately, our Original Nature’s rules of engagement are not only the default setting that underlies the faulty settings we have since acquired during the process of social “enculturation,” our Original Nature’s default setting is amenable to our recovery thereof.

A generic composite of all recovery stories was formulated by Swami Satchidananda: “We started out fine. Then we got defined. Now we are getting refined.”

We started out so wonderfully fine that John Denver proclaimed, “Each of us is the dwelling place of incredible opportunities.” Each of us was a childhood fountain of incredible opportunities to learn, to know, to express and to share the nectar of our magnificence. We were living question marks, whose unbounded curiosity moved us to inquire about everything, endlessly asking “why is…?”, and “how does . . .?” As Bucky Fuller noted,

In observing a little child, we find it is interested in everything and spontaneously apprehends, comprehends, and coordinates an ever-expanding inventory of experiences…. Nothing seems to be more prominent about human life than its wanting to understand all and put everything together.

As our fine start becomes defined by the process of enculturation, our why-ing becomes whining and our questions shift from “why is…?” and “how does . . .?” to “why do I have to . . .?” and “how come . . .?” As a consequence of such enculturation, Fuller further noted, while we are born to be verbs we are raised to be nouns.

When I shared Bucky’s statement about verbs being raised as nouns with nearly two dozen students in a self-transformation class that I was teaching in the mid-1960’s, I asked them to reflect on whether and how they had become “damaged goods.” The ensuing discussion filled two one-and-a-half-hour class sessions, at the end of which I endeavored to summarize the voluminous discussion notes I had taken. Much to my surprise, and subsequently to theirs, my summary took the form of a song entitled “A Plea for Damaged Children”:

Most every newborn babe in this universe is put together mighty fine.

Though one of millions conceived in nature's bountiful purse, he's the only one of his kind.

Born for perfection, given over-protection, he's boxed in body and mind.

Born to be him, he's raised to be us, and we put him in a lifetime bind.

We've gotta let grow our little children, cause verbs weren't meant to be nouns.

Yeah, children are a whole lot like people that way, and we've gotta stop putting ‘em down.

The six-year-old child is brought into school where we tell her what she doesn't know.

We tell her what we're gonna tell her, then we tell her, then we tell her that we told her so.

Born for creation, not regurgitation, she diligently wilts in her row.

Born to think her thoughts, she's stenciled with ours, and she's made to be someone she won't know.

We've gotta let know our growing children, cause verbs weren't meant to be nouns.

Yeah, students are a whole lot like people that way, and we've gotta stop putting ‘em down.

When graduation comes the student's on his way, he can start to be a human being.

But he'll only have a couple hours a day when he's not serving some machine.

Born for relations, it's for manipulations his life is rewarded so green.

Born to do his thing, but doing some thing's thing, he seldom gets a chance to mean.

We've gotta let go our grown-up children, cause verbs weren't meant to be nouns.

Yeah, grown-ups are a whole lot like people that way, and we've gotta stop putting ‘em down.

[My use of the feminine gender in the next verse created quite a stir in the mid-1960’s]

Though our Creator saw that all she made was good, we haven't learned to share her trust.

We think that other people behave as they should only when they act like us.

Born for expression, not moral repression, they never become what they might.

Born to sow their seeds, they're made to reap ours, and they never grow in their own right.

We've gotta let sow our fellow sinners, cause verbs weren't meant to be nouns.

Yeah, sinners are a whole lot like people that way, and we've gotta stop putting ‘em down.

Though others get on my case, my only disgrace is to join with them in their loss cause.

No matter what they think, it’s with me that I’m in synch, for which I don’t require their applause.

Born for presentment, not others’ contentment, I’m here to be on my own way.

Born to do my dance, not listen to their can’ts, it’s time for me to write my own play.

I’ve gotta let grow my way of being, cause verbs weren’t meant to be nouns.

Yeah, my self's a whole lot like all selves that way, and I’ve gotta stop putting it down.

Those who are familiar with New Thought metaphysics know that today’s thoughts and sentiments give according shape to tomorrow’s experiencing. Nor does anyone understand this better than does the inner elder that resides in us each, whom I know as “The Wizard of Is”:

Somewhere this side of the rainbow I can meet the Wizard of Is

whose special magic leaves today's life undistracted

by the should be's, could be's and if only's

that cloud over my inner-most intentions

and distort my outer-most attentions.

"Good old days,"

childish ways

and other once-were's are as absent from the Wizard's view

as are apprehensions about tomorrow.

The Wizard of Is resides instead in the near and how of present instants only –

the time and place from which my being ever emanates itself.

If I would fathom the secret of overflowing from such instants

I must consult the Wizard of Is.

Fortunately, this Wizard inhabits my own domain,

within the being who bears my name.

Consulting the Wizard of Is empowers us to break the distorted self-images via which we put ourselves and one another down. As mid-twentieth century diarist Anaïs Nin asserted:

One discovers that destiny can be directed, that one does not need to remain in bondage to the first wax imprint made on childhood sensibilities. One need not be branded by the first pattern. Once the deforming mirror is smashed, there is a possibility of wholeness; there is a possibility of joy.

In other words, there is forever the possibility of recovering the expressions of our Original Nature, because it is never entirely eclipsed and forsaken. As Ernest Holmes observed,

There is a spiritual man who is never sick, never poor, never confused or afraid...who is never caught by negative thought. Browning called this ‘the spark that a man may desecrate but never quite lose.”

Contemporary philosopher Andrew Cohen similarly proclaims that our Authentic Self “has never been hurt, wounded, traumatized, or victimized. It is already whole and complete, yet it *can and does* develop.”

And so it is, via practicing the Tao of friction-free relationship, that we can recover the expressions of our Original Nature that await our conscious reclamation. We can nurture our self-reclamation by remaining ever mindful of the truth of our Original Nature:

I am here to be a beneficial presence to all concerned, to be more than a further extension of humankind’s inhumanities to other human kindred.

I am here to be a beneficial presence to all concerned, to be more than a reactionary impulse that creates me in the image of those whose own impulses I outwardly discredit.

I am here to be a beneficial presence to all concerned, to be more than an instrument of the either/or retaliatory worldview that feeds the cycle of mutual vengeance and revengeance.

I am here to be a beneficial presence to all concerned, to be more than an agent of those whose purpose is to shape, direct, instruct or otherwise conform me to their own purposes.

I am here to be a beneficial presence to all concerned, to be more than a mere defender of the things that I possess, of the thoughts that I profess, and of the feelings that I express.

I am here to be a beneficial presence to all concerned, to be more than an expression of self-defeating teachings, preachments and ideologies, of outworn trends and fashions, of conventional wisdoms handed down, of yesterday’s reasons handed over, and of momentary meanings that last only for a season.

This set of affirmations befits each of as an ongoing aspiration of our own self-recovery, rather than as a fully accomplished fact, and facilitates our release of whatever obscures the generous truth to which our Original Nature testifies: *each of us is here to be a beneficial presence to all concerned.*

**The Tao of Friction-Free Relationship – Week Four**

**Honoring the Cosmic Kindom of Our At-One-Ment:**

**Our Place to Come from and Our Personhood to Be**

The very molecules that that make up your body, the atoms that construct the molecules, are traceable to the crucibles that were once the centers of high mass stars that exploded their chemically rich guts into the galaxy, enriching pristine gas clouds with the chemistry of life. So we’re all connected with each other biologically, to the Earth chemically, and to the rest of the universe atomically. That’s kind of cool. That makes me smile, and I actually feel quite large at the end of that. It’s not that we’re better than the universe, we are part of the universe. We’re in the universe and the universe is in us. -Neal deGrasse Tyson

Each of us is immersed in the at-one-ment of a universe whose cosmic kindom of common unity is locally manifesting within us, through us and as us. Even when other persons and surrounding circumstances are creating *what* is happening *to* us, it is we who are creating *how* it is being experienced *by* us, however unconsciously we may be doing so.

In a universe where every relationship is an interrelationship, we cannot have an experience in which we are non-participative. For example, even when we unknowingly live on an earthquake-prone fault line, when it quakes we cannot disown our experiencing of the quake by denying that it is our fault. We are response-able for *how* we experience every *what*, because no matter whatcomes our way, we are the ones who choose the way we in turn come from it.

The *Tao Te Ching* is a manual for coming from our innate personhood, rather than from our acquired personality. The word “Tao” signifies the ecology of our personhood’s Original Nature. The word “Te” signifies being in experiential alignment with the ecology of our personhood’s Original Nature by “acting with a clear view of one’s heart.” Of all the translations of “Te” I have seen, this one is my favorite, because it recognizes that while our personality is guided by our intellect, our personhood is guided by our innate affections of love, joy, service and self-realization.

The word “Ching” signifies a “classic,” a work of masterful excellence. Thus the *Tao Te Ching* is a manual for living in masterfully excellent harmony with one’s Original Nature. Such masterful living is based on numerous cosmological, operational, experiential and developmental premises:

**Cosmological premises (where we have come from and where we are going):**

* Prior to all creation a beneficial presence exists, which is self-contained, complete, formless, wordless, changeless, and self-pervaded with the motherhood of all being. Fatherhood (the masculine expression of the beneficial presence) is the *occasion* of all creation, motherhood (the feminine expression of the beneficial presence) is the *source* of all creation. As the masculine interrelationship begets form within substance, the feminine interrelationship begets substance within form.
* All form emerges as an expression (pressing out) of the beneficial presence of fatherhood and motherhood in harmonious union. As Ernest Holmes defined the cosmic kindom of common unity, “Everything in the universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part.” This harmonious good is insufficiently realized in manifestation when form is deficient of substance or when substance is deficient of form. Extreme examples of form-deficient substance are World War 2’s events at Auschwitz and Hiroshima. Extreme examples of substance-deficient form are homelessness and aimless good will.
* The purpose of all being is to be on purpose, whose purpose is being itself. Thus the purpose of one’s life is a life of purpose whose purpose is life itself. “Purpose” in this instance is what Buddhism calls “dharma” and what Christian theology calls “vocation” (which signifies our “calling”. Our calling is identifiable in accordance with the prescription of Howard Thurman: “Don't ask yourself what the world needs, ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go do that. Because what the world most needs are people who have come alive.”

**Operational premises (the how of our coming and going):**

* **Presence:**
  + *Everywhere I go, Here I Am.* This is the principle of perennial primary location: That each manifestation in the universe is always and only centered precisely where its presence is being experienced, and that no manifestation of the universe can be centered where its presence is not being experienced.
  + I am the source of my experiencing, while all else is the occasion of my experiencing. Hence Ernest Holmes’ prescription: “Talk to yourself, not to the world. There is no one to talk to but yourself because all experience takes place within. Conditions are the reflections of our meditations and nothing else.”
* **Flow:**
  + Full presence in the near and how of the here and now.
  + Being present as water is present.
* **Reciprocity:**
  + *Every relationship is an interrelationship.* Each thing in the universe is resonantly interrelated with all other things in the universe. Hence the full statement by Ernest Holmes, that is quoted above only in part: “Everything in the universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part. The universe is forever uniting what is harmonious and diminishing what is not…. It is the unessential only that is vanishing, that the abiding may be made more clearly manifest.”
  + Because there is no spot where “I am” (God) is not, all is holy.
  + All natural and metaphysical laws are laws of reciprocal exchange.
* **Evolution:**
  + Being is emergently, increasingly, and ever more complexly self-emergent from within itself.
  + We are living in a time of evolutionary correction and planetary transition, a cosmic turn-around that amounts to a global transformation (a change in kind rather than of degree).

**Experiential premises (being):**

* Each of us is an opening through which the at-one-ment of cosmic kindom is expressed.
* Our experiencing is the intersection of self and world.
  + “The raspberry within itself does not contain its sweetness, nor does the tongue. It is in the interaction between the two that this divine manifestation resides.” -Brian Josephson
  + “It is we who make wine drunk.” -Rumi
  + “U]ltimate reality is encountered neither in our minds nor in the physical cosmos, but at the point where these meet.” -Alan Smithson
* The how of our experiencing is self-originated.
  + Marcus Aurelius: It is our own power to have no opinion about a thing, and not to be disturbed in our soul; for things themselves have no natural power to form our judgments.
  + Rudolph Steiner: If it depends on something other than myself whether I should get angry or not, I am not master of myself . . . I have not yet found the ruler within myself. I must develop the faculty of letting the impressions of the outer world approach me only in the way in which I myself determine.

**Developmental premises (becoming):**

* Some of us ripen more quickly than others, and some of us do so insufficiently. Only the individual soul can know the current state of its own development.
* There is nothing we have to add to our present behavior in order to enjoy freedom from friction. Because freedom from friction is our built-in default setting, returning to our default setting is a process of subtracting unworkable behavior and of allowing and nurturing the emerge of workable behavior.
* Because intention organizes its own fulfillment, dedicated intention (a.k.a. “commitment”) is the source of all realized aspiration – which includes all of our unconsciously dedicated intentions.

**The Tao of Friction-Free Relationship – Week Five**

**The Tao of the Cosmic Field**

All of me, why not take all of me…

-Popular song

*This exercise, in preparation for our next class session, is an enlargement of an earlier assignment that we didn’t get to. Next week we’ll get to it. If you dutifully did the earlier version of the assignment, so much the better this time around because the assignment bares, repeating.*

*The assignment is to reread Chapter 11 of the* Tao Te Ching *(Dyer, pp. 52-55), and then make a note of any insights into your own life experience as you read the following statements.*

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

U.S. Representative Dennis Kucinich described our place within the cosmic field in a speech entitled “Starlight and Spirit”: 1

Spirit merges with matter to sanctify the universe. Matter transcends to return to spirit. The interchangeability of matter and spirit means the starlit magic of the outermost life of our universe becomes the soul-light magic of the innermost life of our self. The energy of the stars becomes us. We become the energy of the stars. Stardust and spirit unite and we begin: One with the universe. Whole and holy. From one source, endless creative energy, bursting forth, kinetic, elemental. We, the earth, air, water and fire – source of nearly fifteen billion years of cosmic spiraling

As *New Scientist* magazine’s cosmology consultant, Marcus Chown, has testified, Kucinich’s statement is not a flight of so-called “New Age” fancy: 2

Every breath you take contains atoms forged in the blistering furnaces deep inside stars. Every flower you pick contains atoms blasted into space by stellar explosions that blazed brighter than a billion suns. Every book you read contains atoms blown across unimaginable gulfs of space and time by the wind between the stars.

Astronomers often talk glibly of black holes and exploding stars, pulsars, quasars and the titanic eruption of the Big Bang. But if the truth be told it is extremely difficult to believe that any of these things are actually real--as real, for instance, as a mountain or an oak tree or a newborn baby. They are simply too remote, too far removed from the familiar world of our experience. It seems inconceivable that they could have the slightest connection with our everyday lives.

But this is an illusion.

Many of the most dramatic and awe-inspiring of cosmic events--from the violent death throes of stars to the titanic fireball that gave birth to the entire Universe 15 billion years ago--are connected to us directly by way of the atoms that make up our bodies.

If the atoms that make up the world around us could tell their stories, each and every one of them would sing a tale to dwarf the greatest epics of literature. From carbon, baked in bloated red giants--stars so enormous they could swallow a million Suns--to uranium, cooked in supernova explosions--just about the most violent cataclysms in all of Creation. From boron, generated in atom-crunching collisions in the deep-freeze of interstellar space to helium, forged in the hellish first few minutes of the Big Bang itself.

The iron in your blood, the calcium in your bones, the oxygen that fills your lungs each time you take a breath--all were baked in the fiery ovens deep within stars and blown into space when those stars grew old and perished. Every one of us is a memorial to long-dead stars. Every one of us was quite literally made in heaven.

For thousands of years, astrologers have been telling us that our lives are controlled by the stars. Well, they were right in spirit if not in detail. For science in the 20th century has revealed that we are far more intimately connected to events in the cosmos than anyone ever dared imagine. Each and every one of us is stardust made flesh.

Astrophysicist Neal de Grasse Tyson has similarly testified:3

The very molecules that that make up your body, the atoms that construct the molecules, are traceable to the crucibles that were once the centers of high mass stars that exploded their chemically rich guts into the galaxy, enriching pristine gas clouds with the chemistry of life. So we’re all connected with each other biologically, to the Earth chemically, and to the rest of the universe atomically. That’s kind of cool. That makes me smile, and I actually feel quite large at the end of that. It’s not that we’re better than the universe, we are part of the universe. We’re in the universe and the universe is in us.

As profound as the foregoing cosmic assessments may be, even more profound than what we know about the macro-universe of galaxies, solar systems, and wandering stardust is what we are only beginning to understand about the micro-universe. To quote Albert Einstein:4

Matter which we perceive is merely nothing but a great concentration of energy in very small regions. We may therefore regard matter as being constituted by the regions of space in which the field is extremely intense. . . . There is no place in this new kind of physics both for the field and matter *for the field is the only reality.*

According to astrophysicist Freeman Dyson: 5

The picture of the world that we have reached is the following. Some ten or twenty qualitatively different quantum fields exist. Each fills the whole of space and has its own particular properties. There is nothing else except these fields; the whole of the material universe is built of them. Between various pairs of fields there are various kinds of interaction. Each field manifests itself as an elementary particle. The particles of a given type are always completely identical and indistinguishable. The number of particles of a given type is not fixed, for particles are constantly being created or annihilated or transmuted into one another. The properties of the interactions determine the rules of creation and transmutation of particles.

Even to a hardened theoretical physicist it remains perpetually astounding that our solid world of trees and stones can be built of quantum fields and nothing else. The quantum fields seem far too fluid and insubstantial to be the basic stuff of the universe. Yet we have learned gradually to accept the fact that the laws of quantum dynamics impose their own peculiar rigidity upon the fields they govern, a rigidity which is alien to our intuitive conceptions but which nonetheless effectively holds the earth in place.

Sir Arthur Eddington earlier cited the implications of the quantum perspective in his description of the two distinct natures of his writing desk, as summarized in the following commentary: 6

You may be familiar with Arthur Eddington’s parable of the two writing desks. First there is the commonsense solid desk of our physical senses which we can wrap with our knuckles, write on, even sit upon. This desk contrasts with the second desk of quantum physics which consists almost entirely of empty space sprinkled with unimaginable tiny specks of energy separated by distances a hundred thousand times their own size. The interior of the atom is nearly entirely empty, a vast void.

There are many folk sciences, including folk physics. To folk physics things like this podium are made of substance; substance is something hard that fills space. This explains why you don't fall through a podium when you lean on it. However, the podium to real physics, as Arthur Eddington put it, is mostly empty space in which sparsely scattered...are numerous electric charges rushing about with great speed; but their combined bulk amounts to less than a billionth of the bulk of the [podium] itself.

To quote Eddington: “Modern physics has by delicate test and remorseless logic assured me that my second scientific table is the only one which is really there -- wherever ‘there’ may be.” 6

In short, the podium (and everything else that we experience as being “solid” matter) is 99.999999999 percent empty space. As business professor Robert Quinn reports in his book, *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within:* 7

Newtonian physicists were startled to discover that at the core of the atom, at the center of matter, there is . . .nothing, no thing, pure energy. When they reached into the most fundamental building block of nature, they found a pregnant void – stable patterns of probability striving to connect with other patterns of probability. This discovery revolutionized the physical sciences, initiating the quantum era.

By the same token, we are startled to discover that at the core of the person, at the center of selfhood there is . . . nothing, pure energy. When we reach into the most fundamental basis of our being we find a pregnant void, a web of relationships. When somebody asks us to talk about ourselves, we talk about family, work, academic backgrounds, sports affiliations, etc. In all this talk, where is our “self”? The answer is nowhere, because the self is not a thing, but as Jerome Bruner says, “a point of view that unifies the flow of experience into a coherent narrative” – a narrative striving to connect with other narratives and become richer.

Given the fluidic nature of reality, Quinn advises a unique leadership role: Walk naked into the land of uncertainty until you can regularly get lost with confidence. In a subsequent book Quinn likens this process to *Building the Bridge While You’re Walking On It:* 8

Einstein’s realization that “the field is the only reality” was earlier recognized by the 13th century Sufi poet, Rumi:

Out beyond ideas of wrong-doing and right-doing,

there is a field.

I'll meet you there.

When the soul lies down in that grass

the world is too full to talk about.

This same realization similarly informs the contemporary poet, Mark Strand:9

In a field

I am the absence

of the field.

This is

always the case.

Wherever I am

I am what is missing.

When I walk

I part the air

and always the air moves in

to fill the spaces

where my body's been.

We all have reasons

for moving.

I move

to keep things whole.

As Jane Roberts viewed the cosmic field in her novel, *The Further Education of Oversoul Seven:* 10

Each life is charmed . . . yours, and everyone else's, and you must never forget it. The instant you're born, you're charmed, because life itself is a charm. Each being is charmed into existence in whatever reality it finds itself, and given everything it needs to operate in the environment. Your body is charmed, too: It's a magic part of everything else; springing up from all the things you see about you. Atoms and molecules go singing through the miraculous air, forming themselves into rocks and trees and dogs and cats and people, too. You *are* magic. You charm the air so that it thickens into your body wherever you are.

When you want to move, you think the air ahead of you into becoming your body, and the air behind you then stops being your body . . . all very magical indeed. You move your arm just one inch to the right, and the air to the left one inch stops being part of your arm. But it all happens so quickly, your snatching of the air and making it turn into your body, that you never notice it at all, and take it quite for granted. Which is why it works so well, you see.

Chuang Tzu, who is generally considered to be the second greatest expositor of Taoism after Lau Tzu, said this concerning our mental representations of the cosmic field:11

Fishing baskets are for catching fish. But when the fish are caught, you forget the baskets. Snares are for catching hares, but when the hares are trapped, you forget the snares. Words are for conveying ideas, but when the ideas are understood, you forget the words. How I’d like to talk with someone who’s forgotten all the words.

Shunryu Suzuki notes the utility of forgetting all the words:12

**If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything; it is open to everything. In the beginner’s mind there are many possibilities; in the expert’s mind there are few.**

Quantum physicist Brian Josephson, director of the Mind-Matter Unification Project at England’s University of Cambridge, has acknowledged the experiential dimension of the cosmic field:13

The raspberry within itself does not contain its sweetness, nor does the tongue. It is in the interaction between the two that this divine manifestation resides.

Robert Hunter’s lyrics for the Grateful Dead’s song, “Ripple,” also reveal the experiential implications of the cosmic field:14

If my words did glow with the gold of sunshine,

and my tunes were played on the harp unstrung,

would you hear my voice come through the music,

would you hold it near, as it were your own?

It's a hand-me-down, the thoughts are broken,

perhaps they're better left unsung.

Well I don't know, don't really care,

let there be songs, to fill the air.

CHORUS:

Ripple in still water,

when there is no pebble tossed,

nor wind to blow.

Reach out your hand if your cup be empty,

if your cup be full, may it be again.

Let it be known there is a fountain

that was not made by the hand of man.

There is a road, no simple highway,

between the dawn and the dark of night.

If you should go, no one may follow,

this path is for your steps alone.

CHORUS

Ripple in still water, etc.

You who choose to lead must follow,

and if you fall, you fall alone.

If you should stand, then who's to guide you?

If I knew your way, I would take you home.

La da da da da, la da da da da da,

la da, la da, la da da da.

La da da da da, la da da da da da,

la da da da da, la da da da da.

**The ultimate physical aloneness of the path to the spiritual all-oneness of The Field is described in the prologue to Eva Bell Werber’s book, *Journey With the Master*:**15

Spirit came to my Soul and said, “Let us go on a journey together.” There was nothing in all the universe but my Soul and Sprit. The night was crystal clear, the sky was studded with a million stars, and the air carried a fragrance as if all the flowers on the earth had released their perfume for our pleasure. I laughed aloud from pure joy as Spirit and I went into the night. There was no pavement beneath our feet, we walked on air that was a gossamer road stretched out before us, and we sang together all the songs of ages long since past.

As we journeyed on, my mind said to me, “Let us stop here at the house of our friends and take them with us on our happy journey,” so we stopped at the house, and the friends came out and joined us; but somehow the music did not ring so clearly, and the odor from the flowers seemed more faint.

Then it was that the friend said, “Let us stop here and take these other friends with us.” We did so and the other friends were singing also, but the music lacked the sweet harmony of that which we, as Soul and Spirit, sang alone together. As we all journeyed on, a fog settled over the night, and the stars were lost behind the silken veil; the perfume from the flowers came from so far away that we soon lost it altogether, and the air became heavy and hard to tread.

The friends we had gathered with us pulled at my garment, saying, “Come, go our way, it is a good way to go.” As I turned to go with them, I saw through the fog a dim light. It was the lighted candle of Spirit, the light within the Soul which forever burns, waiting for us to find it. Then did a great awakening come to me, and I quickly tore off the clinging hands and stood forth, free.

The lighted candle of Spirit then became the light of a glorious sunrise, the fog lifted and a world of beauty lay before me. Again Spirit spoke to my Soul , saying, “When you journey forth with Me, you must journey alone, for it is only as you disentangle yourself from the outward form of earth things that you can make the journey from Sense to Soul. Until you have made this journey, alone with Me, you are not fit to guide others on the path.”

I awoke and a great peace was upon me. I knew that in the still watches of the night, Spirit had taught my Soul a great lesson.

This same “great lesson” was far more tersely taught by Buddha – “You cannot walk the path until you are the path” – and is likewise inherent in Gandhi’s advice to “be the difference you wish to see in the world.” It was also implicit in another of Rumi’s insights: 16

You are the only faithful student you have.

All the others leave eventually.

Have you been making yourself shallow

with making others eminent?

Just remember, when you’re in union,

you don’t have to fear

that you’ll be drained.

The command comes to *speak*,

and you feel the ocean

moving through you.

Then comes, *Be silent*,

as when the rain stops,

and the trees in the orchard

begin to draw moisture

up into themselves.

**In other words, “everywhere I go, here I am” as a student of my I-am-here-ness.**

**If Lao Tzu were here today to witness the foregoing testimonies, he could add the following verse to the *Tao Te Ching*:**

**I rest my case.**

**FOOTNOTES:**

1. Dennis Kucinich, quoted at http://viz.tumblr.com/post/16431147/spirit-merges-with-matter-to-sanctify-the. See also the painting, “An Unbroken Circle of Starlight and Spirit" at http://www.clarencekapay.com/IMG\_0347.JPG of which the following is a smaller image:

[](http://www.clarencekapay.com/IMG_0347.JPG)

1. Marcus Chown, *The Magic Furnace: The Search for the Origins of Atoms* (Oxford University Press, 2001)*,* p. 1, and at www.marcuschown.com/magicintro.htm.
2. Neal deGrasse Tyson, www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpfoLvlA64o.
3. Albert Einstein, quoted in Milič Čapek, *The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics* (Van Nostrand Rinehold, 1961), p. 319.
4. Freeman Dyson, quoted in Kenneth Brower, *The Starship and the Canoe* (Bantam, 1978), p. 186.
5. Peter Suber, “When We Leave Our Desks,” www.earlham.edu/~peters/writing/bacc2.htm.
6. F. Kofman and P. M. Senge, The Heart of Learning Organizations,” *Organizational Dynamics* 1993, XX, 5-21; quoted in Robert E. Quinn, *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within* (Jossey-Bass, 1996), pp. 41-42.
7. Robert E. Quinn, *Building the Bridge While You’re Walking On It* (Jossey-Bass, 2004).
8. Mark Strand, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark\_Strand.
9. Jane Roberts, *The Further Education of Oversoul Seven.* Excerpted from a longer quote at

http://newworldview.com/library/Roberts\_J\_Charmed\_Life.html

1. Chuang Tzu, quoted in Mark Forstater, *The Tao, Finding the Way of Balance and Harmony* (Plume, 2003). Also at http://community.livejournal.com/tao\_of\_words/profile.
2. **Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind* (Shambhala, 2006).**
3. Josephson
4. “Ripple” lyrics by Robert Hunter, as recorded by The Grateful Dead on their 1970 *American Beauty Rose* album. See www.cs.cmu.edu/~mleone/gdead/dead-lyrics/Ripple.txt.
5. Eva Bell Werber, *Journey with the Master* (DeVorss & Company, 1950).
6. Rumi, http://www.sufism.org/books/barks.html.

**The Tao of Friction-Free Relationship – Week Six**

**WINNING THROUGH ANNIHILATION AND CHAOS**

**Some Perspectives on Spiritual Effectiveness Training:**

**How to Walk Through the Valley of the Shadow**

1. **without Pitching Your Tent There, and**
2. **by Pitching Your Tent There**

**If you wanna get to heaven you’ve gotta raise a little hell.**

**-The Ozark Mountain Daredevils**

**A popular self-help book in the 1970’s was entitled *Winning Through Intimidation*. Though it was primarily addressed to real estate salesmen, it became a best seller with the general public, largely because its author, Robert Ringer, practiced what he preached. Unfazed by the refusal of publishers to accept his manuscript, he self-published it and placed intriguing full page ads for the book in major newspapers. He walked the talk of his book’s message by winning his way through the formidable intimidation of the publishing industry.**

**Many folks thought the book was about intimidating others, having misread the preposition “through” as if it meant “by means of.” Yet the book was about successfully wading one’s way through the intimidations with which other people attempt to thwart us.**

**A few years after Ringer’s book appeared, a Zen Buddhist monk named Karlfried Gras von Durkheim published *The Way of Transformation*, which was about winning our way through our fears of annihilation. The following passage from Durkheim’s book conveys the essence of its message:**

**The man who, being really on the Way, falls upon hard times in the world will not, as a consequence, turn to that friend who offers him refuge and encourages his old self to survive. Rather, he will seek out someone who will faithfully and inexorably help him to risk himself, so that he may endure the suffering and pass courageously through it, thus making of it a "raft that leads to the far shore." Only to the extent that man exposes himself over and over again to annihilation can that which is indestructible arise within him. In this lies the dignity of daring.**

**Thus, the aim of practice is not to develop an attitude which allows a man to acquire a state of harmony and peace wherein nothing can ever trouble him. On the contrary, practice should teach him to let himself be assaulted, perturbed, moved, insulted, broken and battered – that is to say, it should enable him to dare to let go his futile hankering after harmony, surcease from pain, and a comfortable life in order that he may discover, in doing battle with the forces that oppose him, that which awaits him beyond the world of opposites.**

**The first necessity is that we should have the courage to face life, and to encounter all that is most perilous in the world. When this is possible, meditation itself becomes the means by which we accept and welcome the demons which arise from the unconscious – a process very different from the practice of concentration on some object as a protection against such forces. Only if we venture repeatedly through zones of annihilation can our contact with Divine Being, which is beyond annihilation, become firm and stable.**

**The more a man learns whole-heartedly to confront the world that threatens him with isolation, the more are the depths of the Ground of Being revealed and the possibilities of new life and Becoming opened.**

**(NOTE: The above passage and several others of comparable profundity are linked at http://www.transformedia.org/forum/quotatio/topics.htm .)**

Durkheim’s perspective counters those who proclaim that the path of transformation need not be difficult. It indeed *need* not be such for those who are devoid of fears, emotional buttons, personality hang-ups, attachments to preferences and forms, and other obstacles to transformation lurking in their psyche. The rest of us, however, tend to search in vain for what one aspiring seeker has called “a gentle and easy-going path of transformation.” Raising ourselves from such psychic hell (by raising our psychic hell itself to the heaven of higher-self realization) is more like participating in a spiritual Olympics than enjoying a spiritual picnic.

Durkheim presents the perspective of the metaphysical “warrior” who boldly confronts the hidden fears and “inner demons” that compromise one’s spiritual integrity. Many feel that his warrior perspective is “too masculine” – or as one person put it, “too yang,” and yet another, “too Germanic.” Those who prefer a gentler (though ultimately no less tough) “yin” approach to winning through annihilation may find more to their liking the following perspective of another Buddhist monk, Pema Chödrön. Unintimidatingly entitled “Three Methods for Working with Uncertainty,” each of her suggestions prescribes a way of raising one’s hells heavenward.

Sometimes late at night or on a long walk with a friend, we find ourselves discussing our ideas about how to live and how to act and what is important in life. If we're studying Buddhism and practicing meditation, we might talk of no-self and emptiness, of patience and generosity, of loving-kindness and compassion. We might have just read something or heard some teachings that turned our usual way of seeing things upside down. We feel that we've just reconnected with a truth we've always known and that if we could just learn more about it, our life would be delightful and rich.

We tell our friends of our longing to shed the huge burden we feel we've always carried. We suddenly are excited and feel it's possible. We tell our friend of our inspiration and how it opens up our life. "It is possible," we say, "to enjoy the very same things that usually get us down. We can delight in our job, delight in riding the subway, delight in shoveling snow and paying bills and washing dishes."

You may have noticed, however, that there is frequently an irritating, if not depressing, discrepancy between our ideas and good intentions and how we act when we are confronted with the nitty-gritty details of real life situations.

One afternoon I was riding a bus in San Francisco, reading a very touching article on human suffering and helping others. The idea of being generous and extending myself to those in need became so poignant that I started to cry. People were looking at me as the tears ran down my cheeks. I felt a great tenderness toward everyone, and a commitment to benefit others arose in me. As soon as I got home, feeling pretty exhausted after working all day, the phone rang, and it was someone asking if I could please help her out by taking her position as a meditation leader that night. I said, "No, sorry, I need to rest," and hung up.

It's not a matter of the right choice or the wrong choice, but simply that we are often presented with a dilemma about bringing together the inspiration of the teachings with what they mean to us on the spot. There is a perplexing tension between our aspirations and the reality of feeling tired, hungry, stressed-out, afraid, bored, angry, or whatever we experience in any given moment of our life.

Naropa, an eleventh-century Indian yogi, one day unexpectedly met an old hag on the street. She apparently knew he was one of the greatest Buddhist scholars in India and asked him if he understood the words of the large book he was holding. He said he did, and she laughed and danced with glee. Then she asked him if he understood the meaning of the teachings in that book. Thinking to please her even more, he again said yes. At that point she became enraged, yelling at him that he was a hypocrite and a liar. That encounter changed Naropa's life. He knew she had his number; truthfully, he only understood the words and not the profound inner meaning of all the teachings he could expound so brilliantly.

This is where we also, to one degree or another, find ourselves. We can kid ourselves for a while that we understand meditation and the teachings, but at some point we have to face it. None of what we've learned seems very relevant when our lover leaves us, when our child has a tantrum in the supermarket, when we're insulted by our colleague. How do we work with our resentment when our boss walks into the room and yells at us? How do we reconcile that frustration and humiliation with our longing to be open and compassionate and not to harm ourselves or others? How do we mix our intention to be alert and gentle in meditation with the reality that we sit down and immediately fall asleep? What about when we sit down and spend the entire time thinking about how we crave someone or something we saw on the way to the meditation hall? Or we sit down and squirm the whole morning because our knees hurt and our back hurts and we're bored and fed up? Instead of calm, wakeful, and egoless, we find ourselves getting more edgy, irritable, and solid.

This is an interesting place to find oneself. For the practitioner, this is an exceedingly important place.

When Naropa, seeking the meaning behind the words, set out to find a teacher, he continually found himself in this position of being squeezed. Intellectually he knew all about compassion, but when he came upon a filthy, lice-infested dog, he looked away. In the same vein, he knew all about nonattachment and not judging, but when his teacher asked him to do something he disapproved of, he refused.

We continually find ourselves in that squeeze. It's a place where we look for alternatives to just being there. It's an uncomfortable, embarrassing place, and it's often the place where people like ourselves give up. We liked meditation and the teachings when we felt inspired and in touch with ourselves and on the right path. But what about when it begins to feel like a burden, like we made the wrong choice and it's not living up to our expectations at all? The people we are meeting are not all that sane. In fact, they seem pretty confused. The way the place is run is not up to par. Even the teacher is questionable.

This place of the squeeze is the very point in our meditation and in our lives where we can really learn something. The point where we are not able to take it or leave it, where we are caught between a rock and a hard place, caught with both the upliftedness of our ideas and the rawness of what's happening in front of our eyes—that is indeed a very fruitful place.

When we feel squeezed, there's a tendency for mind to become small. We feel miserable, like a victim, like a pathetic, hopeless case. Yet believe it or not, at that moment of hassle or bewilderment or embarrassment, our minds could become bigger. Instead of taking what's occurred as a statement of personal weakness or someone else's power, instead of feeling we are stupid or someone else is unkind, we could drop all the complaints about ourselves and others. We could be there, feeling off guard, not knowing what to do, just hanging out there with the raw and tender energy of the moment. This is the place where we begin to learn the meaning behind the concepts and the words.

We're so used to running from discomfort, and we're so predictable. If we don't like it, we strike out at someone or beat up on ourselves. We want to have security and certainty of some kind when actually we have no ground to stand on at all.

The next time there's no ground to stand on, don't consider it an obstacle. Consider it a remarkable stroke of luck. We have no ground to stand on, and at the same time it could soften us and inspire us. Finally, after all these years, we could truly grow up. As Trungpa Rinpoche once said, the best mantra is "OM—grow up—svaha."

We are given changes all the time. We can either cling to security, or we can let ourselves feel exposed, as if we had just been born, as if we had just popped out into the brightness of life and were completely naked.

Maybe that sounds too uncomfortable or frightening, but on the other hand, it's our chance to realize that this mundane world is all there is, and we could see it with new eyes and at long last wake up from our ancient sleep of preconceptions.

The truth, said an ancient Chinese master, is neither like this nor like that. It is like a dog yearning over a bowl of burning oil. He can't leave it, because it is too desirable and he can't lick it, because it is too hot.

So how do we relate to that squeeze? Somehow, someone finally needs to encourage us to be inquisitive about this unknown territory and about the unanswerable question of what's going to happen next.

The state of nowness is available in that moment of squeeze. In that awkward, ambiguous moment is our own wisdom mind. Right there in the uncertainty of everyday chaos is our own wisdom mind.

We need encouragement to experiment and try this kind of thing. It's quite daring, and maybe we feel we aren't up to it. But that's the point. Right there in that inadequate, restless feeling is our wisdom mind. We can simply experiment. There's absolutely nothing to lose. We could experiment with not getting tossed around by right and wrong and with learning to relax with groundlessness.

When I was a child, I had a picture book called Lives of the Saints. It was filled with stories of men and women who had never had an angry or mean thought and had never hurt a fly. I found the book totally useless as a guide for how we humans were supposed to live a good life. For me, *The Life of Milarepa*, the great Tibetan yogi and poet, is a lot more instructive. Over the years, as I read and reread Milarepa's story, I find myself getting advice for where I am stuck and can't seem to move forward.

To begin with, Milarepa was a murderer, and like most of us when we blow it, he wanted to atone for his errors. And like most of us, in the process of seeking liberation, he frequently fell flat on his face. He lied and stole to get what he wanted, he got so depressed he was suicidal, and he experienced nostalgia for the good old days. Like most of us, he had one person in his life who continually tested him and blew his saintly cover. Even when almost everyone regarded him as one of Tibet's most holy men, his vindictive old aunt continued to beat him with sticks and call him names, and he continued to have to figure out what to do with that kind of humiliating squeeze.

One can be grateful that a long lineage of teachers has worked with holding their seats with the big squeeze. They were tested and failed and still kept exploring how to just stay there, not seeking solid ground. They trained again and again throughout their lives not to give up on themselves and not to run away when the bottom fell out of their concepts and their noble ideals.

From their own experience they have passed along to us the encouragement not to jump over the big squeeze, but to look at it just as it is, not just out of the corner of an eye. They showed us how to experience it fully, not as good or bad, but simply as unconditioned and ordinary.

Through meditation practice, we realize that we don't have to obscure the joy and openness that is present in every moment of our existence. We can awaken to basic goodness, our birthright. When we are able to do this, we no longer feel burdened by depression, worry, or resentment. Life feels spacious, like the sky and the sea. There's room to relax and breathe and swim, to swim so far out that we no longer have the reference point of the shore.

How do we work with a sense of burden? How do we learn to relate with what seems to stand between us and the happiness we deserve? How do we learn to relax and connect with fundamental joy?

Times are difficult globally; awakening is no longer a luxury or an ideal. It's becoming critical. We don't need to add more depression, more discouragement, or more anger to what's already here. It's becoming essential that we learn how to relate sanely with difficult times. The earth seems to be beseeching us to connect with joy and discover our innermost essence. This is the best way that we can benefit others.

There are three traditional methods for relating directly with difficult circumstances as a path of awakening and joy. The first method we'll call no more struggle; the second, using poison as medicine; and the third, seeing whatever arises as enlightened wisdom. These are three techniques for working with chaos, difficulties, and unwanted events in our daily lives.

The first method, no more struggle, is epitomized by shamatha-vipashyana (insight-awareness) meditation instruction. When we sit down to meditate, whatever arises in our minds we look at directly, call it "thinking," and go back to the simplicity and immediacy of the breath. Again and again, we return to pristine awareness free from concepts. Meditation practice is how we stop fighting with ourselves, how we stop struggling with circumstances, emotions or moods. This basic instruction is a tool that we can use to train in our practice and in our lives. Whatever arises, we can look at it with a nonjudgmental attitude.

This instruction applies to working with unpleasantness in its myriad guises. Whatever or whoever arises, train again and again in looking at it and seeing it for what it is without calling it names, without hurling rocks, without averting your eyes. Let all those stories go. The innermost essence of mind is without bias. Things arise and things dissolve forever and ever. That's just the way it is.

This is the primary method for working with painful situations – global pain, domestic pain, any pain at all. We can stop struggling with what occurs and see its true face without calling it the enemy. It helps to remember that our practice is not about accomplishing anything – not about winning or losing – but about ceasing to struggle and relaxing as it is. That is what we are doing when we sit down to meditate. That attitude spreads into the rest of our lives.

It's like inviting what scares us to introduce itself and hang around for a while. As Milarepa sang to the monsters he found in his cave, "It is wonderful you demons came today. You must come again tomorrow. From time to time, we should converse." We start by working with the monsters in our mind. Then we develop the wisdom and compassion to communicate sanely with the threats and fears of our daily life.

The Tibetan yogini, Machig Labdron, was one who fearlessly trained with this view. She said that in her tradition they did not exorcise demons. They treated them with compassion. The advice she was given by her teacher and passed on to her students was, "Approach what you find repulsive, help the ones you think you cannot help, and go to places that scare you." This begins when we sit down to meditate and practice not struggling with our own mind.

The second method of working with chaos is using poison as medicine. We can use difficult situations –poison – as fuel for waking up. In general, this idea is introduced to us with the tonglen meditation practice of taking in pain and sending out positive energy.

When anything difficult arises—any kind of conflict, any notion of unworthiness, anything that feels distasteful, embarrassing, or painful—instead of trying to get rid of it, we breathe it in. The three poisons are passion (this includes craving or addiction), aggression, and ignorance (which includes denial or the tendency to shut down and close out). We would usually think of these poisons as something bad, something to be avoided. But that isn't the attitude here; instead, they become seeds of compassion and openness. When suffering arises, the tonglen instruction is to let the story line go and breathe it in – not just the anger, resentment or loneliness that we might be feeling, but the identical pain of others who in this very moment are also feeling rage, bitterness, or isolation.

We breathe it in for everybody. This poison is not just our personal misfortune, our fault, our blemish, our shame – it's part of the human condition. It's our kinship with all living things, the material we need in order to understand what it's like to stand in another person's shoes. Instead of pushing it away or running from it, we breathe in and connect with it fully. We do this with the wish that all of us could be free of suffering. Then we breathe out, sending out a sense of big space, a sense of ventilation or freshness. We do this with the wish that all of us could relax and experience the innermost essence of our mind.

We are told from childhood that something is wrong with us, with the world, and with everything that comes along: it's not perfect, it has rough edges, it has a bitter taste, it's too loud, too soft, too sharp, too wishy-washy. We cultivate a sense of trying to make things better because something is bad here, something is a mistake here, something is a problem here. The main point of these methods is to dissolve the dualistic struggle, our habitual tendency to struggle against what's happening to us or in us. These methods instruct us to move toward difficulties rather than backing away. We don't get this kind of encouragement very often.

Everything that occurs is not only usable and workable but is actually the path itself. We can use everything that happens to us as the means for waking up. We can use everything that occurs – whether it's our conflicting emotions and thoughts or our seemingly outer situation – to show us where we are asleep and how we can wake up completely, utterly, without reservations.

So the second method is to use poison as medicine, to use difficult situations to awaken our genuine caring for other people who, just like us, often find themselves in pain. As one lojong slogan says, "When the world is filled with evil, all mishaps, all difficulties, should be transformed into the path of enlightenment." That's the notion engendered here.

The third method for working with chaos is to regard whatever arises as the manifestation of awakened energy. We can regard ourselves as already awake; we can regard our world as already sacred.

Traditionally the image used for regarding whatever arises as the very energy of wisdom is the charnel ground. In Tibet the charnel grounds were what we call graveyards, but they weren't quite as pretty as our graveyards. The bodies were not under a nice smooth lawn with little white stones carved with angels and pretty words. In Tibet the ground was frozen, so the bodies were chopped up after people died and taken to the charnel grounds, where the vultures would eat them. I'm sure the charnel grounds didn't smell very good and were alarming to see. There were eyeballs and hair and bones and other body parts all over the place. In a book about Tibet, I saw a photograph in which people were bringing a body to the charnel ground. There was a circle of vultures that looked to be about the size of two-year-old children – all just sitting there waiting for this body to arrive.

Perhaps the closest thing to a charnel ground in our world is not a graveyard but a hospital emergency room. That could be the image for our working basis, which is grounded in some honesty about how the human realm functions. It smells, it bleeds, it is full of unpredictability, but at the same time, it is self-radiant wisdom, good food, that which nourishes us, that which is beneficial and pure.

Regarding what arises as awakened energy reverses our fundamental habitual pattern of trying to avoid conflict, trying to make ourselves better than we are, trying to smooth things out and pretty them up, trying to prove that pain is a mistake and would not exist in our lives if only we did all the right things. This view turns that particular pattern completely around, encouraging us to become interested in looking at the charnel ground of our lives as the working basis for attaining enlightenment.

Often in our daily lives we panic. We feel heart palpitations and stomach rumblings because we are arguing with someone or because we had a beautiful plan and it's not working out. How do we walk into those dramas? How do we deal with those demons, which are basically our hopes and fears? How do we stop struggling against ourselves? Machig Labdron advises that we go to places that scare us. But how do we do that?

We're trying to learn not to split ourselves between our "good side" and our "bad side," between our "pure side" and our "impure side." The elemental struggle is with our feeling of being wrong, with our guilt and shame at what we are. That's what we have to befriend. The point is that we can dissolve the sense of dualism between us and them, between this and that, between here and there, by moving toward what we find difficult and wish to push away.

In terms of everyday experience, these methods encourage us not to feel embarrassed about ourselves. There is nothing to be embarrassed about. It's like ethnic cooking. We could be proud to display our Jewish matzo balls, our Indian curry, our African-American chitlins, our middle-American hamburger and fries. There's a lot of juicy stuff we could be proud of. Chaos is part of our home ground. Instead of looking for something higher or purer, work with it just as it is.

The world we find ourselves in, the person we think we are – these are our working bases. This charnel ground called life is the manifestation of wisdom. This wisdom is the basis of freedom and also the basis of confusion. In every moment of time, we make a choice. Which way do we go? How do we relate to the raw material of our existence?

These are three very practical ways to work with chaos: no struggle, poison as medicine, and regarding everything that arises as the manifestation of wisdom. First, we can train in letting the story lines go. Slow down enough to just be present, let go of the multitude of judgments and schemes, and stop struggling.

Second, we can use every day of our lives to take a different attitude toward suffering. Instead of pushing it away, we can breathe it in with the wish that everyone could stop hurting, with the wish that people everywhere could experience contentment in their hearts. We could transform pain into joy.

Third, we can acknowledge that suffering exists, that darkness exists. The chaos in here and the chaos out there is basic energy, the play of wisdom. Whether we regard our situation as heaven or as hell depends on our perception.

Finally, couldn't we just relax and lighten up? When we wake up in the morning, we can dedicate our day to learning how to do this. We can cultivate a sense of humor and practice giving ourselves a break. Every time we sit down to meditate, we can think of it as training to lighten up, to have a sense of humor, to relax. As one student said, "Lower your standards and relax as it is."

1. No more struggle: "Whatever arises, train again and again in seeing it for what it is. The innermost essence of mind is without bias. Things arise and things dissolve forever and ever. Whatever happens, we can look at it with a nonjudgmental attitude. This is the primary method for working with painful situations.

2. Using poison as medicine: "When suffering arises, we breathe it in for everybody. This poison is not just our personal misfortune. It's our kinship with all living things, the seed of compassion and openness. Instead of pushing it away or running from it, we breathe in and connect with it fully. We do this with the wish that all of us could be free of suffering."

3. Regarding whatever arises as awakened energy: "This reverses our habitual pattern of trying to avoid conflict, trying to smooth things out, trying to prove that pain is a mistake that would not exist in our lives if only we did the right things. This view encourages us to look at the charnel ground of our lives as the working basis for attaining enlightenment.

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**The Tao of Friction-Free Relationship – Week Seven**

**Some Principles of Friction-Free Relationship**

There is something in every one of you that waits and listens for the sound of the genuine in yourself. It is the only true guide you will ever have. And if you cannot hear it, you will all of your life spend your days at the ends of strings that somebody else pulls. -Howard Thurman

If you bring out what is within you, what you bring out will save you; if you do not bring out what is within you, what you do not bring out will destroy you. -Jesus (in *The Gospel of Thomas*)

**The CORE PREMISE** and **FIRST PRINCIPLE** of friction-free relationship is that the ground state of all being is the universal milieu of cosmic *kindom consciousness* that we most commonly signify as “reality.” Reality’s universal milieu is the sum-totaled who/what (identity), where/when (spacetime location) and why/how (functional interrelationship) of all that exists. Anything that can be identified and located within reality’s milieu exists in a functional interrelationship with everything else that can be thus specified, hence the cosmic *kindom* (being of one kind) of all that exists. Because reality is the overall whole and wholeness of all that exists, the term “reality” signifies the totality of all component parts of the cosmic milieu, plus the totality of interrelationships that unify all of its parts.

In short:

* Reality is the cosmic *kindom* (the interactive at-one-ment and wholeness) of all that exists.
* Each thing in the universe exists in interrelationship with all other things in the universe.

Each person experiences his or her participatory placement in reality’s interrelational milieu as *everywhere I go, here* I *am.* This is because each part of the universal milieu is forever centered precisely where it is and nowhere else, nor can any part be centered in more than one place at the same time. Even though processes, functions, properties and qualities that are distinct from the parts that exhibit them, they can be variously centered, even to the point (like gravity) of being centered universally. Our experiencing of *here I am* is eternally centered in a location from which it can never stray, even when its location itself is moving amongst other locations. One’s experience of *“here* *I am”* can never be lost, even if it becomes seemingly misplaced while one is experiencing the “elsewhere” of other locations, because *here* is forever the only location at which *I am* is or ever can be grounded.

**Some existential (i.e., the-way-reality-is) principles of friction-free relationship:**

* **All relationships are reciprocal.** This means that *every relationship is an interrelationship.* Each thing in the universe is in resonant interrelationship with all other things in the universe as follows:
  + Naturalist John Muir: When one tugs at a single thing in nature, one finds it hitched to the rest of the universe.
  + Poet Francis Thompson: Thou canst not stir a flower, without the troubling of a star.

As a consequence of this principle, *all is holy.* All things exist as an interdependent, integrally coherent whole via their independence as parts, *i.e.,* via their being in dependence on their integral wholeness.

* **Each of us is the sole (and soul) proprietor of his/her own experiencing.** Each of us is always the primary formative participant in his/her experiencing, as in the couplet, “looking out from prison bars, one sees dirt while another sees stars.” The primacy of experience is widely proclaimed:
  + Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced – even a proverb is no proverb to you till your life has illustrated it. -John Keats
  + Experience is the best sculptor. -Marion Diamond, Ph.D., and Janet Hopson, *Magic Trees of the Mind*
  + [I]t is the experience of the object, and only the experience of the object, that decides. ­-Alain (Émile-Auguste Chartier)
  + Experience is more forceful than logic. ­-Isaac Abravanel (1437-1508), *Commentary on the Bible*
  + Experience is a hard teacher – she gives the test first, and then the lesson. –Vernon Sanders
  + Wherever we go, whatever we do, self is the sole subject we study and learn. -Ralph Waldo Emerson
  + Talk to yourself, not to the world. There is no one to talk to but yourself because all experience takes place within. Conditions are the reflections of our meditations and nothing else. -Ernest Holmes
* **The causal source of relational friction is not the effect that occasions it.** There is only one causal source of all experiencing, and all causation is interior to its experiential locus. Therefore, all effects are evidential of inside-outward causation that emerges from one’s experiential interface with reality’s milieu, and they are also the occasion (rather than source) of subsequent effects that causally emerge. All causation resides within the interrelational between-ness of reality’s interactive effects.
  + The raspberry within itself does not contain its sweetness, nor does the tongue. It is in the interaction between the two that this divine manifestation resides. -Brian Josephson
  + U]ltimate reality is encountered neither in our minds nor in the physical cosmos, but at the point where these meet. -Alan Smithson
  + It is we who make wine drunk. -Rumi
* **Although we have freedom of choice we do not have freedom of consequence.** As Ernest Holmes put it, “we are bound because we are first free.” That is, we are bound by the consequences of our freely made choices.

**Some operational (i.e., the-way-reality-works) principles of friction-free relationship:**

* **Distinguish all messages from their messenger.**
* **Be openly empty and still. (**Emptiness=non-being~non-seeming; stillness=non-doing~non-acting.)
* **Be your own flow.** (The only thing that *goes* with the flow is a dead fish.)
* **Be *in*, yet not *of* your bounded self.**
* **Allow your experiencing of life to unfold.**
* **Be openly perceptive by recognizing the “just-as-it-is” of your circumstances** without putting your own “spin” on the way things are.
* **Free yourself *from* whatever friction you cannot free yourself *of*,** like the ball bearings that are placed between the otherwise chafing surfaces of axle and wheel. Your freedom from friction is accomplished by your practice of four primary cessations:
  + No blaming
  + No shaming
  + No gaming (competitive manipulation)
  + No naming (fixation of identity)
* **Deactivate your “mine” field.** (Replace possessiveness with non-attachment.)
* **Cease clinging (a.k.a. “attachment” and “self- immobilization").** Suggested practice: write “Cease Clinging” on a post-it note and stick it to your refrigerator door or bathroom mirror.
* **Get a non-clinging grip on your circumstances,** a serially progressive grip-release-grip-again like that of tire treads on the road, and like a climber’s successive hand-holds on a mountainside. In both cases, it is in the space between successive grips that all action takes place. The non-doing called “release” or “letting go” facilitates the doing of what next becomes. As Ernest Holmes put this, “We walk by falling forward.”
* **Stop trying to figure your experiencing out,** and just openly let it out instead.
* **Free yourself from the structure of your knowing.** (Practice beginners mind, freedom from the known, freedom from belief).
* **Be harmoniously consistent in all that you think, feel, say and do.**
  + When Mohandas Gandhi’s wife was asked how he was able to deliver his long, well thought-out, three-hour speeches without notes and without repeating himself, she observed, "You and I, we think one thing, say another, and do a third. With Gandhiji, it’s all the same.”
* **Use your intellect to determine which feelings to constructively express** (i.e., feelings that you allow to press outward of their own *constructive* accord).
  + Everything in the universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part. The universe is forever uniting what is harmonious and diminishing what is not…. It is the unessential only that is vanishing, that the abiding may be made more clearly manifest. -Ernest Holmes
* **Be quick to agree with your adversary** (i.e., to non-disagree by agreeing to disagree).
  + Honor the common ground of all reality, which is experiencing.
  + In the face of another’s contrary assertion, say “That doesn’t match my experience.”
* **Have the heart to make an art of your distress.** 
  + Joy comes to those who have the heart to convert their pain into art. -John D. Engle, Jr.

Men tend to be more clinging than women, yet deny it by projecting their clinging on the women they are clinging to. Dory Previn: When a Man Wants a Woman; Twenty Mile Zone

**The Tao of Friction-Free Relationship – Week X**

**BEING ONLY WHAT IS YOURS TO BE**

**Cease looking *at* your *acquired* self’s personality**

**to see instead *from, through* and *as* your *innate* self’s personhood.**

A meta-linguistic advisory: The outcomes of our propositions always mirror our prepositions, because what shows up in our present position manifests in accordance with the prior (pre) position from which it proceeds. Because our prepositions signify the state of consciousness that governs our relationship to whatever we are experiencing, they are the most powerful of all the words in our language. Therefore, no proposition can be more powerful than its prepositions, and no preposition is more powerful than *as*. This is why we do not always get what we pray *for*, yet never fail to get what we pray *from*, because what we pray from is what we pray *as*.

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You cannot understand God, you cannot define God, and you cannot contain God. Yet when you cease looking at yourself, you can be Godly. (The word “God” signifies our Original Nature.)

The way to avoid looking at yourself is to be so fully engaged in being what is only yours to be that you don’t have anything else left over to look at, from, through and with.

You can’t know the totality of God with your finite mind, because while God is infinite your materially embodied intelligence is finite and cannot contain infinity. Yet when your awareness is not busy impressing itself and others, and is instead allowed to freely express (press outward) *from* itself *as* its consciousness of and being only what is beneficially present in every here-and-now moment, you are thus knowing God in every expression that surrounds you.

There is nothing other than God to experience and to know; and the experiencing↔knowing, the experiencer↔knower, the thing experienced↔known are the individualization of God’s self-expression *in* you, *by* you, *through* you and *as* you.. You are the eyes with which God sees only God as God’s expression, and the mind through which God understands God’s expression.

Therefore, see what God sees *through*, *as* and *from* you, not what you assume that God sees by looking *at* and *to* you.

Right here, right now, and from here~now henceforward, graduate from having faith *in* God, to having the faith *of* God. Faith *in* God is encumbered with the friction of belief. The faith *of* God is friction free. As Ernest Homes acknowledge this distinction in his understanding of Jesus' power to heal:

When Jesus explained to his disciples that they had failed to heal because of lack of faith, they protested that they did have faith *in* God. Jesus explained to them that this was insufficient; they must have the faith *of* God. *The faith of God* is very different from *a faith in God.* The faith of God IS God, and somewhere along the line of our spiritual evolution this transition will gradually take place, where we shall cease having a faith IN and shall have the faith OF. Always in such degree as this happens, a demonstration takes place. We must believe because God is belief; the physical Universe is built out of belief—faith, belief, acceptance, conviction. –SOM, 317/3

The way our prepositions can either limit or liberate our propositions is nowhere more evident than in our propositions concerning divine providence of our abundance. For example, some folks maintain that the foundation of our abundance is our consciousness ***of*** *God* ***as*** *our supply.* However, this ***pro***position falls short of the fullest expression of truth by the misplacement of its ***pre***positions. The prepositions "of" and "as" are out of phase, because we cannot be ***pro*** (for) anything that does not ***pre***cede (go before) itself in our own consciousness.

The term “cede” (as in “precede”) signifies “yielding” and “stepping aside.” We yield ourselves to whatever we desire to experience by ceasing to entertain in consciousness whatever is unlike the intended outcome of our desire. Thereby stepping aside in consciousness from what we do not desire, we become one with what we do desire, whose outcome becomes the welcome subject of our present experience rather than the anticipated object of our eventual experience.

Accordingly, it is our consciousness ***as*** *God* ***of*** *our supply* on which our consciousness of abundance is best founded. When we are merely conscious **of** God, we relate **to** God as a power of wellbeing other than our own. When we instead are conscious **as** God is conscious, we relate together **with** God as a unifying power of wellbeing. When we are thereby conscious as God is conscious, both our own and God's way of being are the same. Thus the distinction between a consciousness *of* God *as* our supply and a consciousness *as* God *of* our supply represents a quantum leap in our power to manifest, a leap into looking and seeing *as* God looks and sees by doing both *from* God.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Ernest Holmes taught that the most powerful preposition is “as,” because it represents embodiment. Thus it is only with the embodied faith *of* God that we thereby have faith just *as* God has faith. Holmes' mentor, Emma Curtis Hopkins, was equally mighty in her understanding that our spiritual purpose is to have God's faith – the faith *of* God – and that our consciousness *as* God *of* our supply foundations our abundance. As we perceive God with the faith of God, God's faith prevails in our lives.

Concerning our embodiment of God’s faith Hopkins wrote,

As Mary looked beyond all ideas into the God beyond ideas she brought forth Jesus Christ. As I look into the home that is beyond my ideas I bring forth home for the people of earth. As I look into the God who is support beyond my idea of sustaining and supporting I bring forth the plenty I see as I look.

**The Idea is Not the Thing Itself**

When we accept indiscriminately the metaphysical proposition that thoughts are things, we tend to confuse the map (our thoughts) with the territory (that which our thoughts are about). We are thus susceptible to choosing the menu (our *idea* of what's possible) rather than the meal (all that *is* possible).

Just as Buddha acknowledged that “you cannot walk the path until you are the path,” Hopkins knew the secret of looking beyond the map to be one with its territory, the secret of looking beyond the menu to be one with our provision, the secret of looking "into" God so deeply that one goes beyond all ideas of God to where we experience oneness *with* God and thereby see *as* God sees.

I look beyond my ideas into the great Fact of Life. This looking into Life, the great fact, away from my idea of life is the dissolution of my ideas. I willingly see my ideas dissolved in my sight by the inner God of my Being looking straight out over the universe of God folding me here.

Hopkins described the immediate realization inherent in seeing as God sees:

There is a power of my mind called "looking" by which I am able to see what is beyond my thoughts. While I am looking at God as One who knows nothing of supporting me, I find myself saying, "God is my support." After speaking this truth I have new clothes, new home conditions, new strength.

Hopkins also described the argumentative alternative to such "looking":

Now if I had spoken the words over many times that God is my support before I had dropped the idea of support and looked beyond my idea, I should have had to wait for my words to [fuel] my understanding. Then my understanding would have looked in silent adoration at the God who is beyond understanding and I should have spoken the words, "God is my support," after a long time of waiting.

Hopkins then clarified the distinction between speaking God's word argumentatively and speaking God's truth declaratively:

I may look straight past all ideas into that which is not idea. And then I shall be thinking the vital principle that makes health but never speaks of health. I am the speaker of health.

**The Trinity of Abundant Well-Being: Healthy, Wealthy and Wise**

Abundance is a gift of grace.

Prosperity is a by-product of action.

From *The Gospel of Not Yet Common Sense*

God is the speaker of health – not *a* speaker of the word of health, but *the* speaker of health itself –because God is the embodied declaration of health. Via my embodiment of God's faith I am likewise the declarer of health, and nothing unlike health is known by me.

God is also the speaker of supply – not the word “supply,” but of supply itself. The declaration, "Let there be light!" originated *all* of supply for all of time. Because every particle of material existence has light as its origin, supply in any of its forms is a form that is taken by light – including the supply that shows up as "health." And so it is, with God's faith, that I am likewise the speaker of supply. When I speak with God's faith my declaration, "Let there be..." can only prosper *as* the form that my conclusion of that declaration supplies, and for as long as nothing unlike that conclusion is known by me.

The ordering of our unfolding abundance is clear:

* we look beyond all *ideas* and *thoughts* of well-being and prosperity to be their cause in our embodiment of God’s faith;
* with God’s faith we see unlimited cosmic abundance as it is, uncircumscribed by any idea or thought;
* with God's faith we declare unlimited abundance into our experience (though not into existence because unlimited abundance has forever been, forever is and forever more shall be.)

When our prosperity is thus ordered in both meanings of the verb, “to order,” we demonstrate as well the third quality of prosperity's famous trinity of virtues: with God's faith, we are not only *healthy* as God is healthy and *wealthy* as God is wealthy, we are also *wise* as God is wise. When God's faith is declared with and as the wisdom of God's way, we bring into manifest form the substance of God's creation. As I declare with God's faith and wisdom that my own creations are good, God's infinite supply is *my* infinite supply as well, and is likewise the infinite supply of all those whom I see being well and doing well.

Wellbeing, in any of its manifestations, is the outcome of our first seeing it and thus seeding it in our own consciousness. And as we embody the faith of God which knows the oneness of all that is, we enjoy precisely as much wellbeing as we are willing to see and seed for others, neither any more nor any less.

The source of God’s faith is always at your hand and in your hands *as* your hands:

If you would know and have the faith of God,

you must consult the Wizard of Is,

whose special magic leaves today's life undistracted

by the should be's, could be's and if only's

that cloud over your perceptions.

"Good old days," childish ways, and other once-were's

are as absent from the Wizard's view

as are apprehensions about tomorrow.

Oblivious to these, the Wizard of Is resides

in the near and how of present instants only--

the time and place where life is most abundant.

If you desire to know

the secret of overflowing from each moment,

you must first know the Wizard of Is.

Fortunately, this Wizard inhabits your own domain,

waiting to be found within the very being who bears your name.

This is a seminar in conflict dissolution, rather than conflict resolution.

A minimum measure of interpersonal friction is unavoidable as long as two or more people are interacting on this planet, because no two persons have outlooks on their lives that are so identical that no discord exists between their outlooks

Eliminating unnecessary interpersonal friction involves the scientific art of discord dissolution (not resolution).

There are no difficult people in the world, only our own difficult ways of being with some people. As Mark Rosen writes in *Thank You . . .,* “16-17 and 24,

Remodeling (Rosen, p. 24) –Dalai Lama, four flat tires

This seminar takes its cue from Jesus’ promise of freedom from sin. In New Thought “sin” signifies nothing more than making mistakes and living with the consequences thereof. And the best way to live with the consequences of your mistakes is to be free from those consequences even though you can’t be free of them. Such freedom is what this seminar is all about.

There are lots of things we can’t be free of, yet can be free from. For example, the whole process of growing up is one of becoming free from your parents even when you can’t be free of them. Such freedom is also what this seminar is all about.

Five-minute method and 10-week seminar method and two-year service method.

The two-year service method is to be a member of the NTCSL Board of Trustees.

In the 10-week seminar method we’ll be freeing up with the help of Dyer Rosen.

That’s only 12 ½ hours to significantly lighten up your entire life, which will further enlighten the rest of our spiritual family accordingly. This spiritual family is already more friction-free than any other I’ve ever been a part of, so if we don’t just rest on our laurels and instead increase the light we bring to the world the whole world will be that much better off.

So *be* there!

Marcus Aurelius: *The Spiritual Teachings of Marcus Aurelius*, Mark Forstater (HarperCollins, 2000).

Since you are an integral part of a social system, let every act of yours contribute to the harmonization of social life. And action that is not related directly or remotely to this social aim disturbs your life, and destroys your unity. (105)

Not becoming like your enemy [those who disturb you] is the best revenge. (117)

[D[iscard the thought “How do I look to others?” Be content if you can live the rest of your life as your nature demands. Consider what it wants. And let nothing else distract you; for you have experienced endless searching and not found happiness anywhere, not in logical thought, not in wealth, not in fame, not in self-indulgence – not anywhere.

Then where can I find happiness? In doing what my nature requires. How can I do this? If I allow my impulses and actions to spring from my principles. What principles? They are about good and evil, that nothing is good for me that does not make me just, modest, courageous, and independent; and nothing is evil that does not produce the exact opposite. (122-23) [TFFR-1]

Forgiveness orchestrates more than we know.

Let go of what no longer serves you.

**Providence:**

The universe delivers to those who create a receptive opening. Everything you desire will come to you when you are prepared and willing to receive it in the form that it shows up.

To be fully rich is to be fully alive, fully healthy and fully engaged in being only as you can be and doing what only you can do.

Look into me, whom do you see?

Could it be you that you're seeing, not me?

Lend me your ear, what do you hear?

Is it your own voice that rings in your ear?

Verse #1:

While peering about on humanity's see,

Seeking the truest expression of me,

Just as I'm seen as I want me to be

The peer where I'm anchored falls into my see.

(CHORUS repeated)

Verse #2:

While hearing the shout of humanity's plea,

Seeking the soundest inflection of me,

Just when I'm heard as I want me to be

My here echoes elsewhere in a different key.

(CHORUS repeated)

Verse # 3:

While feeling my way through humanity's see,

Seeking the self-resurrection of me,

Although I am raised where I want me to be

I'm feeling no mirror, my God, to Thee.

(CHORUS repeated)

CONVERSATION  
By Tom Atlee

I want to expand the concept of conversation.

The Latin and Indo-European roots of "con" and "vers" connote "turning together".

This deeper understanding opens up new meanings.

When we speak our truths and hear each other deeply, letting each other's voices and ideas and stories and passions shift us, we turn together.

When we dance or listen to music, and our bodies and attention resonate with its shifting vibrations and emotional resonances, we turn together.

When we all share the same perspectives, hopes or horrors within the vibrational embrace of mass media and the webs of telecommunications -- 911, elections, earth from space -- we turn together.

When we respond adaptively to the situations we face -- individually or collectively -- we are turning together with the energies and realities that reside within those situations.

When we as a community come together in times of crisis, rather than splitting apart into adversarial or self-aggrandizing camps, we are turning together.

As all plants breathe in carbon dioxide and breath out oxygen, and all animals breath in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide, we turn together in and as one great cycling flow of oxygen and carbon, releasing the energies of Life.

As our one small and beautiful planet spins out its days and nights, and circles the sun into seasons, and glides with our whole solar family on one vast arcing arm of our spiral Milky Way galaxy, we turn together.

We are in conversation -- all of us, all the time, at more levels than we know -- turning together.

Waking up is our emerging realization that we can converse more consciously, learn to do it more knowledgeably and heartfully, inspired and inspiring, and thereby evolve together with -- and into -- greater wisdom, wholesomeness, and grace... turning, together.

**ON DOING ONLY WHAT IS YOURS TO DO**

Serve others by helping them stay out of each other’s way.

Stay out of your own and everyone else’s way while serving others.

Spend the rest of your time doing only what can be done by you and no one else.

**The Tao of Friction-Free Relationships**

**Honoring the Cosmic Kindom of Your At-One-Ment with All That Is**

Rev. Noel McInnis

Interpersonal friction is inevitable in a world where no two people feel, think and act in exactly the same ways. Yet just as mechanical friction can be minimized, so it is with can interpersonal friction as well. Despite all diversity and adversity of expression around us, it is eminently possible to enjoy relationships that are relatively free from personal "static". This seminar series presents simple guidelines for establishing and maintaining friction-free relationships in accordance with the following prescription:

* Be, as water is, without friction.
* Flow around the edges of those within your path, surrounding within your ever-moving depths those who come to rest there – enfolding them, while never for a moment holding on.
* Accept whatever distance others are moved within your flow, being with them gently as far as they allow your strength to carry them, and filling with your own being the remaining space when they are left behind.
* When dropping down life's rapids, froth and bubble into fragments if you must, remembering that the one of you thus many will just as many times be one again.
* And when you’ve gone as far as you can go, quietly await your next beginning.

Time and dates: 9:00-10:15 a.m. from January 25- March ?? [ideally ten weeks, I will settle for less if necessary]

Location: Kingstad Center

Tuition: The ten-week series is available by love offering to all practitioners and persons of any faith who have certified healing, counseling, therapist, MSW, ministerial or theological credentials. All former students of Rev. McInnis may register for a $50 tuition fee. For all others the tuition is $100.

**NewConnexion Announcement:**

### Oregon, February 5 – March 26

#### The Tao of Friction-Free Relationships

A series of eight seminars convened by Rev. Dr. Noel McInnis

New Thought Center for Spiritual Living *(NTCSL)*

February 5-March 26

5319 S.W. Westgate Drive*,* Sylvan Hills/Portland.

At the conclusion of this seminar series you will have less stress in your life, less hassle in your life, less incoherence in your life and less trouble in your life, as well as less of what the first letters of those four words spell out. If not, you can request a refund.

The seminar series presents simple guidelines for establishing and maintaining friction-free relationships in accordance with the following prescription:

* Be, as water is, without friction.
* Flow around the edges of those within your path and surround within your ever-moving depths those who come to rest there – enfold them, while never for a moment holding on.
* Accept whatever distance others are moved within your flow - be with them gently as far as they allow your strength to carry them, and fill with your own being the remaining space when they are left behind.
* When dropping down life's rapids, froth and bubble into fragments if you must, remembering that the one of you thus many will just as many times be one again.
* And when you’ve gone as far as you can go, quietly await your next beginning.

Study material: Wayne Dyer's book on the *Tao Te Ching* and Mark Rosen’s *Thank You for Being Such a Pain: Spiritual Guidance for Dealing with Difficult People.*

The eight-week series is available by love offering to all practitioners and persons of any faith who have certified healing, counseling, therapist, social work, ministerial or theological credentials. All former students of Rev. McInnis may register for a $50 tuition fee. For all others the tuition is $100.

For more information and to register, contact Rev. McInnis at 503-570-4331 or via email to [noelmcinnis.is@gmail.com](mailto:noelmcinnis.is@gmail.com).

**ANNOUNCEMENT:**

It has been little noted nor long remembered that in the 1990’s Pope John declared that heaven and hell are states of mind, rather than celestial and subterranean locations. Since this realization is the cornerstone of New Thought, one might wonder why Rev. David hasn’t been invited to hobnob with cardinals as well as evangelicals. Hobnobbing with cardinals would also be in Rev. David’s ballpark, wouldn’t it?

I learned that heaven and hell are states of mind in the 1960’s, from a little book entitled *The Lazy Man’s Guide to Enlightenment*. Its author’s prescription for the quickest way from a hellacious state of mind to a heavenly one is not the way that is prescribed in the story about the priest, rabbi, and New Thought minister who all died in the same airplane crash and found themselves roasting in Hell. While the priest and rabbi puzzled over what their sin might have been, the New Thought minister closed his eyes, shook his head, and forcefully proclaimed from his burning lips, “It’s not hot and I’m not here.”

Not only is denial not a river in Egypt, neither is it the quickest way from hell to heaven. The *quickest* way to heaven is to *love* yourself in hell, no matter how hellacious your state of mind might be. How this is accomplished is the focus of the six-week Tao of Friction-Free Relationship 9 a.m. seminar that begins the Sunday after Easter. It makes no difference if you’re in financial hell, relationship hell, unforgiveness hell, or the hell of some illness, you can learn to love yourself enough to find yourself in heaven instead.

There’s a wonderful song entitled “Everybody Wants to Go to Heaven, but Nobody Wants to Die.” The good news of New Thought is that you can go to heaven without dying by truly loving yourself, the bottom line of which to forgive yourself.

Since this seminar series is only six weeks long, the tuition is laughably low priced at $50. And I am so certain of the seminar’s effectiveness that if you’re in financial hell you can laughably pay for the series when you get to financial heaven – which is a trip that I have actually made myself.

**ANNOUNCEMENT:**

If you presently enjoy a life that is totally friction-free, please raise your hand.

* No hands raised: either some of you are being modest, or else fear being suspected of dishonesty.
* Hand(s) raised: to what do you attribute your departure from everyone else’s experience? (normality?)

There are at least three paths to friction-free relationship available to the members of the NTCSL spiritual community:

* a quick 5-minute fast-track
* a long-term 2-4 year in-service training track
* an intermediate 10-week seminar track

The quick 5-minute fast track to friction free relationship is a simple two-step process.

* Take a deep breath.
* Hold it for five minutes.

The bad news about the quick 5-minute fast track is that it never works for those who try it, because as soon as they are unconscious – in about two minutes – they begin to breathe again. Thus the good news about the 5-minute fast track is that it doesn’t work for those who might otherwise regret it from the perspective of their unexpected arrival in a less than heavenly place.

For those who would rather continue hanging out on this planet, while being in the world yet not of it, the long-term 2-4 year in-service training track is to join our Board of Trustees, which is the most friction-free leadership group I have ever belonged to.

The intermediate option is the 10-week seminar track entitled The Tao of Friction-Free Relationships, which facilitates making your life less stressful. Those of you who understand what the nature, purpose and function of friction is all about need not be alarmed, because this course will not make you so free of friction that you fly right off the planet. If you apply what you learn in this seminar-workshop series you will have less stress in your life, less hassle in your life, less incoherence in your life and less trouble in your life, as well as less of what the first letters of those words spell out. I therefore guarantee that if at the end of the seminar there is not less stress in your life, less hassle in your life, less incoherence in your life and less trouble in your life, you can request a refund of the (love offering, $50, $100).

The class will be just as much fun as the announcement, and I would like to have all of you take it so that we can all be as friction-free as our Board of Trustees.

**Frictionless Relationship  
and what it takes to have one.**

There is no such thing as frictionless living in a rapidly moving world fraught with conflicting agendas. Nor is absence of friction an option in any gathering of persons, be it household, neighborhood or nation, where more than one preference or perspective is professed.

Yet it is quite possible, amidst our diversities and adversities of expression, to enjoy relationships relatively free from personal "static," where participants do not escalate the frictions already inherent in mutual encounter and engagement.

This workshop presents simple guidelines for establishing and maintaining approximately frictionless, static-free relationships, according to the following prescription:

* Be, as water is, without friction.
* Flow around the edges of those within your path, surrounding within your ever-moving depths those who come to rest there—enfolding them, while never for a moment holding on.
* Accept whatever distance others are moved within your flow, being with them gently as far as they allow your strength to carry them, and filling with your own being the remaining space when they are left behind.
* When dropping down life's rapids, froth and bubble into fragments if you must, remembering that the one of you thus many will just as many times be one again.
* And when you’ve gone as far as you can go, quietly await your next beginning.

The Apostle Paul wrote: “Clothe yourself with compassion and kindness and gentleness and patience before each other and forgive whatever grievance you may have with one another.” How do you adorn yourself when confronted with a partner who appears to be unkind or aloof? Can you dress yourself in patience? That doesn’t mean we have to be a doormat. Clothing oneself in kindness means that we lessen tension instead of heighten it, that we stop rejecting and look for the good. Showing kindness grants us a gift: the cloak of insight that warms and protects us, and brings us closer to God.

Mary Manin Morrissey

**The Secrets of Friction-Free Relationships**

**ESTABLISHING RAPPORT:** What moved you to attend this workshop?

**REVIEWING OF ASSUMPTIONS**

**REVEALING THE SECRETS**

**#1: There is no such thing as a friction*less* relationship.**

Interpersonal friction is inevitable in a world where no two people feel, think and act exactly the same way. Yet just as friction can be minimized in mechanical systems, so can it be minimized in the interpersonal realm.

* It is impossible for me to be free *of* friction. At best, I can be free *from* friction.
* Jesus and Ernest Holmes on “sin”.
* “If I had powers . . .”
* Agreement to disagree – accepting as is as “O.K.”

**#2: It is unnecessary to increase existing friction. All increase of existing friction is optional.**

Interpersonal ball bearings.

“That doesn’t match my information,” or, “That doesn’t match my experience.”

“I resemble that remark – but only up to a point.”

“Tell me more”

Appreciative listening

**#3: It is usually possible to reduce existing friction.**

Cease meeting others’ attacks with reactive attacks of your own.

Cease making others responsible for your feelings. (Hopes and Expectations)

Cease making others responsible for your problems. (The Problem)

Cease looking at what isn’t there. (My Happiness Is All That I Can See)

Cease making comparisons – all comparisons are negating. (No Comparison)

Cease insisting. (Each Leaf)

Get off your “buts”.

Provide options, not advice. (Scott and pregnant neighbor.)

Be forgiving

# Forgiving Your Way to Friction-Free Relationships

Interpersonal friction is inevitable in a world where no two people feel, think and act exactly the same way. Yet just as friction can be reduced in mechanical systems, so can it be minimized in the interpersonal realm. The greatest source of excess friction – i.e., conflict – in relationships is non-forgiveness. When our non-forgiveness is recognized and acknowledged as the principal agent of unwanted conflict in our lives, it is more readily released, making room for the realization of more co-operative relationships by all concerned.

Forgiveness replaces negative, conflicted feelings with positive, co-operative feelings. Such emotional replacement is possible for anyone who sincerely intends it, and is far more easily accomplished when the intention has the support of others, either individually or in a group of supportive others.

Forgiveness coaching, whether in individual, group or organizational settings, is based on the premise that co-operative feelings are more readily created by positive action than by direct attempts to eliminate conflictive feelings. Coaching assists participants in two vital ways:

* Devising an action strategy to replace negative, conflicted feelings with positive, co-operative ones
* Providing a support base for the successful realization of one’s own action strategy.

**The View from the Center of the Universe:**

**Our Common Unity in the Kindom of Cosmic Interbeing**

Interbeing meditation –

* Ecological interbeing
  + Thich Nhat Hanh “Interbeing”
* Planetary interbeing –
  + Argon
  + Whole Earth Icon
    - Wald
    - Schweikert
    - Joe Miller
  + Our Children’s Home
  + Holocoenotic diagram
* Cultural interbeing –
  + Linton
* Neuorological interbeing

Our **neurological interconnectivity and interdependence** is acknowledged in the following excerpt from the inside front cover flap of *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire: On the Matter of the Mind,* Gerald M. Edelman (Basic Books, 1992):

A match-head's worth of the brain contains about a billion connections that can combine in ways that can only be described as hyperastronomical—on the order of ten followed by millions of zeros (there are only about ten followed by eighty zeros' worth of positively charged particles in the whole known universe). [A mega-giga-zigazillion?]

If a match-head's equivalent of brain matter represents that many connections, consider the implications—especially if we were using it!—of our having the equivalent of several hundred matchheads of brain matter in each of our heads.

* Quantum-mechanical interbeing –
  + Swimme
* Cosmic interbeing
  + Each of us is a whole-earth catalog
* Technological interbeing –
  + Moss
  + Global Villiage
  + Internet
* Political interbeing
  + Declaration of interdependence

**The View from the Center of the Universe:**

## Chapter Eight: Are We Alone? The Possibility of Alien Wisdom

## 206/211 – habitable zone – sovereign eye

207 – cosmic perspective (see p. 240)

208 – single ancestor

211 – solar habitable zone

211 – water gets lighter when it freezes

212 – moon stabilizes Earthm slows rotation

213 – galactic habitable zone

214 – life releases chemical energy of the Earth

218 – 32 solid >32 liquid = 32-176 (144)

219 – extinction events

221-222 – convergent evolution

223 – intelligence is sexy

224 – scaling of intelligent life

224-227 – scaling as fractal physics

225 – 1.5 billion heartbeats per life

228+ – SETI

**233 – volatility + unpredictability + commitment to cosmic harmony**

## 240 – integrating cosmic reality into our thinking

240 – persistence of Earth-centered thinking

241 – 1054 supernova unseen

242 – Newtonian insignificance

243 – metaphoric intelligence

244 – affection is warmth; time is money

245 – cognitive unconscious

245 – metaphoric recombination

246-250 – gravity and wealth (concentration)

249 – two kinds of motion: circular, random

250 – scale and politics

252-253 – [prefigurative culture]

254 – species inflation

257 – grow in complexity

257 – become much more, rather than acquire

## Chapter Nine: Think Cosmically, Act Globally

260 – we are held to account for all permitted pleasures we did not enjoy (Talmud)

260 – turning point (see p. 265)

263 – future is real insofar as consequences are real

264 – refrigerator efficiency

265 – tipping point is window of opportunity

265 – small-scale, decentralized solutions

265 – trees have standing

266 – cosmic morality

268 – “We are at the *center* of a vast, cosmic adventure – not outside it and not at its end.”

**Chapter Ten: Taking Our Extraordinary Place in the Cosmos**

269 – “Cosmic perspective is the greatest gift that modern cosmology gives us.”

269 – “*I* am what the expanding universe is doing *here and now*.”

269 – [everything reflects the entire cosmos of which it is a part – William Blake – interbeing]

To see a World in a Grain of Sand

And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,

Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour.

270 – transition from inflation to stability

270 – We are central to the universe (and now have the evidence: #’s 1-7, pp. 270-272)

272 – “[We] experience our own consciousness as the center of our reality – we always look *from here*, from

some point of view that is characteristically us.”

272 – “We are at the center of the *principles* that uphold the universe, and our generation is the first to know it.”

273 – Bertrand Russell quote.

274 – Carl Sagan quote

275 – the existential does not incorporate the meaningful

276 – “…a God that arises from our scientific understanding is not entirely created by us.”

277 – “The new scientific picture of the universe establishes a lower limit for God.”

277 – “…God is nothing less than the process of opening our personal lines of contact with the unknown

potential of the universe.”

278 – view the universe from the inside (also p. 288)

278 – cosmic dessert

279 – “…atoms introduce into matter the possibility of complexity, and complexity allows the possibility of

life and intelligence.”

280 – *“Seeing reality takes a lot of imagination –* but it takes disciplined imagination…”

281 – “’I’m human’ can mean . . .

283 – new cosmologies are counterintuitive

283 – Midgard – middle garden

285 – transcending by orders of 10

286 – “By ‘spiritual’ we mean *the relationship between a conscious mind and the cosmos.*”

287 – “Them” is other size scales

289 - “Since we’re all immersed in the universe and much of it is immersed in us, there is indisputably a

relationship between the universe and us.”

290 – metaphoric thinking [Rubik]

291 – “From a cosmic viewpoint, it doesn’t matter who our recent ancestors are. Our *distant* ancestors are

what everyone on Earth shares.”

292 – “[Light is] carrying the memory of its source at the time it was emitted”

294 – “…we, too, are ancestors, and our actions today will have consequences possibly as broad and far-

reaching as the sum total of all the influences that have led to us.” [Our Children’s Home]

294 – “…search for sustainable prosperity…” (must be discovered, and in harmony with the universe)

295 – “…the universe *as we know it* dies without us.” [and as it transforms itself]

296 – what we need to become

296 – we are the progenitors of a new global attitude

297 – “We represent an age on Earth comparable to the age of cosmic inflation at the beginning of the

universe: brief, but about to set the pattern for the long-term future.”

297 – “[We have] *the opportunity to see everything afresh through a new cosmological lens*.”

299 – Final words: “we uphold the universe.”

**Chapter Ten: Taking Our Extraordinary Place in the Cosmos**

269 – “Cosmic perspective is the greatest gift that modern cosmology gives us.”

297 – “[We have] *the opportunity to see everything afresh through a new cosmological lens*.”

296 – we are the progenitors of a new global attitude

In order to get modern cosmology’s perspective we must adopt the View from the Center of the Universe

278 – view the universe from the inside (also p. 288)

From this perspective we realize

272 – “[We] experience our own consciousness as the center of our reality – we always look *from here*, from

some point of view that is characteristically us.”

As the experiential center of our reality we realize

289 - “Since we’re all immersed in the universe and much of it is immersed in us, there is indisputably a

relationship between the universe and us.”

269 – [everything reflects the entire cosmos of which it is a part – William Blake – interbeing]

To see a World in a Grain of Sand

And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,

Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour.

As the center of my own experiential reality I embody the enormity of all of space and all of time.

269 – “*I* am what the expanding universe is doing *here and now*.”

281 – “I’m human” can mean “I stand [at the Center of the Universe], midway between the largest and the smallest things in the universe. I can trace my lineage back fourteen billion years through generations of stars. My atoms were created in stars, blown out in stellar winds or massive explosions, and soared for millions of years through space to become to become part of a newly forming solar system – my solar system. And back before those creator stars, there was a time when the particles that *at this very moment* make up my body and brain were mixing in an amorphous cloud of dark matter and clouds. Intimately woven into me are billions of bits of information that had to be encoded and tested and preserved to create me. Billions of years of cosmic evolution have produced *me.*” ~ 281-82 – Far from being a package cosmically sealed off by skin, each of us is the tip of a great iceberg of cultural and genetic history moving among and through each other. We sit with the other intelligent beings of this universe in the Sovereign Eye of the Cosmic Density Pyramid – a position whose power and uniqueness cannot be threatened even by the rising tide of dark energy. As time goes on, each human becomes more precious, because of all the evolution and luck it took to get to that person.

295 – “…the universe *as we know it* dies without us.” [and as it transforms itself]

299 – Final words: “we uphold the universe.”

286 – “By ‘spiritual’ we mean *the relationship between a conscious mind and the cosmos.*”

Lifekind Forever

Investment

Erosion

One Song

Re-Creation

Matters of Consequence

The Field of Play

## A Place To Stand

Dr. Charles Garfield

If you have ever gone through a toll booth, you know that your relationship to the person in the booth is not the most intimate you'll ever have. It is one of life's frequent non-encounters: You hand over some money; you might get change; you drive off. I have been through every one of the 17 toll booths on the Oakland-San Francisco Bay Bridge on thousands of occasions, and never had an exchange worth remembering with anybody.

Late one morning in 1984, headed for lunch in San Francisco, I drove toward one of the booths. I heard loud music. It sounded like a party, or a Michael Jackson concert. I looked around. No other cars with their windows open. No sound trucks. I looked at the toll booth. Inside it, the man was dancing.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"I'm having a party," he said.

"What about the rest of these people?" I looked over at other booths; nothing moving there.

"They're not invited."

I had a dozen other questions for him, but somebody in a big hurry to get somewhere started punching his horn behind me and I drove off. But I made a note to myself: Find this guy again. There's something in his eye that says there's magic in his toll booth.

Months later I did find him again, still with the loud music, still having a party.

Again I asked, "What are you doing?"

He said, "I remember you from the last time. I'm still dancing. I'm having the same party."

I said, "Look. What about the rest of the people."

He said. "Stop. What do those look like to you?" He pointed down the row of toll booths.

"They look like toll booths."

"Noooo imagination!"

I said, "Okay, I give up. What do they look like to you?"

He said, "Vertical coffins."

"What are you talking about?"

"I can prove it. At 8:30 every morning, live people get in. Then they die for eight hours. At 4:30, like Lazarus from the dead, they reemerge and go home. For eight hours, brain is on hold, dead on the job. Going through the motions."

I was amazed. This guy had developed a philosophy, a mythology about his job. I could not help asking the next question: "Why is it different for you? You're having a good time."

He looked at me. "I knew you were going to ask that," he said. "I'm going to be a dancer someday." He pointed to the administration building. "My bosses are in there, and they're paying for my training."

Sixteen people dead on the job, and the seventeenth, in precisely the same situation, figures out a way to live. That man was having a party where you and I would probably not last three days. The boredom! He and I did have lunch later, and he said, "I don't understand why anybody would think my job is boring. I have a corner office, glass on all sides. I can see the Golden Gate, San Francisco, the Berkeley hills; half the Western world vacations here and I just stroll in every day and practice dancing.

Abraham Lincoln said, "Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." I would tend to agree

**Discovery Project Earth – Orbital Power Plant (2008)**

CO2 is less than 1% of Earth’s atmosphere, which is mostly oxygen and nitrogen and 60 miles thick.

Volcanoes produce 200 million tones of CO2 annually; coal and oil 130 times that much (20 billion and 70 million tons)

Sunlight bathes our planet at the rate of 173 million gigawatts per second, which is equal to the output of a billion large power-generating plants – more power in each second than humans have generated since the dawn of the electrical age. About 50% of sunlight is absorbed or scattered by the atmosphere, meaning that only about 86 gigawatts per second reach the Earth’s surface. [Sun converts hydrogen to helium at rate of half a billion tons per second. ~Arthur C. Clarke]]

Solution to capturing solar energy more effectively: a square mile grid of solar panels at 22,000 miles above Earth that can generate 10,000 times the power presently used globally and microwave beam it to Earth’s surface.

Space station roughly the size of jumbo jet requires six basket-ball court sized solar panels.

It would take 100,00 square miles of solar panels to generate planet’s present electrical consumption.

Boost solar cell reception with Fresnel lens, focus 200 watts on one inch circle, burn hole in brick, and increase solar cell power exponentially. Eight times more solar power converted into electrical energy.

**SEE: From My Inner Elder to My Inner Child:**

**A Report on Our Common Unity**

We have found a strange foot-print on the shores of the unknown. We have devised profound theories, one after another, to account for its origin. At last, we have succeeded in reconstructing the creature that made the foot-print. And lo! It is our own. -Sir Arthur Eddington

I cannot believe that our existence in this universe is a mere quirk of fate, an accident of history, an incidental blip in the great cosmic drama. Our involvement is too intimate. The physical species *Homo* may count for nothing, but the existence of mind in some organism on some planet in the universe is surely a fact of fundamental significance. Through conscious beings the universe has generated self-awareness. This can be no trivial detail, no minor byproduct of mindless, purposeless forces. We are truly meant to be here. Paul Davies, The Mind of God: The Scientific Basis for a Rational World (Simon and Schuster, 1992), p. 232. From Chapter: “The Mystery at the End of the Universe” (pp. 223-232)

**Wildfire Facts:**

Only Hurricane Katrina rivaled California’s 2007 wildfires for infernal destructiveness. The 2007 wildland fire season reported 83,583 fires and burned 9,318,710 acres.

Prior to 2005, the yearly fire season in California traditionally ran from June 1 until October 31; since 2005 the notion of an official fire season has been abandoned. Fire season now runs from January 1 through December 31.

Since 1986, according to the journal, *Science*, longer, warmer summers have resulted in a four-fold increase in the number of major wildfires in the United States and a six-fold increase in the area of forest burned, compared to the period from 1970 to 1986.

Global warming is a prominent factor in the proliferation of major wildfires throughout the world since year 2000. While arson and other human activities are the primary causes of fires, the ferocity of the blazes and the amount of fuel available to feed them are directly related to the state of world climates as they have been affected by global warming.

-back cover: *Hell on Earth: The Wildfire Pandemic*, David L Porter with Lee Reader (Tom Doherty Associates, LLC /Forge Books, 2008)

**The Tao of Global Transformation:**

**Appreciating Our Common Unity**

If God lived on Earth, all his windows would be broken. -Yiddish proverb

Cows produce 100 gallons of methane gas daily, mostly by belching. Atmospheric methane has increased 6-fold in the past 50 years. Methane is 23 times more potent as a warming agent CO2.

It follows from the premises of “everywhere I go, here I am” and “all is holy” that

The most required transformation in consciousness: agreement to disagree.

Now, having brought up the "I" word, initiate, I want to explain more what I mean by that.   It's a word that I use as much out of habit as anything, I think, but it has a specific meaning for me.  It means someone who is a graduate in a particular arena or in working with a particular set of skills.  In that sense, a doctor is an initiate of medicine or a lawyer is an initiate of law.  One hopes that Joe the Plumber is an initiate of plumbing

In my world, an initiate is someone who is a graduate in working with subtle energies and the dynamics of consciousness and spirit.  It means that a certain threshold of competency and awareness has been passed in dealing with these things.

It doesn't mean "messiah" or "avatar" or that a person has nothing more to learn or cannot make mistakes or is holier than anyone else.  As Obama said at the Al Smith dinner, he wasn't born in a manger, contrary to rumor!  There are plenty of levels from which to graduate, or put another way, there are graduates and post-graduates and post-post-graduates.

The basic function of an initiate is to undertake and hold tasks of service and responsibility that someone without their particular set of skills and accomplishments would not be able to do.  True spiritual initiation is always, always, always into service and love.

Being an initiate is never, ever a guarantee of success; it is only a guarantee that you have a set of skills and capacities to handle a particular range of problems and energies and that you can do so with an enhanced probability of success but no guarantees.  Obama could be a spectacular failure as President and still be no less an initiate.  And of course, a person could be a spectacular success as a President and not be an initiate.

In fact, a person approaching initiation--approaching a certain critical threshold of consciousness in which the incarnational system of soul and personality becomes more deeply meshed and whole--may function more effectively and powerfully than someone who has just passed that threshold and is now trying to integrate and balance a whole new condition of beingness and consciousness.  This is no different than saying that a person may be extremely effective and competent at one job and then struggle for awhile after being promoted as he tries to adjust to his new responsibilities.

Initiation is often understood by people who use that word as a spiritual phenomenon, but I don't see it as such.  For me, it's strictly an energy phenomenon or a way of talking about the state of internal coherency and the external connections of a person's energy field vis a vis the larger fields of nature, humanity, the world, and the cosmos. An initiate is not necessarily more "spiritual" than someone who hasn't crossed that threshold; an initiate is no more sacred or holy or blessed than a non-initiate, any more than a person with a PhD is a better person than someone without.  But a person with a PhD--and certainly, say, with an MD--presumably has a more developed set of skills and knowledge in a particular area than someone who doesn't.

I'm simplifying what for me is a complex reality, and my main point is that initiate has nothing to do with rank but everything to do with what a person's energy field is capable of holding and working with as a result of their internal energy structure, integration, coherency, and attunement. -David Spangler

**What’s Growing On (eternally):**

For reasons that will be made fully apparent in the fullness of time, I begin every class, seminar or other gathering of which I have a facilitating function with a song that recognizes the universal principle of primary location, which is that each thing in this universe is always and only where it is and nowhere else, and that no thing in this universe can be in more than one place at the same time:

[Everywhere I go, Here I Am]

**What’s Growing On (presently):**

We are living in a time of evolutionary correction and evolutionary progression. This gathering is devoted to the evolutionary correction. In the Spring I will convene a different gathering entitled “The Tao of The Cosmic Feminine.”

Squeeze the Earth ~ *Earth Abides* (1949)

This evening is devoted to setting the thought-atmosphere arena for our series of Thursday evening gatherings. While our next seven gatherings will be conversational and dialogic in their format, tonight will be largely a monologue on my part whose purpose is twofold: to establish the frame of reference that informs our reading assignments, and to satisfy my egoic i’s perception that I have a lot to say. By getting my egoically perceived “lot to say” out of the way at the start, an enormous space will be established in which our conversations can be fruitful of their intended purpose.

**How I Came to My Own Appreciation of Our Common Unity:**

**[Subset: “How I Joined the Cosmic Kindom Consciousness of the Universe”]**

RS/NT chaplaincy

*The Power of Commitment*

Managing editor, *Brain/Mind Bulletin*

RS/NT ministry Aspen year between careers & wifetimes

*<<crisis of vocation>>*

Volunteer fireman

Env’t and energy education projects

*<<crisis of vocation>>*

Environmental educator (CCD) (now put it back together)

Gestalt ecologist

*Freedom and Culture ~ The Silent Language*

*What Makes Education Environmental?*

*You Are an Environment*

*Can Man Care for the Earth?*

Environmental consciousness Author/Editor

*<<breakthrough of insight>>*

*Understanding Media ~ The Challenge of Man’s Future*

College instructor (survey courses):

Western Civilization ~ U.S. History ~ American Government ~ Political Science

Graduate student: history of ideas (especially cosmology

Psychological warrior ~ psychological Aikido ~ wrote country music

Admissions director

Religious Journalist University journalism student

history of ideas (3) ~ political science

*<<crisis of faith>> (we’re all good news)*

Junior college student ~ Paul Erwin ~ *As a Man Thinketh ~ Power of Positive Thinking* ~*You are Important* (cosmology)

Methodist ministry

High school student: played in band, lunch hour on piano, had a band (Foo’s Fumbler’s), & wrote stories

Grade school student (4th grade +): played in band and wrote stories

Unusual (2)

Word experiences – the obvious becomes obvious – the child, seeing

December 23-4, 1941 – Good News (1)

Summer 1941 – mother remarried ~ creek ~ ripples ~ The Child, Seeing (intuitional imprint of quantum-physical reality)

1940: writer and musician (Red Rocks and Buffalo Bill’s grave)

1. The conscious destiny of my current life cycle was set at the age of five. The word “destiny” signifies overall tendency, and my present overall conscious tendency was set in my fifth year. Ripples & good news.
2. When I was asked, as a child, what I wanted to be when I grew up, I said "unusual" - an ambition that has always been tempered by my reluctance to fully be as unusual as I actually am.
3. Paul Erwin: you have already made the best choice, to live during another renaissance, the next and even greater, more rapid and global transition to something new. I decided right then and there to major in history.

**Influences on my metaphysical maturation**

* Ripples on water
* House to put a home in
* “The Longest Way”
* “Old Man Atom” – “Peace in the world or the world in pieces.”
* “There Will Come Soft Rains” ~ *Earth Abides ~* ~ SF book with strange map
* *The Universe and Dr. Einstein* (movements)
* “Rusty Old Halo”
* Paul Erwin - you have already made the best choice.
* *As a Man Thinketh, Power of Positive Thinking, You Are Important*
* Journalism
* *Atlas Shrugged*
* History of Ideas (especially cosmology)
* Kennedy assassination
* Leukemia – Harrison Brown, *The Challenge of Man’s Future*: environment and energy.
* – Marshall McLuhan
* Bucky Fuller
* Morley poem – Maslow quote
* *Freedom and Culture ~ The Silent Language*
* *The Broken Image*
* *The Strategy of Life*: Bobcat and rabbit
* Xxxxx: “Sigmund and the amoeba”
* Jonah
* Polanyi – Tacit Knowing
* Sandburg
* *The Lazy Man’s Guide to Enlightenment ~ The Crack in the Cosmic Egg*
* Ripple
* The Gurgle ~ Something New ~ Walls ~ Hopes and Expectations ~ Comparisons ~ The Wizard of Is
* Ernest Holmes/Science of Mind
  + Talk to yourself, not to the world.
  + Being for something and against nothing.
  + Only the non-essential is vanishing . . .
  + Not any place too long
* Brain/Mind Bulletin
* The Global Brain
* Everywhere I go, here I am.
* Swimme
* Allward
* Looking for and looking from.

**Influences on my metaphysical maturation**

You Are Accepted

E-mail reading: “From My Inner Elder to My Inner Child: A Report on Our Common Unity”

Thumper the rabbit.

Ripples on a creek. That’s the way human beings should relate.

House to put a home in

Longest way around

Old Man Atom

There will come soft rains . . .

Lincoln Barnett – motions of the Earth

You are important.

Love may fly if held too lightly . . .

Phillip Wiley – Chris – the jerkies

McLuhan

Harrison Brown: The Challenge of Man’s Future – energy and environment

Sigmund and the Amoeba

Bobcat and rabbit

The Broken Image

Polanyi

Jonah

Sandburg

Argon

Hopes and Expectations

Comparisons

Whole-cosmos consciousness:

The Global Brain

Swimme

Declaration of Interdependence

Inter-being

**Fundamental premises:** [See “The Dynamics of Thought Central,” “The Quest for Salvation,” and “The Metapsychology of Experience.”]

***Everywhere I go, here I am.***

Write down your home address.

“We have a home, we just don’t have a house to put it in.”

[Everywhere I go, Here I Am]

Every person yearns to experience three things:

* constancy
* dependability
* affinity

We yearn for something to depend with, in order to be independent (Depending *on* results in dependen*cy*.)

We yearn for something to belong with, in order to be fulfilled. (Belonging *to* results in co-dependency.)

The only thing that we can both depend with independently and belong with fulfillingly is our eternal homestead: here I am.

Here-I-am is the eternal homestead of each being and the playground of all beings, a single mansion with many rooms that satisfies our yearning for constancy, dependability and affinity by virtue of another already-stated premise:

I will begin with an unpacking of the terms in the seminar’s title, “The Tao of Global Transformation: Appreciating Our Common Unity.” For the purposes of this seminar these terms are to be understood as follows:

* “Tao” is generally translated as “The Way” and signifies “original nature.” Since the word “Te” (as in *Tao Te Ching*) signifies self-alignment of oneself with Tao, the two terms jointly signify our return to our original nature. (The word *Ching* signifies a written classic.)
* “Global” signifies “planet-wide” and includes both physical (matter and motion) and metaphysical (mind and consciousness) factors in its scope.
* “Transformation” signifies difference in kind, rather than a difference in degree that is merely a *re*formed version of more of the same, and thus no more than a variation of the same old same mold.
* “Appreciation” signifies “increase in value” (ask any realtor!). This seminar’s overall objective is to increase our valuation of both our local and cosmic common unity.
* “Common Unity” (Rev. David’s term, parsed from the word “community”) signifies the underlying oneness in which all beings are unified yet not uniform.

Our moments of greatest learning are moments in which the obvious becomes obvious, moments in which we become aware of something that we already knew, yet did not know until then that we knew it. In our encounter with New Thought, one such moment for many of us is when we attend a New Thought church for the first time, and feel like we have come home.

[Mile-High Church experience]

Such moments are also reminiscent in a passage from T. S. Eliot’s poem, *Little Gidding*: “We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.”

[Examples from participants of such moments.]

[Adam and Eve story]

Everything that I know or presume to know is rooted in several metaphysical, cosmological, scientific and historic premises that I will share with you this evening, because they are the foundation of our working together in this seminar. The first of these premises and the taproot of all other premises is embodied in a song that came to mind two decades ago when I wondered what God’s theme song might be. No sooner had I wondered this than I heard the song’s lyrics and melody resounding in my thought.: [Everywhere I go, Here I Am]

[Specifics of the occasion]

[Why this is so: God Dwells Within Me, As Me]

These messages are so enchanting that I call them enchantments. The purpose of repetitive chanting is to enchant oneself by anchoring the thought form that is conveyed by the chanting.

Ever since the first of these songs came to my mind, I have used it to initiate almost every class, seminar or other gathering in which I have a facilitating function, because its premise embodies the universal principle of primary location: that each thing in this universe is always and only centered precisely where it is and nowhere else, and that no thing in this universe can be centered in more than one place at the same time. The centering influence of the universal “here I am” is essential to the wholeness, completeness and perfection of all that is.

* To be whole is to be unbroken.
* To be complete is to have nothing left out.
* To be perfect is to be all-inclusive.

The principle of primary location is the taproot premise of this seminar. A taproot is a vertically downward central root from which all other roots branch forth as offshoots, and which is therefore analogous to the branching trunk of a tree that grows above the ground. A taproot is the primary underground channel of nourishment for plants such as carrots and dandelions. A taproot is so firmly grounded that it tends to remain in the ground when you attempt to uproot the plant that it sustains, which is why it is so hard to weed out dandelions, burdock, kudzu and other plants that have a taproot.

The above-ground portion of a taprooted plant is an additional set of offshoots that can readily be detached from their central root. Such plants are essentially centered in their taproot. We are similarly rooted in our Here-I-Amness.

[Home with no house to put it in.]

The principle of primary location is a taproot premise because it is a centering premise from which all other premises branch and take their sustenance.

[There is also a principle of secondary location that I will address later, whose validity is grounded entirely in this primary principle.]

Another premise on which this seminar series is based is that all is holy. I therefore usually follow “Everywhere I Go, Here I Am” with another song whose premise branches from the “Here-I-Am” taproot. Because of the principle of primary location, wherever I may go is holy ground.

[All is/we are/I am Holy]

***All is holy***

Not God in disguise. The disguise is ours, not God’s.

God pronounced the creation to be “very good.” All that is therefore has value. Once again:

* All that is, is whole (unbroken).
* All that is, is complete (nothing left out).
* All that is, is perfect (all-inclusive).

Yet nothing that is, is finished. [Illustrate with rose]

Because the universal principle of primary location is the bottom-line holy ground of being of all that is, it is likewise the absolute holy ground of all experience, the inner-world’s experiential equivalent to the outer world’s experience of the speed of light.

At this point in our collective human history, what we are collectively experiencing is a time of planetary transition. This is another fundamental premise in which this seminar series is rooted.

***We are living in a time of evolutionary correction, planetary transition, and cosmic turnaround:***

Philosopher Lancelot Law Whyte wrote in 1950 what is equally true today:(30)

The entire human race now for the first time faces a single collective. During the next few decades it must decide what kind of [hu]man and community is to survive on this planet. In the past, regional civilizations have come and gone, but now we are all involved together and share a common future….

This does not imply a uniform standardization of human life throughout the globe in coming years. It means simply that without some kind of *universally acceptable ideas* about nature and [hu]man[kind] there can be no stable world order. The world is now one; we are entering a period of universalism. From now on only universal ideas can be effective.

(A prophet is not a person who foretells the future. A prophet is someone who sees the big picture of what is going on today, which puts him 50 years ahead of almost everyone else)

A very recent assessment of our collective experience reads as follows: William Calvin’s *Global Fever,* inner front bookleaf: [read]

Distant early warning signal from Paul Erwin: you have already made the best choice, to live during another renaissance, the next and even greater, more rapid and global transition to something new. I decided right then and there to major in history.

Forgiveness re-anchors us in our original nature.

There at least two well-known prophecies of this transitional time:

* End-times
* Mayan Calendar

December 2012 is a cosmic trigger. It is essential for us to know both our place and function in the cosmic turn-around, which brings us to a further examination of the principle of primary location.

We are living in a time of evolutionary correction and evolutionary progression. The purpose of this seminar series is to facilitate our appreciation to this evolutionary correction. In the Spring I will convene a follow-up gathering entitled “The Tao of The Cosmic Feminine.”

The evolutionary correction in which we are presently participatory is one of re-anchoring ourselves in our original nature.

Yet another premise on which the work of this seminar series is founded and grounded is the one that guides the news media:

***Most good news is unworthy of reporting, unless it represents the ending of some bad news.***

In journalism school I learned that only that which is exceptional qualifies as news. The fact that several million people in the greater Portland-Vancouver area today did not murder or rob someone, die a violent death, break a law, or otherwise generate bad vibes is considered good news that is unworthy of reporting. Only exceptional news is considered to be report-worthy, which means that only bad news gets reported unless the good news is that something bad has come to an end.

When your view of the world is primarily that which is shaped by the mass media, you are aware of only the miniscule portion of your current reality that is bad, and are unaware of how fundamentally good is most of your current reality. Accordingly, while we will appropriately acknowledge in these seminars the existence of bad news as our metaphysical growing pains, we will not dwell on it like the news media do. We will look through the smidgen of bad news to see the good news that surrounds it.

Examples:

***Reality is a unified resonant field of interpenetrating vibrations.***

My introduction to unified field theory came at the age of five, when I recognized that the overlapping and mutually accommodating waves radiating in outward circularity from the movements of numerous waterbugs on the surface of a creek was somehow representative of the common unity of all things. The experience was somewhat like that described in the poem, below, entitled “The Child, Seeing.”

The scientific premise of all unified field theory was stated by Albert Einstein:

Matter which we perceive is merely nothing but a great concentration of energy in very small regions. We may therefore regard matter as being constituted by the regions of space in which the field is extremely intense. . . . There is no place in this new kind of physics both for the field and matter *for the field is the only reality.* –Albert Einstein

Einstein’s assertion that “the field is the only reality” has been corroborated as follows by astrophysicist Freeman Dyson:

The picture of the world that we have reached is the following. Some ten or twenty qualitatively different quantum fields exist. Each fills the whole of space and has its own particular properties. There is nothing else except these fields; the whole of the material universe is built of them. Between various pairs of fields there are various kinds of interaction. Each field manifests itself as an elementary particle. The particles of a given type are always completely identical and indistinguishable. The number of particles of a given type is not fixed, for particles are constantly being created or annihilated or transmuted into one another. The properties of the interactions determine the rules of creation and transmutation of particles.

Even to a hardened theoretical physicist it remains perpetually astounding that our solid world of trees and stones can be built of quantum fields and nothing else. The quantum fields seem far too fluid and insubstantial to be the basic stuff of the universe. Yet we have learned gradually to accept the fact that the laws of quantum dynamics impose their own peculiar rigidity upon the fields they govern, a rigidity which is alien to our intuitive conceptions but which nonetheless effectively holds the earth in place.

In its quantum aspect overall, reality is a single and unified universal field that is comprised of numerous entangled subfields within subfields within subfields. This entanglement of subfields is analogous to the entangled qualities of the warm, green, salty water. Imagine a glass filled with warm, green, salty water, and notice that all of the water is warm, all of it is green, and all of it is salty. Nor is merely only some of it H2O, because all of it is hydrogen and all of it is oxygen as well.

And so it is with the universe’s ten or twenty universal quantum fields. All of the universe is photonic (i.e. permeated with lack), all of the universe is gravitational, all of it is electromagnetic, all of it is kinetically in motion, and all of it is held together by the blended dynamics of its universal subfields of photons, electrons, protons, neutrons and other “particles” whose vibrational resonances interpenetrate one another and interect like the melding waves set in motion by the waterbugs who introduced me to this understanding of the cosmos. It may be said, therefore, that the universe – and thus universal reality-at-large as well – is in its own peculiar way like a glass of warm, green, salty water – except that its universal qualities are *far more* than merely three-fold!

As with everything else that “matters” in this field-like manner, both our ongoing experiencing and our individual experiences take their form within a fundamentally unified order of existence that we philosophically designate as “reality.” It is within this universal order of mutually entangled “what’s-so’s” and “so-what’s” that each of us forms his or her own immediate and individually customized experiential subfield of reality. Our experiential subfields become individually custom-tailored to each of our perspectives, and our custom-tailored experiencings of reality form each person’s experiencing uniquely, as the only reality a person can ever know. Thus is each person’s experiencing and knowing of reality different from that of all other persons.

The “good vibrations” set in motion by waterbugs and all other things from quarks to quasars “effectively holds the earth in place” as follows:

**The Child, Seeing**

It was Eden that morning; the child was on earth,

she did not know it was Eden until there on the barnhill

the curtain slipped back, the light poured forth,

and for a moment that had no seconds or minutes

she could see unfolded before her the celestial pattern

tier on tier rising, like a vast towering tree

branching angelic, the movement up-curving,

her place assured, and around in the air

weightless as gauze, a wondrous stuff, the light that was sound,

the musical tinkle of light in a million flakes.

And she stood open to the mystery like a plant in the field,

Good burned like a beacon; whatever seemed evil

was working for good, good arched over all.

And the curtain was drawn... but the child kept on seeing.

And the child saw the stone, and knew it was good,

saw the forms swimming within in amazing sequence,

knew the sky with its planets and stars was inside it –

the planes of crystal, the hidden prisms:

fire and sun, the blue and the green,

the atom of granite, the garnet eye.

And the child saw the plant, and knew it was good,

saw the sun running up the stalk,

saw the flower-shapes rolled up like flags in the bud,

the stem's cool green tunnels, luminous tubings

walled in lucite, fitted in amber and emerald.

And the child saw the tree, and knew it was good,

the green universe with cities of leaves on its branches,

the roots in the sky and the roots in the earth,

the trunk a marvelous column of armies,

of secret comings and goings,

of fragrant interior rivers,

a green print of life that only the child could read.

And the trapdoor opened, the key in the lock turned,

the grinding and creak of the bark, the cortex door:

and she looked inside at invisible greenness,

green exploding with stars, edging with auras

the tremendous hallways, the exquisite networks;

saw the commerce along the quicksilver channels,

the pulleys of bright ropes that checked and that balanced.

And the child saw the fruit, and knew it was good,

saw the seed in the center, the diminutive kingdom;

perfect cradle of newness – and tightly drawn over,

coverlet of apple skin, or peach fleece or apricot quilt,

plum peel of violet or pear sheeted in jade –

and always inside it

that small world of seed before waters divided,

each pip in its polished case like an Indian child in its basket,

like a small rabbit in a sod hollow,

like the seeing eye in the socket –

the cipher shape that contains within it all numbers,

the unlimited limits, the circled expansion.

And the child saw the world, and knew it was good.

Twenty years later, in a spate of full daylight,

the vision returned, an exact duplication.

It remained but a moment. The child kept on seeing.

-Harvena Richter

***Each thing in the universe is in resonant interrelationship with all other things in the universe.***

[Interbeing, etc.]

***Life exists to experience itself.***

The purpose of life is a life of purpose whose purpose is life itself.

Every Little Cell – Oh, How Lucky I Am

The word “exist” signifies living that stands out rather than hides out. The more we allow the uniqueness of our being to flourish by standing out, the greater is our experience of being alive. The more we disallow the uniqueness of our being to flourish by hiding out, the more diminished is our experience of being alive.

Standing out is maximized by showing off. Standing out is minimized by not showing up. Standing out is optimized by hiding in plain sight. Tao is the way of optimization (nothing is out of alignment) rather than the way of maximization (excess) or minimization (lack). Where there is neither excess nor lack, there is an optimum experience of being alive.

The word “experience” signifies trying out rather than holding out. To “try out” is to be complete, whereas mere “trying” is incomplete. To try something out is to make the most of it. To merely “try” something is to make the least of it. The more we try out life’s opportunities for the uniqueness of our being to stand out, the greater is our experience of having being. The more we hold out from life’s opportunities for the uniqueness of our being to stand out, the lesser is our experience of having being. Having what it takes is of value only in proportion to giving what it takes.

Therefore, when we say that “life exists to have experience” we are saying that life stands out in order to try out.

The reason we tend to hold out is to avoid making errors. Yet making errors is vitally essential to having experience, as physician Lewis Thomas explained:

Our kind of brain is built so that it can make great numbers of errors, all the time, for this is really the way we go about the process of thinking. We get things wrong by nature, and when we get enough things wrong we make use of that information to get things right. The process is trial and error, as we say. It is in this sense that our brains differ so greatly from machines, and it is probably the recognition of this special gift of error that makes us feel so strongly that we are different from all the other animals on earth. It is hard for us to imagine anything taking place in the brain of an insect that bears any resemblance to the events in our own heads. We take it for granted that insects are little whirring machines, programmed by their genes to do this or that little insectlike thing, but we recoil from the notion that the bug is a conscious, thinking creature. We do this partly because we feel superior, and partly because we know that we could never do so reproducibly what beetles do. It could be that simple animals possess the same kind of awareness as ours, but that they are conscious of fewer items, and therefore the probability of error is greatly reduced.

If the name “Bilbo Baggins” rings a bell with you, you may also recall that he lived to have adventures. Life exists to have adventures, to make mistakes, and to recover from the mistakes we make. This was fully understood by rocket scientist Wernher von Braun, who once observed that in the process of developing rockets, “We can lick gravity, but sometimes the paperwork is overwhelming.”

In 1943, Wernher von Braun was working on a rocket that the Germans hoped would destroy London and end the war. Producing this new rocket required new metals, new fuels, new guidance systems, new everything. Von Braun's superiors were impatient to move the project to completion. They were angered by the many changes he had sent to the factories responsible for manufacturing the rocket. "You are supposed to be the ultimate brain in this operation...do you know offhand how many last-minute changes you've made in your rocket plans...since you started two years ago?" They waved a piece of paper before von Braun. "Make a guess, Professor. How many changes have you sent to the factories?" And there the ridiculous figure was: 65,121. It was accurate. Von Braun acknowledged his 65,121 mistakes. He then estimated he would make 5,000 more before the rocket was ready. "It takes sixty-five thousand errors before you are qualified to make a rocket," he said. "Russia has made maybe thirty thousand of them by now. America hasn't made any."

In the second half of World War II, Germany, alone, pounded her enemies with ballistic missiles; no other country had them. And when the war was over, Wernher von Braun became the "ultimate brain" in America's space program. Only a few years –and many mistakes – later, America put a man on the moon.

adapted from James A. Michener's book, *Space*:

As someone has observed, "He who has never made a mistake will make no discovery." And somewhere, I once read, there is an epitaph that reads "Here lies \_\_\_\_\_\_\_: no hits, no runs, no errors." The consequence of living so cautiously that I make no errors will inevitably be a life that also has no hits or runs. Errors are essential to every worthwhile success. Thus the primary difference between people who are deemed failures and people who appear successful is that successful people fail more often. Yet rather than dwelling in their last failure, they move right along through their next one. Successful people are like filmmakers in this regard: they make however many re-takes are required until there is no miss-take.

The purpose of making mistakes is to free us from our errors.

There is no sin but a mistake . . .

***Life exists to rejoice.***

My Heart Sings and My Soul Does Rejoice

***Life exists to express.***

I Don’t Want to Figure Myself Out

All figuring out is with reference to things external. All expression is with reference to something internal. The word “express” signifies pressing outward from within.

***Life is presently experiencing the good news of a global threat to its existence.***

Cover inside front leaf of *Global Fever* by William H. Calvin.

As astronomer Fred Hoyle proclaimed in 1948 "Once a photograph of the earth, taken from the outside, is available . . . a new idea as powerful as any in history will let loose."

“Earth” is now most often capitalized.

***Each of us is the sovereign I of the universe.***

My favorite way of acknowledging this premise is via another enchantment.

[God Dwells within Me as Me]

Xxxxx

It is from the foregoing primary premises that we derive a number of secondary premises concerning the nature of human experience.

Because the universal principle of primary location – everywhere I go, here I am – is the bottom-line holy truth of the sovereign I of the universe, another premise of this seminar series is that

***We are both the sovereign I and Eye of the universe.***

As we shall see, the sovereign I of the universe is correspondingly universal to all that experiences it. The sovereign I of the universe is what quantum physicists call “non-local,” which signifies that its influence, once established anywhere, continues to prevail in all subsequent places and times that it is present.

It is important for us to distinguish between non-locality and “omnipresence,” a theological term that signifies the universal presence of an entity that we commonly call “God.” As quantum physics has demonstrated, while it is not possible for the same entity to be identically present in more than one place at the same time, and therefore *omni*present, it is always possible for the influence of its identity to be diversely present in both place and time.

We will later examine the details of the distinction between non-locality and omnipresence. In the meantime, it is essential to recognize that in addition to the non-local sovereign I of the universe, there are innumerable local egoic i’s of the universe, whose influence is far more limited than that of the sovereign I. Whereas the non-local sovereign I of the universe sees I to i, the local egoic i does not see from i to I. The local egoic i has a limited point *of* view from a single location. The non-local sovereign I has an unlimited infinity of points *to* view, because it has a view from every location.

The sovereign I of the universe is the source of all universally prevailing principles, etc.

The egoic i is the source of all locally originated principles (moral, behavioral, etc.), etc.

The premise the “We are the sovereign I of the universe” quite literally signifies that the sovereign I is what transformationalist Richard Moss has called “the I that is *we*.” The egoic i, by contrast, is the i that is *me*. To resolve the resulting I-dentity problem of our being both an I that is me and an I that is we, whenever I use the word “I” with reference to myself, I am simultaneously referencing both the I that is me and the I that is we, because they are in truth inseparable as a dual unity. I will assume that everyone else in this class is likewise acknowledging the same dual unity of their own I-dentity when they self-reference themselves as “I.” The distinction between egoic i and sovereign I will be made only when clarity of our I-dentity calls for this distinction.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

This evening is devoted to setting the thought-atmosphere arena for our series of Thursday evening gatherings. While our next seven gatherings will be conversational and dialogic in their format, tonight will be largely a monologue on my part whose purpose is twofold: to establish the frame of reference that informs our reading assignments, and to satisfy my egoic i’s perception that I have a lot to say. By getting my egoically perceived “lot to say” out of the way at the start, an enormous space will be established in which our conversations can be fruitful of their intended purpose.

The frame of reference that informs our gatherings, and our preparations for our gatherings, includes several additional fundamental premises, the first of which is a premise of timing:

***We’re all in this alone. -Lily Tomlin***

Ronald Laing

Ripple

***Experience is the only evidence.***

By their fruits . . .

Nobody knows what gravity/electricity/consciousness *is*. We know only our experience of its evidence.

* The evidence of gravity is the mutual attraction of all things.
* The evidence of electricity is the electromagnetic energy that informs and is embodied by all things.
* The evidence of consciousness is sensitivity – physical sensitivity, mental sensitivity, emotional sensitivity, intuitive sensitivity, etc.

A British master of the fine art of punning boasted to his audience during a performance that he could make a pun of any word the audience could give him.

“The Queen!” shouted a member of the audience.

He instantly replied, “The Queen is not a subject.”

The logical depth in his reply is that nothing can be a subject when it is prefaced by the words “the”, “a” or “an”, because these words define whatever follows them as an object. All perception is objective because it is *of* something other than the perceiver. Even when our own self is what we are perceiving, the self thus perceived is an abstraction of ourselves, and the word “abstraction” signifies “pulled away from.”

Just as all percepts are objective, so are all concepts objective. Percepts are interpretive, concepts are representative. Our *con*ceptions represent the interpretations of our *per*ceptions.

Percepts and concepts are always and only *of* something that is objectively other than whatever is perceiving and conceiving. We can’t even perceive and conceive of ourselves without objectifying whatever is thus perceived and conceived.

Experience is always and only *as* something that is subjectively constant. We are able to experience what we perceive and conceive to be objective, but because perceiving and conceiving are both aspects of experiencing, all perceiving and conceiving – like all other experiencing, takes place subjectively within. Thus everything we experience, perceive and conceive is experienced from within. Objectivity is the consequence of perceiving, conceiving and experiencing things from within as if *they* were without. We are incapable of perceiving, conceiving and experiencing anything as if *we* were without. Everywhere I go, *here* I am.

In short: experience is the only evidence we have, because all evidence is experientially conditioned. There is no such thing as objectivity, only the objectification of subjective perceiving, conceiving and experiencing.

***Evidence is the only experience.***

Xxxxx

***The “sweet spot” in experience is now.***

Concept of “sweet spot.” The experience of sweet spots is totally subjective. The moment we objectify it, we no longer experience it.

Celtics – totally subjective.

Runner’s high.

Perhaps the most common example of an interpersonal sweet spot is the experiencing of mutual orgasm.

Common example of an interpersonal sour spot is negative crowd behavior.

***None of us is a statistic – and all of us* are *a statistic***

Oh, How Lucky I Am

Precisely because I am *not* a statistic, being part of a statistic with others is very fortunate.

Binostat

The Car Song - Dory Previn We’re all in this *together* alone.

**Miss-takes and Re-takes**

The most effective way I have found to free myself from my errors is to look at them from a film-maker's perspective. When a film sequence doesn't work out, the film-maker says "cut" and filming stops. The unusable film is called a miss-take.

At this point, rather than anguishing over the miss-take, castigating oneself for the miss-take, or going into guilt about the miss-take, the film-maker does a re-take . . . and continues to do re-takes until there is no miss-take.

The primary difference between seeing an error (i.e., what doesn't work) as a miss-take rather than a so-called "mistake" is that when I see it as a miss-take, I can also see what to do next. Every miss-take provides valuable information for my next re-take. This miss-take/re-take perspective on life was profoundly understood by William David Coolidge, the member of Thomas Edison’s electrical engineering staff who designed the tungsten filament used in light bulbs. Coolidge conducted nearly 10,000 experiments before he was able to transform tungsten's brittle structure into a resilient one – a metallurgical accomplishment without precedent in his time. When asked how he was able to endure 10,000 failures, he denied that they were failures. He saw them as 10,000 successes, because each experiment informed him of his next relevant step .

***We have freedom of choice, not of consequence .***

Ingersol

**I Am Not Bound By Any Mistake**

Let us now let go of everything and enter into the consciousness of that which we believe. The Spirit within each one of us is God, and It is perfect, It is love, reason, life, truth and beauty. It is limitless and perfect and complete and whole. It knows no lack and no limitation.

There is nothing we have done, said or thought which rises up against us, which has power over us or which limits us; there is no memory of fear, no condemnation for previous mistakes. With the desire to free ourselves from further indulgences in the mistake, the effect of the previous mistake is wiped out, just as light dissipates the darkness. The Universe holds nothing against us.... Consequently, every apparent shortcoming – which could be traced to some mental or spiritual infringement of the Law – is not only removed but the effect is healed!

That means there is no history to our case. All of its history is this minute wiped out in the knowledge that today the perfect Law - the Law of Freedom - is the only Law there is in our experience. We enter into that freedom with joy, free from every sense of sadness and burden. We enter into it with laughter, with lightness....

We know that Infinite Wholeness is in us and through us and around us now, and we are conscious that we are renewed this moment, instantly and perfectly, after the image of Perfection. We are guided into the knowledge of happiness, of certainty, of wholeness, and of freedom; and we know that there is that subtle Essence of Spirit, which emanates from us at all times, healing everything it contacts.

–Ernest Holmes

***All experience takes place within.***

Ernest Holmes prescribed the art of having being with his statement, “Talk to yourself, not to the world. There is no one to talk to but yourself for all experience takes place within. Conditions are the reflections of our meditations and nothing else.” [See “The Dynamics of Thought Central”]

Taoist philosopher Alan Watts similarly prescribed the art of having being: “The thinker takes the form of his own thoughts.”

In other words, all trying out is from within. Mere trying is the result of holding out from trying out.

We’re all in this alone. -Lily Tomlin

Privacy - Laing

***Freedom is what we do with what’s been done to us. -Jean Paul Sartre***

Toll booth –

***The purpose of life is a life of purpose whose purpose is life itself.***

Ernest Holmes prescribed the purposeful life as follows:

Man does not exist for the purpose of making an impression on his environment. He does exist to express himself in and through his environment. There is a great difference. Man does not exist to leave a lasting impression on his environment. Not at all. It is not necessary that we leave any impression. It is not necessary, if we should pass on tonight, that anyone should remember that we have ever lived. All that means anything is that while we live, WE LIVE, and wherever we go from here we shall keep on living. (SOM, p. 270/4)

The purpose of life is to live a life of purpose whose purpose is fully living life itself. One’s life is fully lived by having an optimal experience of the life that you have been given – not a full experience of the life you would rather you had been given, a full experience of the life that you actually are given.

**Personal Knowledge:**

[W]e are invaded, as it were, from morning to night, both by our inner being as well as by the threatening exterior world for which we are responsible. The field of our ceaseless effort to reconcile both sides is none other than our ordinary life. -Karlfried Graf Dűrkcheim

This seminar is grounded in personal knowledge, and I’m going to introduce it by being personal. All knowledge is individually known before it becomes collectively known, because all knowing takes form as our experiencing (the verb) and experiences (the perceived shapes) of our internal and external reality. We cannot know anything that we have not in some way experienced, either by way of word or of happenstance, nor can we convey what we know to others without words or behaviors that signify what we know. Of these two communication modes, behavior is the most effective, for as Ralph Waldo Emerson observed, “What you are speaks so loud I cannot hear what you say.” Our experiencing of persons always tells us far more than does our experiencing of their words.

Reality is known to us only by the forms that we give to our experiencing thereof, and is known to us only *as* those forms. Whatever reality may pristinely be, independent of our experiencing thereof, can never be known to any person. In short: known reality is always experiential.

Not only is experience the proverbial “best teacher,” experience is the *only* teacher, even if only via the experience of reading or hearing words.3 Therefore all *known* reality is experientially molded to the infinitely differing perspectives of its respective beholders, while all remaining reality is unknown. And among those who know reality, there are as many versions of known reality as there are persons living, dead and yet to be born.

It has also been said that “Experience is the worst teacher. You get the test first, the lesson after.” To the extent that this perspective is also valid, the experience of reading and hearing words can sometimes make it unnecessary for one to face certain tests; or, if one must face them, makes it possible to ace them.

How one’s experience is formed gives us a clue to the limiting as well as liberating nature of experience. Experience is liberating insofar as it provides us with valuable knowing. It is at the same time limiting, however, because it excludes us from most of what is to be known. All of us will always know more than any of us can know, because none of us can ever know all of what is known by everyone else.

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes.

Marcel Proust

A central thesis of these seminars is that we are the Sovereign Eye of the universe, which signifies two things: that we have evolved to become the universe’s way of seeing and knowing itself, and that what we see and know is authoritative in the sense that it authors our experience.

This seminar honors an extra-terrestrial minds-eye view of our life experience on Earth, a view that I began to develop when I was only five years old. It was during my fifth year that I first recognized that I had come to a very silly planet. Before describing what triggered that awakening, however, I will establish the generic importance of viewing our life experience from an extra-terrestrial perspective.

Guy Murchie began his 1967 book, *The Music of the Spheres*, with an imaginary experience of viewing the Earth from the perspective of a spaceship. Although it would be two years before astronauts would actually experience the vantage point that Murchie imagined, his imagination thereof confirmed much of what they would soon be experiencing in real time.

Concerning his imaginary extra-terrestrial vantage point, Murchie wrote:

“Why?” you may ask. “Why should I stir from my accustomed ways for the risks and trials of space? Etc.

Other writers have also weighed in our collective role as Earth’s organ of consciousness. Physiologist George Wald somewhat earlier proclaimed that “Matter has reached the point of beginning to know itself…. [Man is] a star's way of knowing about stars.” As Kenneth Rexroth similarly acknowledged in his poem, “The Heart of Herakles”:

**Lying under the stars,  
In the summer night,  
Late, while the autumn  
Constellations climb the sky,  
As the Cluster of Hercules  
Falls down the west  
I put the telescope by  
and watch Deneb  
Move towards the zenith.  
My body is asleep. Only  
My eyes and brain are awake.  
The stars stand around me  
Like gold eyes, I can no longer  
Tell where I begin and leave off.  
The faint breeze in the dark pines,  
And the invisible grass,  
The tipping earth, the swarming stars  
Have an eye that sees itself.**

In a more down-to-Earth assessment of our Herculean destiny, biologist Julian Huxley proclaimed that “We are evolution’s way of becoming aware and directive of itself.” The word “destiny” signifies overall tendency, and our evolutionary tendency is to become mindfully conscious of the way evolution works and of becoming collaborators in the mindful direction of its further unfoldment. *We* are the long-sought missing link between the apes and so-called “civilized man,” a transition that will be completed only as we cease to be a collective planetary cancer and instead become analogous to a collective planetary brain.

As visionary Ken Carey portrayed our collective evolutionary role:

The field of collective human consciousness is now entering the final stages of the awakening process, congealing into awareness of itself as the organ of consciousness (similar in function to a brain) of *a single planetary being****,*** a being with internal organs of oceans, forests, ecosystems and atmosphere.  Humankind is its system both for processing information and for directing its future development.

We have established a global information processor by technologically extending our central nervous system into a digitized global brain called “Internet.” As noted by *Wired* magazine columnist John Perry Barlow:

The point of all evolution up to this stage is the creation of a collective organism of Mind. . . . With cyberspace, we are, in effect, hard-wiring the collective consciousness.

As an electronic extension of our physical mind’s collective activity, the Internet likewise extends the qualities that we associate with our metaphysical One Mind. Just as all of the One Mind is accessible to each mind, and each mind is associated with the One Mind, so is the entire Internet accessible to each computer even as each computer is associated to the entire Internet. Just as each of our six-and-a-half-billion physically embodied mentalities is a subset of a single metaphysical mind, so is each of our billions of devices of computerized technology a subset of a comprehensive meta-technology. Just as a rose by any other name is just as sweet, so is the One Mind by any other extension just as complete.

We are presently cast in a starring role that psychologist Barry McWaters typified as “conscious evolutionaries”, a species whose ultimate business is to be mindful of our planet’s ultimate business as well. Our planet’s ultimate business is the well-being of lifekind overall, of which humankind’s business is an ultimately fragile subset. Of all Earth’s species, ours is the most capable of appreciating lifekind’s kindom, and insofar as the word “appreciation” signifies increase of value, we are accordingly here to increase and multiply the value of lifekind’s worth. As McWaters asserted in his 1982 book, *Conscious Evolution: Personal and Planetary Transformation:*

We now enter a period wherein the goal of individual salvation is no longer appropriate. Our guidance calls for a collective transformation…. The present recognition of our emergent collective consciousness represents a quantum transformation in human evolution…. While much of human consciousness is still caught in a separative, alienated condition, significant numbers of individuals and groups are consciously working toward critical mass. When just the right quantity and quality of catalytic influence is reached, the entire process will be affected.

The purpose of our gathering together on eight Thursday evenings is to amplify the catalytic influence of which McWaters wrote.

If the prospect of humanity’s being our planet’s greatest evolutionary hope inclines you to throw up your hands in dismay and say, “There goes the neighborhood,” I urge you to hear me out.

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My own initial awakening as a conscious evolutionary occurred with my recognition at age five that I had come to a silly planet. The silliness I recognized is what is generally termed a “failure to communicate.” The grown-up world didn’t make much sense because grown-ups only heard what they were saying to one another and didn’t listen to what they meant. I heard people talking everywhere, yet seldom heard them listening.

It has since become a well-established fact 80% of interpersonal communication is subliminally conveyed by posture, gestures, eye-movements, facial expressions and other so-called “body language,” as well as by intonations of voice and other non-verbal cues. At age five I knew none of that as a fact, yet I now assume in retrospect that reading subliminal cues what made it possible to hear what grown-ups meant even when I couldn’t understand their words.

It had also become clear to me by age five that grown-ups pretended to be more like one another than they actually were. I was also dimly aware of why this was so: most people who were different from others were not looked upon favorably. I felt sure that I was quite different from everyone else on this silly planet, and when the first sightings of UFO’s were widely reported in 1947 I hoped they had come to take me back where I belonged. I would lie out on the lawn at night, gaze into the heavens, and telepathically indicate my readiness for them to come and take me back to wherever it was I belonged. When that didn’t happen I eventually decided to make the most of my difference. So whenever others asked me, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” T told them “I want to be unusual.” This gathering is one of the ways that intention is presently showing up.

It was also during the Christmas season of my fifth year, just a few weeks after the December, 1941 “day of infamy,” that I spontaneously realized for no apparent reason that Santa Claus was a fiction. I said to my mother, “There isn’t really a Santa Clause, is there?” She hesitantly admitted that there wasn’t, perhaps suspecting that this news would spoil my Christmas. Yet I was so excited about recognizing the truth all on my own that her confirmation made that Christmas even better. Nonetheless she sought to console me by telling me that my name, “Noel,” means “good news.”

Until then I had disliked my first name, because it was so different from the names of the other children in my small northern Illinois town that some of the older kids made fun of it. Upon learning that it meant “good news” I figured that with a Christmas present like that, who needed a Santa Clause?

Subsequent teasing about my first name lost its power to upset me, because I went instantly from not liking my name to the belief that I AM good news – not THE good news, mind you, yet good news regardless of what anyone else might call me. I decided that I was here to BE good news by bringing good news to others. At that age, of course, I had no idea just what good news I was here to bring. I did not doubt, however, that the good news had to become apparent to me because I was here on its behalf. And I did intuit how, whenever it did show up, I was to bring that good news to others: via music and the written word, to both of which forms of self-expression this lifetime has since been dedicated.

I didn’t know until my late teens what good news I was here to bring and just how I would bring it, only that I would eventually know and bring whatever that good news may be. With occasional lapses I have mindfully endeavored to honor my name by being a bearer of good news, and sometimes by being good news itself. I also recognized that the grown-up word’s silliness had a lot to do with the fact that most women are far more intuitively tuned into good news than are most men. I therefore decided to spend my life mostly in the company of women. It is only quite recently that men have begun tuning themselves to the good news as well.

It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change. -Charles Darwin

http://www.svamd.com/ Monday, 09 April, 2007

The one course in sociology I ever took was as an undergraduate in 1966.  It included a number of readings from Robert Ezra Park, one time student of William James.  He was said to have been the founder of sociology in America as a serious and “scientific” discipline.  His description of the "marginal man" has stuck with me ever since for its accurate description of my own life circumstance:

*The marginal man... is one whom fate has condemned to live in two societies and in two, not merely different but antagonistic cultures... his mind is the crucible in which two different and refractory cultures may be said to melt and, either wholly or in part, fuse.           Robert E. Park (wikipedia)*

Contemplation: infinity in a grain of sand and eternity in an hour.

[Interbeing]

Each of us is a walking universe. Our inner space spans huge differences, with unreachable horizons in all directions. We contain black holes of lost memory and white holes of erupting joy. A mysterious center of gravity keeps all our mental processes in delicate balance. To change this vast, intricate, ever-evolving system, you must know how to overturn worlds. The only person who can do this is the god who presides over this inner cosmos, and when I presume to break into a patient's mind, it is to implant the idea that he is that god. By thinking, feeling and acting, he is altering the universe that is himself. If a person can gain that insight, even in a brief glimpse, anything in his life can change. -Deepak Chopra, *Unconditional Life*

Since the word “introspection” is used to designate inward looking, I have coined the word “omnispection” to designate what I call “allward” looking. The full opposite of my looking uni-directionally inward is my looking omni-directionally outward, a projection of my perception that is more effectively designated as “allward.”

With reference to the totality of who, what, and how I am – my individual estate as an allward outlooker – I employ the term “whole-sum” being, by which I mean the totality of all that I feel called to be.

The evolution of whole-sum being was acknowledged in George Wald’s summation:

In conjunction with the estate of my whole-sum being, which is the most real of all the real estate I have ever appraised, I employ the term “appreciation” just as any other realtor would, to connote increase in value. To appreciate whole-sum being is, therefore, to add to its value. Alternately, I depreciate whole-sum being whenever I diminish its value.

**The foundational premises of our gathering:**

Humankind is standing at the threshold of a leap in consciousness. Whether that leap is one of forward progression or backward regression will depend on whether the leap in consciousness embraces an understanding of how our planet’s evolutionary process works.

We are living on the tipping point of an ecological and ideological bifurcation, which was set in motion at least a century ago by the beginning convergence of many tendencies that were leading up to it during preceding centuries, and which has been foreseen by an increasing number of prophetic persons for well over half a century. (Define “prophetic” person.)

Ernest Holmes (SOMT 60/3): A new light is coming into the world. We are on the borderland of a new experience. The veil between Spirit and matter is very thin. The invisible passes into visibility through our faith in it. A new science, a new religion, and a new philosophy are rapidly being developed. This is in line with the evolution of the great Presence and nothing can hinder its progress. It is useless, as well as foolish, to make any attempts to cover this Principle, or to hold It as a vested right of any religion, sect or order. The Truth will out; the Spirit will make Itself known. Happy are we if we see these things which, from the foundation of the human race, have been longed for by all aspiring souls.

Allerd Stikker (TF X/X): Human cultural evolution and Earth’s biological evolution are on a collision course.

The imbalance we see outside ourselves only mirror the imbalance within. The way to heal the imbalance is to heal ourselves. We have to stop thinking of ourselves as conquerors and start thinking of ourselves as travelers with every living being on this planet. The task is not climb a mountain, but to navigate a river. [Marilyn Ferguson, *Aquarius Now: Radical Common Sense and Reclaiming Our Personal Sovereignty* (Weiser Books, 2005), from book cover front overleaf.]

Global healing cannot be accomplished by a worldwide program established for that purpose. The objective is too complicated for a rationally programmed worldwide solution. It can rather be accomplished only as individuals and communities worldwide optimize their own immediate interrelationship with their local and regional area of the planet, a sustainable interrelationship that serves the optimum wellbeing of all living creatures worldwide and of all the ecological interrelationships that sustain their wellbeing. [Note that “optimum” signifies the best that is possible, not the maximum and thus most that is possible.]

“We have it in our power to begin the world again.” -Thomas Paine

More accurately stated, we have it in our power to give new form to our experience of reality.

Universal principles

* The principle of cosmogenesis: eternal self-origination.
* The principle of cosmic interbeing: entanglement, whole cosmos catalog, interbeing, holons, [Capra] [Argon] [Jonah]
* The principle of cosmic evolution:
* The principle of primal location: Everywhere I go, here I am. Like all else in the universe, I am only and always where I am and nowhere else, yet the “here” in which I am is nonlocally everywhere. [Swimme]
* The principle of cosmic reciprocity: Every relationship is an interrelationship. Our relationship to the world is a self←↨→world interrelationship.
* The principle of cosmic harmony: All dissonance is local. Local pain is always being reconciled to cosmic joy. (Holmes quote) The quality of harmonious relationship takes precedence to and prevails over any specific relationship.
* The principle of local emergence:
* The principle of autogenesis: To understand is to invent. We form our own experiencing of reality.

The history of humankind’s environmental consciousness:

* Experiential keeper consciousness – unified thinking.
* Distinctional breaker consciousness – distinctional thinking, combinatorial thinking
* Integral mender consciousness – integral thinking

Five evolutions:

* cosmic/inorganic
* biological
* socio-cultural
* noetic
* conscious

The doors of perception:

* sensation
* mentation
* intuition
* illumination (a.k.a. “revelation”)

**Setting the consciousness arena for our gathering:**

Unpacking the title of our eight weeks’ gathering:

* Tao: the ever-present origin and nature of manifest reality (a.k.a. “First Cause,” “great Presence,” etc.) Tao is self-originating, self-differentiating, self-organizing, self-sustaining, etc. [“Tao” is present within all that is as the relationship between patterns and void.]
* Te: the dynamic alignment of manifest reality with its ever-present origin and nature. [“Te” signifies our individual and collective alignment and co-operation with patterns and void.]
* Ching:
* *Tao Te Ching*: A manual for our return to original essence.
* Global Healing
* Gathering
* Souls
* Appreciation
* Common Unity

I would like to share with you the subjective foundation of this gathering – the autobiography of how I have felt my way to where I am in consciousness today – an inventory of self-expanding felt shifts in my experience of being-in-relationship with the world, in the direction of being-one-with (a.k.a. “at-one-ment”) with all that is, which is a feeling, not a knowing, a conviction, not a cognition. They came into my consciousness, sometimes as an experience of enlargement, and sometimes as a so-called shock of recognition: a deeply felt “a-ha”, God bumps (a.k.a. goose bumps), a tingling in some part or all of my body, a crawling sensation in my scalp, a shiver in my spine, etc.

I can remember where I was and what I was doing when each of these shifts occurred, and as I share them you may recall similar expansive experiences of your own. As you do so make a note of each experience that comes to your memory so that you can compile it into an inventory of your own personally expansive experiences.

EXERCISES:

* Holocoenetic diagram
  + Interbeing
  + Argon, etc.
* Transformational signs of the time:
  + 18 million votes for a woman presidential candidate
  + Evangelical-New Thought conference
  + Schatschneider
* Inventory of felt shifts.

The axial period – 800-200 BCE – the great bifurcation. -Karl Jaspers

From geocentric to homocentric consciousness TF p. 30

Stikker’s book.

**Freedom from the known.**

Democritus and same river twice.

This morning I recalled a story my late wife told of her confrontation with a coiled rattlesnake. She essentially stood still and stared it down. As she described it, when she froze and looked the coiled snake in the eye, the two of them filled the entire universe. During that time there simply was nothing else in reality for either one of them. The snake gave in and left first.   
  
I think we should strive to achieve the capability of loving that same way -- so that there is nothing else in the entire universe but that love. It's a tall order, but so is staring down a snake!

Shift awakening. Being one with, rather than being separate from. Being one with as if – as if what I am one with is who and how I am.

A guided meditation on the action that you embody:

Universal action is ceaselessly taking place as me. Nor can I divorce myself from the action that is taking place as me. (whole universe catalog)

“Only the wise possess ideas; the greater part of mankind are possessed by them.” -Samuel Taylor Coleridge

My only options are to take charge of my own activity or default to its being in charge of me.

This brings us to our next question: Is there anyone here who has been redeemed from some former explanation, description or story?

Anyone who has successfully participated in a 12-step program has been redeemed from some former explanation.

**The Tao of Self-Dominion: Further Notes on Session One**

Kinds of knowing other than cognitive

*Illuminative knowing* comes to us via direct revelation, and is state dependent. Although we may remember what the knowing was about, we cannot reconstruct the knowing itself unless we return to the state in which we experience it. This includes the knowing that we experience during so-called drug “trips.”

*Generative knowing* comes to us via our intuition, which emerges from the interface of our experience and our articulation thereof.

Masculine energy is the field of infinite potential, a.k.a. the field of becoming.

Feminine energy is the field of experienced potential, a.k.a. the field of being.

The best overview of the experiential distinction between masculine and feminine consciousness is Carol Gilligan’s book, *In a Different Voice*. Another helpful resource is *Only Two Can Play This Game* by James Keys [pseudonym for G. Spencer-Brown). According to Keys, masculine energy brings form to substance, and feminine energy brings substance to form. Examples of form without substance are the WW2 phenomena of Auschwitz and Hiroshima. Examples of substance without form are homelessness and aimless living.

Expectancy is the quality of openness to our good, while expectations are preconceived forms of our good. Expectancy allows our good to manifest in its best form. Expectations limit the manifestation of our good to our preconceptions thereof.

Feng Shui is the harmonious alignment of our residential living spaces and collective gathering and work spaces with the universal forms of energetic patterns and rhythms.

**Where the Action Is**

The only thing you have to offer another human being, ever, is your own state of being.

Ram Dass

The everywhere-ness of “Here I am” is signified in religious contexts as “God.” In scientific contexts this everywhere-ness is signified in an acronym of God – the **G**rand **O**rder and **D**esign of the universe. In spiritual contexts it is signified as “spirit” or “consciousness.”

You may have noticed by now that I consistently make reference to what words **signify** rather than what they mean. This is because words mean nothing other than what we mean by our use of them. In short: Our words don’t mean, we do.

Words are merely signs that point to their referents, and they do not embody the meanings of their referents. For instance, the word “pencil” neither signifies nor embodies what its referent means, it is the action of our writing with a pencil that conveys what it means. Many are the testimonies to this principle:

Scientist Jacob Bronowski: The world can only be grasped by action, not by contemplation.

Psychologist Alfred Adler: Trust only movement. Life happens at the level of events not of words.

Anthropologist Carlos Castenada: You should know now that a man of knowledge lives by acting, not by thinking about acting, not by thinking about what he will think about when he has finished acting. A man of knowledge chooses a path with heart and follows it.

Meaning is signified and embodied only in purposeful dynamic interrelationality, such as that of a pencil being purposefully moved on paper. Things in themselves have no meaning other than what their perceived context bestows on them. Accordingly, the only meaning that words point to is the dynamics inherent in their overall context, as in the sentence, “Please hand me that pencil.” Our words can have no meaning other than that to which we sentence them.

Four things are brought into dynamic context by the words, “Please hand me a pencil”: courtesy and the pleasing thereof, handing and a particular pencil. Only words that signify a context generate meaning. Of themselves alone, words not bound together in a context are just a heap of meaningless data. Merely to say “please”, or to say “hand”, or to say “me”, or to say “a”, or to say “pencil” is meaningless unless the context of the word is understood with reference to previously spoken words, such as the question “What do you need?” to which the answer, “a Pencil” may suffice; or with reference to some other signal, such as someone’s apparent requirement – possibly your own – of a pencil.

Words point to meaning only when they are assembled in meaningful formation, which is what makes the difference between an inert heap of data and useful information. The word “information” refers to data that literally is in formation because of its being perceived in a meaningful pattern. The word “information” signifies data patterned in a perceivably meaningful form. And even when data are in a meaningful form the consequent meaning is not inherent in the data per se, only in the collective formation that is taken by or given to the data.

For example, the data of our daily existence has meaning only insofar as we can either see a meaningful pattern that it forms or can give it meaningfully patterned form. The activity of giving patterned formation to the data of our daily existence is our observer-participation in the process of reality formation.

Reality formation is a unifying process of discovering what is, via pattern recognition, and fabricating it to be otherwise, via pattern construction. We are at all times engaged in reality formation, and the reality that we form can be no better than the performanceof recognizing patterns in the data of our experience and of informing what we recognize with new patterns. The informance of our experience mirrors our performance in detecting meaningful patterns therein or of giving meaningfully patterned form to our experiential data. It is within the limiting parameters of our performance and informance that we create our immediate experiential reality within our already created reality-at-large.

Thus the Tao of self-dominion is about giving effective and efficient form to the data of our existence. “Effectiveness” signifies doing what works. “Efficiency” signifies doing workably what works. Workability is sometimes established as a consequence of initially doing what doesn’t work, as in Winston Churchill’s comment that “The Americans always do the right thing after they’ve tried everything else.” Hence the implacable First Law of Workability cited earlier, “Doing what doesn't work does not work, etc.” (p. 5)

The process by which we determine what works is called trial and error, which is a built-in aspect of our intelligence. The word “intelligence” signifies our ability to choose among options. As physician Lewis Thomas observed,

Our kind of brain is built so that it can make great numbers of errors, all the time, for this is really the way we go about the process of thinking. We get things wrong by nature, and when we get enough things wrong we make use of that information to get things right. The process is trial and error, as we say. It is in this sense that our brains differ so greatly from machines, and it is probably the recognition of this special gift of error that makes us feel so strongly that we are different from all the other animals on earth. It is hard for us to imagine anything taking place in the brain of an insect that bears any resemblance to the events in our own heads. We take it for granted that insects are little whirring machines, programmed by their genes to do this or that little insectlike thing, but we recoil from the notion that the bug is a conscious, thinking creature. We do this partly because we feel superior, and partly because we know that we could never do so reproducibly what beetles do. It could be that simple animals possess the same kind of awareness as ours, but that they are conscious of fewer items, and therefore the probability of error is greatly reduced.

Given our built in trial-and-error optionality, the best way to establish knowledge of our limits is to exceed them, as in T. S. Eliot’s observation that “Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.” The prescription for “going too far” was similarly cited by Arthur C. Clarke: "The only way to discover the limits of the possible is to go beyond them into the impossible." It is thus, therefore, that some racing-car drivers mindfully exercise trial and error in order to determine their vehicle’s ultimate speed limit on a given racetrack by inducing a controlled spinout on each of its curves. In so during they lay claim to the Irish blessing

May you have the hindsight to know where you have been,

the foresight to know where you are going,

and the insight to know when you have gone too far.

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The First Law of Reality Formation simply states that “Every action has a co-responding consequence.” We live in a **co-responding** universe in which every action has a correlative **consequence** because every outcome is the effect of some **commensurate action**. And whether one signifies an action’s co-responding “effect” as a “consequence”, a “result,” an “outcome” or a “demonstration,” all such terms signify a commensurately formative activity.

Those who are scientifically informed may recognize that the statement, “every action has a co-responding consequence,” is suggestive of Newton’s second law of motion, that “for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.” We experience most of our consequences as being less immediate and oppositely precise than Newton’s law suggests, and sometimes even subject to being forestalled by a change of action.

Nevertheless, as Robert Louis Stevenson observed, “Sooner or later we all sit down to a banquet of consequences.” This is because we have only freedom of choice, and not freedom of consequence, because although we may free ourselves *from* some of the consequences of being alive, we cannot free ourselves *of* those consequences themselves. For example, while one may be freed *from* one consequence of becoming pregnant via an abortion, the act of abortion does not free one *of* all the life-impacting consequences of once having been pregnant, which will includes the further consequences of action upon the initial consequence. The banquet of one’s consequences is therefore never-ending

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The banquet of our consequences is just part of the greater feast of consciousness that our weekly gatherings together to experience is not represented by a judgmental menu of right and wrong, rather by an **operational** menu of what works and what doesn’t work. Nor is any feast of consciousness complete until we have sampled both what works and what doesn’t, once again because what works is ultimately determined by what doesn’t work.

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Although our permanent existence resides in the homestead of our being, we spend most of our lives maintaining our immediate geographic and bodily housing rather than in maintenance of our perennial residence. Whenever our temporary housing is thus mistaken for our permanent home, we illustrate Albert Einstein’s maxim that "We can't solve our problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." Jesus was making this same distinction in his commandment to be in the world yet not of it. So long as we spend most our lives in support of being physical creatures *of* the world, rather than in support of being spiritual creators *in* the world, we cannot solve the spiritual problems that arise from the physicality of our worldly embodiment.

The spiritual remedy for worldly negligence is a mindful awakening to the process of reality-formation, for while we are always engaged in the process of forming our own reality, we are seldom engaged therein mindfully. It is for the purpose of mindful engagement in reality-formation that the Tao of self-dominion focuses on the effectiveness and efficiency of our individual and collective **housekeeping** and **homemaking** of our individual and collective common unity. Self-dominion is the inner housekeeping and homemaking with which we maintain the perennial homestead of our common unity.

Those of you who are old enough to remember the Smothers Brothers may recall their version of the cowboy song, “Oh give me a home where the buffalo roam, and I’ll show you a dirty housekeeper.” In terms of effective and efficient maintenance of our individual and collective common unity, we are very dirty housekeepers indeed, as I described during a 1975 Earth Day presentation in Miami.

Earth is a single household.  
The planet's winds and waters see to that,   
so interlinked are they that each square mile of earthly surface  
contains some stuff from every other mile.

Some say the winds alone  
carried topsoil from the 1930's Dust Bowl three times around the Earth  
before the atmosphere was cleansed of it.

Today, Earth's soiled air disseminates  
exhaust of billions of tailpipes and chimneys,  
while the global network of her waterways  
spreads other human waste around our planetary homestead.

As we alter thus the content of Earth's atmosphere,  
and tamper with the chemistry of her waters,  
we take her life into our hands  
along with all of lifekind yet to come.

Earth is a single household, but its homestead is not ours;  
we are visitors in the living room of those about to follow,  
caretakers of the hospitality and shelter that our children's home affords.

Our children, not ourselves, are our earthly homestead's host,  
and we are but their household's privileged guests.

Why then do we abuse their mansion so,  
as if we had the right to wreck their residence?  
What have they and their children done  
to earn a life of struggling to restore what we've undone?

Of what crimes do we hold Earth's children guilty,  
that we sentence them to life at such hard labor?  
And what are we doing to our children's living room,  
as we trample, scrape and pave its carpet bare?

Our children ask the Earth for bread.  
Are we giving them a stone?

Since the housekeeping of our common unity can be no better than our homemaking thereof, it is ultimately with the homemaking of our perennial common unity that the Tao of self-dominion concerns itself, and our homemaking can be no more workable or complete than is our exercise of self-dominion.

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I would like us to think of our assembly here as a weekly gathering to experience six Thursday evening meals, each of which is a feast of consciousness. We are commencing tonight’s feasting by surveying the menu of the meals that we are assembling our minds to experience.

A menu is an overview of the feasting that it signifies by pointing to its meals. We could just as accurately say that our gathering begins by surveying the map of the territory that we have assembled to experience. A map is also an overview of the experience that it signifies as it directs us to the territory of our experience by pointing to it. However, since we are gathering for en experiential feast of consciousness rather than for a guided tour of consciousness, the metaphors of menu and meal are far more apt for our purpose than are the metaphors of map and territory.

The menu for our gathering merely signifies its meal, and its pointing to the meal is not to be mistaken for the meal itself. As a Zen saying advises, “A finger pointing at the moon is not to be mistaken for the moon itself.” Our gathering’s menu consists of the words we will read plus the words that we will speak to one another. Insofar as we focus our attention on the perceived meaning of our words, rather than upon what our words point to, we are attending to the menu rather than the meal. Mere words – and all words, whether spoken or written – are the menu of our understanding, not its meal. Words are mere signifiers of the meal’s ingredients, and are thus no more than pointers to the meal that are not to be mistaken for the meal itself.

In Eastern thought this approach to our experience is called a return to “beginner’s mind.” In Western thought it has been most recently called “dismantling the structure of our knowing.” In either event, our knowing remains intact, though not always in the tact of its previous form.

The most that words can offer us is an understanding of what our experiential meal is *like*, and this is not the same as feasting on a meal that our words direct us to. Actually eating a meal is *knowing* what it’s like, just as fasting is knowing what not eating is like, and it is from our mindful action and inaction that all true understanding emerges. Accordingly, when we read in *Proverbs* 4:7, “With all thy getting get understanding,” we are thereby being admonished to cease holding fast to our words so that we instead may feast on the consciousness that is signified by our words.

In short: It is only as we experience that to which our words are pointing that our understanding can be informed by our knowing of the meal they signify.

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Surveying the menu of the meal which we are gathered to experience consists of unpacking the words that principally signify the meal. In addition to the numerous words we’ve already unpacked there are several more.

The word “**Tao**” signifies the all-inclusive universal resonant field of reality-at-large, the field of all interrelating subfields of reality.

The word “**Te**” signifies the immediate experiential subfields of our individual and collective reality-at-hand, which are engaged with and within the all-inclusive field of reality-at-large.

The word “**field**” signifies a region of all-encompassing ordered influence. The largest known overall region of such influence is what we signify as “universe,” whose all-encompassing influence is signified by the word “cosmos,” which in turn signifies orderliness. Not only does the original Greek word, *cosmos,* metaphorically signify an orderly arrangement of ornaments, the cosmology of Hua-Yen Buddhism is also represented by an ornamental metaphor, the so-called “Jewel Net of Indra”: X

[This cosmology] teaches that the cosmos is like an infinite network of glittering jewels, all different. In each one we can see the images of all the others reflected. Each image contains an image of all the other jewels; and also the image of the images of the images, and so ad infinitum. The myriad reflections within each jewel are the essence of the jewel itself, without which it does not exist. Thus, every part of the cosmos reflects, and brings into existence, every other part. Nothing can exist unless it enfolds within its essence the nature of everything else.

The Word “**Ching**” signifies an appreciation of Tao and Te. “Ching” translates into English as “classic,” a term which, when applied to a book or other form of expression, honors its referent with ultimate appreciation. Since the word “**appreciation**” signifies increase of value (ask any realtor), the *Tao Te Ching* is a value-adding perspective on the engagement of Tao and Te.

The word “**engagement**” signifies mutuality of relationship. Within a field every relationship is an interrelationship, in accordance with a principle acknowledged by quantum physicist Eugene Wigner: “**we do not know of any phenomenon in which one subject is influenced by another without [the other] exerting a [corresponding] influence thereupon.”**

From this all-encompassing field perspective, the cosmos is a nested hierarchy of interacting ensembles-within-ensembles-within-ensembles: sub-atomic particles embedded within atoms that are embedded within elements, which are further embedded within molecules embedded within Tissues embedded in organs embedded in organisms embedded within planets, which are still further embedded within solar systems embedded within galaxies embedded within galactic clusters, etc. 13 Physicist Paul Davies has provided an historical cosmic survey of the reality forming dynamics of the universe at large:

Xxxx

As psychologist Vince Whitcomb has characterized the all-encompassing influence of this universal reality-at-large:14

As physics refines its tools of inquiry, it finds that the objective world cannot be isolated from the observer who seeks to observe it. There is a place where the physical world and human thought flow into one another and the distinction between inner and outer breaks down. This place is a seed bed of creativity, where the mind observes itself and where physical reality takes form in our consciousness. By exploring this place we may come to know better the processes by which we grow and evolve, and by so doing become more conscious co-creators of the world in which we live. . . .

As our world view expands from the quark to the cosmos, from the birth of form to the birth of thought, we are learning that we are in inseparable union with the wholeness of existence. The imprint of that unity may be found in the reflections of the processes of creation from one level to the next.

The all-encompassing ordered influence of reality-at-large is the evidence of stable and sustainably managed diversity, a steady state of common unity that we call “**inclusivity**.” From an operational perspective, the term “inclusivity” is synonymous with the coherent integrity that characterizes stable and sustainably managed diversity. An operational example of coherent integrity is the so-called “homeostasis” of the human body, the body’s self-regulation of a reliably stable and sustainable steady state of diversified energies.

What distinguishes stability from steadiness is illustrated by both cancer and global warming. Each of these represents a stable steadiness of decline known as **devolution**, the putting asunder of what evolution has joined together. Ernest Holmes defined the overall dynamic relationship between evolution and devolution in a few sentences:

Every part of the universe exists for the good of every other part. . . .

Thus the Tao of self-dominion may be signified as the self-regulation of our bodies and minds in a reliably stable and sustainable steady state, in harmony with the abiding principles of evolution.

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How many of you have had the experience of failing to keep something from changing? Of failing to fix something by making it work in a way other than the way it is already working?

(Virginia Satir)

Nothing in the universe is fixed. Permanence of form is a misconception that Percy Bysshe Shelley hauntingly acknowledged in his poem, “Ozymandias”:

I met a traveler from an antique land

Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,

Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,

The hand that mocked them, the heart that fed.

And on the pedestal these words appear:

“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings.

Look upon my works ye Mighty and despair!”

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,

The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Nothing in the universe is fixed. Permanence of form is a mirage that invariably deserts us on the shifting sands of eternity. Everything changes except the principles that govern change, and even they aren’t inflexibly fixed. Take, for instance, the principle that “the only thing permanent is change.” It is also true that “the more things change, the more they stay the same.”

Bohr: “The opposite of a correct statement is a false statement; but the opposite of a profound truth may be another profound truth.”

The function of evolutionary adaptation is one of formative change that empowers underlying processes of change to stay the same.

Holmes: “Everything in the universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part. The universe is forever uniting what is harmonious and diminishing what is not. . . . It is the unessential only that is vanishing, that the abiding may be made more clearly manifest.”

For example, our measurements of the so-called “constants” of cosmology vary slightly from time to time, meaning that although they are never more or less constant they are sometimes experienced as differently constant.

Doing what doesn't work does not work.

Doing more of what doesn't work does not work.

Trying harder at what doesn't work does not work.

Improving what doesn't work does not work.

Getting better at what doesn't work does not work.

Mastering what doesn't work does not work.

Committing to what doesn’t work does not work.

The only thing that works is what does work.

Operational re-minders:

[Following Laing quote in SOCO]: We create nothing more than the way we reshape the stuff of our self↔world interrelationship and the immediate initial consequences of our doing so, because the long term consequences of our shaping are subject to unpredictable further shaping via the responsive or reactive contributions of others. And since the choiceful self-dominion of our own respective bodyminds is ultimately exercised always and only “in here,” any rental of our power of choice to other persons, or to governments, schools, churches and other institutions, or to our immediate or general circumstances is likewise a choice that ultimately made within the “in here” of our own personal authority. We forever retain ultimate authorship of our own experiential script, however and to whomever we may consign or default its subordinate co-authorship. Thus concerning anything that becomes *actually* possible for us to experience as being done by ourselves or as something that happens to us, the efficient cause of our experienced outcome thereof is always and only our own choice of how to experience it via our mindful, unmindful or defaulted self-dominion.

The Greek philosopher Democritus proclaimed that “There are only atoms and the void.” He was close, but no cigar. Today we can proclaim, with far more evidence in support of our proclamation, that there are only patterns *in* the void – ordered patterns of information, ordered patterns of energy, and ordered patterns of matter. Chaos is pre-patterned information, energy and matter whose randomness has yet to emerge in form. Order is everywhere, always and only pattern-based.

The original chaos was the so-called Big Bang, the explosive origin of undifferentiated light.

Ernest Holmes “forms”

Democritus and same river twice.

“Tao” signifies the relationship between patterns and void.

“Te” signifies our individual and collective co-operation with patterns and void.

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I think we should strive to achieve the capability of loving that same way -- so that there is nothing else in the entire universe but that love. It's a tall order, but so is staring down a snake!

Shift awakening. Being one with, rather than being separate from. Being one with as if – as if what I am one with is who and how I am.

A guided meditation on the action that you embody:

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“Only the wise possess ideas; the greater part of mankind are possessed by them.” -Samuel Taylor Coleridge

My only options are to take charge of my own experience or default to its being in charge of me.

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**The Tao of Self-Recovery**

[Keep It Simple]

Addiction is obsessive, ineffective and misdirected housing maintenance, *i.e.* maintenance of our sensory physicality. Sobriety is effective home maintenance, *i.e.,* maintenance of our inner being. Higher sobriety is the most effective home maintenance of all.

Physiological addictions to substances and relationships are the symptomatic effects of painful psychological addictions that sustain them. Psychological addictions are in turn sustained by emotionally tinged feelings that we associate with personal shortcomings of incompetence and unworthiness and that we experience as fear, shame, guilt, anger, and other distressful emotions.

Physiologically we experience two generic feeling sensations, feelings of painful distress and feelings of pleasant well-being, which become differentiated psychologically as sadness, happiness, etc. Feelings of pain and pleasure instruct our nervous system about the state of our relationship to our experienced world. These instructs are the raw information from which we emotionally construct into

We indulge in physiological addictions to substances and relationships to blot out our awareness of our psychological addictions. The only way to heal a physiological addition – not just keep it in check, and actually *heal* it – is to heal the psychological addictions of which they are merely the symptoms.

We’re going to begin this session by acknowledging the greatest of all insights into self-mastery. On behalf of our accomplishing this objective, I would like you to do two things:

* Write down the address of your home.
* I would like those who are willing to do so to read out loud what you’ve written down.

Next I’m going to tell you a story that puts in perspective what you’ve just done.

[Ellis Island anecdote]

Is what you wrote down the address of your home, or is it the address of the place in which you lodge your home? If you wrote down the latter, now write down the address of your home.

As Polly Adler, a notorious madam a half-century ago, entitled her 1953 book, *A House is not a Home*. Yet we spend most of our lives in support of maintaining our housing rather than in support of maintaining our home. Addiction is obsessive, ineffective and misdirected housing maintenance, *i.e.* maintenance of our sensory physicality. Sobriety is effective home maintenance, *i.e.,* maintenance of our inner being. Higher sobriety is the most effective home maintenance of all.

Whenever we mistake our housing for our home we illustrate Albert Einstein’s maxim that "We can't solve our problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." Jesus was making this same distinction in his commandment to be in the world yet not of it. So long as we spend most our lives in support of being physical creatures *of* the world, rather than in support of being spiritual creatures *in* the world, we cannot solve the spiritual problems that arise from being physically in the world.

No matter what forms our problems take, they tend to be habitual forms if not addictive ones. Our habits and addictions function as a deforming mirror that grossly distorts our expression and being of who we truly are. Fortunately, these habits and addictions are not something we are born with. They instead are something with which we are culturally ingrained. The psychologist Abraham Maslow put it this way:

I find children, up to the time they are spoiled and flattened by the culture, [to be] nicer, better, more attractive human beings than their elders . . . The 'taming and transforming' that they undergo seems to hurt rather than help.  It was not for nothing that a famous psychologist once defined adults as 'deteriorated children.'

Those human impulses which have seemed throughout our history to be deepest, to be most instinctive and unchangeable, to be most widely spread throughout mankind, i.e., the impulse to hate, to be jealous, to be hostile, to be greedy, to be egoistic and selfish are now being discovered more and more clearly to be acquired and are not instinctive. They are almost certainly neurotic and sick reactions to bad situations, more specifically to frustrations of our truly basic and instinct-like needs and impulses.

Maslow's perspectives on adult-erated children were shared by one of his well-known contemporaries, anthropologist Ashley Montague, who likewise felt that the deterioration of childhood genius is circumscribed by entrainment to "bad situations" and not genetically or characterologically preordained. Montagu noted that even though our way of being in the world is to a great extent genetically preordained, our environmental and cultural circumstances select for which of our endowed hereditary potentials actually become developed. Nature and nurture are jointly empowering and selective of our endowments of genetically programmed potentials.

For example, if human beings were genetically programmed with an automatic predisposition to proliferate bad situations regardless of our environmental circumstances, whether physical or cultural, our species would long since have become extinct. And if we instead were genetically programmed with an automatic predisposition to proliferate good situations, once again regardless of our surrounding circumstances violence rarely occur.

Fortunately for all concerned, our negative predispositions are for the most part amenable to remaining dormant in environments that do not nurture their development, and our positive predispositions are amenable to fulfillment in environments that select for their expression. And in either case, the “environment” most important to their development and expression is one’s inner mental and emotional condition, as illustrated in the story of two wolves.

John Denver once proclaimed, “Each of us is the dwelling place of incredible opportunities.” Once again, this is most obvious in young children. Each of us was once a childhood fountain of incredible opportunities to learn, to know and to express. We were living question marks, whose unbounded curiosity moved us to inquire about everything, endlessly asking “why is…?”, and “how does . . .?” As architect-engineer-inventor R. Buckminster (“Bucky”) Fuller noted,

In observing a little child, we find it is interested in everything and spontaneously apprehends, comprehends, and coordinates an ever-expanding inventory of experiences…. Nothing seems to be more prominent about human life than its wanting to understand all and put everything together.

Our early childhood inclination to think the world together emerges without inhibition as an expression of our expansive way of growing outward. We would tend to continue being this were our inquiring nature not squelched by the process of our becoming enculturated instead to think the world to pieces, and our why-ing is turned into whining as our questions shift from “why is…?” and “how does . . .?” to “why do I have to . . .?” and “how come . . .?”

According to Maslow, “If our true nature is permitted to guide our life, we grow healthy, fruitful and happy. [Yet] ninety-eight percent of us die before we taste the nectar of our magnificence.” Our alienation from the nectar of our own magnificence was acknowledged nearly a century ago by poet Christopher Morley:

The greatest poem ever known  
Is one all poets have outgrown:  
The poetry innate, untold,  
Of being only four years old.

Still young enough to be a part  
Of Nature's great impulsive heart,  
Born comrade of bird, beast and tree  
And unselfconscious as the bee--  
And yet with lovely reason skilled  
Each day new paradise to build,  
Elate explorer of each sense,  
Without dismay, without pretense!

In your unstained, transparent eyes  
There is no conscience, no surprise:  
Life's queer conundrums you accept,  
Your strange divinity still kept.

Being, that now absorbs you, all  
Harmonious, unit, integral,  
Will shred into perplexing bits --  
Oh, contradiction of the wits!

And Life, that sets all things in rhyme,  
May make you poet, too, in time--  
But there were days, O tender elf,  
When you were poetry itself.

Because the eclipse of childhood together-thinking wonderment is so evident by the age of eight or nine, I asked a third grade teacher if anything was different in third grade from the previous two. “Well of course,” she proudly proclaimed. “In the third grade we stop all the fun and games and get down to the serious business and hard work of learning.”

In other words, children’s together-thinking nature ceases to be honored as their minds are filled with the adult world’s apart-taking answers of “that’s the way it is.” The consequences of this dishonoring were once directly acknowledged by Bucky Fuller when he was asked if he was a genius:

I am convinced that neither I nor any other human being, past or present, was or is a genius. I am convinced that what I have, every normal child also has at birth. So there’s no such things genius, some children are less damaged than others.

[A Plea for Damaged Children]

Those who are familiar with New Thought know that thoughts and sentiments with which we feed our minds today give according shape to our experiences of tomorrow. And no one better knows the genius of New Thought than the inner elder that resides in us each, whom I have come to know as the Wizard of Is:

Somewhere this side of the rainbow I can meet the Wizard of Is

whose special magic leaves today's life undistracted

by the should be's, could be's and if only's

that cloud over my inner-most intentions

and distort my outer-most attentions.

"Good old days,"

childish ways

and other once-were's are as absent from the Wizard's view

as are apprehensions about tomorrow.

The Wizard of Is resides instead in the near and how of present instants only –

the time and place from which my being ever emanates itself.

If I would fathom the secret of overflowing from such instants

I must consult the Wizard of Is.

Fortunately, this Wizard inhabits my own domain,

within the being who bears my name.

The good news is that consulting the Wizard of Is empowers us to break whatever may be the distorting self-mirroring with which we have out ourselves down. As mid-twentieth diarist Anaïs Nin asserted:

One discovers that destiny can be directed, that one does not need to remain in bondage to the first wax imprint made on childhood sensibilities. One need not be branded by the first pattern. Once the deforming mirror is smashed, there is a possibility of wholeness; there is a possibility of joy.

**This week**

* Xxxxxx

**At-home exercises:**

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 17, “Living as an Enlightened Leader”; 7, “Living beyond Ego”; 13, “Living with an Independent Mind”; 25 “Living from Greatness”; 60, “Living with Immunity to Evil”; 72, “Living with Awe and Acceptance ”; 73, “Living in Heaven’s Net”; 76, “Living by Bending”; and 81 “Living Your Own Utopia.”

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. 203-211, “Making the Commitment”.

To what are you willing to commit on behalf of being for something and against nothing?

**In-class activity and questions:**

* Baptism and right hemisphere experience.
* How can you let go of something you don’t know that you’ve taken on?
* How can you give what you don’t have?
* How can you have what you don’t give?
* All forgiveness is self-forgiveness for having bound oneself to unwanted external control. Forgiveness is the unbinding of one’s consciousness from some aspect of one’s past or current experience, thus freeing oneself from the perception of bondage to something that is external to one’s existence. Accordingly, what most requires forgiveness is the perception that forgiveness is required.

**The Tao of Self-Dominion: Preparation for Session Two**

**Living Beyond My Explanations and Descriptions**

The true value of a human being can be found

in the degree to which he has found liberation from the self.

Albert Einstein

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* please read (preferably in one session) verses/chapters #33, “Living Self-Mastery”, p. 160; #14, “Living Beyond Form,” p. 64; #11 “Living From the Void, p. 52; and then reread #33, “Living Self-Mastery,” p. 160.

When this reading has been finished, and as thoroughly as time permits, please write out two statements that begin as follows:

* I will be living in greater self-dominion when . . .
* The difference(s) that my living in greater self-dominion will make is(are) . . .

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it,

move with it, and join the dance.

Alan W. Watts

In *Daily Afflictions* please read p. XVII, which contrasts the purposes of afflictions and affirmations, and then read “The Agony of Being Connected to Everything in the Universe,” p. 89, “Diving into the Abyss,” p. 78, “Everything Happens for A Reason,” p. 70, and “Breaking Up with Yourself,” p. 42. Then read the following statement:

**The man who, being really on the Way, falls upon hard times in the world will not, as a consequence, turn to that friend who offers him refuge and encourages his old self to survive. Rather, he will seek out someone who will faithfully and inexorably help him to risk himself, so that he may endure the suffering and pass courageously through it, thus making of it a "raft that leads to the far shore." Only to the extent that man exposes himself over and over again to annihilation can that which is indestructible arise within him. In this lies the dignity of daring.**

**Thus, the aim of practice is not to develop an attitude which allows a man to acquire a state of harmony and peace wherein nothing can ever trouble him. On the contrary, practice should teach him to let himself be assaulted, perturbed, moved, insulted, broken and battered – that is to say, it should enable him to dare to let go his futile hankering after harmony, surcease from pain, and a comfortable life in order that he may discover, in doing battle with the forces that oppose him, that which awaits him beyond the world of opposites.**

**The first necessity is that we should have the courage to face life, and to encounter all that is most perilous in the world. When this is possible, meditation itself becomes the means by which we accept and welcome the demons which arise from the unconscious – a process very different from the practice of concentration on some object as a protection against such forces. Only if we venture repeatedly through zones of annihilation can our contact with Divine Being, which is beyond annihilation, become firm and stable.**

**The more a man learns whole-heartedly to confront the world that threatens him with isolation, the more are the depths of the Ground of Being revealed and the possibilities of new life and Becoming opened.**

**Karlfried Graf Dürckheim, *The Way of Transformation***

In light of the insight you have gained from these industrial strength affirmations, please address the following questions:

* When and how (if ever) have I experienced the agony of being connected to everything in the universe?
* When and how (if ever) have I “dived into the abyss” and/or encountered all that is most perilous in the world?
* When and how (if ever) have I broken up with myself?
* What reason(s) have I accepted for each of the above experiences? Were these reasons given by the experience itself, or are they the way that I chose to accommodate the experience?

**The Tao of Self-Dominion: Preparation for Session Three**

**Living in the Complementarity of Our Feminine and Masculine Energies**

Who knows his manhood's strength,

Yet still his female tenderness maintains,

As to one channel flow the many drains,

All come to him, yea, all beneath the sky.

Thus he the constant excellence retains;

The simple child again, free from all stains.

*Tao Te Ching*, v. 26, James Legge translation

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* please read (preferably in one session) verses/chapters #28, “Living Virtuously”, p. 132; #43, “Living Softly,” p. 208; and #76 “Living by Bending, p. 360.

When you have completed this reading, and as thoroughly as time permits, please write out how you might go about awakening to a “second childhood” via one or more of the prescriptions offered in these three verses and chapters.

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They have finally found something that can do the work of five men: one woman.

Said by a feminist, no doubt.

In *Daily Afflictions* please re-read p. XVII, which contrasts the purposes of afflictions and affirmations, and then read “Hopelessness Can Change the World,” p. 62, “Being in It for Yourself” p. 61, and “Compassionate Hypocrisy,” p. 60. Then read the attachment entitled “Turning Point”.

How do these various insights pertain to the complementarity of feminine and masculine energies?

NOTE: We will also address the statements that you prepared for Session Two.

**The Tao of Self-Dominion: Preparation for Session Four**

**Living As the Flow**

Be,

as water is,

without friction.

Flow around the edges

of those within your path.

Surround within your ever-moving depths

those who come to rest there—

enfold them, while never for a moment holding on.

Accept whatever distance

others are moved within your flow.

Be with them gently

as far as they allow your strength to take them,

and fill with your own being

the remaining space when they are left behind.

When dropping down life's rapids,

froth and bubble into fragments if you must,

knowing that the one of you now many

will just as many times be one again.

And when you've gone as far as you can go,

quietly await your next beginning.

-The Wizard of Is

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* please read (preferably in one session) verses/chapters #8, “Living in the Flow”, p. 40; #78, “Living Like Water,” p. 368; #61, “Living by Remaining Low,” p. 290; and #66 “Living by Emulating the Sea,” p. 312.

When you have completed this reading, and as thoroughly as time permits, please write out how you intend to *be your own flow* rather than go with one of the many other flows that are available to you.

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I’ve known many superstars who can handle failure quite well.

I’ve known very few who can handle success.

-Elton John’s manager

In *Daily Afflictions* please re-read p. XVII, which contrasts the purposes of afflictions and affirmations; “Finding Sorrow,” p. 22, “Doing the Wrong Thing” p. 48, and “Succeeding at Failure,” p. 52. Then write out how these afflictions relate to being your own flow.

NOTE: We may also address the statements that you prepared for Session Two.

**The Tao of Self-Dominion: Preparation for Session Five**

**The Tao of Service**

I slept and dreamt that life was joy,

I awoke and saw that life was service,

I acted and behold, service was joy!

Rabindranath Tagore

Service is the ultimate practice of spiritual discipline.

Sai Baba

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* please read (preferably in one session) verses/chapters #7, “Living Beyond Ego”, p. 34; #17, “Living as an Enlightened Leader,” p. 76; #57, “Living without Authoritarianism,” p. 274; and #77 “Living by Offering the Surplus,” p. 364.

When you have completed this reading, and as thoroughly as time permits, please write out your own understanding of the above quotation from the Indian poet, Tagore.

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The highest reward for one's toil is not what one gets for it but what one becomes by it.

John Ruskin

The only thing you have to offer another human being, ever, is your own state of being.

Ram Dass

In *Daily Afflictions* please re-read p. XVII, which contrasts the purposes of afflictions and affirmations, and then read “The Supermarket of Life,” p. 8, “Selfless Selfishness,” p. 16, and then re-read “Compassionate Hypocrisy,” p. 60, “Being in It for Yourself” p. 61, and “Hopelessness Can Change the World,” p. 62. Then write out how these afflictions relate to being of service to others.

**The Tao of Self-Dominion: Preparation for Session Six**

**The Tao of Raising Your Allowance**

May what I do flow from me like a river, no forcing and no holding back, the way it is with children.

Ranier Maria Rilke

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* please read (preferably in one session) verses/chapters #1, “Living the Mystery”, p. 2; #2, “Living the Paradoxical Unity,” p. 8; #11, “Living from the Void,” p. 52; #20, “Living without Striving, p. 94; and #29 “Living by Natural Law,” p. 138.

When you have completed this reading and as thoroughly as time permits, please write out how you are going to raise your own allowance.

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For fast acting relief, try slowing down.

Lily Tomlin

In *Daily Afflictions* please re-read p. XVII, which contrasts the purposes of afflictions and affirmations, and then read pages 3-10. Then write out how these afflictions relate to raising your allowance.

R-U = acknowledgement - attention - intention

U

R = acceptance – attunement - inclusion

T-R = allowance - ??? - immersion

**The Tao of Self-Dominion: Preparation for Session Seven**

**The Tao of Kindness**

What wisdom can you find that is greater than kindness?

Author unknown

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* please read (preferably in one session) verses/chapters #32, “Living the Perfect Goodness of the Tao”, p. 156; #38, “Living Within Your Own Nature,” p. 186 ; #40, “Living by Returning and Yielding,” p. 194; #46, “Living Peacefully ,” p. 224; # and #73, “Living in Heaven’s Net,” p. 344.

When you have completed this reading and as thoroughly as time permits, please write out how what you have read empowers you to be more kind.

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To be happy is to be able to become aware of oneself without fright

Walter Benjamin

In *Daily Afflictions* please re-read p. XVII, which contrasts the purposes of afflictions and affirmations, and then read pages 22-33. Then write out how these insights empower you to be more kind.

**The Tao of Self-Dominion: Preparation for Session Eight**

**The Tao of Co-Operation (Working Together)**

We’re all in this alone.

Lily Tomlin

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* please read (preferably in one session) verses/chapters #9, “Living Humility,” p. 44; #12, “Living with Inner Conviction,” p. 56; #16 “Living with Constancy,” p. 72; #21, “Living the Elusive Paradox ,” p. 100; # and #22, “Living with Flexibility,” p. 104.

When you have completed this reading and as thoroughly as time permits, please write out how what you have read empowers you to be more co-operative

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Xxxxx

Xxxxx

In *Daily Afflictions* please re-read p. XVII, which contrasts the purposes of afflictions and affirmations, and then read pages 9-21. Then write out how these insights empower you to be more co-operative.

**Preparation for Session Two**

For an understanding of the assumptions that underlie this seminar, read the article entitled “xxxx” and the pamphlet entitled “Alcoholism” by Ernest Holmes, and note any statements about which you would like to have more clarity or further understanding at our next class session.

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 33, “Living Self-Mastery”, XX, “Living Xx” XX, “Living Xx” and XX, “Living Xx”. After reading these chapters Chapter 33, complete the following sentences:

* I will be closer to self-mastery when . . .
* The difference that will be made by my being closer to self-mastery is . . .

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. v-xiv and 1-7, and then

* Make a list of any “canary carcasses” in your life.
* Make a list (if any) of your “keeper” tendencies.
* Make a list (if any) of your “breaker” tendencies.
* Make a list (if any) of your “mender” tendencies.
* Complete the sentence (if relevant to you), “The breaker tendency I am most able to release is . . .

**Becoming a More Inclusive Person**

As you read Chapter 53 in Wayne Dyer’s book, “Living Honorably” (pp. 256-260) note especially his concept of “Environorganism” (p. 258). To more fully appreciate your own existence as an environorganism, as well as the counsel to live honorably, proceed as follows with your blank holocoenotic diagram:

* Make a list of everything that is required for you to become a more inclusive person.
* Make another list of everything that hinders you from becoming a more inclusive person.
* Prioritize each list from most to least essential.
* In the diagram’s center circle put the initials BAMIC for “Becoming A More Inclusive Person.”
* Place the top eight items in each of your lists in the half-circles on the perimeter of the larger circle, alternating between requirements and hindrances. [NOTE: If you think of additional requirements and hindrances as you are doing this, add them to their respective lists. If any of them is more essential than something in your present top eight, revise your top eight accordingly.
* Draw a line from each requirement and hindrance to the central circle with an arrowhead at the end of the line nearest the central circle.
* For each requirement and hindrance to which you are capable of altering your relationship, put an arrowhead at the perimeter end of its line to the center as well.
* Now draw an additional line from each peripheral item to every other peripheral item that it in any way influences and/or is influenced by it. Be sure that all *mutual* influences are interlinked by lines that have arrowheads at each end. [NOTE: since every relationship is an interrelationship, it is quite unlikely that any of these lines will have an arrowhead at only one end. If you cannot perceive any mutuality of influence, make a special note of it for discussion at the next session.

**From session #2 discussion:**

* Blame is disownership of one’s experience.
* We forget who we are. Beginner’s mind is forgetting who we *think* we are. Letting go of what we think to clearly see what we know. Letting go of our history.
* Choose again (i.e., differently)
* Separation anxiety > surrogate divinity.
* One power and one order. The order plays out in and as our consequences.
* Pairing of stars – Vedanta: Brahma coming closer

**From session #3 discussion:**

* Feel comfortable with oneself in all situations.
* Common thought form of separation – insufficiency – not enough. At basis of all fear is perception of self-insufficiency.
* Right relationship to the mess: consciousness of sufficiency.

**From session #4 discussion:**

* Exclusivity is appropriate as a mutual transaction (blood-brain barrier; gendered restrooms) S.A. p. 15
* Insufficiency consciousness is a projection “out there” of a self-deficiency consciousness in here: not being enough projected as not having enough.
* “Bad” behavior is an expression of wounded-ness.
* When I cease wrong-making I cease to make myself “better” than others.
* Homelessness is an unsustainable lifestyle. Sustainable lifestyles are about thriving, not surviving.
* Wealth tends toward unsustainablity.
* Excess is over-expansion waiting to exhale.
* Infinity symbol: minimize-optimize-maximize.

**From session #5 discussion:**

* There’s no one in the boat.
* Focus on where you are going – see the whole.
* “I” statements
* Without connection there is no correction.
* All chickens are coming home to roost (the problem is not the rooster, e.g. Hitler).
* I created this. What is the lesson? To what am I attached?
* Keep enemies apart
* Violence is an option that has alternatives.

VISION RESPONSE

Threat-----------------------------------🡪 Defense

Ego-maintenance

Perception 🡨-----------------------------Event

Growth

Opportunity--------------------------------🡪 Creative

Fear risk vs. embrace risk

Presence of mind and being

Allowing, gratitude

**From session #6 discussion:**

Peace just is. Experience thereof is a choice.

Justice requires a judgment of contrast, and is a human invention.

Deeply listen

Consensus – looking for common values and vested interests.

Retributive – rehabilitative – restorative justice – from getting even to being even.

Inclusivity as connection between peace and justice

Differences of emotional development and charge

Is lack of transparency unjust?

Equity – equality of opportunity, not of outcome.

Give $2 to person who has $3 and $3 to person who has $2, so that each can buy a $5 ticket.

Parable of workers in vineyard – the reward is the same, regardless of when one accepts it.

Putting on the Mind of Christ

Translation and Transformation

Getting rid of stress (Dorothy’s diagram)

Cross with peace as vertical and justice as horizontal – infinity symbol at juncture.

**From session #7 discussion:**

One can experience “Living without” either as deprivation (sacrifice, giving up) or as liberation (letting go of).

What would you like to live with instead?

What are you willing to release that is detrimental to your well-being?

You can’t let go of something until you’ve taken it on.

**From session #8 discussion:**

How to let go of something you don’t know that you’ve taken on: Via the batch-processing of

* willingness,
* forgiveness,
* taking self-dominion.
* Giving yourself a clean slate
* ceasing to give away your power (Dyer’s nail-biting actress had given away her power to stop)

All of the foregoing are ways of focusing rather than scattering your powers of attention and intention.

Getting what you want is easier than deciding what you want.

It isn’t necessary to do it all in order to have it all.

Shadow play: bringing one’s shadow into the light (not casting the light on your shadow).

Therapy is most productive for those who do not require it.

**Four Realms of Consciousness:**

**Subjective, Objective, Interjective, Omnijective**

Xxxxx

-Xxxx

Require four designations, not two.

**Grist**

Love isn’t always a lightning bolt. Maybe sometime it’s just a choice. Maybe true love is a decision to take a chance with somebody, to give to somebody without worrying whether they’ll give anything back or if they’re going to hurt you, or if they really are *the* one. Maybe love isn’t something that happens to you. Maybe it’s something you have to choose. -*Love and Other Disasters*

Our perceptual encounter with reality.

"Laughing at our mistakes can lengthen our own life. Laughing at someone else's mistakes can shorten it." ~ Cullen Hightower

Global warming got you down?! Check out other points of view before giving in to alarmism-Unstoppable Global Warming: Every 1,500 Years by Dennis Avery and S. Fred Singer (not scary as the title implies :-)), The Politically Incorrect Guide to Global Warming (and Environmentalism) by Christopher Horner, [www.globalwarming.org,](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/warming/debate/singer.html) Jay Wile's Eco-hysteria audio CD

From Eckhart Tolle,

The particular egoic patterns that you react to most strongly in others and misperceive as their identity tend to be the same patterns that are also in you, but that you are unable or unwilling to detect within yourself. In that sense, you have much to learn from your enemies.

We create governments to manage our projected collective irresponsibility. Accordingly, our governments mirror our irresponsibility.

The politics of insemination rather than the politics of dissemination.

We live our leaves so fearful to be seen as weak that we live, perhaps, not having been seen at all. – Alan Shor, *Boston Legal*

Love is seeing yourself in others. - Oprah

The Lord of the Dance ~ Is That All There Is?

The desire to love is not itself love…Love is an act of will – namely an intention and an action.  Will also implies choice. We do not have to love.  We choose to love.  No matter how much we may think we are loving, if we are in fact not loving, it is because we have chosen not to love and therefore do not love despite our good intentions. On the other hand, whenever we do actually exert ourselves in the cause of spiritual growth, it is because we have chosen to do so. The choice to love has been made.

M Scott Peck

What Is Simple Living?

**"Living in a way that is outwardly  
simple and inwardly rich."**

- Duane Elgin

The emergence of essence: Coswhole: Something from Nothing?

Coswhole: the heroine's journey as conscious eve-olution

Coswhole: “The Tao of… [numerous]

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We are hungering for an inclusive cosmology.

—S.O.S. – in “Coswhole”

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Professor Rustum Roy describes the work of Stanford Professor Emeritus (and materials scientist) William Tiller and his colleagues as follows: “For the first time, in the language of physics, very solid and very extensive data on spirit-mind–physical matter interactions have been provided.”

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Caring too much is as dangerous as caring not enough, because when you care too much it means that you have reasons to live, and that, my friend, is as encumbering as having a reason to die. The fanatic is anyone who seeks beyond their own living stillness.

When you finish the out-going aspect of your journey, and you begin the return, that is when you find that now the external must serve the internal, and not the other way around.

I am an advocate, not an apologist. I proffer, I do not plea.

If you can both forget everything at every moment and also let the form operate, then the two shall be one- the father and the son, joined by the absence called ‘I’.

Look at them without yourself.

When you let go, you freefall.

We are like islands in the ocean, separated by the water and yet whole beneath the sea, the waves, and the depths of our seeing.

“Do not follow in the footsteps of the men of old, seek what they sought.” -Basho

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“A picture without a frame is not a picture.” -John Archibald Wheeler

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“The archetype of the planetary world is that the one is many objects and the many have one relationship.” Richard Heath, *The Matrix of Creation*, p. 14

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I assume that these quotations (which I will link to your website) are to be attributed to Arun Goenka. (of ANG Resources) [angresources@vsnl.com](mailto:angresources@vsnl.com)

* Never in the history of world, has there been such abundant opportunity as there is now for the person who is willing to serve before trying to collect.
* Render more services than that for which you are paid and you will soon be paid for more than you render. The law of " Increasing Returns " takes care of this.

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You, your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will, are in fact no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their assembled molecules. -Francis Crick, *The Astonishing Hypothesis: The Scientific Search for the Soul*. (quoted in *Spook*, p. 13)

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Has my year among the evidence-gatherers left me believing in anything I didn’t believe in a year ago? It has. It has left me believing something Bruce Greyson believes. I had asked him whether he believes that near-death experiences provide evidence of life after death. He answered that what he believed was simply that they were evidence of something we can’t explain with current knowledge. I guess I believe that not everything we humans encounter in our lives can be neatly and conveniently tucked away inside the orderly cabinetry of science. -Mary Roach, *Spook* (p. 294)

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Mead, Margaret. "The Future As the Basis for Establishing a Shared Culture." Daedalus, Vol. 94, No. 1, 1965, pp. 135-155

All my life I've wondered why is it that human beings more easily demonize our differences rather than focus and work on what we all have in common? Somebody say that evil is inbred in us like other genetic factors while others know of cultures where evil is said not to exist.

At church yesterday I asked former Washington State Supreme Court Justice Charles Z. Smith, a black man, my question after an Adult Education class about hate crimes.  Justice Smith said it's a historical question related to ethnocentric self-identity and that the root causes of negativism leading to hatreds can only be eradicated by understanding developed in compassionate and loving families.

Theologian Paul Tillich put it this way, "Sin is separation and is threefold: there is separation among individual lives, separation of a (wo)man from himself, and separation of all (wo)men from the Ground of Being." So, I guess what keeps humankind from working on the common good is ethnocentric egotism? Tell me what you believe?

Meanwhile we have an example of someone who has risen above low expectations and might very well become the next First Lady of our United States, Michelle Obama.

May it be so . . . . Sky

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Dear CCRS colleagues,

As the person who composed "Now We Are Gathered Within The Harmony," I am far from disinterested in the current discussion of its presence or absence from CCRS's Sunday service.

Nonetheless, the deep interest that I feel is as communal as it is personal.

Among the things that moved me most when I attended and spoke at CCRS on February 24 was hearing "Now We Are Gathered Within The Harmony" - though less because I wrote it than because, from the moment the song began, I immediately recalled the abiding presence of CCRS's historical roots - its origin-al, unique identity - in ceremonial expression, as well as the presence of the God-around-us-through-us-as-us state of consciousness from which the song's words had come forth.

For human beings on Earth, the purpose of spirituality is to remain - or to once again become - mindful of our continuity with the eternally ongoing origin-al cause of all that is, designated variously as "God's word," "Christ consciousness" and (in contemporary scientific cosmology) "the initial conditions."

As Ernest Holmes portrayed this origin-al cause, "The Original Spirit is Harmony." And as I honored it in contemplation of Holmes' portrayal:

Now we are gathered within the Harmony

of the Creation that sings through you and me, making us one.

Opening heart and mind, leaving care behind,

giving away to the flow of life divine, keeping us one.

One in the Spirit that calls us together again.

One in the Presence that hallows the moments we share here and then

goes before us to bless our way.

Those words were composed by me to honor that we ourselves are composed by that selfsame Beneficial Presence to which the words refer. And they emerged from my awesome comprehension of the understandings presented below (plus many, many more) of our embodiment of both that Presence's and the universe's origin-al and origin-ating states.

The song is meant to serve as a call to the celebration of our individual and communal expressions of Original Spirit's ever-abiding presence in and as us - the universally abiding Beneficial Presence that we ultimately realize when we fully understand what it means to \_be\_ home, and which is celebrated in another song that was written to represent the first step of treatment, "Everywhere I Go, Here I Am").

At the beginning of my encouragement on February 24, I acknowledged that my experience of being at CCRS that day was a "homecoming," and defined home as "that place where, when you go back, you never left." However impossible it may be for me to \_go back\_ home again, my hearing once again of "Now We Are Gathered Within The Harmony" after a ten year absence from CCRS had recalled to my mind that the consciousness I seek to experience at church is my \_coming\_ home to the centeredness in Universal Consciousness that I may check out of but can never leave because it is the eternally abiding Here-I-Am.

Other than the continuity of the invocatory "Now We Are Gathered Within The Harmony," of the light-hearted and bright-smarted spirit in which Marvin Davis formerly announced the community's current and forthcoming activities, and of the Peace Song (which represents the continuity of the New Thought movement overall rather than of CCRS's individual expression), the only other thing that palpably expresses the continuity of the CCRS community's origin-al Sunday expression is the ongoing presence of many members who have attended CCRS from - or nearly from - the beginning.

[When I referred to these long-standing members as "old-timers" and some of them did not appreciate my terminology, I substituted the term "stalwarts." In recognition of their role in anchoring CCRS' continuity, they might also be termed "anchorites."]

I consider it to be no mere coincidence that the initial report of a feeling of loss at the sudden absence of "Now We Are Gathered Within The Harmony" from the Sunday service came from CCRS's earliest anchorites (present from the very beginning with Rita and myself), Suzanne and Tim.

Experience of deep continuity within change is the essence of spiritual intuition, and in this regard Religious Science is both challenged and challenging.

For instance, in contrast to the traditions from which most folks come to our church, Christianity and Judaism, the Religious Science experience is culturally discontinuous. Having no temporal or cultural scenario, Science of Mind is a-historical - without a story of communal beginning and continuity - and is therefore relatively devoid of reference to culturally memorable traditions and events. Hence the tendency of persons who value such ongoingness of the familiar to have an initial experience of Science of Mind as detached and discontinuous from their prior experience.

Those who are less valuing of such ongoingness are much less susceptible to this discontinuity. Hence also the tendency of Religious Science churches to retain the participation of many persons who, for whatever reasons, are themselves feeling detached and discontinuous with reference to their immediate and/or larger cultural milieu.

[Ernest Holmes himself, by the way, felt no discontinuity whatsoever with Christ's teachings, and even once asserted that of all prior spiritual precedents, Religious Science was strongest in the Christian one (i.e., of Jesus' version of what has become the Christian tradition, not Paul’s).

Even though what is historically continuous in the Sunday ceremonies of traditional churches has lost its appeal for us, the contrasting absence of such continuity in Religious Science ceremonies is neither a greater virtue nor a necessary given. In my view, therefore, it behooves us to preserve what little we have of such continuity, especially when it is unique to the origin-al and historic expression of the CCRS community. I will say more about this in my conclusion of this post.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*  
I also wish to share what is (to me) an equally relevant cosmological perspective - the consciousness within which I was immersed and praying \_from\_ as I wrote "Now We Are Gathered Within The Harmony," several years before Rita and I moved to the Washington, D.C. area. In complementarity with the extraordinary experience of inner depth from which the words emerged, I have also retained a vivid recall of my immediate surroundings when the experience occurred - for "going within" is not a withdrawal from the world, rather it accesses our deepest appreciation of the world.

[The Gurgle]

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**Q: What is meditation?**

: Meditation is relaxing deeply...

Sri Sri: Meditation is *not* trying to think of something. Meditation is relaxing deeply. If you are concentrating on a problem, then you are not relaxing.

Meditation is almost like sleep, but it's not sleep. It is what happens right after [Sudarshan Kriya](http://us.artofliving.org/art-of-living-course/sudarshan-kriya.html) - when you are lying down, what's on your mind?

Nothing! There is nothing. It's blank. That is meditation. Or, when you are really happy or when you are resting, then, what is the state of your mind?

*That* is a meditative mind.

Even when you are in deep love... and you are reposing in love, then that is meditation. It's very simple! When the mind becomes free from agitation, when it becomes calm and serene, and is at peace, then meditation happens. By meditation you can turn your body into a powerhouse as your generate an inner source of energy.

**Q: How can I be assured of salvation and a perfect life on this planet?**

**Sri Sri**: You need a warranty on the spiritual path also, don't you?!Examine how much time you spend on the spiritual path... Evaluate the *seva* (service) you are doing...How much are you meditating? There should be a balance between seva and meditation. Those who do a lot of service get burnt out, if they don't make time for meditation, and those, who only meditate, become 'dry', if they don't make time for service. So you need both - service and meditation.

**Q: What is the best way to reach bliss?**

**Sri Sri**: What is the *best* way? - One is, by meditating, and the other, is by serving the people around you - by getting into some service activity.

You know the technique to get depressed is to sit and only think: "What about me? What about me?" - all the time! That's good enough to get thoroughly depressed!

Seeing God within you is meditation. Seeing God in the people around you is love, is service. They go hand-in-hand.

**Q: How to pray? I was raised in a non-religious environment.**

**Sri Sri**: Meditation is the best form of prayer. In meditation you surrender, you say let thy will be done. You may light a candle, chant Om Namaha Shivaya.

**Q: What is more important - career or family?**

**Sri Sri**: When you watch TV, what is more important - the scenes or the sound? Both! One supports the other. Similarly, when one has no family, what is use of a career? Career is for supporting one's family. To support oneself, a career is not required. Likewise, when one has no career, how can one support one's family?

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**Areté.**The classic Greek philosophers had a word for the process of self-actualizing and striving to reach your highest potential. They called it 'Areté.' (pronounced ar-uh-tay | [listen](http://thinkarete.com/sounds/arete.mp3)). In fact, Areté was one of the most important values in classic Greek culture. Guys like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle tell us that the meaning of life is to live with happiness and that the way to achieve happiness is to live with Areté (aka excellence, striving to reach your highest potential). Areté. Isn't it beautiful?

You have any movies you just absolutely hated?

Yah?

Me, too.

Quick question: Would you go watch it 10,000 times?

Um.

Riiiiiiiiight.

That’d be pretty stupid, eh?

So, another quick question: Why do you replay that horrible scene from your life over and over and over and over and over and over again?

Time to go to a new movie, no?

...

[This brilliant little Big Idea was inspired by Tony Robbins!]

**How To Get Others To Expand**

By expanding myself. We are all connected. Any expansion I do automatically expands

others. Others sense this - otherwise they would not sense and sap energy of others. I

can also be authentic with others and speak up in non-threatening ways to others to

allow them the opportunity to re-think their ideas. I can be now and expect that any

encounter I have is sacred and expect that, because I conduct myself in this sacred

manner, others will do likewise. Listen wholly and completely to others. Often people

will allow themselves enough rope to...correct themselves. Emphasize the value/benefit

of feeling good. Refrain from sapping othersʼ energy. Recognize “awakenings” in

others by acknowledging in some way. IN OTHER WORDS, let our light shine!

Carolyn Crawford

Is all reality virtual?

A more Tao-like assessment of morality would be that it is “imitation” virtue, which leaves open the possibility of imitations that are far more accurate than the term “fake” allows.

This acknowledgement arises from an even greater realization that, with the exception of those who report having a direct experience of reality that is totally unlimited of all distortion by sensory, mental, emotional, locational or other bias of perspective, ***everything*** that we experience is an imitation of Tao.

For instance, our sensory consciousness is limited to a fraction of one percent of the electromagnetic spectrum, all of which we consider to be real. Our sensory consciousness is also limited by the perspective of a given observer’s native language, vantage point, past experience, attitudes, beliefs, moods, cognitive and intuitive prowess, etc.

SInce no two persons have an identical experience of physical reality, let alone of its ultimate source in  Tao,  everything that is known to and by us is an imitation of the larger reality that it represents.

In short: Just as a map is not the territory that it represents, neither is our experience the reality that it represents. Accordingly, what has in recent decades become known as “virtual” reality (i.e., simulated reality) is the only reality that is experienced and known by us.

The fact that nearly 7 billion distinctly different human virtual realities presently co-exist on this planet with sufficient coherence to bind us in groupings that range in size from couples to nations indicates that an enormous agreement to disagree about reality is the only thing that saves our species from psychological and social chaos.

This suggests that the ultimate foundation of inclusivity is a collective agreement of our species as a whole to disagree agreeably to a far greater extent than we disagree violently. The purpose of knowing Tao – or God – is to enlarge our agreement to disagree agreeably to the point that violence is no longer perceived as necessary.

James Harvey Robinson, *Mind in the Making* (1921), Chapter Seven: “Our Savage Mind”

Nothing is more essential in our attempt to escape from the bondage of consecrated ideas than to get a vivid notion of human achievement in its proper historical perspective. In order to do this let us imagine the whole gradual and laborious attainments of mankind compressed into the compass of a single lifetime. Let us assume that a single generation of men have in fifty years managed to accumulate all that now passes for civilization. They would have to start, as all individuals do, absolutely uncivilized, and their task would be to recapitulate what has occupied the race for, let us guess, at least five hundred thousand years. Each year in the life of a generation would therefore correspond to ten thousand years in the progress of the race.

On this scale it would require forty-nine years to reach a point of intelligence which would enable our self-taught generation to give up their ancient and inveterate habits of wandering hunters and settle down here and there to till the ground, harvest their crops, domesticate animals, and weave their rough garments. Six months later, or half through the fiftieth year, some of them, in a particularly favorable situation, would have invented writing and thus established a new and wonderful means of spreading and perpetuating civilization. Three months later another group would have carried literature, art, and philosophy to a high degree of refinement and set standards for the succeeding weeks. For two months our generation would have been living under the blessings of Christianity; the printing press would be but a fortnight old and they would not have had the steam engine for quite a week. For two or three days they would have been hastening about the globe in steamships and railroad trains, and only yesterday would they have come upon the magical possibilities of electricity. Within the last few hours they would have learned to sail in the air and beneath the waters, and have forthwith applied their newest discoveries to the prosecution of a magnificent war on the scale befitting their high ideals and new resources. This is not so strange, for only a week ago they were burning and burying alive those who differed from the ruling party in regard to salvation, eviscerating in public those who had new ideas of government, and hanging old women who were accused of traffic with the devil. All of them had been no better than vagrant savages a year before. Their fuller knowledge was altogether too recent to have gone very deep, and they had many institutions and many leaders dedicated to the perpetuation of outworn notions which would otherwise have disappeared. Until recently changes had taken place so slowly and so insensibly that only a very few persons could be expected to realize that not a few of the beliefs that were accepted as eternal verities were due to the inevitable misunderstandings of a savage.

Within the scheme of the Cosmic Calendar, an average human life of 70-80 years is equivalent to approximately 0.16 cosmic seconds!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2qezQzfgIY

http://school.discoveryeducation.com/schooladventures/universe/itsawesome/cosmiccalendar/page2.html

http://visav.phys.uvic.ca/~babul/AstroCourses/P303/BB-slide.htm

December 31

Apes ~10:30 a.m.

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| --- | --- |
| Origin of *Proconsul* and *Ramapithecus*, probable ancestors of apes and men | ~1:30 p.m. |
| First humans | ~ 10:30 p.m. |
| Widespread use of stone tools | 11:00 p.m. |
| Domestication of fire by Peking man | 11:46 p.m. |
| Beginning of most recent glacial period | 11:56 p.m. |
| Seafarers settle Australia | 11:58 p.m. |
| Extensive cave painting in Europe | 11:59 p.m. |
| Invention of agriculture | 11:59:20 p.m. |
| Neolithic civilization; first cities | 11:59:35 p.m. |
| First dynasties in Sumer, Ebla and Egypt; development of astronomy | 11:59:50 p.m. |
| Invention of the alphabet; Akkadian Empire | 11:59:51 p.m. |
| Hammurabic legal codes in Babylon; Middle Kingdom in Egypt | 11:59:52 p.m. |
| Bronze metallurgy; Mycenaean culture; Trojan War; Olmec culture; invention of the compass | 11:59:53 p.m. |
| Iron metallurgy; First Assyrian Empire; Kingdom of Israel; founding of Carthage by Phoenicia | 11:59:54 p.m. |
| Asokan India; Ch'in Dynasty China; Periclean Athens; birth of Buddha | 11:59:55 p.m. |
| Euclidean geometry; Archimedean physics; Ptolemaic astronomy; Roman Empire; birth of Christ | 11:59:56 p.m. |
| Zero and decimals invented in Indian arithmetic; Rome falls; Birth of Islam and the Islamic Civilization | 11:59:57 p.m. |
| Mayan civilization; Sung Dynasty China; Byzantine empire; Mongol invasion; Crusades | 11:59:58 p.m. |
| Renaissance in Europe; voyages of discovery from Europe and from Ming Dynasty China; emergence of the experimental method in science | 11:59:59 p.m. |
| Widespread development of science and technology; emergence of global culture; acquisition of the means of self-destruction of the human species; first steps in spacecraft planetary exploration and the search of extraterrestrial intelligence | Now: The first second of New Year's Day |

The very molecules that that make up your body, the atoms that construct the molecules, are traceable to the crucibles that were once the centers of high mass stars that exploded their chemically rich guts into the galaxy, enriching pristine gas clouds with the chemistry of life. So we’re all connected with each other biologically, to the Earth chemically, and to the rest of the universe atomically. That’s kind of cool. That makes me smile, and I actually feel quite large at the end of that. It’s not that we’re better than the universe, we are part of the universe. We’re in the universe and the universe is in us. -Neal deGrasse Tyson

We are made of atoms. With each breath you inhale a million billion billion atoms of oxygen, which gives some idea of how small each one is. All of them, together with the carbon atoms on your skin, and indeed everything else on Earth, were cooked in a star some 5 billion years ago. So you are made of stuff that is as old as the planet, one-third as old as the universe, though this is the first time that those atoms have been gathered together such that they think they are you. –Frank Close, *Particle Physics: A Very Short Introduction*.

Only that day dawns to which we are awake. -Henry Thoreau

“Touching” Chopra, *Spontaneous Fulfillment*, p. 40

Life is not a problem to be solved, nor a question to be answered. Life is a mystery to be experienced. -Alan Watts

Answers obfuscate our experience of mystery. Questions illuminate our experience of mystery.

William James: A great many people think they are thinking when they are really rearranging their prejudices.

The beneficial presence of our human beingness, though instinctively expressed at birth, is a seed awaiting our appropriate cultivation thereof.

In recognition of our tendency to put the onus on others for living peacefully, non-violently and inclusively, whenever our showing and telling becomes primarily about the world’s “them’s”, we will stop the show to refocus our intention on our respective “I’s” and “me’s”. We shall do this in the spirit of Emmet Fox’s perspective on I-me attunement:

The fact that I is watching Me means that you have taken one of the greatest steps forward. When you find yourself doing things that are useless, or perhaps even mean or petty, stop them. When you find that I can laugh at Me, it means that your life is commencing to change for the better. Finally, you will find that Me is beginning to get in step with I, and when that happens you are truly on the road to having dominion over your life.

This raises the question of how one attunes the experience of one’s “me” with the integrity of one’s “I.” Answering this question will be facilitated by a collection of short readings that we will use during our sessions for the purpose of stopping our show-tell dramatizations of “them” by turning from outer conditions to our inner conditions of truth. The collection is appropriately entitled “Turning from the Condition” and features numerous show-stoppers that serve as bridges over the troubled waters of us-and-themdom.

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Words don’t mean , people do. Words merely signify what they point to, like a finger that is pointing toward the moon. The finger does not mean “moon”, it merely points to what means “moon” to us. Thus the words “Tao Te Ching” have no meaning, they merely signify something to which we have given some meaning. I will tell you, therefore, what the words Tao Te Ching” signify, the meaning of which varies from person to person.

- and dwell instead on what is to be recovered: the unitary integrity of my inmost being, whose beneficent grace never ceases to in-here me, despite my self-adulterating compromises thereof.

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The past’s only power to keep you from being present now is the power that you give it to do so. [The past has no power to keep you from being present now.]

There is always more to what exists than meets the eye.

Perception is the process of interpreting sensory impressions.

Being happy doesn't mean that everything is perfect.  It means that you've decided to look beyond the imperfections." ~ Unknown speaker

They say that nobody's perfect. Then they tell you practice makes perfect. I wish they would make up their minds. -Wilt Chamberlain

http://www.energygrid.com/science.html

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| --- | --- |
| **NEW SCIENTIST** has done an interesting piece (Mar 2005) on "13 things that don't make sense" in the scientific world. We can think of a lot more, but considering this is an orthodox science magazine, we felt it was worth summarizing their list here: | |
| **1.** | **The Placebo Effect:** Fabrizio Benedetti of the University of Turin has done some excellent work on the placebo effect by showing that a morphine-blocker, naloxone, works even if the a saline placebo is being used instead of morphine! |
| **2.** | **The Horizon Problem:** How did the universe become so uniform in its background radiation when its size and the limit to the speed of light prevents any hot or cold spots evening out their temperatures? |
| **3.** | **Ultra-Energetic Cosmic Rays:** Physicists in Japan have reported over the last 10 years cosmic rays so powerful that there is nothing in the universe scientists can think of that might have caused them. |
| **4.** | **Homeopathy Research Results:** Madeleine Ennis, a pharmacologist at Queen's University, Belfast, wanted to prove once and for all the homeopathy was bunkum. Only problem was that her research shows that it works. |
| **5.** | **Dark Matter:** If our understanding of gravity is correct, then the galaxies should spin apart with centripetal forces. To fudge this one, scientists have invented "dark matter" — matter that cannot be detected (very scientific!). |
| **6.** | **Mars' Methane:** In 1976 the Viking Landers picked up carbon-14-containing nutrients in the Martian soil. This has not been corroborated by other missions but some scientists stick by the claim. |
| **7.** | **Tetraneutrons:** Four years ago scientists at the Ganil accelerator in France detected six particles that should not exist according to current laws of physics — tetraneutrons. |
| **8.** | **The Pioneer Anomaly:** Now that both Pioneer spacecraft have done their bit of planet studying, they should be drifting off predictably into deep space. Problem is that they are accelerating away slightly faster than they should. |
| **9.** | **Dark Energy:** For the expansion of the universe to agree with General Relativity, it was proposed in 1998 that dark energy was hidden in empty space. Problem is it has never been pinned down so Relativity itself may need altering. |
| **10.** | **The Kuiper Cliff:** Beyond Pluto there is a region of space called the Kuiper belt that is made of icy rocks. These rocks stop suddenly as you go out which hints that there might be a large 10th planet sweeping them. But it remains unseen. |
| **11.** | **The Wow Signal:** On 15 Aug 1977 scientists at Ohio State University looking for intelligent signals coming from space came across one so unnatural-looking that one of them wrote "Wow!" by the data print out. It has never repeated. |
| **12.** | **Variable Physical Constants:** Australian astronomers researching light from quasars in 1997 noticed anomalies in their data that can only be explained if Alpha, a physical constant that determines how light interacts with matter, once had a different value. |
| **13.** | **Cold Fusion:** This one was viciously dismissed by the scientific community when Fleishmann and Pons at Utah University first unveiled their lab results in 1989. Now, even the US Department of Energy is giving it the thumbs up. |

**Tao of Inclusivity – Seminar Briefing**

**Objectives**

**Living in the questions:**

Xxxxx

* Life, all life, is about asking questions, not about knowing the answers. It is wanting to see what’s over the next hill that keeps us all going. You have to keep asking questions, wanting to understand. Even when we know we’ll never find the answer, we have to keep on asking the questions. –Allie Keys [as Leslie Bohem] in *Taken*
* **Every question possesses a power that does not lie in the answer**.**** -Elie Wiesel
* When the mind is exhausted in trying to find the answer, the answer dawns. –Vernon Howard
* The answer lies in the person who answers. I like that “lies.” It is a lie if anyone thinks he has the right answer. He has only his own answer. –Barry Stevens
* Religion always needs defending; truth never does for it is self-revealing, self-vindicating, self-evident… Your answers to the riddle of life lie not "outside," but rather reside where you least expected to find them...within yourself, for you are an endless repository of truth yet to be discovered. -Ransom L. Webster
* The answer to having a better life is not about getting a better life, it's just about changing how we see the one we have right now. -Angel Kyodo Williams

**In-sights:**

“…recognition of the significance of relationality and of the need for holistic accounts of physical reality [and] a holistic concept of pattern-forming information.” (Polkinghorne, *The End of the World and the Ends of God*, p. 17).

The integral meta-paradigm of inward cohesion:

The compartmental meta-paradigm of outward separation: IONS: The four prevailing myths that today still define human relationships amongst themselves and with nature: money brings happiness, technology yields well-being, weapons provide security, and natural resources are unlimited.

**Exercising harmonial between-ment/at-one-ment:**

Shift from having a point of view to having points to view, by ceasing to look up to God as we instead look out from God.

**Experiencing your experiencing :**

Experiencing is the “subject” of our subjectivity. Non-predicated experience of self: Experience oneself as a subject without reference to any predicate.

**Procedures**

**Embodying Tao: Show Stoppers**

* St. Francis’ prayer
* Ripple
* Flow
* The Invitation
* Etc.

**Examples**

* Something better to do with that hand / the energy of this feeling
* That doesn’t match my information.
* Each thing you do supports everything you do.
* Triune management strategy
* Lying on Heidy’s couch

**Perspectives**

Xxxxx

The Gurgle/Flow

* Evidenc*ing* the Tao
* History of Flow poem

No unforgiveness dwelled in me when I was born. Nor, therefore, was forgiveness an issue for me. Like all newly arrived infants, I was a beneficial presence devoid of unforgiveness, and unconditionally welcoming of everyone. When someone’s finger was put in either of my hands – regardless of the person’s color, race, creed, gender, ethnic origin, size, appearance – I gently clasped it with my own fingers. I didn’t grab the presented finger, nor did I obsessively clutch, cling or otherwise persist in possessively holding on to it. I exerted no control over the offered finger, nor did I endeavor to impede its departure. I gracefully enfolded its presence and just as gracefully relinquished it.

Such were the initial “rules of engagement” of my beneficial presence, unknown to me self-consciously yet fully known instinctively. And thus did I engage all persons whose finger was offered to me, be-holding them without any urge to “have” them by keeping them there. Nor did I yet fear being “had” by them. Instead, I was tenderly and unconditionally acknowledging, accepting, and allowing of every finger that came to rest in my hand, for however long my gently enfolding clasp was invited, and I just as unconditionally surrendered to the finger’s passage at the instant it was removed. No matter whose finger, which finger, or how the finger was given, I unconditionally welcomed it and willingly respected its passage by gently surrendering to its departure.

This initial instinctive handshake for all persons is exemplary of harmless passage in one’s mind. Its rules of engagement – “When you come we welcome, when you go we do not pursue.” – are indicative of our original default setting for relationship with others. Thus do all newborn human babies on this planet begin life as a beneficial presence that graciously enfolds others’ presence and allows them harmless passage without prejudicial distinction or controlling imposition. In our beginning, one and all, we are neither possessively grabby of what others may have to offer, nor are we obsessively crabby at them.

It will be seen in the end how greatly metaphysicians and psychologists may err, who assume their own mental operations, instincts and axioms to be identical with the rest of mankind instead of being special to themselves. -Sir Francis Galton, *Inquiries into the Human Faculty*

The foundation of all mental illness is the unwillingness to experience legitimate suffering. –Carl Jung

Art is the imposing of a pattern on experience, and our esthetic enjoyment is recognition of the pattern. -Alfred North Whitehead

Figure out what your purpose is in life, what you really and truly want to do with your time and your life then be willing to sacrifice everything and then some to achieve it. If you are not willing to make the sacrifice, then keep searching.  
- Quintina Ragnacci

You must be willing to give up the life you have in order to get the life you want. -Rhonda Britten

Life is not determined by blind external forces; it is affected, for weal or for woe, by the quality of our respect for its inherent processes and our willingness to interact with (relate to) all life forms in a gentle, non-exploitive, cooperative manner. –Diarmuid O’Murchu

**One’s willingness to seek is the finding. -Taoism**

We can no longer stand at the end of something we visualize in detail and plan backwards from that future. Instead, we must stand at the beginning, clear in our intent, with a willingness to be involved in discovery. -Margaret Wheatley

You can learn new things at any time in your life if you're willing to be a beginner.

If you actually learn to like being a beginner, the whole world opens up to you.

Barbara Sher

When you truly possess all that you have been and done, which may take some time, you are fierce with reality.-Florida Scott Maxwell

In the World of Reality there is no self. There is no other-than-self. -Seng-T'San

Reality leaves a lot to the imagination. -John Lennon

Unless one says good-bye to what one loves, and unless one travels to completely new territories, one can expect merely a long wearing away of oneself and eventual extinction. -Jean Dubuffet

“The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths to it are not found, but made; and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination.” -- Peter Ellyard

Yet the only country that has thus far played the game for keeps is prepared to launch a “pre-eminent first strike” upon any “evil” country that has the potential to do likewise. In today’s world, where nation states are increasingly at the mercy of rapidly multiplying terrorist cells so tiny that they remain largely invisible, the exercise of any first strike eminently favors the few who’ve been designated as “evil” at the expense of the many presumed to be virtuous.

Kenotic view (Watts) and whole view (Peat – the variance in form of invariant substance in accord with invariant principles of holistically flowing cosmic order.

Co-ordination, Co-operation and Co-Creation – *optimum* order

Although the entire universe is forever doing the same thing, each part of it is doing the same thing differently.

Meaning and purpose are determined by the way things happen (co-operate) together. All factors that are pertinent to a given moment are co-determinative of the moment’s nature.

ENERGY IS THE ACTION OF SELF-TRANSFORMATION

All different things point to one singular thing.

Emergence and convergence – everything that rises must converge.

Occasion: A specific occurrence at a specific time and place. As verb: to give rise to a specific time/placement.

Entity: that which occupies space for a period of time.

Eventity: that which makes (marks?) an occasion an event – that which is occasioned by an entity or entities.

By the agency of man a new aspect of things, a new universe, comes into view. –Bacon

Out of any chaos we can produce harmony. –SOM 187

It is only where the ‘eye views the wo5rld as one vast plain, one boundless reach of sky,’ that it sees truth, -SOM 429/1

Faith is either in or of.

The possibility of differentiating is endless. –SOM 45/1

The universe always says yes – except when it says not yet.

After dating comes courtship – for those who want to get on with it.

Linear circulation model Systemic percolation model Multi-linear integration model

**In-sights**

Xxxxx

CONSCIOUSNESS OUTTAKES

Cognitive, emotional, conative.

Consciousness study is the exploration of self by an “I.” Scientific study is the exploration of it by an it.

Since we can’t continue to bake a globally lethal cake without having to eat it, too, a change of recipe is called for.

Problems signify an argument with or a denial of what is.

“Effective” navigation signifies doing what best works, and “efficient” navigation signifies the most productively workable doing of what works. Effective “best” and efficient “most” are thus brought together as an optimum expenditure of energy on an optimum amount of matter to produce an optimum result. In support of such effective and efficient navigation on reality’s slippery slope, the *Tao Te Ching* serves as a cosmic positioning system that guides our journey of personal reality formation.

Receptivity, perceptivity, conceptivity. acceptivity, inceptivity, preceptivity. (The actions of reception, perception, conception, acceptance, inception, and precept formation

On approximation and God: http://www.beliefnet.com/gallery/leaders.html?pgIndex=13

Mailer rejected both atheism and organized religion, believing instead in "an imperfect, existential God doing the best He (or She) could manage against all the odds of an existence that not even He, our Creator, entirely controlled."

Recognition + Unification + Realization + Thanksgiving + Release = Acknowledgement + Acceptance + Allowance of our good.

Criticism is the negative judgment of one’s self, or of another…

Everywhere I Go, Here I Am > Each of us is a fixed point of reference in an ever-changing and everywhere changing universe, which is the only fixed point that s/he can know. (“X” in sidewalk – each of us is an individuated center of the universe.)

Inclusivity = the interconnection of all that is – of everything that has existed, does exist and ever will exist. (“Argon”) (“The Sound of Thunder”) (ancient starlight)

As you read in Wayne Dyer’s book Verse and Chapter #27, “Living By Your Inner Light” – i.e., by the inner light of respect for self and others – recall that the sun shines its light equally on everyone, rather than withholding if from some and heaping it on others. Recall also, that the sun is the only object in our solar system that does not cast a shadow, and then ask yourself, “How would my experience of the world be different if I, like the sun, were to shine my inner light equally on all others?”

When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, all your thoughts break their bonds; your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction, and you find yourself in a new, great and wonderful world. Dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive, and you discover yourself to be a greater person by far than you ever dreamed yourself to be.

From the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (c. 200 B.C.E.)

According to a popular bit of pulpit lore,

A person that was very down hearted sat alone on the steps. GOD appeared to her and asked what is your problem? She replied, “Yesterday was just terrible, I lost one of my best friends. Tomorrow is going to be the day of the funeral and I am so down.”

In response GOD said: Do not look for me in Yesterday, I am not there. Do not look for me in Tomorrow, I am not there, I am with you in your present and that is why it *is* a present. So just be fully present, for that is all you need.

We tend to forget that we exist yesterday no longer and tomorrow not yet, that we always and only exist right here just now.

Steiner example: Observing a negative effect or condition does not make one’s attitude negative unless one approaches it with dislike.

Our filters are clogged or unclogged.

Our collective economic, political, social and environmental problems represent our own wounds made visible.

**Resources**

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**Reading for week two +:** (\*=e-mail)

* I Refused the Verdict
* Argon\*
* Sermon By the Sea (excerpts)\*
* 100 percent American\*
* The Silver Kite, The Golden Wind
* Winning Through Annihilation\*
* The Lace Tablecloth
* Showstoppers
* Dyer (in the order given):
* Verses 49, “Living Beyond Judgment”; 33, “Living Self-Mastery”; 50, “Living as an Immoratal”; 53, “Living Honorably” (environorganism – recall holocoenotic diagram) ([9-50, 53 are Te]
* Abdullah: v-xiv, 1-7
* i to I\*

**A-musings on Tao:**

* Beginner’s Mind
* Te as Tao in Practice: Non-interference and Non-fixation (Be-Knots)
* The Tao of Creation and Reality Formation
* The Tao of Experience: The Flowing Order of the Self-transformational Journey
* The Te of Experience: The Flowing Presence of the Self-transformational Journey
* The Principle of Prime Location
* Living the Questions
* Deconstructing the Anatomy of Againstness
* Bridging the Upside and Downside of the Cosmic Flow
* Xxxxx

**Affirmations of care (Tao-firmations) (doses of shared reality)**

I love until it hurts, and continue loving until it no longer hurts.

**Koans:**

The true cost of living is the loss of one’s life.

How do you know when the knowing of another is greater than the words with which his or her knowing is expressed?

**Pitfalls:**

Looking for reality in the wrong places.

Dory Previn: Mythical Kings and Iguanas, I Danced and Danced

**Safe Landings:**

Looking for reality in the right places

Lee: Is That All There Is

Grateful Dead: Ripple (radiate waves of Tao)

**Tao-sings:**

**Te-timers:**

Better thing to do with that hand (this feeling)

**Te-trips:**

Each thing you do supports everything you do.

SPT ~ Sprouts: thought-forms and projects that are aborning

FLR ~ Flowers: thought-forms that have blossomed.

**Reading:**

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***Tao Te Ching*** is an operating manual for establishing individual and collective self-mastery and self dominion. It is also a guide to personal, interpersonal and transpersonal reality formation for all of us who are students at M.S.U. Concerning our role in making stuff up, for example, in verse 41 of a contemporary rendition we are told the following:

First there is Reality.

Then there is me thinking about reality.

Then there is me thinking about me thinking about Reality.

The mind creates “things.”

Yet all things spring from reality.

They fit together, thanks to Reality. (David K. Reynolds’ *Reflections on the Tao Te Ching* )

*Tao Te Ching* was originally a two-part book, dealing with what the same contemporary rendition calls “Transcendence of the Ordinary” (1-37) and “Awareness of the Realistic” (38-81). We are able to transcend the ordinary only as we become extra-ordinarily real. (The word “extra-ordinary” signifies being even more ordinary than usual.)

The ultimate significance of the *Tao Te Ching* is its value as an effective and efficient guide to our navigation of reality’s slippery slope, which keeps us from looking for reality in all of the wrong places.

***Creating a World That Works for All*** is a guide to establishing global self-mastery and self dominion as Earth’s custodial conscience.

**Miscellaneous readings**, both printed out and e-mailed.

Etc.

**Conceptual context**

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So just what are Tao and Te?

Tao is

* the interconnection of all that is: all past, present and future being with all other being that has been, is, or shall be, and with non-Being from which all that exists emerges.
* the origin of all substance and all form, yet is itself without substance or form. If Tao had either substance or form, it would be a thing that is distinctive from other things. Tao is not a thing and has no thing, yet all things emerge from Tao to express Tao as Te.
* the integrally and harmoniously flowing way of all being. Te is the integral practice of the principles of integral and harmonious flow. The essence of this practice was revealed to me in a series of experiences with water.

The term “Tao” signifies the non-manifest underlying reality of patterned cosmic order and process from which manifest reality emerges. The term “Te” signifies the experiential reality that we take to be true.

Te” allowing the presence of Tao (one’s divinity) to become one’s demonstration.

The practice of such realization is the essence of the *Tao Te Ching,* which is best translated from the perspective of today’s scientific, psychological and metaphysical understanding as “The book [*Ching*] of the Emergent Flowing Way [*Tao*] of Indwelling Authenticity and Self-Mastery [*Te*].”

Tao represents optimum use of material and optimum expenditure of energy to produce optimum results, which also known as “the path of least resistance.”

Tao is a sociable cosmology.

Webster’s Revised Dictionary definition: Paradigm – "A set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitutes a way of viewing reality for the community that shares them, especially in an intellectual discipline."

Reality does not exist until it is chosen.

Uni-que-ness ~ one which is

Trans send – new relationship

ill = I lack love

get your part icipating

dis-ease = non-participation

gravity is not a drag

**Abundance** > we always and only manifest abundance. “The mess”

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A central teaching in most spiritual traditions is: What you wish to experience, provide for another. –The Dalai Lama

I presume only to have addressed your question, because no person can answer it to another’s complete satisfaction.

Nor has this person yet succeeded in answering it to his own complete satisfaction.”

**Allowance** > expressing Tao as Tao is

Don't ask yourself what the world needs, ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go do that. Because what the world most needs are people who have come alive. -Howard Thurman

**Appreciation (increase of value):**

* Find the pony in the pile.
* See all incoming energy as a gift, and accept the gift to the advantage of all concerned.

**Aspiration:**

All progress is based upon a universal innate desire on the part of every organism to live beyond its income. -Samuel Butler

**Balance:**

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**Belonging:**

Who I am – or the only who I am that I want anybody to know – is the who I am that we all are. –William Hurt

**Co-operation**

Fingers

**Co-respondence**

If you hate a person, you hate something in him that is part of yourself. What isn't part of ourselves doesn't disturb us. -Hermann Hesse (1877-1962)

**Co-Attraction**

What you deny to others will be denied to you, for the plain reason that you are always legislating for yourself; all your words and actions define the world you want to live in. -Thaddeus Golas

Work joyfully and peacefully, knowing that right thoughts and right efforts will inevitably bring about right results. -James Allen

**Faith** (equal)

Everywhere I go, here I am.

**Humility**

Technology is the art of so arranging the world that we don’t have to experience it. –Max Frisch

**Integrity:**

Prescription: Decide what's right before you decide what's possible. -Brian Tracy

Inventory of regrets.

Lying on Heidy’s couch.

**Metaphors:**

Adultescent

Sponsor thoughts, fueling thoughts and framing thoughts.

Referential (objective) reality and experiential (subjective) reality

Quid pro quo (this for that, i.e., “for the uses of life.”

**Openness:**

Kingdom of Heaven = wide-open consciousness; hell is a contracted consciousness state.

Heidegger: A person is neither a thing nor a process. A person is an opening.

An opening for the expression (pressing outward) of Tao.

**Our problem with openness:** Our mental and emotional hairballs of loss, lack and abandonment.

Loss + Lack + Abandonment = Absence-mindedness.

**Our self-opening-up solution:** Cough up our hairballs by turning from the condition of absence-mindedness that each of them represents as we altogether cease to taint our ever-present good.

**Timeliness:**

Sports writer John Jerome (*The Sweet Spot in Time)* acknowledges Tao of timeliness as the moment when a bat hits the ball at exactly the right point on both bat and ball, and at exactly the right speed and right instant to send it sailing out of the ballpark.When this happens the batter also instantly knows that he has hit a home run without ever having to look at the ball.

**Trust**

The way to be safe is never to be secure. -Benjamin Franklin

If we listened to our intellect, we'd never have a love affair. We'd never have a friendship. We'd never go into business, because we'd be cynical. Well, that's nonsense. You've got to jump off cliffs all the time and build your wings on the way down. -Ray Bradbury

**In-Session Exercises**

**Briefing activities**

To be incorporated into Session One briefing

* Argon
* Holocoenotic diagram exercise
* Inventory of regrets – for at-home exercise

**Audio-visual**

* Heidy Heidy Ho
* Mythical Kings and Iguanas
* Good Vibrations

**Grist for at-home exercises:**

* Write down the most important thing you have learned from your preparation for tonight’s class.
* What is the most important thing you have learned from your preparation for this session?
* Weaknesses and strengths – contexts thereof.
* Make a list of all current disagreements in your life?
* Etc.
* Make a list of everything that can make you angry, frustrated, otherwise upset. (You remember how to be angry when certain things happen.)
* What would it take for me to be a more flowing person?
* On a half sheet of paper write: In all that I have read in Wayne Dyer’s book and the e-mails I have received, what I would most like to know more about is:
* Miscellaneous questions:

1. “To him who can perfectly practice inaction, all things are possible.” What does this statement mean to you?
2. “Be for something and against nothing.” What does this statement mean to you? How does one go about being such?
3. What does it mean to you to be in totally inclusive at-one-ment with all that is?
4. Do you consider yourself to be in totally inclusive at-one-ment with all that is?
5. Is there anyone or anything in your experience that you are presently against or otherwise in resistance to? (Another way to ask this question is, “Is there anyone or anything that does not have harmless passage in my mind? This question always works, because if you have the slightest doubt about someone’s or something’s harmless passage in your mind, that someone or something doesn’t have it.
6. How would the way you *are* be different if you were a totally inclusive person?
7. How would the way you *have* things be different if you were a totally inclusive person?
8. How would the way you *do* things be different if you were a totally inclusive person?
9. BONUS QUESTION: What does the statement following my signature mean to you?

**Reading for week two +:** (\*=e-mail)

* **The Principle of Prime Location\***
* Verses 49, “Living Beyond Judgment”; 33, “Living Self-Mastery”; 50, “Living as an Immoratal”; 53, “Living Honorably” (environorganism – recall holocoenotic diagram) ([9-50, 53 are Te]
* Abdullah: v-xiv, 1-7
* I Refused the Verdict
* The Lace Tablecloth
* Showstoppers
* Argon\* (1) (Orientation)
* i to I\* (3)
* The Golden Kite, The Silver Wind (4)
* Two Ways of Moving Through Life (4)
* Powerhouse (5)
* Sermon By the Sea (excerpts)\* (5)
* The Man in the Rorschach Shirt (6)
* 100 percent American\*
* Winning Through Annihilation\*

**Session One: Seminar Orientation**

[Everywhere I Go, Here I am]

[Oh, How Lucky I Am]

[Pass Your Love Around]

[Pass your love around was a behavioral prayer set to music. Ask Chuck for his perspectives on behavioral (a.k.a. “body-movement” or “kinetic”) prayer. ]

[Holy]

**An overview of the seminar’s terrain:**

This seminar is counter-assumptive to the mindset that we grew up with, which “knows” that one cannot be for something without therefore automatically setting oneself against something else. If this knowing is correct, then Jesus gave us an impossible prescription when he commanded, “Be ye perfect as your father in heaven is perfect.” Would Jesus knowingly give us an impossible commandment? Or did he know something that we don’t?

In Jesus’ thinking, perfection and inclusivity were synonymous, and what he meant by his commandment to be perfect was quite different than what we understand in our translation thereof. In the Aramaic language with which he delivered the commandment, the word translated into English as “perfect” signified all-inclusiveness. What Jesus actually prescribed, restated in non-theistic terms, is that we be all-inclusive just as the cosmos is all-inclusive.

Both God and cosmos, which is the **G**rand **O**rder and **D**esign for those who believe in both, are consistently for everything and against nothing. With only one notable exception, the cosmic design is egalitarian throughout. The notable exception is ourselves whenever we think, speak and act in contradiction of cosmic inclusivity, the inextricably interrelated common unity of all that the cosmos contains. There is nothing else in the known universe, other than ourselves, that is fundamentally self-contradictory.

One reason we are self-contradictory is that, unlike all other creatures, each of us interrelates with all else in the cosmos via the medium of language. As Zen philosopher Alan Watts has noted, “Things are separable in words that are inseparable in nature because words are counters and classifiers that can be arranged in any order.” Language inevitably creates and reinforces perception of separation in all who use it, because every word refers to something to which all else is “other.” This is especially the case with polarizing words like “good” and “bad.”

[Neckar Cube “Good”-“Bad” illusion]

Some of our words are inherently self-contradictory in and of themselves, let alone we who use them. Take, for instance, the words “one” and “oneness”, as well as the symbol of the circle, when any of these is employed to signify all-inclusiveness: [Arabs, zero, pebble in sand]

Unity. The One. God. The Great Spirit. Mirror of Wonders. The still eternity. Permanence. There are countless names for it.

According to one perspective, one cannot actually speak of the One, because to speak of it is to make an object of it, implying separation from it, thus misrepresenting the essence of oneness from the start, a mysterious conundrum.

The One is the limit of all, first before the beginning and last after the end, alpha and omega, the mold that shapes all things and the one thing shaped by all molds, the origin from which the universe emerges, the universe itself, and the center to which it returns. It is point, seed and destination.

One is echoed in all things and treats all things equally. Its stability among numbers is unique, one remaining one when multiplied or divided by itself, and one of anything is uniquely that one thing. One is alone, all one, and no thing can exist to describe it.

All things are immersed in the shoreless ocean of Unity. The quality of oneness permeates everything, and while there is nothing without it, there is also no thing within it, as even a communication or idea requires parts in relationship. Like light from the sun or gentle rain the One is unconditional in its love, yet its majesty and mystery remain veiled, and beyond apprehension, for the One can only be understood by itself. It is alone, all one, and no thing can exist to describe it.

One is simultaneously circle, center, and the purest tone.

[From *Sacred Number: The Secret Qualities of Quantities* (Miranda Lundy, Wooden Books, 2005) p. 2. Note that the above paragraphs can be read just as meaningfully by substituting “God” or “Tao” for “oneness” and “The One.” ]

A word can only point to (i.e. signify) its referent and never fully embody it or equate with it, á la the axioms “the map is not the territory” and “the menu is not the meal.” Nor can any combination or volume of words equate with anything to which we refer them.

Words are no more the equivalent to what they refer than are one’s references (a.k.a. “resumes”) equivalent to oneself. This is perhaps most obviously the case with the word “oneness” and other referents to all-inclusiveness such as “God” and “Tao”:

You can’t understand oneness [God] [Tao]. You can’t define oneness, and you can’t contain oneness. But you can, if you don’t look at yourself, *be* oneness.

The way to keep from looking at yourself is to be so busy doing your best that you don’t have anything left over to look with.

You can’t know the totality of oneness with your finite mind, because oneness is infinite, and your material plane intelligence is finite – it cannot contain an infinite thing. But if you aren’t pressing about the totality, and just relax and observe what’s in front of you, you are knowing oneness, because that’s all there is to know.

There is nothing else to know; and the knowledge, the knower, the thing known, and the act of knowing *are all one*.

You are the eyes with which oneness looks, and the mind through which oneness understands itself.

[The unknown source of this statement used the word “God” rather than “oneness.” We may also just as meaningfully replace the word “oneness” in this statement with “Tao” . . . or with one’s own name while also substituting first person pronouns for those in the second person ]

The words “one” and “oneness,” when used to signify what Rev. David calls our “common unity,” point to more than the metaphysical reality with which we most commonly associate them. They also signify the physical cosmos of hierarchically nested forms that range from quark to cosmos overall, with the possibility that even smaller and/or larger forms than these exist as well. The cosmos is an eternally singular whole comprised of an infinite plurality of parts, whose unbroken wholeness is no less within each of its parts than is each of its parts within a wholeness that ultimately permeates all of time as well as all of space.

Although no words, nor any combination or volume of words, can effectively embody and equate with oneness, verbal descriptions and diagrams of holistic process more closely approximate doing so than does the word “oneness” by itself. For example, consider astronomer Harlow Shapley’s calculation of the ultimate dispersion of the molecules in a single breath of exhaled air. Such calculation is feasible because, though our atmosphere consists mostly of carbon, nitrogen and oxygen, it also contains atoms of argon. Since argon atoms are inert, they do not combine with any other atoms. Nor do they dissipate into outer space, being heavier than most other atmospheric gases and thus gravitationally retained close to Earth's surface.

Given these conditions, the number of argon atoms in Earth’s atmosphere is for all practical purposes constant, which makes it possible for one to calculate their dispersion rather precisely. In an essay entitled "Breathing the Future and the Past" in his 1940’s book, *Beyond the Observatory,* Shapley described what happens to a single breath ("Breath X”) whose contingent of argon atoms approaches the number of grains of sand on all of Oregon’s beaches:

[Breath X] quickly spreads. Its argon, exhaled this morning, by nightfall is all over the neighborhood. In a week it is distributed all over the country; in a month it is in all places where winds blow and gases diffuse. By the end of the year, the quintillions of argon atoms on Breath X will be smoothly distributed throughout all of the free air of the Earth. You will then be breathing some of those same atoms again. A day's breathing a year from now, wherever you are on the Earth's surface, will include at least 15 of the argon atoms of today's Breath X.

This rebreathing of the argon atoms of past breaths, your own and others', has some picturesque implications. The argon atoms associate us, by an airy bond, with the past and the future. For instance, if you are more than twenty years old you have inhaled more than 100 million breaths, each with its appalling number of argon atoms. You contribute so many argon atoms to the atmospheric bank on which we all draw, that the first little gasp of every baby born on Earth a year ago contained argon atoms that you have since breathed. And it is a grim fact that you have also contributed a bit to the last gasp of the perishing.

Every saint, every sinner of earlier days, and every common man and common beast, have put argon atoms into the general atmospheric treasury. Your next breath will contain more than 400,000 of the argon atoms that Gandhi breathed in his long life. Argon atoms are here from the conversations at the Last Supper, from the arguments of diplomats at Yalta, and from the recitations of the classic poets. We have argon from the sighs and pledges of ancient lovers, from the battle cries at Waterloo, even from last year's argonic output by the writer of these lines, who personally has had more than 300 million breathing experiences. Our next breaths, yours and mind, will sample the snorts, sighs, bellows, shrieks, cheers, and spoken prayers of the prehistoric and historic past.

The cosmic common unity of all things in both space and time is also portrayed by Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hahn in his book, *The Heart of Understanding*, in which he invites his readers to contemplate a piece of paper:

If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper. Without a cloud, there will be no rain; without rain, the trees cannot grow; and without trees, we cannot make paper. The cloud is essential for the paper to exist. If the cloud is not here, the sheet of paper cannot be here either. So we can say that the cloud and the paper inter-are. Interbeing is a word that is not in the dictionary yet, but if we combine the prefix "inter-" with the verb "to be," we have a new verb, inter-be. Without a cloud we cannot have paper, so we can say that the cloud and the sheet of paper inter-are.

If we look into this sheet of paper even more deeply, we can see the sunshine in it. If the sunshine is not there, the forest cannot grow. In fact, nothing can grow. Even we cannot grow without sunshine. And so, we know that the sunshine is also in this sheet of paper. The paper and the sunshine inter-are. And if we continue to look, we can see the logger who cut the tree and brought it to the mill to be transformed into paper. And we see the wheat. We know the logger cannot exist without his daily bread, and therefore the wheat that became his bread is also in this sheet of paper. And the logger's father and mother are in it too. When we look in this way, we see that without all these things, this sheet of paper cannot exist.

Looking even more deeply, we can see we are in it too. This is not difficult to see, because when we look at a sheet of paper, the sheet of paper is part of our perception. Your mind is in here and mine is also. So we can say that everything is in here with this sheet of paper. You cannot point out one thing that is not here—time, space, the earth, the rain, minerals, the soil, the sunshine, the cloud, the river, the heat. Everything coexists with this sheet of paper. That is why I think the word inter-be should be in the dictionary. "To be" is to inter-be. You cannot just be by yourself alone. You have to be with every other thing. This sheet of paper is, because everything else is.

Suppose we try to return one of the elements to its source. Suppose we return the sunshine to the sun. Do you think that the sheet of paper will be possible? No, without sunshine nothing can be. And if we return the logger to the mother, then we have no sheet of paper either. The fact is that this sheet of paper is made up only of "non-paper elements." And if we return these non-paper elements to their sources, then there can be no paper at all. Without "non-paper elements," like mind, logger, sunshine and so on there will be no paper. As thin as this sheet of paper is, it contains everything in the universe in it.

[Holocoenetic diagram: *holos* = whole, *koinos* = common, ergo “common unity”]

The universality of the common unity of all things throughout both space and time becomes apparent when you fully address the question, “How old is your nose?” Your answer to this question depends upon whether you are assessing the age of your nose’s formal structure, or the age of the material that comprises it. The structural form of your nose is as old as you are chronologically. Materially, however, its age can be assessed in two different ways, both of which are correct. The atoms that presently comprise your nose have been in your body for less than a year, while they have been occupants of the universe-at-large in various material and energetic forms since its origin some 13-20 billion years ago. [Our knowledge of cosmology has become so precise that we now know the age of the universe to within several billion years. Cosmology, as well as the use of words, is somewhat inexact.]

Your nose is simultaneously less than two years old, as old as your body, and also as old as the universe. Like all other profound questions, such as “What is the nature of God?” and “What is the nature of the universe?” the answer to “How old is your nose?” is also a trinity.

Far more important than the age of your nose is the fact that neither your nose, nor the rest of your body, nor the consciousness that inhabits your body is a permanent fixture in the universe. Nor is your nose or body even a permanent presence in the universe. Only your consciousness is an eternal presence in the universe, and even its current manner of being present will lapse as soon as its current body is vacated.

Our presence in the universe is like that of a fish in water. A fish flows through the same water that flows through it, just as we flow through the same air that flows through us. As Alan Watts described our ultimately flowing nature,

A living body is not a fixed *thing* but a flowing *event*, like a flame or a whirlpool: the shape is stable, for the substance is a stream of energy going in at one end and out the other. We are particular and temporarily identifiable wiggles in a stream that enters us in the form of light, heat, air, water, milk, bread, fruit, beer, beef Stroganoff, caviar and *pate de fois gras*. It goes out as gas and excrement – and also as semen, babies, talk, politics, commerce, war, poetry and music. And philosophy.

Relating to the last thing on Watt’s list of our outputs, my wife, Heidy, recently asked me, “Who are you, and what do you want?” These two questions are ultimately as tricky as the Zen koans, “What was your original face before you were born?” and “What is the sound of one hand clapping?” It took me nearly a full minute of contemplation to satisfactorily formulate an answer that is equally true of myself and of all other manifestations from quark to cosmos. I finally replied, “I am a unique self-revelation of God that wants to be more fully self-revealed.”

Heidy then asked, “How do want to more fully self-reveal?” Since I was at that moment editing the syllabus for this seminar I said, “In this moment by more fully articulating the Tao of Inclusivity.” Her laughing response was characteristic of her good-humored nature: “That’s why we’re in debt, isn’t it?”

Heidy’s response was utterly appropriate from the perspective of a monetary paradigm of prosperity. I, however, happen to have a vocational paradigm of prosperity. I define prosperity in terms of being able to spend my life doing what I feel most called to do, without having to do anything primarily for monetary gain rather than for vocational or recreational gain. I am therefore willing to be in debt when no acceptable (to me) alternative presents itself.

In other words, I am not here to “go with the flow” of the world around me, because the only thing that “goes” with the flow is a dead fish. Going with the flow is passive floating, not active being, as in the familiar song. “Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream . . . .” Most people don’t fully get the major point of that song, which is to *row to the rhythm of your own flow* even when you’re headed downstream. For example, fish undulate to their own rhythm whether they are swimming upstream, cross-stream or downstream. Each of us is likewise present in the world as the flow of his or her unique self-revelation of God, and being present as such takes a lot of rowing no matter in what direction our surrounding stream of circumstances or consciousness may be going.

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What this seminar is ultimately about is summed up in a poem that came to me 31 years ago in a time of mental and emotional anguish. At the age of five I discovered a way to dissipate my anguish, which was then over the situation in which I found myself when my divorced mother married a farmer and I was suddenly stuck out in the countryside with no children in the neighborhood for companions. I literally overnight went from having friends to play with every day to having no playmates at all.

One day I decided to walk around the farm to see what it was all about. I soon came to a creek, which was my first experience of seeing the dynamics of flowing water in anything other than a faucet or a gutter. I was utterly fascinated with the patterns woven by the movement of waterbugs on the otherwise still surface of the creek’s slowly flowing water. I marveled at the blending of the radiating circular waveforms that their activity set in motion (also known in current quantum mechanical terms as the “entanglement” or “superposition” of interference patterns). I imagined (again in terms of my vocabulary today) how wonderful it would be if human beings were as mutually accommodating of one another’s “making waves.”

I lost all sense of time as I observed the creek, and when I returned to my customary perception of duration my anguish over being alone was gone, never to return as more than an echo of its former intensity. From that time onward, therefore, whenever I felt greatly stressed I would go where I could observe water flowing in a stream or tiding on a beach.

Such was the case once again in July, 1977, when I was temporarily “hanging out” in Aspen, Colorado, while being unemployed and yearning for loving companionship as I was sorting myself out between wifetimes. I had no idea where I would be going, with whom I would be going, or what I would next be doing for my livelihood. I was feeling one "L" of a way from being "all one".

And so one day I sought solace in a creek that alternately tumbles and meanders down a mountain slope into the Roaring Fork River south of Aspen. As I walked along the creek’s course, I was struck by the stark contrast between its turbulent and smooth passages. The contrast seemed to emulate the stream of my own consciousness, as well as the uneven rhythm of my life’s alternately tumultuous and timorous course. Respecting an urge to fathom what this correspondence might indicate, I sat down with pen and paper in hand to take dictation, and solicited the creek’s advice: "If you were literate, what message would you have for me?"

The creek responded as if it were literate, for this is what I “heard” it “saying” to me

Be,

as water is,

without friction.

Flow around the edges

of those within your path.

Surround within your ever-moving depths

those who come to rest there—

enfold them, while never for a moment holding on.

Accept whatever distance

others are moved within your flow.

Be with them gently

as far as they allow your strength to take them,

and fill with your own being

the remaining space when they are left behind.

When dropping down life's rapids,

froth and bubble into fragments if you must,

knowing that the one of you now many

will just as many times be one again.

And when you've gone as far as you can go,

quietly await your next beginning.

The verbal “flow-through” of this poem so profoundly transformed my overall life perspective that ever since whenever I have been in anguish and there is no flowing or tiding water conveniently nearby, I can get a equivalent healing by remembering my experience of receiving the poem, and once again quietly await my next beginning.

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Another way of summing up what this seminar is about is to acknowledge that we have come to a crazy world, and that playing with the world’s craziness is sometimes the only thing that keeps us from going insane. The Sanskrit word for such sanitizing “play” is *leela,* which signifies the creative outcome of divine play.

The secret of maintaining one’s sanity is to play *with* the world’s craziness without playing *into* it. Playing into the world’s craziness eventually manifests in afflictions, addictions and other forms of dis-ease. Persons who are free of affliction and addiction have learned how to play with the craziness of their world without ever playing into it – “being in the world, but not of it” as Jesus advised. Being thus crazy is sometimes the only way to retain our sanity, hence the playfulness of what Buddhism calls “crazy wisdom.”

One of my favorite sources of Western crazy wisdom is a little book called *Daily Afflictions*, a collection of brief affirmations that challenge our conventional view of life’s circumstances. Of these affirmations, my favorite one is entitled “Breaking Up with Yourself.”:

The majority of people are subjective toward themselves and objective toward all others . . . but the real task is, in fact to be objective toward oneself and subjective toward all others. -Soren Kierkegaard

The time immediately after a bad relationship is filled with promise. It’s as if you’ve rid yourself of something that was weighing you down and keeping you from reaching your full potential. You feel light and clear and free. But this honeymoon with yourself is short-lived and you’re soon in a new relationship fraught with the same old problems. This pattern continues until you finally realize that most of the issues are your own, and that to be truly free, you must break up with yourself.

Doing so is not always easy. Yu might become nostalgic for the better times you’ve had with yourself and feel sad to let yourself go. But you must be strong. You must remember the pain and anguish done to you and be ruthless. You must look yourself in the eye and say all those things you’ve been keeping inside for years. You must dump yourself without remorse or apology, and as you slowly get over yourself, you mustn’t call.

I can be my own best ex.

The most effective way to break up with yourself is to do so metaphysically, by freeing yourself from what you know. This is accomplished via the dismantling of the structure of your knowing and returning to what Tao calls “beginner’s mind,” which is your mind’s “original face” before you were born. The term “beginner’s mind” signifies a consciousness that accurately reflects the structure of the present moment, because it is neither perceptually nor conceptually holding on to any structure formed from past experience or ongoing habit.

In addition to being free from the influence of all remembrance of things past, beginner’s mind is likewise free of all anticipation of things to come. Beginner’s mind is an empty mind – not empty of all content but empty of all preconception and other pre-structured formation of its content, only the form and content of the present moment. Like a mirror, beginner’s mind reflects any structure that is currently presented to it, yet does so for no longer than the structure is immediately present to it. A mirror no more retains an image that is momentarily presented to it than does the ground hold on to a passing shadow.

It is thus that beginner’s mind honors the three rules of engagement essential to living in the present moment:

* When you come, we welcome you.
* When you stay, we do not hold onto you.
* When you leave, we do not pursue you.

These rules of engagement are embodied in every one of us at birth, the proof of which is demonstrated each time we place a finger in the hand of a newborn child. All newborns instinctively embody the common unity of which they are a part. For example, whenever a finger was placed in either of your infant palms, you greeted it with a welcoming clasp of your own fingers that did not hold on, and you gently released the visitation’s withdrawal. You accepted the offered finger regardless of the color, race, creed, gender, ethnic origin, size, appearance, etc. of whoever made the offer. You were unconditionally acknowledging and allowing of any finger that came to rest in your hand for as long as your gently enfolding clasp was accepted, and you surrendered just as unconditionally to the finger’s passage at the instant it was removed. No matter whose finger it was or which of their fingers was presented, you inclusively graced its presence and just as gracefully relinquished it by feely allowing its departure.

This gesture was your primal handshake and primal hug, the inner default setting of your common unity with all whom your infant self instinctively accepted as an extension of its own wholeness. The primal rules of kindred engagement – welcoming, non-possessiveness and non-pursuit – did not require your conscious knowledge thereof, for they were your instinctive embodiment of the integral self-knowing operational embedment within you of the *co*-operative common unity that these rules of engagement represent.

In full accord with the trustful nature of this instinctive primal greeting you neither rejected nor grabbed at an offered finger, nor did you obsessively clutch, cling or otherwise possessively grab on to it. You enfolded the presence of all persons and allowed them harmless passage without prejudice, distinction or other imposition. It could have been George Bush’s finger, Saddam Hussein’s finger – no matter whose finger it was or how the finger (or which finger) was given to me, I unconditionally accepted it, allowed its presence, and willingly let it go.

It is only as our welcoming, non-possessive embrace and non-pursuing release of others is betrayed by prejudicial distinctions and dominating imposition that we become grabbing and controlling of what comes to our hand. In the meantime, our primal rules of kindred engagement continue to lurk semi-consciously at the threshold of our awareness, instinctively awaiting our mindful re-honoring thereof, as illustrated

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Our initial gathering here tonight is a briefing session centered in and from the perspectives presented in the document that orients us to the seminar’s mission, objectives, realities and contingencies. Unlike all of our subsequent sessions, this evening’s session is rather conventionally structured for the purpose of surveying the terrain that we will be exploring in the coming seven weeks. In our subsequent sessions we will function as a fluidly structured learning community, rather than as a conventional class or seminar.

So-called “classes” are structured for the transmission of their teacher’s knowledge of a “curriculum” (the Roman word for “race course”). Seminars are structured for the assimilation of the teacher’s knowledge. In either case, dissemination of a teacher’s knowledge by any other name is just as elite. The shortcoming of teacher-centered elitism was identified by Thaddeus Golas in his book, *The Lazy Man’s Guide to Enlightenment*:

Every person who allows others to treat him as a spiritual leader has the responsibility to ask himself: Out of all the perceptions available to me in the universe, why am I emphasizing the ignorance of my brothers? What am I doing in a role where this is real? What kind of standards am I conceiving, in which so many people are seen to be in [lack], while I am the enlightened one?

Unlike teacher-centered information environments, learning-communities are non-elitist structures, because every participant learns from all others the value that each has to offer the rest, and benefits from the worth that each part of the learning community brings to its harmonial whole. This is our only way to fully benefit from the fact that all of us know more than any of us, and that each of us has both something to be learned by and something to learn from everyone else.

Each of us is already intuitively knowledgeable of the wisdom signified by the *Tao Te Ching*. Wisdom is knowledge that has been lived in one’s personal experience, and each of us has livingly (if not lovingly) embodied knowledge of which s/he is not yet conscious. And since nobody experiences anything precisely the same way as anyone else, each person’s wisdom is experientially unique. Each of us embodies wisdom as does no one else nor ever can, namely the wisdom of his or her own unique experiencing, as noted by author Aldous Huxley in his book, *The Doors of Perception:*

We live together, we act on, and react to one another; but always and in all circumstances we are by ourselves. The martyrs go hand in hand to the arena; they are crucified alone. Embraced, the lovers desperately try to fuse their insulated ecstasies into a single self-transcendence; in vain. By its very nature, every embodied spirit is doomed to suffer and enjoy in solitude. Sensations, feelings, insights, fancies – all these are private and, except through symbols and at second hand, incommunicable. We can pool information about experiences, but never the experiences themselves. From family to nation, every human group is a society of island universes.”

Were this all that can be said on the matter of our embodied state, life would be as unbearable as it is thus presumed to be un-bare-able. Yet sometimes, as poet William Blake asserted, “the opposite of a profound truth may well be another profound truth.” Hence the testimony of John Dunne:

All mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated.... As therefore the bell that rings to a sermon, calls not upon the preacher only, but upon the congregation to come: so this bell calls us all: but how much more me, who am brought so near the door by this sickness.... No man is an island, entire of itself...any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

Hence also the briefer testimony of Hugh Romney to the same effect: “We are all the same person trying to shake hands with our self.” (Hugh Romney’s other name is “Wavy Gravy”.)

Our hidden inner wholeness is the source of what philosopher Michael Polanyi signified as “tacit” knowing, our silent knowing of more than we are able to express. Everyone in this seminar knows more than he or she can express, which is also more than all the rest of us can express, yet some of which we all may join in expressing better than any of us can express it on his or her own.

While Polanyi signified tacit knowing as the more we know than we can “say,” I choose the term “express” because of its literal meaning: to press outward from within. Expression is our saving grace, the tolling bell of our individualized existence as island universes, to which Alfred North Whitehead so eminently testified

Expression is the one fundamental sacrament. It is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. It follows that, in the process of forming a common expression of direct intuition, there is a first stage of primary expression into some medium of sense-experience which each individual contributes at first hand. No one can do this for another. It is the contribution of each to the knowledge of all.

In this seminar, expression is the *intended* grace of the island universes herein assembled as a learning community, in which the hidden wholeness that yearns in every one of us for a fuller self-revelation thereof may find its voice as we allow it to speak to one another in, through and as our lives.

Nothing new under the sun?

Each of us is proof this is not so.

No matter what has been done before,

and no matter what has been thought before,

it is equally true of all concerned

that I am the one doing and thinking

in the near and how of my own here and now.

Never before has the universe happened

in just the way that I do.

There is always something new under the sun

whenever someone new is doing it.

In my life and through my hands

the universe continues to shape itself

as it never has before.

[The contrast of our island-universe existence and the belle-weathering grace of self-expression is explored at http://isu.indstate.edu/ilnprof/ENG451/ISLAND/index.html.]

Spiritual philosopher Ernest Holmes spoke to both of the foregoing profound truths. For our condition as island universes he accurately prescribed:

Talk to yourself, not to the world. There is no one to talk to but yourself because all experience takes place within. Conditions are the reflections of our meditations and nothing else.

Holmes also extolled the ocean of consciousness in which we as island universes abound, and prescribed our redeeming virtues of the hidden wholeness

We are surrounded by an Infinite Possibility. It is Goodness, Life, Law and Reason. In expressing Itself through us, It becomes more fully conscious of Its own being. Therefore, It wishes to express through us. As It passes into our being, It automatically becomes the law of our lives. It can pass into expressi0on through us only as we consciously allow It to do so. Therefore, we should have faith in It, and Its desires and Its ability to do for us *all that we shall ever need to have done.* Since It must pass through our consciousness to operate for us, we must be conscious that It is doing so.

It is thus that we assemble via this seminar, as a learning community of eavesdroppers on one another’s talkings to ourselves, to thus overhear the mutual generation and expression of our common unity’s fuller self-revelation.

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One way to signify our hidden wholeness is to call it our “whole-self being,” whose fullest self-awareness and outward expression is obscured by the expressions of our role-self being-ness. Each of us performs several roles in life, such as parent, child, sibling, relative, worker, co-worker, boss, manager, butcher, baker and indigent thief, and we tend to be so identified with and wrapped up in the expressions of our role-selves that our whole-self expression gets lost in the crowd.

Our objective this evening is to orient ourselves to this seminar’s perspective on how we may liberate our inner hidden wholeness in outward expressions of whole-self being. Our objective in the seven weeks that follow this evening is to cultivate the liberation of our hidden wholeness both individually and collectively. Its collective expression is so vital to its fullest individual expression that when we cultivate it only in solitude we can become too heavenly to be of earthly good.

It is on behalf of knowing our whole-self being, which exceeds the ability of our role-selves to express it, that we are drawn to spiritually oriented gatherings, organizations and classes. We are drawn to such associations because of their potential to acquaint us with our whole-self being and to empower our self-expression thereof.

The most profound written source of wisdom-per-word concerning whole-self being is the *Tao Te Ching*, which begins by acknowledging that whole-self being is more than any or all of us will ever be able to say. What the word “Tao” signifies is the hidden wholeness that is more than any name that we can give it. The hidden wholeness that can be named is not the hidden wholeness that is. Accordingly, for the purposes of this seminar, the word Tao signifies hidden wholeness, and the terms “Tao” and “hidden wholeness” are synonymous.

The word “Te” signifies our outward expression of hidden wholeness, the emergence in thought, word and expression-in-practice of our inner whole-self being as lived experience. For the purposes of this seminar, the word “Te” signifies the lived experience of hidden wholeness, and the terms “Te,” “lived experience of hidden wholeness”, and “whole-self-being in practice” are synonymous.

The word “Ching” signifies what in English is called a “classic,” an outstanding work of literature. Our mission during the coming seven weeks is to make Tao and Te CHINNGGGG!!! by empowering our hidden wholeness to live itself in each of our lives as a classic work of whole-self being in expression. In support of our mission, we will function in our next seven sessions as a learning community that comes to more wisely know, embody and express the individual and collective whole-self being-ness that we cannot name yet may more fully live.

My function this evening – and only for this evening – is analogous to that of a tour guide. Along with the seminar syllabus that you will be reading in the next few days, I am laying before you the overall scope and context of what we are gathering here to learn from one another during the next seven Mondays. In so doing my role appears to be that of teacher. Therefore, as we say in New Thought, “Bless the appearances, full speed ahead.”

*However,* if I appear to be unduly in the role-self of teacher in the weeks to come, you are officially deputized to call upon my whole-self, whose function is to set my role-selves aside and be out in the open saying far less than I will say tonight, listening much more to all of you, and sharing my lived experience in the context of your shared knowing of yours. Each participant in this seminar is authorized to intervene whenever it feels to him or her 1) that one or more persons tends to be dominating our dialog (which is different from having more to say than others in a non-dominant manner), or 2) that our dialog is spinning its wheels without gaining traction.

In the meantime, the rationale for this evening’s formal briefing is that we cannot be a fluidly structured learning community in our subsequent sessions until we have all been shown what we are here to learn.

**Inventory of regrets.**

Make a list of every person, thing, event, circumstance or situation in your life about which you presently have hard feelings, including any hard feelings you may have concerning yourself, i.e., feelings of anger, envy, grievance, resistance, insistence, impatience, competition, possessiveness, etc.

* Reduce the list to a single item by successively subtracting those feelings that you consider the easiest to release.
* Close your eyes and become aware of your #1 hard feeling. Be with the feeling as fully as you can.
* I will now walk around the room and touch each of you on the shoulder while giving you an instruction.
* “Love your ability to feel what you are feeling right now.”
* What was your experience of this exercise?

Loving our ability to experience something changes our relationship to and of that something. Therefore, whenever you are experiencing unloving feelings, love your experience of unloving feelings and love yourself for being able to have the experience. Whenever you are experiencing being upset, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, psychologically, socially, politically, economically, etc., love your experience of being upset and love yourself for being able to experience being upset. While it may not be always possible to experience love for someone or something else, it is always possible to be loving of your experience.

Take another item from your list.

* Close your eyes and become aware the feeling.
* Ask yourself, “Am I willing to let go of this feeling for thirty seconds?”
* If you are willing, please raise your hand.
* Now let go of the feeling for thirty seconds.
* What was your experience of this exercise?

There isn’t any feeling that we can’t release if we are willing to love our ability to feel it and be willing to let go of it for 30 seconds. The secret is not to pick it up again.

**Self-mastery exercise**

Our mission in this class is to reinvent our lives by transforming our perceptions – a perceptual makeover that facilitates self-mastery.

* What “self-mastery” means to me is . . .
* When I have accomplished full self-mastery, the difference this accomplishment will make is . . .

**Inclusivity exercise**

Write down one thing you could do between now and next session that would make you a more inclusive person.

Form groups to share what you have written down.

[Next week you will re-gather in your groups and share with each other what your progress in releasing your #1 regret and being a more inclusive person.

**Session One: Orientation Outtakes**

I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits." -Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (1964)

**Learning Community Orientation**

The objective of our six-week date with our harmonial at-one-ment is to provide nutrition for our spiritual appetite while pulling the weeds of misperception and misconception from our consciousness. The most effective and efficient way to do that is to facilitate inquiry by addressing leading questions, rather than doubting or skeptical questions.

I presume only to have addressed your question rather than answered it, because no person can answer such questions to another’s complete satisfaction.

Nor have I yet succeeded in answering such questions to my own complete satisfaction.

Final paragraph before inventory of regrets:

Since the scope and context of our seven-week inquiry is both broad and deep, we will now get on with it. We will take turns reading through the seminar’s statement of mission, objectives, realities and contingencies because its message is more readily and deeply anchored as we hear it being read by others as we are reading it ourselves

An exercise in demystification/re-enchantment

Our mission in this class, for those who accept it as a commitment, is to reinvent our lives by fulfilling Ernest Holmes’ vision of a group of people who are “for something and against nothing.” Although Holmes articulated this vision of non-adversarial advocacy 49 years ago, no group of people has since then purposefully *committed* to fulfilling his vision by developing the collective self-mastery that the vision calls for.

Our mission will be accomplished as we transform our perceptions by engaging in a process of perceptual makeover that nurtures and facilitates our expression of non-adversarial advocacy. This accomplishment will emerge in proportion to our *commitment* to understand the nature, dynamics and practice of non-adversarial advocacy. We will become non-adversarial advocates only as we walk the path that leads us away from conflict escalation and toward conflict resolution.

Our mission’s rules of engagement consist of three behavioral practices that accord with the nature, function, and practice of Tao:

When you come, we welcome you.

When you stay, we do not hold onto you.

When you leave, we do not pursue you.

Learning to practice these rules of engagement is a recovery process, the procedure of recovering what we already know. These practices are instinctively present throughout all of nature, and were instinctively present in each of us at birth. Baby finger, etc..

On behalf of realizing Ernest Holmes’ vision, throughout this seminar we will consult the *Tao Te Ching* and all else that we read and hear, including what we hear from one another, as a resource for understanding the theory and practice of being for something and against nothing. We will be especially observant of any and all insights that facilitate the accomplishment of our mission of walking the path of non-adversarial consciousness.

While some of us already know how to talk about “being for something and against nothing,” none of us (myself included) has learned how to self-masterfully walk that talk’s path of non-adversarial advocacy. Yet we do have some highly instructive clues on the nature and practice of non-adversarial advocacy.

* Ernest Holmes: “It is better to affirm good than to deny evil.” (And it is even better yet to do good than to affirm it.)
* Marianne Williamson: “The new activist is one who wields power by standing for what could be rather than fighting what is.”
* R. Buckminster Fuller: “You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”
* Sharif Abdullah’s book-length presentation of a new model of reality: *Creating a World that Works for All*.
* And the biggest clue of all, the overall message of the *Tao Te Ching*.

Although this eight-week courtship of our mutually harmonial at-one-ment is entitled “The Tao of Inclusivity” its focus is less on inclusivity *per se* than on our realization and actualization of inclusivity. The term “inclusivity” signifies the interconnectedness of all being (a.k.a. “universal harmonial at-one-ment”), which is more than just a good idea or an ethical ideal. Inclusivity is, no less so than gravity, a universal principle of the way that all things work.

It is therefore on behalf of our *mindfully* embodying and exemplifying the universal principle of inclusivity that our eight-week courtship with universally harmonial at-one-ment will focus on our development of two great virtues of being, authenticity and self-mastery.

Grist for interbeing:

A skeptical professor with great contempt said of us: “Astronomically speaking, man is but the tiniest speck in such a universe as ours.” To this another professor, equally learned, replied: “Astronomically speaking, man is the astronomer.” -Roy L. Smith

**TOI Session 1: Seminar Overview and Owner’s Manual**

**Setting the consciousness arena**

[Oh, How Lucky I Am]

[Pass Your Love Around]

[Heidy-Heidy Ho]

[Holy]

Etc.

**Seminar orientation**

Alignment and attunement

I have subtitled our eight-week Tao of Inclusivity date with our harmonial at-one-ment “Xxxx” because the central purpose of our gathering together is to address the two most significant questions that face everyone on this planet today:

* How is it possible to be for peace without being against or resorting to violence?
* How do we become inclusive rather than abusive of those who disagree with us?

Like all questions for which we presently have no answer, the most we can do is address these two questions by looking where their answers may eventually be found. One of humankind’s oldest resources in which to find such answers is the *Tao Te Ching* . . . Among our most recently developed resources is Sharif Abdullah’s *Creating a World That Works for All*.

Since Tao is not a point of view, it assists us in focusing on non-adversarial advocacy as a point *to* view while not having a point *of* view.

I talk Tao better than I walk it. In so saying, I do not speak for anyone else in this room. If anyone here is an accomplished master of walking the *Tao Te Ching’s* talk, it will be evident without your ever speaking a word. And if you are not a master of walking the *Tao Te Ching’s* talk, this too will be evident without your ever speaking a word.

An exercise in demystification and re-enchantment that facilitates the process of perceptual makeover.

The rules of engagement for dating your harmonial at-one-ment –

Although this six-week date with our harmonial at-one-ment is entitled “The Tao of Inclusivity” its focus is less on inclusivity *per se* than on our realization and actualization of inclusivity. Such realization is the essence of the *Tao Te Ching,* which is best translated from the perspective of today’s scientific, psychological and metaphysical understanding as “The book [*Ching*] of the Emergent Way [*Tao*] of Indwelling Authenticity and Self-Mastery [*Te*].”

Inclusivity – the interconnectedness of all being (a.k.a. harmonial at-one-ment) – is not just a good idea, it is a universal principle of the way everything works. Inclusivity is no less a universal principle than is gravity. The term “principle” signifies a universal truth that includes many subordinate truths, in contrast to “laws” which signify in words various expressions of principle. It is on behalf of our *mindfully* embodying and exemplifying the universal principle of inclusivity that our six-week date with our harmonial at-one-ment will focus on the attainment of authenticity and self-mastery.

“Mindfulness” is self-awareness of how one is creating one’s moment-to-moment experience by being fully present therein with conscious knowledgeability of how one’s own self is shaping it. Mindful authenticity is prerequisite to self-mastery, and self-mastery is prerequisite to the realization and actualization of inclusivity. In the absence of authenticity our egos distort the integrity of our essential state of being. And without self-mastery of, by, for and ***as*** our authentic being, we cannot exemplify the principle of inclusivity.

The keys to being an inclusive person are authenticity and self-mastery. In preparation for our focusing on authenticity and self-mastery, it is essential that we know what the word “inclusivity” signifies.

[See quotations on “Mind” at end?]

**Unpacking the seminar syllabus**

**Session Two**

[Everywhere I Go, Here I am]

[Oh, How Lucky I Am] *-* [Pass Your Love Around] *–* [Heidy Heidy Ho]

[Holy]

NOTE: What follows has been incorporated into “The Principle of Prime Location”]

“Here I am” is the universal principle of prime location, the principle that *everything is precisely where it is and nowhere else*. In accordance with this principle, the “I” of “here I am” resides within Itself, rather than somewhere else beyond Itself. “I” shows up everywhere as Its own self-generated containment.

The statement “here I am” signifies the omni-local beingness that everywhere knows Itself as “I,” and is not the temporary bodily residence of what “I” calls “me.” The “I” that is everywhere “here” is transcendent of all the housing projects that give residence to Its immediate egoic embodiments, which is why the latter are locally signified as “my” body rather than “I” body. “My” and “me” are among the terms we employ to signify local limitation. “I” signifies that which is beyond all limitations of locality.

“I” is universal self-knowingness, which is self-originating, self-containing and self-sustaining. Each “me” is a locally differentiated individuation of the universal “I”, whose wholeness is represented only in part by “me.” Me is “I” in part because while all of “I” is locally “me,” local “me” is not all of omni-local “I.”

If the body that houses “I” were the ultimate homestead of Its being, rather than a local and temporary abode, “I” would be as transient as are my egoic experiences of being “me.” Such transience is the greatest fear of the egoic self, the fear of its eventual bodily death. Bodily death is not feared by “I,” who am infinitely reposed in eternal being.

Because the temporary bodily residence of egoic self is not the ultimate homestead of its larger being, it experiences itself as being “my” self rather than “I” self. “I”-self’s permanent homestead is the universal, unbounded (and thus non-embodied) singular inner Source of all beingness. This homestead is eternally constant amidst a universe of transient fluctuations that include the egoic flux of the self called “me.”

If “I”-self were also inconstant, Its ongoing experienc*ing* would be as impermanent as are the transiently momentary egoic experienc*es* of “me.” Instead, “I”-self is the continuous experienc*ing* of at-one-ment from which emerges all discontinuous experienc*es* of apart-ment by egoic “me”-self. “I” is the constant truth of inner being to which “me” is transiently impermanent. “I” am continuity of experienc*ing,* and am thus a singular verb of whole-self being*.* “Me” is discontinuity of experienc*es*, and is thus a plural noun of multiple role-selves being.

This seminar is an I-opener with which to become more fully acquainted with the “I” that is “we,” the permanent inner ground state of all integral being, along with the “I” that is “me,” the transient outward-oriented egoic states of differentiated being. The appropriate interrelationship between undifferentiated inner “I” and differentiated outward-oriented “me” was prescribed by Emmet Fox:

The fact that I is watching Me means that you have taken one of the greatest steps forward. When you find yourself doing things that are useless, or perhaps even mean or petty, stop them. When you find that I can laugh at Me, it means that your life is commencing to change for the better. Finally, you will find that Me is beginning to get in step with I, and when that happens you are truly on the road to having dominion over your life. -Emmet Fox, *Stake Your Claim*, pp.17-18

We are barely aware that rather than being humans who are seeking to have a spiritual experience, we are spiritual beings seeking to have a humane experience – an experience of our humane nature, not merely of our human nature. Nor is the prerequisite to humane experience, as some would have us believe, the elimination, repression or other diminution of the egoic “me”-self that is a vitally essential servant to our worldly existence. It is only via our individually differentiated egoic “me”-selves that we are able to experience the “fall out” of multiplicity that emerges from our “oneness” and “at-one-ment.”

Only as a person comes to know her or his egoic “me”-self as transcendent “I”-self in local expression can s/he experience the ego-transcending I-dentity of at-one-ment. Yet while “me”-self’s most suited function is to be in service to its at-one-ment, it endeavors instead to be a dysfunctionally presumptive master thereof – what John Milton called (in *Paradise Lost*) to be a ruler in hell rather than a servant in heaven. *Self*-mastery and *self*-dominion, whether in heavenly or hellacious circumstances, are the only means by which egoic “me”-self can fulfill its function of service to the at-one-ment of “I”-self.

Unity and at-one-ment are therefore alternate perspectives. Unity is an egoic perspective on the integral nature of multiplicity, while at-one-ment is a trans-egoic perspective on the singular nature of multiplicity. Unity is always plural and at minimum two. At-one-ment is always singular and even at its maximum is without distinction of number or any other signification.

For example, the unity of four fingers and one thumb (multiplicity) represents the at-one-ment (singularity) of the hand, which is in turn a unified extension of at-one-ment with its arm. The unity of two arms, two legs and a head similarly extends their body’s at-one-ment. Multiple human bodies in turn extend the planetary at-one-ment recognized in Alan Watts’ observation that “flowers blossom, trees branch, and Earth peoples. We don’t come into the world, we come out of the world.”

In other words, our bodies come out of the world to provide a setting called “me” in service to the “I” that comes into the world to experience its at-one-ment humanely.

Unlike my body, the inner homestead of my being is an absolute to which all else is relative no matter where “I” may go, which includes my body during so-called “out-of-body experiences. “Here I am” is an eternal-life sentence without parole or time off for “good” behavior, and with no prospect of divorce even after bodily death. No matter what “I” experiences as coming to pass in life, moving through life, or changing in life, all transience takes place within an eternal “here I am” perspective. “I” am at once all changes and all changings of all things changed.

In short: “I” am a universal passenger that never leaves the inner homestead which stays forever put relative to the passenger. While all of “this” and “that” comes to pass, “I” have come to stay, from before all that starts and beyond all that has an end.

The implication of this principle of prime location was recognized by a little girl who was seen sitting atop a pile of baggage as her parents were being processed for immigration at Ellis Island as “displaced persons” shortly after World War 2. When a passing social worker remarked sympathetically, “It’s too bad you don’t have a home,” the little girl brightly replied, “Oh, we have a home, we just don’t have a house to put it in.” She knew that home is a state of being, while a house is no more than a temporary place in which to be.

Our bodies are likewise only temporary places in which to be. The one and only thing we can depend on eternally and absolutely is that our being, however and wherever temporarily housed, is never without an inner homestead. This is because no matter where “I” goes and no matter what happens around, to, within or or from “I”-self, all such happening takes place *as* “I”-self right *here* where “I” perpetually am.

Since the *here* that I *am* is the inner homestead of all being, everywhere I go, it is *from* home I am.

[Everywhere I go, from home I am.]

Fortunately, my own self-expression is not the only expression of selfhood that I am aware of from the perspective of my all-inclusive inner homestead, for while “me”-self experiences multiple points *of* view, “I”-self knows only multiple points *to* view.

[Oh, How Lucky I Am]

**At-home exercises:**

* One thing done to be more inclusive.
* Holocoenotic exercise – environorganism.
* Closer to self-mastery
* Canary carcasses
* Keeper-Breaker-Mender tendencies . . . breaker tendency most easily released.
* In what aspects of my life am I a keeper? A breaker? A mender?

**Questions:**

* Q &C: “Principle of Prime Location”
* Participants’ questions about the reading.
  + Syllabus
  + Orientation
  + Dyer: Living Self-Mastery
  + Dyer: Living Honorably
  + Abdullah: “Introductory Essay”, “Preface”
* When am I most likely to be for something while being against something else?
* When am I most likely to be for something while not being against something else?

**Session Three**

[Everywhere I Go, Here I Am]

[Oh, How Lucky I Am] *-* [Pass Your Love Around] *–* [Heidy Heidy Ho]

[Holy]

I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather.  I possess tremendous power to make life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration, I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal.  In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis is escalated or de-escalated, and a person is humanized or de-humanized.  If we treat people as they are, we make them worse.  If we treat people as they might be, we help them become what they are capable of becoming.-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

To be even-minded is the greatest virtue. Wisdom is to speak the truth and act in keeping with its nature. -Heraclitus

The sharper the point of the needle, the more easily it goes through. The thinner the blade of the sword, the more swiftly it cuts through. [And so it is with words that say more with less. See below]

**Saying more with less:** When I read something I often attempt to reduce my understanding of its essence to a single sentence. When I first read the Tao Te Ching in high school, I reduced my understanding of it to the sentence, “Don’t just do something, stand there.” I didn’t find this very helpful, however, until I read John Milton’s poem about his being blind, in which he stated “They also serve who stand and wait.” The Tao Te Ching is all about standing and waiting for the appropriate moment of being in which to take the appropriate action of doing.

**[NOTE:** What follows (to the asterisks) has been assimilated into “Allowing Your Inmost Essence to Take Form”]

**Non-being (11th verse) ↔ computer punch card – action facilitated by non-being and non-doing.**

**Wu** (non-being): emptiness that awaits the appropriate moment for its pre-manifest existence in mind and its manifest existence in form

**Wu wei** (non-doing) stillness that awaits the appropriate moment for its pre-manifest and manifest expression.

**Non-being** = emptiness = non-conceiving = awaiting the appropriate moment for the authentic and transparent expression of one’s inmost being

**Non-doing** = stillness = non-striving = awaiting the appropriate moment for the authentic and transparent expression of one’s outward doing. [The wind and the sun.]

**Non-being plus non-doing** = allowing the expression of what comes most naturally from inmost being, the authentic and transparent expression of inner vital essence.

**Tao** is the integrally and harmoniously flowing way of all being. **Te** is the integral practice of the principles of integral and harmonious flow. [The essence of this practice was revealed to me in a series of experiences with water.]

[The Gurgle]

**Awaiting the appropriate moment for the expression of one’s being** is what the Tao Te Ching calls “non-being”.  **Awaiting** **the appropriate moment for an expression of doing** is what the Tao Te Ching calls “non-doing”. And “right action” takes place. And only at an appropriate intersection of non-being and non-doing does “right action” take place.

On whiteboard:

**Te:**

non-being >emptiness (openness, non-needful receptivity)> blending with the fullness of Tao’s

essential nature

+non-doing> stillness (allowance, non-interfering acceptance)> blending with the movement of

Tao’s essential nature

=non-acting> authenticity of being one’s essential (Tao) self

* One’s being empowers one’s doing in proportion to one’s openness and stillness of being and doing.
  + Openness is the vacancy of “non-being” and stillness is the authenticity of “non-doing” (i.e., of expressing that is free of acting).

The term “at-one-ment” signifies the harmonial interrelationship of your local being with the universality of all being that ever was, is, or shall exist, and with the essence of universal non-being from the ever-present origin of which all that has existence is forever emerging.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Work “The Tao of Creativity” into the following discussions:

**At-home exercises:**

* One thing done to be more inclusive (from session two)::
  + David: Forgive the rich and powerful
  + Chuck: Take initiative with young adults
  + Loretta: Unconditionally accept what is, via being in touch with feelings. [Knowing that something is so is beneficial, knowing how it is so is useful].
  + Karen: Give loving and compassionate prayer in times of fear, judgment, etc.
  + Dorothy: Be more inclusive with those who don’t include me.
* Your greatest dissatisfaction.
* Flow
  + I can access and outwardly exemplify the inner rhythm of my own flow by . . .
  + I can be a more flowing person in troublesome circumstances by . . .
* Internal contradictions & Breaker consciousness
  + Are there any internal contradictions within me that tend to make me a Breaker of life’s natural harmony? If so, how may I dissolve these contradictions?
* The Mess
  + What aspect(s) of “the Mess” am I inclined and prepared to dissolve in my own circumstances, and how may I best go about its/their dissolution?
  + How may I/we best encounter “the Mess” transformatively by flowing within its midst from my/our inmost Tao nature rather than by “taking it on” or otherwise being against it?

**Questions:**

* Q & C: “The Principle of Prime Location”
* Participants’ questions about other reading.
  + Syllabus
  + Orientation
  + E-mails
  + I-I relationship
  + Dyer
  + Abdullah
* When am I most likely to be for something while being against something else?
* When am I most likely to be for something while not being against something else?

**From Session Two discussion:**

* Blame is disownership of one’s experience.
* We forget who we are. Beginner’s mind is forgetting who we *think* we are. Letting go of what we think to clearly see what we know. Letting go of our history.
* Choose again (i.e., differently)
* Separation anxiety > surrogate divinity.
* One power and one order. The order plays out in and as our consequences.
* Pairing of stars – Vedanta: Brahma coming closer

**Session Three discussion:**

* Feel comfortable with oneself in all situations.
* Common thought form of separation – insufficiency – not enough. At basis of all fear is perception of self-insufficiency.
* Right relationship to the mess: consciousness of sufficiency.

**Non-being (11th verse) ↔ computer punch card – action facilitated by non-being and non-doing.**

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**Session Four**

[Everywhere I Go, Here I Am]

[Oh, How Lucky I Am] *-* [Pass Your Love Around] *–* [Heidy Heidy Ho]

[Holy]

To be even-minded is the greatest virtue. Wisdom is to speak the truth and act in keeping with its nature. -Heraclitus

Insofar as even-mindedness is concerned, the single most empowering metaphysical insight is the relationship between prepositions and propositions, especially as this relates to our spiritual freedom. Freedom *from* what we cannot be free *of.* Without freedom *from* we have very little freedom *as* and freedom *to* (infinitive rather than preposition, i.e., signifying unbounded-ness).

**This week**

One thing done to be more inclusive (from session two):

* David: Forgive the rich and powerful
* Chuck: Take initiative with young adults
* Loretta: Unconditionally accept what is, via being in touch with feelings.
* Karen: Give loving and compassionate prayer in times of fear, judgment, etc.
* Dorothy: Be more inclusive with those who don’t include me.

**At-home exercises:**

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. 63-83, “Inclusivity- Spirit and Practice”; pp. 85-87, “A New Analysis for a New Society”, and pp. 89-108, “Stop Blaming Others – You Are the Problem”.

* Make a complete inventory of everything that is for you “The Other.”
* From the perspective of the premise (on p. 75) that “Working with [The Other] is like facing a polished and fierce mirror of your own reality,” how would you describe yourself in the mirror provided by your inventory?
* From the perspective of the related premise (also on p. 75) that “The Other helps us by encouraging us to face what we most shrink from in ourselves,” what is it that your inventory encourages you to face?

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 11, “Living from the Void”; 28, “Living Virtuously”; 50, “Living As an Immortal”; 56 “Living by Silent Knowing”; 36 “Living in Obscurity”; and 39, “Living Wholeness”. Then complete each of the following sentences

* I can allow my authentic and transparent inner essence to more fully reveal itself by . . . (see verse 11)
* I can live more in accordance with the virtue of my true nature by . . .(see verse 28)
* I can more fully learn to die from my mortality by . . . (see da Vinci quote, p. 245)
* I can more fully untie the knots that bind me by . . . (see p. 273)
* I can be more powerfully obscure by . . . (see verse 36)
* I can more fully live “in accordance with the whole” by (see p. 192)

**In-class activity and questions:**

* Q & C: “Allowing Your Inmost Essence to Take Form”
* How complete do you feel in understanding non-being and non-doing?
* Allowing: juggle cups.
* Earth in a squeeze: sponge-Earth
* Participants’ questions about the reading.
  + Syllabus
  + Orientation
  + E-mails
  + I-I relationship
  + Dyer
  + Abdullah
* When am I most likely to be for something while being against something else?
* When am I most likely to be for something while not being against something else?

**From Session Two discussion:**

* Blame is disownership of one’s experience.
* We forget who we are. Beginner’s mind is forgetting who we *think* we are. Letting go of what we think to clearly see what we know. Letting go of our history.
* Choose again (i.e., differently)
* Separation anxiety > surrogate divinity.
* One power and one order. The order plays out in and as our consequences.
* Pairing of stars – Vedanta: Brahma coming closer

**From Session Three discussion:**

* Feel comfortable with oneself in all situations.
* Common thought form of separation – insufficiency – not enough. At basis of all fear is perception of self-insufficiency.
* Right relationship to the mess: consciousness of sufficiency.

**Session Four discussion:**

* Exclusivity is appropriate as a mutual transaction (blood-brain barrier; gendered restrooms) S.A. p. 15
* Insufficiency consciousness is a projection “out there” of a self-deficiency consciousness in here: not being enough projected as not having enough.
* “Bad” behavior is an expression of wounded-ness.
* When I cease wrong-making I cease to make myself “better” than others.
* Homelessness is an unsustainable lifestyle. Sustainable lifestyles are about thriving, not surviving.
* Wealth tends toward unsustainablity.
* Excess is over-expansion waiting to exhale.
* Infinity symbol: minimize-optimize-maximize.

The sharper the point of the needle, the more easily it goes through. The thinner the blade of the sword, the more swiftly it cuts through. [And so it is with words that say more with less. See below]

**Saying more with less:** When I read something I often attempt to reduce my understanding of its essence to a single sentence. When I first read the Tao Te Ching in high school, I reduced my understanding of it to the sentence, “Don’t just do something, stand there.” I didn’t find this very helpful, however, until I read John Milton’s poem about his being blind, in which he stated “They also serve who stand and wait.” The Tao Te Ching is all about standing and waiting for the appropriate moment of being in which to take the appropriate action of doing.

His purpose was to bare the bones of meaning,

strip away superfluous skin and fat.

He spoke of this as a kind of mental weaning.

He said, “I can find truth if I do that.”

So he proceeded, and here’s what he won:

some bits of flesh and a bloody skeleton.

But unperturbed he still made science his art.

“Truth’s in the bones: I must split them apart.”

He split the bones down to their very centers

and searched in vain for truth among the splinters.

He then rose undefeated from the dead.

“It is quite clear truth is not here,” he said.

The last I heard, he still was going strong,

dissecting the throat of a bird in search of song.1.

Verse 28:

Who knows his manhood's strength,

Yet still his female tenderness maintains;

As to one channel flow the many drains,

All come to him, yea, all beneath the sky.

Thus he the constant excellence retains;

The simple child again, free from all stains.

James Legge: <http://classics.mit.edu/Lao/taote.html> <http://www.taoteching.org>

**Session Five**

[Everywhere I Go, Here I Am]

[Oh, How Lucky I Am] *-* [Pass Your Love Around] *–* [Heidy Heidy Ho]

[Holy]

Xxxxx

**This week**

One thing done to be more inclusive (from session two):

* David: Forgive the rich and powerful
* Chuck: Take initiative with young adults
* Loretta: Unconditionally accept what is, via being in touch with feelings.
* Karen: Give loving and compassionate prayer in times of fear, judgment, etc.
* Dorothy: Be more inclusive with those who don’t include me.

**At-home exercises:**

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 42, “Living By Melting into Harmony”; 35, “Living Beyond Worldly Pleasures”; 37, “Living in Simplicity”; 46, “Living Peacefully”; 49, “Living beyond Judgment”; and 57 “Living without Authoritarianism.”

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. pp. 109-132, “The Story – How Things Got to Be This Way”; and pp. 133 – 146, “How the Breaker Story Maintains Itself.”

Throughout all of your reading of this week’s assigned material, continually to ask yourself, “How does what I am reading instruct me in understanding 1) how to be for something peace while neither being against nor resorting to violence, and 2) how to be inclusive rather than abusive of those with whom I disagree?”

**In-class activity and questions:**

* Allowing: juggle cups.
* Earth in a squeeze: sponge-Earth

**From Session Two discussion:**

* Blame is disownership of one’s experience.
* We forget who we are. Beginner’s mind is forgetting who we *think* we are. Letting go of what we think to clearly see what we know. Letting go of our history.
* Choose again (i.e., differently)
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* Wealth tends toward unsustainablity.
* Excess is over-expansion waiting to exhale.
* Infinity symbol: minimize-optimize-maximize.

**Session Five discussion:**

* There’s no one in the boat.
* Focus on where you are going – see the whole.
* “I” statements
* Without connection there is no correction.
* All chickens are coming home to roost (the problem is not the rooster, e.g. Hitler).
* I created this. What is the lesson? To what am I attached?
* Keep enemies apart
* Violence is an option that has alternatives.

VISION RESPONSE

Threat-----------------------------------🡪 Defence

Ego-mainternance

Perception 🡨-----------------------------Event

Growth

Opportunity--------------------------------🡪 Creative

Fear risk vs. embrace risk

Presence of mind and being

Allowing, gratitude

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His purpose was to bare the bones of meaning,

strip away superfluous skin and fat.

He spoke of this as a kind of mental weaning.

He said, “I can find truth if I do that.”

So he proceeded, and here’s what he won:

some bits of flesh and a bloody skeleton.

But unperturbed he still made science his art.

“Truth’s in the bones: I must split them apart.”

He split the bones down to their very centers

and searched in vain for truth among the splinters.

He then rose undefeated from the dead.

“It is quite clear truth is not here,” he said.

The last I heard, he still was going strong,

dissecting the throat of a bird in search of song.1.

Verse 28:

Who knows his manhood's strength,

Yet still his female tenderness maintains;

As to one channel flow the many drains,

All come to him, yea, all beneath the sky.

Thus he the constant excellence retains;

The simple child again, free from all stains.

James Legge: <http://classics.mit.edu/Lao/taote.html> <http://www.taoteching.org>

**Session Six**

[Everywhere I Go, Here I Am]

[Oh, How Lucky I Am] *-* [Pass Your Love Around] *–* [Heidy Heidy Ho]

[Holy]

Fable of the Scotty dog (James Thurber)

Justice's first step is equity based on all beings being equals in the eyes of God and thus to treat others with the Golden Rule. All want well being for self. Justice wants well being for all. Without justice compassion is mere sentiment. -Jonathan Granoff

**This week**

One thing done to be more inclusive (from session two):

* David: Forgive the rich and powerful
* Chuck: Take initiative with young adults
* Loretta: Unconditionally accept what is, via being in touch with feelings.
* Karen: Give loving and compassionate prayer in times of fear, judgment, etc.
* Dorothy: Be more inclusive with those who don’t include me.

**At-home exercises:**

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 51, “Living By Hidden Virtue”; 55, “Living by Letting Go”; 58, “Living Untroubled by Good or Bad Fortune”; 59 “Living by Thrift and Moderation”; 66, “Living by Emulating the Sea”; 67, “Living by the Three Treasures”; 68, “Living by Cooperating”; and 69, “Living without Enemies.”

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. pp. 147-183, “The Revolution to Inclusivity” and “The Internal Revolution – Feeding Your Internal Hunger.”

It is often said that “There can be no peace without justice,” and warring leaders commonly claim to be fighting for a “just peace.” Therefore, throughout all of your reading of the above material continually ask yourself, “How does what I am reading illumine the interrelationship of peace and justice?” Is there an actual connection between peace and justice other than a rhetorical effort to validate violent means to peace? If there is no operational connection of peace with justice, why is this so? And if there is, what is it?

Reviews of books on Public Intelligence, Social Entrepreneurship, Natural Capitalism, Moral Economy and Conflict Dissolution

**In-class activity and questions:**

* Allowing: juggle cups.
* Earth in a squeeze: sponge-Earth

**From Session Two discussion:**

* Blame is disownership of one’s experience.
* We forget who we are. Beginner’s mind is forgetting who we *think* we are. Letting go of what we think to clearly see what we know. Letting go of our history.
* Choose again (i.e., differently)
* Separation anxiety > surrogate divinity.
* One power and one order. The order plays out in and as our consequences.
* Pairing of stars – Vedanta: Brahma coming closer

**From Session Three discussion:**

* Feel comfortable with oneself in all situations.
* Common thought form of separation – insufficiency – not enough. At basis of all fear is perception of self-insufficiency.
* Right relationship to the mess: consciousness of sufficiency.

**From Session Four discussion:**

* Exclusivity is appropriate as a mutual transaction (blood-brain barrier; gendered restrooms) S.A. p. 15
* Insufficiency consciousness is a projection “out there” of a self-deficiency consciousness in here: not being enough projected as not having enough.
* “Bad” behavior is an expression of wounded-ness.
* When I cease wrong-making I cease to make myself “better” than others.
* Homelessness is an unsustainable lifestyle. Sustainable lifestyles are about thriving, not surviving.
* Wealth tends toward unsustainablity.
* Excess is over-expansion waiting to exhale.
* Infinity symbol: minimize-optimize-maximize.

**From Session Five discussion:**

* There’s no one in the boat.
* Focus on where you are going – see the whole.
* “I” statements
* Without connection there is no correction.
* All chickens are coming home to roost (the problem is not the rooster, e.g. Hitler).
* I created this. What is the lesson? To what am I attached?
* Keep enemies apart
* Violence is an option that has alternatives.

VISION RESPONSE

Threat-----------------------------------🡪 Defense

Ego-maintenance

Perception 🡨-----------------------------Event

Growth

Opportunity--------------------------------🡪 Creative

Fear risk vs. embrace risk

Presence of mind and being

Allowing, gratitude

**Session Six discussion:**

Peace just is. Experience thereof is a choice.

Justice requires a judgment of contrast, and is a human invention.

Deeply listen

Consensus – looking for common values and vested interests.

Retributive – rehabilitative – restorative justice – from getting even to being even.

Inclusivity as connection between peace and justice

Differences of emotional development and charge

Is lack of transparency unjust?

Equity – equality of opportunity, not of outcome.

Give $2 to person who has $3 and $3 to person who has $2, so that each can buy a $5 ticket.

Parable of workers in vineyard – the reward is the same, regardless of when one accepts it.

Putting on the Mind of Christ

Translation and Transformation

Getting rid of stress (Dorothy’s diagram)

Cross with peace as vertical and justice as horizontal – infinity symbol at juncture.

**Session Seven**

[Everywhere I Go, Here I Am]

[Oh, How Lucky I Am] *-* [Pass Your Love Around] *–* [Heidy Heidy Ho]

[Holy]

Christianity is about Jesus. Christ-consciousness is what Jesus is about. Similarly, David’s representation last week of peace and justice via the cross isn’t about the peace-justice relationship, it’s what the peace-justice relationship is about. Peace and justice aren’t about connection, they are what connection is about. Where there is connection, peace and justice are possible outcomes thereof. Where there is no connection, neither peace nor justice is possible. Hence my assertion that the connection between peace and justice is the existence of connection itself.

I’m never satisfied with language that only tells me about something, and am continually in search of language that tells me what that something is itself about. Signifying something about a referent is not nearly as powerful as signifying what the referent is about. Knowing about something takes us only to the threshold of its significance. Knowing what it is about takes us past the threshold into the heart of its significance.

During one of Rev. David’s Sunday talks my understanding “metaphysics” crossed the threshold of the term’s significance into the heart of its significance. Customarily, the term “meta-physical” signifies non-physical reality. Yet the term “non-physical” signifies the metaphysical domain in terms of absence, as in apostle Paul’s proclamation in Hebrews 1:13, “Things which are seen are not made of things which do appear.” The term “non-physical reality” signifies the absence of the tangible rather than the presence of the intangible.

When we frame our understanding of metaphysics in terms of “non-physical reality” we are signifying something about metaphysics, not what metaphysics is about. This is how Aristotle’s philosophy framed the Western mindset, by first addressing physical reality and only afterward addressing non-physical reality as if it is a leftover (the term “meta” signifying “after” and the term “metaphysics” thus meaning “after physics”).

Metaphysics is ultimately about the presence of pre-physical reality, not the absence of physical reality. While the term “non-physical” signifies something about the metaphysical domain, the term “pre-physical” signifies what the metaphysical domain is about. Metaphysics is about the pre-physical reality out of which physical reality emerges. Although this distinction has been staring me in the face for over four decades, it was not until recently that I saw it so clearly.

From the perspective of conventional physics, consciousness emerges from matter. From the perspective of New Thought metaphysics, matter emerges from consciousness. The emergence of physical reality from consciousness is signified in the first verse of the Gospel of John: “In the beginning was Christ-consciousness (which in John’s day was signified with the capitalized term “Word”) and the Christ-consciousness was with God and the Christ-consciousness was God.” In other words, while the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and Mark are primarily about Jesus, the Gospel of John is primarily what Jesus was about.

Similarly, just as physics is about energy and matter, so is metaphysics what energy and matter are about. In the 20th century some physicists began to perceive matter as condensed energy. From the perspective of New Thought, however, energy and matter are successive condensations of consciousness: from pre-physical consciousness emerges physical energy, from which there is the further emergence of physical matter. Thoughts, which are energetic condensates of consciousness, become things, which are material condensates of energy. Pre-physical reality is therefore so-called because its existence precedes physical reality.

Also yesterday morning, I more fully realized what Tao and Te are about, again in response to Rev. David’s talk. I heard Rev. David say that the objective of New Thought is to be freely and fully available to the presence and power of God. (His actual words were that the objective of New Thought is to be fully free and available to the power and presence of God. My statement reflects the way I signify his words rather than the way he signifies them.) And because of the way I signify what he said, I now have a deeper understanding of the terms “Tao” and “Te”.

“Tao” signifies the presence (the benefit of nearness) and power (the utility of how-ness) of the immediate moment.

“Te” signifies being fully and freely available to the presence and power of the immediate moment, or as I prefer to signify it, being fully and freely available to the near and how of the immediate moment.

When I realized 30 years ago that what “here and now” is about the near and how of the immediate moment, I wrote the following I-opener:

Somewhere this side of the rainbow I can meet the Wizard of Is

whose special magic leaves today's life undistracted

by the should be's, could be's and if only's

that cloud over my inner intentions

and distort my outward attentions.

"Good old days,"

childish ways

and other once-were's are as absent from the Wizard's view

as are apprehensions about tomorrow.

The Wizard of Is resides instead in the near and how of present moments only –

the time and place from which my being forever self-emanates.

If I would fathom the secret of overflowing from such moments

I must consult the Wizard of Is.

Fortunately, this Wizard inhabits my own domain,

within the being who bears my name.

Living according to Tao is what Rev. David calls “lendsorbency”: lending oneself over to and being absorbed by the near and how of Tao. Lendsorbency is the function of allowing, and was explicit in Carl Jung’s prescription for practicing psychology: “Learn every psychological system you can. But when you are in the presence of the actual patient, forget them all – just see what happens in the here and now.” -Carl Jung (via Edward C. Whitmont, quoted in *The Healing Power of Neurofeedback*, p. 10.

[Allowing: juggling cups]

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Historically our species has always sought to rise above the limitations of its worldly existence via faith in some means of salvation, and in our search for these means we have come full circle. Since all of today’s indigenous cultures associate salvation with faith in the conscious nature of all being, we can assume that such was the case for our species overall prior to our creation of so-called “civilization.” As civilized beings we have sought salvation by faith in religion (belief), by faith in science (control), by faith in reason (intellect), by faith in the machine (industry), by faith in society (socialism), by faith in prosperity (capitalism), by faith in acquisition (consumerism), by faith in knowledge (education), by faith in communication (networks), and most recently (and quite scarcely) by faith in the consciousness nature of all being.

Since World War II the means of salvation in which Americans have placed their greatest faith is acquisition. This is because the industrial means of winning World War 2, the so-called “war machine,” had either to be dismantled or abandoned when the war concluded or else to be redeployed for an alternative purpose. The deliberate makeover of America’s war machine into a consumer machine fulfilled the recommendation of retail analyst, Victor Lebow, who advised the war machine’s management as follows:

Our enormous productive economy. . . demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfaction, our ego satisfaction, in consumption . . . at an ever increasing rate.

Consumerism didn’t just happen, it was deliberately chosen as our civilization’s ultimate rationale for existing. Our institutional canonization of affluenza as the mythical precondition and grounding of all material, social, personal and spiritual fulfillment moved Rod Serling to forecast a cultural Twilight Zone in which “We're developing a new citizenry, one that will be very selective about cereals and automobiles, but won't be able to think.” Consumerism is a classic example of our having freedom of choice but not of consequence, as noted by economist John Kenneth Galbraith’s comment about the Great Depression of the 1930’s: “The threat to men of great dignity, privilege and pretense is not from the radicals they revile, it is from accepting their own myth. Exposure to reality remains the nemesis of the great – a little understood thing.” The planet is now exposing us to the consequential reality of our choice to accept consumerism as our civilization’s number one value.

**This week**

One thing done to be more inclusive (from session two):

* David: Forgive the rich and powerful
* Chuck: Take initiative with young adults
* Loretta: Unconditionally accept what is, via being in touch with feelings.
* Karen: Give loving and compassionate prayer in times of fear, judgment, etc.
* Dorothy: Be more inclusive with those who don’t include me.

**At-home exercises:**

Your readings this week in *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* all have one thing in common: living *without*. Read verses/chapters 18, “Living without Rules”; 19, “Living without attachment”; 20, “Living without Striving”; 24 “Living without Excess”; 30, “Living without Force ”; 31, “Living without Weapons ”; 63, “Living without Difficulties”; 69, “Living without Enemies”; 71, “Living without Sickness”; 79, “Living without Resentments”; and 81 “Living without Accumulating.”

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. pp. 185-201, “The External Revolution – Practicing Inclusivity with Others.”

As you are reading the above materials, make notes on what *you* are willing not to be bound to in order to be more **inclusively for something and against nothing.**

**In-class activity and questions:**

One can experience “Living without” either as deprivation (sacrifice, giving up) or as liberation (letting go of).

What would you like to live with instead?

What are you willing to release that is detrimental to your well-being?

You can’t let go of something until you’ve taken it on.

**From Session Six discussion:**

Peace just is. Experience thereof is a choice.

Justice requires a judgment of contrast, and is a human invention.

Deeply listen

Consensus – looking for common values and vested interests.

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Putting on the Mind of Christ

Translation and Transformation

Getting rid of stress (Dorothy’s diagram)

Cross with peace as vertical and justice as horizontal – infinity symbol at juncture.

**Preparation for Session Two**

Read the seminar syllabus, noting any concepts, passages or sections on which you would like more clarity or further understanding at our next class session.

Seminar Orientation\*

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 53, “Living Honorably” and 33, “Living Self-Mastery”. Chapter 53 prepares you for the exercise below. After reading Chapter 33, complete the following sentences:

* I will be closer to self-mastery when . . .
* The difference that will be made by my being closer to self-mastery is . . .

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. v-xiv and 1-7, and then

* Make a list of any “canary carcasses” in your life.
* Make a list (if any) of your “keeper” tendencies.
* Make a list (if any) of your “breaker” tendencies.
* Make a list (if any) of your “mender” tendencies.
* Complete the sentence (if relevant to you), “The breaker tendency I am most able to release is . . .

**Becoming a More Inclusive Person**

As you read Chapter 53 in Wayne Dyer’s book, “Living Honorably” (pp. 256-260) note especially his concept of “Environorganism” (p. 258). To more fully appreciate your own existence as an environorganism, as well as the counsel to live honorably, proceed as follows with your blank holocoenotic diagram:

* Make a list of everything that is required for you to become a more inclusive person.
* Make another list of everything that hinders you from becoming a more inclusive person.
* Prioritize each list from most to least essential.
* In the diagram’s center circle put the initials BAMIC for “Becoming A More Inclusive Person.”
* Place the top eight items in each of your lists in the half-circles on the perimeter of the larger circle, alternating between requirements and hindrances. [NOTE: If you think of additional requirements and hindrances as you are doing this, add them to their respective lists. If any of them is more essential than something in your present top eight, revise your top eight accordingly.
* Draw a line from each requirement and hindrance to the central circle with an arrowhead at the end of the line nearest the central circle.
* For each requirement and hindrance to which you are capable of altering your relationship, put an arrowhead at the perimeter end of its line to the center as well.
* Now draw an additional line from each peripheral item to every other peripheral item that it in any way influences and/or is influenced by it. Be sure that all *mutual* influences are interlinked by lines that have arrowheads at each end. [NOTE: since every relationship is an interrelationship, it is quite unlikely that any of these lines will have an arrowhead at only one end. If you cannot perceive any mutuality of influence, make a special note of it for discussion at the next session.

**Preparation for Session Three**

If you haven’t completed your reading of the seminar syllabus, please do so this week, noting any concepts, passages or sections on which you would like more clarity or further understanding at our next class session.

“The Principle of Prime Location”\*

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 8, “Living in the Flow”; 78, “Living like Water”; 43 “Living Softly”; 56, “Living by Silent Knowing”; and 32, “Living the Perfect Goodness of the Tao.” These verses/chapters (along with several others) urge us to flow within the surrounding body of our affairs just as watery fluids flow within the immediate body of our “here-I-am” habitation. “Live as water is, since you *are* water” (p. 41) – *i.e.,* flow through life in accordance with the ordered rhythm of your inmost nature’s flow.

After reading these five verses/chapters, complete the following sentences:

* I can access and outwardly exemplify the inner rhythm of my own flow by . . .
* I can be a more flowing person in troublesome circumstances by . . .

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read“The Problem without a Name” on pp. 29-34, which includes a compendium on p. 30 of what Sharif calls “the Mess”. (Can you think of anything he left out?) Then read “The Vision”, pp. 9-25, which argues for the possibility of a world that works for all, and “The Nightmare – A World on the Brink”, pp. 27-61, which explains how the mess is brought about. Determine as specifically as you can what is the “single condition” common to all manifestations of “the Mess.”

During and after your reading of these materials, ask yourself

* Are there any internal contradictions within me that tend to make me a Breaker of life’s natural harmony? If so, how may I dissolve these contradictions?
* What aspect(s) of “the Mess” am I inclined and prepared to dissolve in my own circumstances, and how may I best go about its/their dissolution?
* How may I/we best encounter “the Mess” transformatively by flowing within its midst from my/our inmost Tao nature rather than by “taking it on” or otherwise being against it?

**Reducing your DQ (Dissatisfaction Quotient)**

Proceed as follows:

* Make a list of everything about which you are dissatisfied, and use the reduction method to determine which of your dissatisfactions is the greatest.
* Make another list of everything that contributes to your greatest dissatisfaction, and if necessary reduce it to eight items.
* Make yet another list of everything that can be done by you to dissolve your greatest dissatisfaction, and if necessary reduce it to eight items.
* Place your greatest dissatisfaction in the center circle of a blank holocoenotic diagram.
* Place the eight remaining items in each of your lists in the half-circles on the perimeter of the larger circle, alternating between contributing and dissolving factors. [NOTE: If you have less than eight on one list and more than eight on the other, use a total of sixteen. If you have less than sixteen altogether so be it – unless others come to mind as you are doing the exercise, in which case add them to the perimeter.
* Draw a line from each contributing and dissolving factor on the perimeter to the central circle with an arrowhead at the end of the line nearest the center.
* For each contributing and dissolving factor to which you feel capable of altering your relationship, put an arrowhead at the perimeter end of its line to the center as well.
* Now draw an additional line from each peripheral item to every other peripheral item that it in any way influences and/or is influenced thereby. Be sure that all *mutual* influences are interlinked by lines that have arrowheads at each end. [NOTE: since every relationship is an interrelationship, each of these lines will presumably have an arrowhead at both ends. If you cannot perceive any mutuality of influence, make a special note of it for discussion at the next session.]

**Preparation for Session Four**

If you haven’t completed your reading of the seminar syllabus, please do so this week, noting any concepts, passages or sections on which you would like more clarity or further understanding at our next class session.

“Allowing Your Inmost Essence to Take Form”\*

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 11, “Living from the Void”; 28, “Living Virtuously”; 50, “Living As an Immortal”; 56 “Living by Silent Knowing”; 36 “Living in Obscurity”; and 39, “Living Wholeness”. Then complete each of the following sentences

* I can allow my authentic and transparent inner essence to more fully reveal itself by . . . (see verse 11)
* I can live more in accordance with the virtue of my true nature by . . .(see verse 28)
* I can more fully learn to die from my mortality by . . . (see da Vinci quote, p. 245)
* I can more fully untie the knots that bind me by . . . (see p. 273)
* I can be more powerfully obscure by . . . (see verse 36)
* I can more fully live “in accordance with the whole” by (see p. 192)

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. 63-83, “Inclusivity- Spirit and Practice”; pp. 85-87, “A New Analysis for a New Society”, and pp. 89-108, “Stop Blaming Others – You Are the Problem”.

* Make a complete inventory of everything that is for you “The Other.”
* From the perspective of the premise (on p. 75) that “Working with [The Other] is like facing a polished and fierce mirror of your own reality,” how would you describe yourself in the mirror provided by your inventory?
* From the perspective of the related premise (also on p. 75) that “The Other helps us to by encouraging us to face what we most shrink from in ourselves,” what is it that your inventory encourages you to face?

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**Preparation for Session Five**

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 42, “Living By Melting into Harmony”; 35, “Living Beyond Worldly Pleasures”; 37, “Living in Simplicity”; 46, “Living Peacefully”; 49, “Living beyond Judgment”; and 57 “Living without Authoritarianism.”

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. pp. 109-132, “The Story – How Things Got to Be This Way”; and pp. 133 – 146, “How the Breaker Story Maintains Itself.”

Throughout all of your reading of this week’s assigned material, continually to ask yourself, “How does what I am reading instruct me in understanding 1) how to be for peace while neither being against nor resorting to violence, and 2) how to be inclusive rather than abusive of those with whom I disagree?”

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**Preparation for Session Six**

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 51, “Living By Hidden Virtue”; 55, “Living by Letting Go”; 58, “Living Untroubled by Good or Bad Fortune”; 59 “Living by Thrift and Moderation”; 66, “Living by Emulating the Sea”; 67, “Living by the Three Treasures”; 68, “Living by Cooperating”; and 69, “Living without Enemies.”

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. pp. 147-183, “The Revolution to Inclusivity” and “The Internal Revolution – Feeding Your Internal Hunger.”

It is often said that “There can be no peace without justice,” and warring leaders commonly claim to be fighting for a “just peace.” Therefore, throughout all of your reading of the above material continually ask yourself, “How does what I am reading illumine the interrelationship of peace and justice?” Is there an actual connection between peace and justice other than a rhetorical effort to validate violent means to peace? If there is no operational connection of peace with justice, why is this so? And if there is, what is it?

**Public Intelligence, Social Entrepreneurship, Natural Capitalism, Moral Economy and Conflict Dissolution**

To Jesus’ commandment, “forgive them, for they know not what they do,” may be added “forgive them for they do not what they know.” There are known potential solutions to “The Mess” that are not being implemented. For example, for *each* of the 6 ½ billion human beings on the planet, there are several tons of edible vegetation. And in the state of Kansas alone, there is sufficient wind power and space in which to locate wind-power generators to generate the equivalent of the current electrical energy budget of the entire planet.

Both the technological and monetary means to clean up “The Mess” are at hand. The following books reveal the emergence of for-something-and-against nothing approaches to “the Mess.” It is not necessary to read all of these books to gain an appreciation of this emerging trend, which may be acquired by reading the reviews of these books at Amazon.com.

* William Easterly, [*The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*](http://www.amazon.com/White-Mans-Burden-Efforts-Little/dp/B000R33QOM/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1205253599&sr=8-1)
* Mohammed Yunus, *Creating a World Without Poverty: Social Business and the Future of Capitalism*
* C. K. Prahalad, *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid: Eradicating Poverty Through Profits*
* William Grider, *The Soul of Capitalism: Opening Paths to a Moral Economy*
* John Bogle, *The Battle for the Soul of Capitalism*
* Yochai Benkler, *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom*
* \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_, *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas (Updated Edition)*
* Daniel C. Esty and Andrew S. Winston, [*Green to Gold: How Smart Companies Use Environmental Strategy to Innovate, Create Value, and Build Competitive Advantage*](http://www.amazon.com/Green-Gold-Companies-Environmental-Competitive/dp/0300119976/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1205181139&sr=1-1)
* William McDonough and Michael Braungart, [*Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*](http://www.amazon.com/Cradle-Remaking-Way-Make-Things/dp/0865475873/ref=pd_bbs_3?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1205181139&sr=1-3)

ALSO: Contyroller General David M. Walker: “strategic human capital management”

**Preparation for Session Seven**

Your readings this week in *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* all have one thing in common: living *without*. Read verses/chapters 18, “Living without Rules”; 19, “Living without attachment”; 20, “Living without Striving”; 24 “Living without Excess”; 30, “Living without Force ”; 31, “Living without Weapons ”; 63, “Living without Difficulties”; 69, “Living without Enemies”; 71, “Living without Sickness”; 79, “Living without Resentments”; and 81 “Living without Accumulating.”

In *Creating a World that Works for All,* read pp. pp. 185-201, “The External Revolution – Practicing Inclusivity with Others.”

As you are reading the above materials, make notes on what *you* are willing to live without in order to be more inclusively for something and against nothing.

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To what are you willing to commit on behalf of being for something and against nothing?

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**Session Eight**

We’re going to begin this session by seeing how well you’ve gotten the most important insight of this seminar, as well as of every other course that you have ever taken from me.

* Write down the address of your home.
* Read out loud what you’ve written down.

Is what you wrote down the address of your home, or the address of the place in which you lodge your home? If the latter, now write down the address of your home. Is what you wrote down your permanent home? Self-mastery is the house-keeping with which one maintains one’s permanent home.

[Everywhere I Go, Here I Am]

[Oh, How Lucky I Am] *-* [Pass Your Love Around] *–* [Heidy Heidy Ho]

[Holy]

A house is not a home. Yet we spend most of our lives in support of housing maintenance rather than in support of home maintenance. Mistaking one’s housing for one’s home illustrates Albert Einstein’s maxim, "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." In other words, so long as we spend most our lives in support of our being of the world than of our being in the world, we cannot solve the problems that arise from our being in the world.

**This week**

One thing done to be more inclusive (from session two):

* David: Forgive the rich and powerful
* Chuck: Take initiative with young adults
* Loretta: Unconditionally accept what is, via being in touch with feelings.
* Karen: Give loving and compassionate prayer in times of fear, judgment, etc.
* Dorothy: Be more inclusive with those who don’t include me.

**At-home exercises:**

In *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life* read verses/chapters 17, “Living as an Enlightened Leader”; 7, “Living beyond Ego”; 13, “Living with an Independent Mind”; 25 “Living from Greatness”; 60, “Living with Immunity to Evil”; 72, “Living with Awe and Acceptance ”; 73, “Living in Heaven’s Net”; 76, “Living by Bending”; and 81 “Living Your Own Utopia.”

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**In-class activity and questions:**

* Baptism and right hemisphere experience.
* How can you let go of something you don’t know that you’ve taken on?
* How can you give what you don’t have?
* How can you have what you don’t give?
* All forgiveness is self-forgiveness for having bound oneself to unwanted external control. Forgiveness is the unbinding of one’s consciousness from some aspect of one’s past or current experience, thus freeing oneself from the perception of bondage to something that is external to one’s existence. Accordingly, what most requires forgiveness is the perception that forgiveness is required.

**TOI: Setting the Consciousness Arena**

[Oh, How Lucky I Am]

[Pass Your Love Around]

[Heidy-Heidy Ho]

[Holy]

We are gathered in this seminar for a grand opening, for grandly opening ourselves up to do something that has been talked about all over the world for the past 45 years, even though it has been seen by only a few people to whom I have previously shown it. Most of you, therefore, are about to see what that “everybody’s talkin’ ‘bout it” thing looks like for the very first time. Those of you who may have seen my earlier demonstrations of this, please keep its secret to yourself so as not to dilute the experience of first-timers to this revelation.

[Pair o’ dimes shift.]

The term “**paradigm shift**” signifies a **perceptual makeover** of our collective consciousness. We’ve been talking about collective perceptual makeovers since the term “paradigm shift” was introduced in philosopher Thomas Kuhn’s 1962 book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Folks have been talking about these perceptual makeovers ever since, even though nobody has ever seen what one looks like.

I begin with this revelation because we have gathered for the purpose of facilitating and experiencing a paradigm shift in our own consciousness. Not only does understanding Tao require a perceptual makeover, so does the specific ability that our understanding of Tao will cultivate, the ability to be for something and against nothing. We are here not merely to learn *about* being for something and against nothing, we’re here to learn its practice.

My lifelong vocation of destiny has been to facilitate my own and other people’s learning and practice of metaphysical truth principles. Out of all of the statements of metaphysical truth that I have ever read or heard, one stands out above the rest, Ernest Holmes’ statement that

It would be wonderful indeed if a group of people should arrive on earth who were for something and against nothing. This would be the highest good of human organization, wouldn’t it?

Being for something and against nothing is the principle of **non-adversarial advocacy**, being for peace without being against or resorting to violence, and being inclusive rather than abusive of those who disagree with us. Such advocacy is nowhere else better described than in the *Tao Te Ching*. I first read Holmes’ vision of a non-adversarial group of people in 1979, when I was proofreading the 1959 speech in which he made the statement. I immediately wanted to be a member of that group, and until three years ago despaired of ever finding it. In the three decades that have passed since I was moved to such membership, no group has evidenced more potential to live the principle of non-adversarial advocacy than NTMO. Thus my life-culminating mission is to facilitate the NTMO community’s learning, understanding and practice of non-adversarial advocacy. This practice brings into focus all metaphysical truth principles, including those which we only dimly understand and perhaps some of which we are not as yet aware of.

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Perceptual makeovers are facilitated most effectively and efficiently with metaphors: literary metaphors, musical metaphors, visual metaphors, action metaphors, behavioral metaphors and multiple combinations thereof that sometimes take the form of semi-forbidden mixed metaphors, and especially those we call “puns.” A pun is so-called because it is one letter longer than the euphemistic literary metaphor for strong odors, “P. U.”

In the so-called “politics of experience,” the euphemism “P. U.” is a politically correct way of situations like one that I once handled poorly. As I came home from work one evening to my first wife and our two young children, upon entering the house I sniffed and asked “who vomited?” It turns out that my wife had just finished baking one of my favorite dinners, lasagna smothered in parmesan cheese. While I might have still lost face by instead uttering the metaphor, “P. U.”, I would have avoided the potential loss of far more face than I did by asking “who vomited?” Fortunately, however, my wife thought it was funny, so all four of us ended up having a big laugh. (The children were probably too young to appreciate the literal humor of the situation, but as all babies do they got caught up in the sense of humor that made it possible for their parents to laugh about the incident.

I share the incident as a distant early warning that this seminar has been baked up in a smother of metaphors. For example, the three songs we’ve just anchored in our consciousness are concatenations of all the forms of metaphor I mentioned: literary, musical, visual, active and behavioral. As one of us will explain to the rest of us a little later, each of these songs is a behavioral prayer.

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The paradigm shift from adversarial to non-adversarial advocacy may be metaphorically understood as a perceptual makeover of our sense and practice of timing, a makeover in which our experiencing of “right now” is brought into resonance with our experiencing of the “long now”

[loooooong nowwwwwwwww]

The “long now” bears the fruit of the past that is no longer and is pregnant with the seeds of the future that is not yet. The “right now” consists of what is sandwiched between the no longer and the not yet. Just as the purpose of a sandwich is to blend our experience and assimilation of its middle with our experience and assimilation of its packaging, the purpose of right now is similarly that of blending ourexperience of “right now” time with our experience of the “no longer” and “not yet” slices of “long time.”

This is the first mixture of dozens of new metaphors to which you will be exposed in this seminar, many of which will emerge spontaneously in “right now” moments rather than being premeditated in the longer now as this one was. Metaphors have far more power to facilitate perceptual makeovers than does academically linear prose.

For example, there will be numerous occasions in this seminar when referring to the distinction between “right now” and “long now” will save us from excess verbiage (to cite some more metaphors) by “saying more with less,” by “tickling our fancy,” by doing what Ernest Holmes in one of his radio programs called “shortcutting the difference” – and in the case of mixed metaphors by “batch processing.” The mixed-metaphorical “long now” sandwich with “right now” between the “no longer” and “the not yet” slices of time says a whole lot more with less, it shortcuts the difference of past, present and future, it processes a whole batch of non-linear contingencies, and tickles the fancy of those of us who aren’t so unduly fancy that we’re in resistance to mixed metaphors and thus have no fixations against mixation.

This course is a metaphoric overview of everything I have learned in the past 70 years, and of all the ways I’ve learned how to be fruitful with my learning. Those of you who have met Ample Leeway will recognize where some of my ways of thinking and being come from. And if you haven’t met him yet, he’ll show up in person one of these evenings.

The prescription for taking the mixed metaphor trip while sober is the opposite of Timothy Leary’s prescription for drug trips: instead of tuning out, turning on and taking a solo trip, I urge you to turn *out* for every seminar session, tune *into* its vibration, and enjoy its guided tour of the *Tao Te Ching*

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One way to empower our learning an practice of metaphysical truth principles is to mentally and emotionally anchor them in our consciousness with musical affirmations like those with which we began. The musical storage of thought forms in consciousness increases our likelihood of recollecting them in situations that call for our remembrance of their truth. Since the purpose of melodically anchoring thought forms in our consciousness is to enchant ourselves with their truth, and because singing these melodies is similar to chanting, I refer to them metaphorically as “enchantments.”

One of my favorite enchantments affirms the Golden Rule, “Do unto others what you would have them do unto you.” As with gravity, the Golden Rule is not just a good idea, it’s the law, an ethical version of the universal truth principle known more generically as “the principle of universal reciprocity.” The term “principle” signifies an overall truth that includes many subordinate truths, while “laws” signify the forms of expression in which principles show up. Like all other principles, therefore, reciprocity is an overall truth that incorporates many subordinate expressions of truth in lawful form. The words “principle” and “truth” are therefore synonymous, while laws specify the ways that principles and truth manifest.

Insofar as the Golden Rule is sometimes called a “principle” it is a moral principle that honors the overall principle of cosmic reciprocity.

The Golden Rule is affirmed in all great religions and codes of morality. For example:

Buddhism: “Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful."

Confucianism: “Never impose on others what you would not choose for yourself.”

Hinduism: “Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you.”

Islam: “None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.”

Judaism: “That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. That is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation; go and learn.” (Hillel)

Thirty-seven versions of the Golden Rule (a.k.a. “The Ethic of Reciprocity”), as proclaimed in 21 religions, are cited at http://www.religioustolerance.org/reciproc.htm, plus additional versions from philosophers and moral systems, links to numerous resources on the Golden Rule, and some exceptions that are claimed in adversarial situations. The most comprehensive Golden Rule website is http://www.scarboromissions.ca/Golden\_rule/index.php

A shorter generic name for the principle of reciprocity that is honored by the Golden Rule is “karma,” which is sometimes stated colloquially as the Boomerang Rule: “What goes around comes around.” As metaphysician Florence Scovel Shinn put it, “The game of life is a game of boomerangs. Our thoughts, deeds and words return to us sooner or later, with astounding accuracy.” In any event, whatever we think about and say or do to others becomes what they will eventually think, say and do to us in turn, because our thoughts, words and actions set us up for feedback that corresponds with whatever we feed forward.

In accordance the truth of universal reciprocity, others won’t care about what you think unless they think that you care. If you care about them enough to send your very best, they will respond in kind. If you care so little about them that you send your worst, they will respond unkindly. And if you care about them not at all, they will mirror your indifference

The Golden Rule is a therefore a practice of enlightened self-interest, because we inevitably *are* done unto by others no more or less caringly than we do unto them. We live in a boomerang cosmos that reciprocates all activity, be it the activity of gravity, depravity, civility, humility, empathy, apathy, or whatever. Every physical and metaphysical influence in the universe has a corresponding reciprocal influence, which Newton’s second law of motion acknowledges as reciprocated corresponding activity: “For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.” And so it likewise is with our projected thoughts, feelings and actions, and with the entwinements of thought and feeling that we call our “emotions.”

Since whatever goes forth from us inevitably comes around to greet us in kind, whether we like the universal principle of reciprocity or not, it best serves ourselves as well as others to project thoughts, feelings, emotions and actions of love.

[Pass Your Love Around]

I asked you to get up and do what the song says rather than just sit and sing it, because its thought form is anchored in your consciousness even more firmly via the practice of what Barbara Marx Hubbard calls “embodied prayer” and I call “behavioral prayer.” To the extent that we behaviorally embody any prayer, we live the prayer rather than merely give it. The prayer shows up from us *as* us.

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In our metaphysical understanding of reality, there is only one source and cause of all that is real manifests in many forms, yet the many forms exist in one massive coherent interrelationship with one another and with their source. The whole creates itself in the form of many parts and the many parts share a common relationship to the whole. From one whole come the many and to the one whole the many forever tend to return because everything is connected to everything else in common manifestation of their wholeness.

Concerning our own relationship to this whole-part model of reality, an unorthodox self-proclaimed monk who calls himself “Brother Void” has written a book on guerilla metaphysics entitled *Daily Afflictions: The Agony of Being Connected to Everything in the Universe.* His book is a collection of brief notes from the underbelly of metaphysics, which he offers in the form of affirmations that are intended to guide us in the practice of making lemons out of lemonade by de-constructing various aspects of life’s downside. One of its de-construction practices is called “Breaking Up with Yourself.” Since some form of breaking up with ourselves is prerequisite to our breaking through to a more proficient level of self-mastery, its advice is worth heeding:

[Breaking Up with Yourself, p. 42]

The most firmly anchored of all metaphysical truths is the universal principle of prime location, the universal truth that at any given moment nothing is ever anywhere other than where it is. For example, I am never elsewhere than right here within my own being. Thus even in the process of breaking up with myself I cannot divorce myself from my eternal marriage to my own being. The broken pieces remain right here, and sooner or later *I* am the one who is called on to re-member them – quite literally to rearrange the membership of my inner being in a more effective expression of myself than the expression thereof the preceded by break-up with myself.

The necessity of breaking up with oneself is illustrated by my favorite song on the subject of metaphysical malpractice

[Keep It Simple]

Whenever there is a breakdown of order, some breaking-up is required for the restoration of order in a more suitable form. For instance, when one decides it is time to restore order to one’s kitchen cabinets or tool chest, one begins by actually increasing the existing disorder so that the parts can be reorganized more effectively as a whole.

The ultimate agony of being connected to everything else in the midst of a never-ending potential for break-ups is honored in Ani DiFranco’s song, “Reflection”, with its statement that “We didn’t know when we signed up for forever that it would be in here.” That is her way of acknowledging another universal principle, the **principle of prime location**: Everywhere I go, here I am.

[Everywhere I go, here I am]

Even in those moments when I experience being beside myself, even when I experience meeting myself coming and going, the experience is always and only occurring here and never elsewhere. All of my self’s experiencing is always and only happening within, which includes all of my self’s experiencing of other selves. Even my experience of outer things that happen to me is invariably experienced within me. Even when I’m “out there” beyond my body, as I myself once was during a so-called “near death experience,” the “I” that left my body was still here. Nothing can happen in my experiencing of awareness until it happens to me. Nor can anything that I am not aware of be experienced by me, because everywhere I go, *here* I am.

[Everywhere I go, *here* I am]

“Here I am” is the universal principle of prime location. The statement “here I am” signifies the home source of my being, not the housing project that constructs and maintains my body. The “I” that is “here” is distinct from my body, which is why I signify it as “my body” rather than identify with it as being “I body.” If the body that houses me were the home source of my being, my experience of being would be transient like all of my other experiences, because my ongoing experienc*ing* would last no longer than do its momentary experienc*es*.

Nor is the home source of my being the self that my body houses, for if it were I would call it “Iself” rather than “myself.” The home source of my being is the one and only source of all being from which my sense of self emerges. The home source of my being is the only eternal constant amidst a universe of fluctuations, including the changes that occur in the self that is thus home-based.

The home source of my being is an absolute to which all else is relative, including my experience of everywhere I go. “Here I am” is an eternal-life sentence without parole or any time off for good behavior, and with no prospect of a divorce even after my body’s death. No matter what comes to pass in my life, or moves through my life, or changes in my life, all such fluctuations take place from the perspective of “here I am.”

In short: I’m a universal passenger who never leaves home, and whose home base forever stays put.

The implication of this principle of prime location is seldom appreciated by us as fully as it was by a little girl who was seen sitting atop a pile of baggage as her parents were being processed for immigration at Ellis Island as “displaced persons” shortly after World War 2. When a passing social worker remarked sympathetically, “It’s too bad you don’t have a home,” the little girl brightly replied, “Oh, we have a home, we just don’t have a house to put it in.”

The one and only thing that we can eternally and absolutely count on is that our being is never without a home base of operation, regardless of the state of its bodily housing and any surroundings, because no matter where I go and no matter what happens around me, to me, within me, or as me, *here* I consistently am.

Since the *here* that I *am* is home, everywhere I go, it is *from* home that I am

[Everywhere I go, from home I am.]

I am always and only a center of outward local expression that is emerging from an inwardly embodied universal being whose beneficial presence I locally experience as “being home.” The word “ex•press” signifies pressing outward from within. What I outwardly ex-press is an inward beingness that im•presses me. Since my home’s showing up as me is prerequisite to my showing up from it, home is *what* I am. Everywhere I go, *at* home I am.

[Everywhere I go, at home I am]

Being home is never my outward expression *there*of. Being home is what I am an embodiment *here*of. Therefore, everywhere I go, *from* here is *what* I am.

[Everywhere I go, from heream I]

The ultimate message from home base is never my momentary outward expression. The message from home base is my consistent inward expression of that which I embody even as it embodies me. Hence Emerson’s proclamation that “What you are speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say”; Buddha’s proclamation that “You cannot walk the path until you are the path”; and Gandhi’s proclamation to “be the difference you want to make in the world.” The only way to make a difference is to be it.

The universal principle of prime location empowers the staying put of that which is enduring, while all else comes to pass. As Ernest Holmes articulated the principle of prime location:

Everything in the universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part. The universe is forever uniting what is harmonious and diminishing what is not. . . . It is the unessential only that is vanishing, that the abiding may be made more clearly manifest.

The principle of prime location was also honored by the concluding proclamation in the Eagle’s song, “Hotel California”: “You can check out any time you want, but you can never leave.” *Every*where I go, here I *forever* am.

[Everywhere I go, I forever am]

The principle of prime location encompasses all of our experience. Wherever I may go in space, here is where I am. Wherever I may go in time, here is where I am. All of our thoughts, all of our feelings, and all of our other experiencing is relative to our prime location in the near and how of present moments only. We never experience a past moment, only a memory thereof in the present. We never experience a future moment, only an anticipation thereof in the present. Our present moments are the fruit of the past, not the past itself, and mixed in with the fruit of our present moments are also the seeds of future moments, not the future itself. We exist always and only in present moments, which is why each moment *is* a present. The never-ending present of our own being’s presence is the only experience we will ever have whose endurance is absolute. The reason we are spiritual beings having a human experience, rather than human beings having a spiritual experience, is because everywhere I go, heeeeere’s I AM!

[Everywhere I go, here’s *I Am*]

Since “I AM” is the ultimate home of my being, its being here is the ultimate source of my being. Thus the ultimate message from the home source of my being is, Everywhere I go, *source* I am.

[Everywhere I go, *source* I am.]

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When we have become so self-masterful that we can totally and consistently walk the talk and the song and the dance that we’ve just done, we can deliver its message without saying a single word. As for the words we speak, all talk is ultimately self-talk in any event, in accordance with Ernest Holmes’ prescription:

Talk to yourself, not to the world. There is no one to talk to but yourself because all experience takes place within. Conditions are the reflections of our meditations and nothing else.

All spoken words are ultimately feedback addressed to their speaker’s own source. Even when we assume that our speaking is addressed to others, we are still talking to ourselves in the company of others whom we are allowing to eavesdrop on our self-talk for one of two purposes: either to verify our self-talk with their own (which is more often than not our preference), or to say something that our own eavesdropping can put to good use by way of correcting, modifying or embellishing our own further self-talk. Perhaps no one has better understood the nature of our never-ending self-talk than did Marcel Proust, who spoke of its written expression as follows:

In reality, every reader is, while he is reading, the reader of his own self. The writer’s work is merely a kind of optical instrument which he offers to the reader to enable him to discern what, without this book, he would perhaps never have experienced in himself. And the recognition by the reader in his own self of what the book says is the proof of its veracity.

And so it is that we are right now gathered to re-mind ourselves into a state of non-adversarial self-mastery, by talking to ourselves about such self-mastery in the company of some others who also want to re-member where, how and who we always are, always have been, and always will be, which can be described in a single word: “holy.” *Where* I am is always and only holy ground, whether I recognize the home base of my being as my source or not. *How* I am is always and only holiness in expression, whether I am being that way or not. *Who* I am is always and only holiness incarnate, whether I let it show or not.

[Holy, all is holy]]

We are holy not because we say that this so, but because our holiness is itself forever being so. Our holiness is the presence of the **ever-present origin** of that which sources all being. Our customary term for the origin and home of our being is “God.” In this seminar, however, because the term “God” tends to be associated in our minds with something that is remote from ourselves, I choose to use the words “Source” and “Origin” to indicate the ever-present initial conditions of our being.

And what is the nature of our ever-present initial conditions, by any other name just as complete? The terms “God”, “Source” and “Origin” all signify the opening through which the harmonious energy of Creation eternally flows. “Here I AM” is the home base of that energy, which flows from within the being of each one of when we allow rather than block its flow. Hence the proclamation of philosopher Martin Heidegger’s that a person is neither a thing nor a process, rather an opening.

The *Tao Te Ching* is both an owner’s manual and an operating manual: a manual for our whole-self ownership of “here I AM” and for our operational self-mastery of the individual and collective openness of our being. *Creating a World That Works for All* is a guidebook to reestablishing and maintaining the individual and collective openness of being that we are blocking with “The Mess” of civilization’s internal contradictions.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

#### There is another enchantment that anchors the truth of how the path to self-mastery works, which was made popular in the 1960’s by Donovan Leitch:

[First There Is a Mountain]

Translation: Before I understood Tao, there was a mountain. As I was learning to understand Tao, there was no mountain. Now that I understand Tao, there is a mountain. In other words: Before I understood Tao, there was otherness. As I was learning to understand Tao, there was no otherness. As I came to understood Tao, what once was “other” became “also” and “too” in my newly acquired perception of harmonial at-one-ment that replaced my former perception of other-ment. The term “Tao” signifies the harmonial at-one-ment of all that is in the mutual interrelationship of one-to-all and all-to-one.

[First There Is Another]

The *Tao Te Ching* is a manual for self-mastery in a world where a whole lot of also’s going on, and to all of which we can harmoniously adapt as we empower ourselves to be in an inclusive “also” and “too” relationship to what we presently perceive excludingly as “other” and “apart”. *Creating a World That Works for All* is a guidebook to unblocking our individual and collective openness of being. Together they can assist us in realizing the individual perceptual makeovers and collective paradigm shift that is required to release us from our present condition of institutionalized other-ment and open us to the freely flowing energy of universally harmonial at-one-ment.

Accordingly, the objective of this seminar is to make over our perception of otherness, to shift from the paradigm of mutual other-ment to a paradigm of mutual harmonial at-one-ment, in which everything that was formerly “other” becomes as an “also/too.” In Sanskrit the paradigm of mutual harmonial at-one-ment is acknowledged in the affirmation, *Tvat tam asi,* “thou art that,” which signifies that everything is an expression of what is ultimately the same thing.

Other-ment is a barrier that exists only in perception, not in the world, a barrier that excludes us from experiencing universally mutual harmonial at-one-ment rather than (at best) merely familial, tribal and other cultural cliques of local at-one-ment. The separatist nature of this perceptual barrier, as well as the integrative outcome of its dissolution, is conveyed in a Sufi tale:

Freed from its earthly body, Ali’s Soul sought its return to Paradise. Eventually it stood before a wall that extended across its path as far on either side as the Soul could see, vanishing from view only in the haze of opposite horizons. And there before him, in the middle of the wall, was a closed door just large enough to admit the Soul’s entrance. The Soul assumed that this door was its re-entry point into Paradise

Upon turning the door’s handle and discovering that it was locked, the Soul softly knocked. From the other side came an equally soft voice, asking “Who’s there?” “It’s me,” said the Soul, assuming that its identity would be recognized by its voice. There being no response, the Soul knocked more loudly. From the other side there came an equally louder voice, asking “Who’s there?” “It’s Ali!” the Soul asserted, assuming that its identity was now sufficiently declared.

Again there was no response.

The Soul sat down before the door to ponder its situation. What was the keeper of the door expecting to hear? After considerable contemplation, the Soul recalled that only One Being is universally recognized in Paradise, that of the Ultimate Beloved. Yet again the Soul knocked, and yet again the voice asked, “Who’s there?” The Soul proclaimed, rejoicing, “It is THEE!!”.

Instantly both door and wall disappeared.

Like this Sufi tale, every religious tradition describes our worldly relationship to the ever-present origin of our being as a journey of return to Source, a journey in which we outwardly seek a homecoming with the Source from which we presume ourselves to have “fallen,” yet which nonetheless has always been, always is, and always will be forever present within us as well as within all that is around us no matter where we go.

[Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*]

Twenty years ago, while preparing an encouragement (what others call a “sermon”) for the 4th of July on the declaration of metaphysical independence, I was inspired to rewrite the Judeo-Christian myth of eternal return with a revised slandered version of the story of Adam and Eve’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden:

[“The Short Course”]

# I also summed up the metaphysical common denominator of all versions of the myth of eternal return in a poem in which God wondered how many ways the Creation could be experienced, and therefore created life – and ultimately each of us – as a way of finding out. Each of us is one of the infinite numbers of ways that Source can experience its own being. The metaphysical cycle of the myth of eternal return is an ongoing spiral of feed-forward > feed-through > feedback > feed anew via experiencing > contemplating > assimilating > modifying the Creation accordingly. The name of this process is “evolution,” which applies to Source’s experience of all aspects of Creation rather than just of its living creatures, and thereby synthesizes evolution with so-called “intelligent design” as a process of intelligent evolution.

The myth of the eternal return lurks in T. S. Eliot’s proclamation, “We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.”

The myth of the eternal return also lurks in John Dunne’s famous poetic line, “Seek not for whom the bell tolls, its tolls for thee.”

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Every place to which I go, and all that I encounter wherever I may go, emerges as do I from a single and universal opening of the common ground of all being that each of us experiences as “here-I-am.” Just as our fingers are joined to single hands, we are all islands in a single ocean of consciousness, wherein all of us are joined beneath the surface of our respective individuations of consciousness. Just as the positive and negative poles of a magnet are diverse extensions of a single energy flow, so do our diversities function as extensions of our harmonial at-one-ment rather than as oppositions to one another.

The ultimate attainment of self-mastery is to live in and from a constant realization of the harmonial at-one-ment from which our diversities emerge. The word “realization” signifies “making real,” and we are here to make real our respective locally individualized and collective masteries of the universal non-adversarial way of being that each self represents.

Another way to convey the nature of presumed oppositional barriers that don’t actually exist and the outcome of their dissolution is embodied in a Zen koan (conundrum) about a goose in a bottle:

Imagine a goose that is trapped in a bottle that has a very narrow neck. How do you free the goose without breaking the bottle?

The simplest way to free the imagined goose without breaking the bottle is to simply declare, “The goose is out of the bottle.” We always have the ability to thus dissolve imagined barriers because whatever we have constructed in our perception we can also deconstruction our perception. It is ultimately this simple (though often not as easy) to exercise our ability to make over our perceptions, shift our paradigms, and otherwise change our mind.

Nineteenth century American humorist Artemus Ward addressed the nature of barriers that exist only in our perception when he said, “It ain't so much the things you don't know that get you in trouble. It's the things you know that just ain't so.” One thing known by most of us that actually isn’t so is the presumed other-ment of what is ultimately “also” and “too.” Other-ment is a perceptually constructed barrier that has no material existence in the universe itself. The mutually harmonial at-one-ment that it perceptually obscures features only also-ness and too-ness, not otherness.

Yet we are so beholden to our perception of other-ment that we actually worship it in our religious hymns, and perhaps most evidently in the hymn, “How Great Thou Art.” I heard that hymn famously sung by George Beverley Shea when I attended a Billy Graham Crusade in Chicago’s Soldier’s Field the 1960’s. I was greatly moved by the hymn, and even answered the altar call that eventually followed. Yet the motion that moved me was an emotion of other-ment, which at its best is religiously localized to a perceived at-one-ment of a chosen few.

Like “How Great Thou Art,” almost all hymns reinforce the perception, emotion and paradigm of other-ment. Hymnodically speaking, it was also in the 1960’s that the paradigm of harmonial at-one-ment began to emerge. My very first experience of a hymn that celebrates the perception and emotion of harmonial at-one-ment was this:

[Good Vibrations]

The path *of* good vibrations is reached by walking the path *to* good vibrations. The path *to* good vibrations is sometimes experienced as a path of bad vibrations, as acknowledged in the book *Daily Afflictions: The Agony of Being Connected to Everything in the Universe.”* [Read p. 89.]

The agony of being connected to everything in the universe is overcome by loving everything in your experience until the agony ceases – by loving until it hurts to love and then continuing to love until it stops hurting to love. This approach to our agony is sometimes called “tough love” for reasons explained in another book on enlightenment, entitled *The Way of Transformation*. [Read p. xx]

The good news of the path *to* good vibrations is celebrated in Albert Camus’ statement that "In the depths of winter I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer."

The other news of the path *to* good vibrations is that it is a path from which we intermittently if not frequently go astray.

The best advice for walking the path *to* good vibrations is “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I do not pitch my tent there.”]

The only thing that brings us back to any path is our commitment to be on it.

[See “Newer Thought (Revised)”]

Te: The path of good vibrations

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**The happiest people don't have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything that they have.**

**Contemporary Contexts and Contingencies**

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-Xxxxx

Xxxxx

**Temporal contexts and contingencies**

The word “temporal” signifies the state of the world in time, i.e., what’s happening now.

Pre-sent from the past <>Present<>Pre-sensed in the future

**Procedural contexts and contingencies**

Xxxxx

**Existential contexts and contingencies**

Xxxxx

-Xxxxx

Xxxxx

Whether we recognize it or not, it is we who tell others how to treat us, and not others who tell themselves how we are to be treated. Others are told how to treat us by the way that we treat them. We are all either self-inflicted or self-empowered with our own boomerangitis. Since we meet ourselves coming in the manner of our going, it behooves every one of us to be well met. Such

**Attitudinal contexts and contingencies**

What you deny to others will be denied to you, for the plain reason that you are always legislating for yourself; all your words and actions define the world you want to live in. -Thaddeus Golas

In times of profound change, the teachable inherit the earth, while those full of knowledge find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists. -Eric Hoffer

You do not belong to you. You belong to the universe. The significance of you will remain forever obscure to you, but you may assume you are fulfilling your significance if you apply yourself to converting all your experience to highest advantage to others. -R. B**uckminster Fuller**

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**Destinal contexts and contingencies:**

A skeptical professor with great contempt said of us: “Astronomically speaking, man is but the tiniest speck in such a universe as ours.” To this another professor, equally learned, replied: “Astronomically speaking, man is the astronomer.” -Roy L. Smith

Destiny is a matter of choice, not chance.

Conscious evolution

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**Exercises**

Holocoenotic diagram exercise

* After you have cross-linked these peripheral items you may recall additional factors that hinder or contribute to the central circle, via the influence of either their presence or their absence. Note these on the periphery of your paper as well and draw all linkages they have with the other items already present.

**The Tao of causation:**

You have diagramed the Tao of integral/aggregate causation. Note how this ensembled model of integral causation differs from the piecemeal model of successive causation in which one thing brings about another, which brings about yet another and so on in a sequential “chain” of cause-and-effect.

<http://glossary.gardenweb.com/glossary/holocoenotic.html>

The theory that environmental factors act as a [whole](http://glossary.gardenweb.com/glossary/whole.html) or [aggregate](http://glossary.gardenweb.com/glossary/aggregate.html) in their effect upon organisms.

<http://zipcodezoo.com/Glossary/holocoenotic.asp>

(Gr. holos: whole, entire; koinos: common) Denotes the interdependent parts of a coherent indivisible whole and applies to the interrelationship of nature and humankind; about the theory that environmental factors act as a whole or aggregate in their effect upon organisms.

[http://www.google.com/search?q=holocoenotic&rls=com.microsoft:\*:IE-SearchBox&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&sourceid=ie7&rlz=1I7SUNA](http://www.google.com/search?q=holocoenotic&rls=com.microsoft:*:IE-SearchBox&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&sourceid=ie7&rlz=1I7SUNA)

**A. Holocoenotic approach.**

The holocoenotic approach to a plant’s environment stresses that a plant responds simultaneously to all environmental factors that impinge upon it. This is a holistic approach to the environment in the sense that it recognizes that the environment as a whole affects the plant.

Holocoenotoic is derived from *holocoen* a term coined by the marine ecologist Karl Frederick in the 19th century to emphasize the interdependence and interconnections of organisms with their environment.

In forestry the concept of site (see Kimmins pages 363-364) is a holistic or holocoenotic approach to the tree’s environment.

The practical value of the holistic approach is that it reduces the chances that we will over-emphasize a single environmental factor in trying to explain plant distributions or plant performance. An example of an old-fashioned single-factor approach in ecology is C.H. Merriam’s life zone classification based exclusively on temperature.

**B. Factorial [piecemeal] approach.**

In a factorial approach to the plant’s environment (such as the Concept of the Operational Environment described below) we identify a number of parameters (i.e. environmental factors) to try to better understand the relative importance of different aspects of the environment in determining plant distribution and performance. For example, foresters often identify numerous *site factors* (e.g. elevation, soil depth, precipitation, etc.) in their attempt to quantitatively describe the concept of *site*.

Although at first glance the holocoenotic and factorial approaches may seem contradictory, actually they are compatible approaches. We will use a factorial approach in discussing the plant’s environment, but the holocoenotic approach will remind us that the plant actually responds to all environmental factors. This is important in reminding us that individual factors (e.g. temperature, moisture, etc.) are not independent variables (i.e. they interact among themselves).

*2. Concept of critical factors*

Whenever an environmental factor (resource) approaches a threshold for the growth, survival, and/or reproduction of a plant, its relative effect on the plant is *critical*.

TAKE HOME:

Inventory of regrets.

What would make me more inclusive exercise.

Holocoenotic diagram exercise

Our mission in this class is to reinvent our lives by transforming our perceptions – a perceptual makeover that facilitates self-mastery.

* What “self-mastery” means to me is . . .
* When I have accomplished full self-mastery, the difference this accomplishment will make is . . .

Whenever you are experiencing unloving feelings, love your experience of unloving feelings and love yourself for being able to have the experience. Whenever you experience being upset, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, psychologically, socially, politically, economically, etc., love your experience of being upset and love yourself for being able to experience being upset. While it may not be always possible to experience love, it is always possible to be loving of your experience.

Write down the word or phrase that best says in English what the term Tao signifies in Chinese.

[The dynamics of Tao may be defined as “omni-dimensional interbeing”.]

Write down the most important thing you have learned from your preparation for tonight’s class.

AT CONCLUSION: Write down one thing you could do between now and next session that would make you a more inclusive person.

Share what you wrote down at last session to do this week on behalf of being a more inclusive person. If you didn’t do this, answer instead the question, what would it take for me to be a more flowing person?

AT CONCLUSION: Write down one thing you could do between now and next session that would make you a more inclusive person.

On a half sheet of paper write:

In all that I have read in Wayne Dyer’s book and the e-mails I have received, what I would most like to know more about is:

Re-gather in your groups from last week and share with each other what you have done in the past week to be a more inclusive person.

Make a list of every person, thing, event, circumstance or situation in your life about which you presently have unloving feelings, include any unloving feelings you may have concerning yourself.

Reduce the list to a single item by successively subtracting the item that is least unloving.

Close your eyes and become aware of your most unloving feeling. I will walk around the room and touch each of you on the shoulder while giving you an instruction.

Love your ability to feel what you are feeling right now.

What was your experience of this exercise?

Loving our ability to experience something changes our relationship to and of that something.

**Beginner’s mind**

You can learn new things at any time in your life if you're willing to be a beginner.

If you actually learn to like being a beginner, the whole world opens up to you.

Barbara Sher

If you would educate a man, fill his belly and empty his mind.

*-Tao Te Ching*

Tao Te Ching #11:

The wheel’s hub holds thirty spokes.

Utility depends on the hole through the hub.

The potter’s clay forms a vessel.

It is the space within that serves.

A house is built with solid walls.

The nothingness of window and door alone renders it usable.

That which exists may be transformed.

What is non-existent has boundless uses.

Our minds are like parachutes: they work best when they are open. Hence the *Tao Te Ching’s* prescription to educate a man by filling his belly and emptying his mind, which in terms of Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs means satisfying the deficiency needs of xxx (as signified by “filling the belly”) in order to liberate our being needs of xxx (as signified by “emptying the mind”). An empty mind is one that has been wedded of all distractions to fresh and clear thinking. Our thoughts, ideas, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, etc. tend to be mind-stuffers – existing thought forms that distract us from assimilating new thought forms. In Eastern perspectives on thinking, such emptiness is called “beginner’s mind.”

Do everything with a mind that lets go. Do not expect any praise or reward. If you let go a little, you will have a little peace. If you let go a lot, you will have a lot of peace. If you let go completely, you will know complete peace and freedom. Your struggles with the world will have come to an end. -**Ajahn Chah**

When a man lacks steadiness, unable to control his mind,

His senses are unmanageable horses.

But if he control his mind, a steady man,

they are manageable horses.

He who calls intellect to manage the reins of his mind

reaches the end of his journey, finds there all-pervading Spirit.

-Katha Upanishad

The mind verily is the world (samsara)

One should purify it strenuously.

One assumes the form of that which is in one's mind.

This is the eternal secret.

-Maitri-Upanishad

Beginner’s mind is almost totally absent from Western perspectives on thinking, two notable exceptions being these:

It should be the chief aim of a [teacher] to exhibit himself in his own true character – that is, as an ignorant man thinking, actively utilizing his small share of knowledge…. We must be aware of ‘inert ideas’ – that is to say, ideas that are merely received into the mind without being utilized, or tested, or thrown into fresh combination. -Alfred North Whitehead

Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. . . . The point is to live everything. Live the questions now. -Rainer Maria Rilke

What is signified by the term “beginner’s mind” is sometimes also signified as “original face,” as in the Zen koan, “What was your original face before you were born?” Similarly, what was your original knowing before it took form?

The state of mind most conducive to original thinking is what the *Tao Te Ching* signifies as “beginner’s mind”, which is consciousness that has been emptied of all inaccuracy of perception and conception in full recovery of its pristine freshness, clarity, tranquility, elasticity and creative quietude. One’s mind must be empty of all else before we can become **mindful** of the way we go about creating and driving our individual experiences of being, having and doing..

Beginner’s mind empowers the continuation of inquiry as we to swim in our questions via strokes of ongoing and ongrowing inquiry, rather than drown in our answers via the *dis*continuation of inquiry. Drowning in our answers is the essence of closed-mindedness, whose symptoms include “the paralysis of analysis”, “hardening of the categories” and “fundamentalism” – mentalism that has become bankrupt for lack of further funds.

Tao champions the cultivation of “beginners mind” that is emptied of all belief, all assumptions, all conceptions, all conclusions, all thoughts, all ideas – a mind that is so utterly empty of any and all *forms* of knowing that it knows all that is *as* it is, knows reality in and as its pristine natural order, both the content and context of which is constantly modifying its form from moment to moment. Accordingly, from the perspective of beginner’s mind in contrast to pre-fabricated mind, if by anything I say today means exactly what it meant to me at this same time yesterday, last week, last month or last year, I have learned nothing in the meantime about what I am saying, even though there is always more to be known about everything.

The attainment of beginner’s mind requires us to dismantle the structure of our pre-fabricated knowing. Such dismantling does not signify the elimination of what you know, rather the deconstruction of what you know so that your knowing can readily take new forms in the presence of new information. What makes beginner’s mind essential to new learning is that our thinking seldom takes new forms in the presence of new information. Most people change their thinking only in the presence of new experience.

The ultimate purpose of this course is for us to do new thinking, to think anew not only about what we think and how we think, but to think newly *with* what and how we think. More important than what we think and how we think is *that* we think, and that our thinking be fresh rather than pre-fabricated. Hence the requirement for beginner’s mind, which is open to thinking that is cleansed of adversarial and other non-co-operative perceptions and conceptions, and is distinguished by its clarity, its tranquility, its elasticity, and most importantly its freedom from the known – not its freedom *of* the known because knowing is absent, rather freedom *from* the fossilization of our knowing that is present.

(I have seen the original face of beginner’s mind: Holly and sand, myself and word, Jim Vargas and spoon.)

**TAO**

Most simply stated, Tao is the hidden wholeness of all that is.

**Aspects of Tao**

**The Tao of Inclusivity:**

The very molecules that that make up your body, the atoms that construct the molecules, are traceable to the crucibles that were once the centers of high mass stars that exploded their chemically rich guts into the galaxy, enriching pristine gas clouds with the chemistry of life. So we’re all connected with each other biologically, to the Earth chemically, and to the rest of the universe atomically. That’s kind of cool. That makes me smile, and I actually feel quite large at the end of that. It’s not that we’re better than the universe, we are part of the universe. We’re in the universe and the universe is in us. -Neal deGrasse Tyson

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**Understanding Tao :**

We begin with a definition of reality that is compatible with Tao:

Reality is that which makes it possible for us to have experience.

Insofar as there is agreement on what is real, our experience of reality is shared. Insofar as there is not agreement on what is real, our experience of reality is not shared.

In any event, experience is our only point of reference to reality. Nothing is more real to anyone than his or her experience.

Presumably there is a reality independent of human perception thereof – such as the reality of a universe that preceded the existence of human perception by 13 billion years. But what reality is TO US will never be more than what we individually and collectively make of IT.

I presume only to have addressed your question, because no person can answer it to another’s complete satisfaction.

Nor has this person yet succeeded in answering it to his own complete satisfaction.”

Some doses of shared reality:

People don’t care what you think until they think that you care.

Looking for reality in the wrong places.

Dory Previn: Mythical Kings and Iguanas, I Danced and Danced

Looking for reality in the right places

Lee: Is That All There Is

Grateful Dead: Ripple (radiate waves of Tao)

**What Tao is All About.**

The place to find is within yourself.

-Joseph Campbell

Just as Christianity is all about representing Jesus, to the extent that it misrepresents what Jesus was about. Similarly, knowing about Tao in terms of nameable processes, structures and forms is of far greater benefit than it is useful. It is only as we know what Tao is about as primordial un-nameable essence that our knowing becomes useful to our enjoyment of knowledge’s benefits. (See *Tao Te Ching*, Verse #11)

Tao is far less the answer to all of our questions than it is the question to all of our answers. Accordingly, our study together is dedicated primarily to questioning our answers, and only secondarily to answering our questions. Answering a question is of far more benefit than utility, because (again recalling *Tao Te Ching* Verse #11) it tends to fill the space that was opened by the question it presumably “settles”. Answers are useful only to the extent that they are the seeds of further questions. Accordingly, the most useful answer to a question is often another question that keeps the space of inquiry open rather than closes it.

What Tao calls “beginner’s mind” empowers us to continually swim in our questions via ever ongoing and ongrowing inquiry, rather than drown in our answers via *dis*continuation of inquiry. Drowning in our answers is the essence of closed-mindedness, whose symptoms include “the paralysis of analysis”, “hardening of the categories” and “fundamentalism”. Fundamentalism is a symptom of mentalism that has become bankrupt for lack of further funds.

Only via continuous inquiry may we look for Tao in all of the right places as prescribed by Alan Cohen: “If you want to find God, hang out in the spaces between your thoughts.”

Tao’s principle of emptying the mind is violated by those whose minds are filled with answers, because the most effective way to close ourselves off to further thinking is to allow ourselves to be had by our conclusions, rather than allow our conclusions to be a point of departure for ongrowing inquiry. Answers serve us best when we employ them as a means to the further liberation that every conclusion provides: a new point of departure for emptying our mind of yesterday’s outworn answers in the light of today’s new questioning.

Destiny is a matter of choice, not chance.

Mountains and valleys

outgoing <> outgrowing

infinite expansiveness

**Tao Itself:**

Opening (and shaded) metaphysical prescript on “The prepositional index to individualized reality.”

Hebrews 1:13 and Emerson’s liquid universe.

Tao is knowable both by its eternal indwelling ***essence*** and its ever-changing ***evidence***. Just as a map is not the territory that it signifies, nor is a menu the meals that it signifies, neither is the evidence of Tao the essence thus signified.

The ***essence*** of Tao:

pre-existence and pre-experience

indwelling (TdC: “interiority”; TNH: “interbeing”; interconnectivity: Indra’s net)

eternal (constant and enduring)

formlessness

the universal Source and beneficial presence and power of common unity within and among all that is, etc.

that which neither knows nor shows distinction, yet within which all distinctions co-exist

the landscape of pre-manifest reality

co-operation (working together)

interdependence

absolute information

The ***evidence*** of Tao:

Ex-istence and ex-perience

outpicturing

mutable (inconstant and ongrowing)

formal process and structure

the localized presence and power of common unity

all that knows and shows distinction

the landscape of manifest reality

contrast (appearing to be apart)

independence ( in dependence)

relative in formation

Tao is

For me, the term “Tao” signifies the universally indwelling and eternally constant and consistent Source and deepest interior of all that ever is, ever has been and ever will be, and of all that ever happens, ever has happened and ever will happen. Tao is what Teilhard de Chardin called “interiority” and what Buddhist Monk Thich Nhat Hanh calls “Interbeing”.

The interbeing of all that has been, is, and shall be.

Tao is characterized as:

Co-operation and co-respondence

Because Tao is as invisible to the senses as is gravity and electricity, we no more know what Tao is than we know what gravity is or what electricity is. Like the nature of gravity and electricity, the nature of Tao can only be inferred from its evidence. Furthermore, the languages of metaphor, simile (i.e. what Tao is “like”), symbolism and graphic representation are more revealing of its nature than the language of alphabetic abstraction.

For example: The alphabetic abstraction “national flag” is far less revealing of what it signifies than is an actual national flag, and an actual national flag is far less revealing of the further context of the nation for which is stands, making it more than a mere piece of multi-colored cloth on a stick. The words “national flag” point to a physical manifestation that the words merely signify rather than fully replicate, and the manifestation thus signified exists in still further signification (and again not replication) of the contextual nation-state that determines its manifest relevance. Therefore, relationship between a nation-state and the words “national flag” is analogous to the relationship between the sun and a finger that points at the moon. Without the sun’s light, no moon would be seen for a finger to be pointed at. Thus every word is at least twice removed from its manifest physical context, to say nothing of its pre-manifest metaphysical context and its supreme context in Tao.

Tao is most readily represented symbolically:

Destiny is a matter of choice, not chance.

Mountains and valleys

outgoing <> outgrowing

infinite expansiveness

Yin-Yang

The Mandala of Being

Self <-> world interrelationship (one’s interconnectivity with all that manifests)

Greater comprehends lesser: worms crawling out of water.

Blind man touching a snowflake.

Origin <>destiny relationship (sequential order of emergence)

Destiny is a matter of choice, not chance.

Fate is the outcome of self-management .

Water (“Flow” poem.)

Tao is the supreme context of all else that is metaphysically pre-manifest in mind or physically manifest in material process or form, while being itself no thing that is metaphysically pre-manifest in the form of thought or is physically manifest in the form of thing. Thus Tao precedes all that is metaphysical and physical, which are at most mere evidence of Tao and not Tao itself. Tao is so indescribable in either thought, word or thing that, as the *Tao Te Ching* accordingly reports, Tao that can be told about or named is not Tao that eternally is. The only way to describe Tao is to manifest Tao in action and deed.

Some examples of Tao manifest in action and deed:

* Four forms of personal interrelationship, of which only the fourth represents Tao in evidence of non-clinging embrace. (When you come, we welcome you; when you stay we do not hold on to you; when you leave we do not pursue you.)
* Sponginess – evidence of return to natural order.
* Wheels on ice – evidence of struggle-free functional relationship, a.k.a. “right relationship.
* Stuck jar lid – evidence of struggle-free functional action, a.k.a. “right action”.
* Juggling cups into a stack – evidence of struggle-free functional spacing and timing, a.k.a. “right timing”.
* The interbeing of all things: evidence of the universal struggle-free functional interrelationship of all that is pre-manifest and manifest, a.k.a. “systemic” or “holistic” relationship. As interbeing is described by Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hahn in his book, *The Heart of Understanding*,

If you are a poet, etc.

Interbeing is not Tao, nor is interbeing about Tao. It is only evidential of Tao as the omni-reciprocal at-one-ment of all that is.

Since all relationships are co-operatively omni-reciprocal, every relationship is an interrelationship and each interrelationship is a convergence of all things that are pre-manifest and manifest in the universe. Astronomer Carl Sagan honored Tao in the art of cooking when he quipped, “If you want to bake a cake from scratch, you begin by creating a universe.”

An anecdote that periodically circulates the Internet similarly honors Tao:

Emboldened by humankind’s increasing command of molecular, atomic, and genetic engineering, thereby wielding powers that were formerly attributed to God, the scientific community decided that our species had no further requirement for a deity. A representative was therefore deputized to inform God that He could take the rest of eternity off.

God was unconvinced. “Do you really think that you can create life from scratch exactly the way I did?”

“No problem,” said the scientist, as he stooped to pick up a handful of dirt.

“No, no,” said God. “That’s not the way I did it.”

“What do you mean?” asked the scientist.

“Get your own dirt.”

Tao is evidenced in our realization that while we are not the sole creators of that which precedes our existence, we are the sole creators of how we experience what precedes our existence.

In summary of “What Tao Is”:

* Tao is the ultimate non-manifest context of all that is real, the intangible presence throughout the manifest cosmos of unformed and infinitely open content-less being.
* Tao is at one with all that is, as the non-manifest context of unbroken, undivided, untroubled and unbounded openness through and from which all of the pre-manifest and manifest content and process of reality emerges.
* Tao is the pure and unstructured is-ness which is the source of all that does pre-manifest and manifest as content, process, structure and form.
* Tao is the universal formless context of all that has been, is, and will be, of all that has happened, is happening, and will happen, and of all that has been done, is done and will be done.
* Tao can be no further described because all descriptive and explanatory language signifies content, process, structure and form, none of which are qualities of Tao. Tao’s only quality is its openness, the non-being and non-doing which is the context of all pre-manifest and manifest being and doing.

**What Tao Does:**

**The Tao creates the one**, etc.

**The Way Tao Works:**

**How to Use Tao:**

Honor the thing-ness of all that manifests, via co-operative right relationship to its substance, structure and form.

Honor the no-thingness of whatever it manifests, via co-operative right relationship to its utility.

Although utility depends on the substance, structure and form of what is utilized, it is other and more than the substance, structure and form that one utilizes. Taking advantage of substance, structure and form is the essence of what we today call “consumerism”. Utilizing what the advantage of substance, structure and form makes possible is what has in all ages been called “service”.

**Tao as Principle: Non-Being and Non-Doing**

Be still and know that I am God

-God within Us All

The silence of the heart is much more important than the silence of the mouth. A person may outwardly silent, but if in their heart they are condemning others, they are babbling unceasingly. The silent heart is untroubled by anything that takes place in one’s experience. -Author unknown

There is nothing in any written or spoken word that can fully answer questions like “What is God?”, “What is Reality?”, “What is Tao?”, “What is consciousness?”, “What is experience?”, etc. While these questions can be addressed they cannot be fully answered. This is because both reality itself and our consciousness thereof have a built-in uncertainty principle. Hence the observation of theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, that the politics of experience allows for only “approximate solutions to insoluble problems.”

The *Tao Te Ching* is one of the most valuable resources that addresses both the uncertainty principle and what this principle is certain about. Insofar as the foregoing questions are somewhat answerable,

The essence of these rules was instinctively known by you at birth. (Grasp)

**Embodying Tao: Show Stoppers**

Our mission in this class is to reinvent our lives by transforming our perceptions – a perceptual makeover that facilitates self-mastery.

* What “self-mastery” means to me is . . .
* When I have accomplished full self-mastery, the difference this accomplishment will make is . . .

Whenever you are experiencing unloving feelings, love your experience of unloving feelings and love yourself for being able to have the experience. Whenever you experience being upset, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, psychologically, socially, politically, economically, etc., love your experience of being upset and love yourself for being able to experience being upset. While it may not be always possible to experience love, it is always possible to be loving of your experience.

Henley poem

Practicing the keys to inclusivity – the constancy of Tao (self-taofication)

Presuppositions.

* Tao is the essence that precedes all existence and which permeates all that exists by the infusion of its essence within all that exists.
* The *Tao Te Ching* is best understood as a book about the context of our perception and experience rather than a book about the content of our thoughts.
* “. . . no one has the power to make you uneasy without your consent.” (p. 162)
  + Steiner
  + Frankl
* Impartiality of Tao – no privileged vantage point in the universe and no privileged perspective on the universe.
  + “That’s right, that’s right.’
* Constancy of Tao (eternal = forever constant and enduring)
* Integrity of Tao
* Resiliency of Tao
* Appreciation of Tao – growing in value

**Understanding Tao:**

Tao is the meta-context of all other contexts and of all content, itself included and not separate.

The Way that Can Be Followed (wayed) is “not a changelenss way” ~ p. 233, *Te of Piglet*

We begin with a definition of reality that is compatible with Tao:

Reality is that which makes it possible for us to have experience.

Insofar as there is agreement on what is real, our experience of reality is shared. Insofar as there is not agreement on what is real, our experience of reality is not shared.

In any event, experience is our only point of reference to reality. Nothing is more real to anyone than his or her experience.

Presumably there is a reality independent of human perception thereof – such as the reality of a universe that preceded the existence of human perception by 13 billion years. But what reality is TO US will never be more than what we individually and collectively make of IT.

I presume only to have addressed your question, because no person can answer it to another’s complete satisfaction.

Nor has this person yet succeeded in answering it to his own complete satisfaction.”

“…the Primordial Reason, or the Sublime Intelligence that which created, and which governs the world…” (Legge 13)

“…the initial principle of life and order…” (Legge, p. 13)

The way of nature’s processes, methods and laws. (Legge, p.14)

A mode of being, not of thinking. (Legge, p.15)

“…the spontaneous operating cause of all movement in the phenomena of the universe…” (Legge, p.15)

“…was before God {who is] what He is by virtue of [Tao’s] operation?” (Legge, p, 19)

“…an evolution and not a creation [that came not] into existence, but into operation…spontaneously of itself.” (Legge 21)

Life is a “coming forth” and death an “entering in”. (Legge, p. 21)

“…there is in him no place of death.” (v. 33) (Legge, p. 25)

“Dispensing with the use of means.” (V. 40) (Legge, p. 27)

Tao exceeds our ability to describe and define what it signifies because it honors the reality and worth of what is not, as well as the reality and worth of what is. Its integration of what is with what is not accredits an essential quality of reality that the sensory-bound intellect that cannot see, hear, smell, taste nor touch. Yet even though we are therefore unable to describe and define what Tao is, we can describe and define what it resembles. And what Tao most resembles is

* an eye that can see what itself is
* an ear that can hear what itself is
* a nose that can smell what itself is
* a tongue that can taste what itself is
* a touch that can touch what itself is
* a feeling that can feel what itself is
* a finger that can point to what itself is

and thus a knower who fully knows who is knowing, and an experiencer who fully experiences that which is experiencing. Tao is reality’s inside looking out *as* itself even as its outside is looking in *at* itself, thus seeing its inside from both perspectives and its outside from both perspectives.

The mutually inclusive realities of both what is and what is not are addressed throughout the 81 verses of the *Tao te Ching,* and especially in its 11th verse:

The wheel’s hub holds thirty spokes.

Utility depends on the hole through the hub.

The potter’s clay forms a vessel.

It is the space within that serves.

A house is built with solid walls.

The nothingness of window and door alone renders it usable.

That which exists may be transformed.

What is non-existent has boundless uses.

Tao is a universal principle that orders and governs the way all existence, experience and expression works. It gives order to workability by patterning and structuring it, and governs workability by empowering and directing it.

Tao is operational as our experience.

Tao is the substance, power and principle of all effect.

Conscious harmonial at-one-ment with Tao is required to be constructively effective.

Interrelationship of construction and deconstruction.

Tao multiplies itself without dividing.

Universally harmonious flowing order

**Tao ~ The Principles of Engagement in Reality**

The Chinese language is symbolically ideographic rather than linearly alphabetic, because it is composed via the juxtaposition of meaningful word-pictures (a.k.a. “ideograms”) rather than via juxtaposed letters that in themselves have no meaning. In the Chinese language, as in most Oriental languages, each concept is signified by its own unique ideogram. Thus, for instance, the concept of walking is represented with an ideogram that differs from all other ideograms, as does the concept of “head” and so on.

Many Chinese words are composite ideograms constructed from two or more other ideograms, which makes Chinese a combinatorial conceptual language in which subjects, actions and objects acted upon are juxtaposed in mutually co-causal interrelationships. English, like other alphabetical languages, is a serially linear conceptual language in which there are precise one-way causal distinctions of subject, action and objects acted upon. Thus while complete English sentences indicate a specific causal relationship that links actor, action and object via a verbal distinction, Chinese sentences represent a multiplicity of relationships in which causality is integrally rather than linearly signified.

In the Chinese language, just as in quantum physics, every relationship is an *inter*relationship. For instance, it has become somewhat well known that the Chinese word-picture for “crisis” combines the word-pictures for “danger” and “opportunity” in mutually co-causal relationship. Similarly, the word “Tao” combines the word-pictures for “walk” and “head” in a manner that signifies “mindful action.”

Mindfulness is itself an invisible, intangible and inscrutable activity of consciousness, the activity of being so fully and transparently present to oneself in each moment that one knows how one’s perception of all other activity is taking form in one’s awareness. Because the activity of mindfulness is invisible, intangible and inscrutable, its quality is signified by ideograms that signify what gets translated into English as “inaction,” “non-action” and “non-doing”, i.e., as being-without-doing.

“Tao” is not, therefore, the essence of what people do, it is the essence of what does people. As the Zen philosopher Alan Watts once put this, “We don’t come into the world, we come out of the world. Flowers blossom, trees branch and earth peoples.” (Zen, by the way, is a blend of Taoism and Buddhism.)

Since the activity of “Tao” is also invisible, intangible and inscrutable, it cannot be precisely defined, hence the opening sentence of the *Tao Te Ching,* “the Tao that can be specified is not the Tao that is.” Although we can talk *about* Tao or say what it’s about, it is impossible to say what Tao *is* because words presume the finiteness of whatever they signify. Like gravity and electricity, Tao is an invisible pattern of interrelationship that we may finitely employ even though nobody can know precisely what it finitely *is.* Unlike gravity and electricity, however, Tao cannot be signified with linguistic or mathematical precision. This does not mean that Tao is itself imprecise, only that its precision eludes all forms of description and definition.

In other words, while Tao is the ultimate source of all that has precise form, Tao’s own precision is itself forever formless. What the term “Tao” signifies does not and cannot have finite form. This is because finiteness is not what anything is, has or does. Finiteness is a pattern of interrelationship that all things are *in*. Each thing is *in* finity, and finity is in each thing, which is what the word “infinity” partially signifies. What the word “infinity” signifies altogether is the unbounded relationship that may also be signified as “at-one-ment.”

(Pre-positions, along with pre-fixes suf-fixes, signify the structure of our pro-positions.)

What the term “Tao” was fabricated to abstractly signify is the interrelationship that integrates all parts of the cosmic order within the cosmic whole, a.k.a. “the at-one-ment of all that is.” The nature and dynamics of this abstract interrelationship are intuited in the well-known Biblical statement, “Things which are seen are not made of things which do appear” (*Hebrews* 11:3).

The essence of this invisibly abstract interrelationship is that every tangible *re*lationship in particular is governed by an intangible i*nter*relationship of everything in general, an interrelationship within which everything is both caused and affected by everything else. All causation is multiple and integral, including causation that tangibly appears to be linearly chained as so-called “cause and effect.”

The paradigm that the ancient Chinese signified as “Tao” is one in which all apparent cause *and* effect is the evidence of cause *as* effect. Accordingly, all visible and otherwise tangible local sub-interrelationships are governed by intangible universal supra-interrelationships.

Most simply abstracted and stated, Tao is the substance of all form. Substance is what governs the interrelationship of matter (stuff) with form (structure) as well as all other interrelationships of content with context. Substance, stuff and structure are an interrelating triunity, and the essence of enlightenment is to fully understand the essential nature, dynamics and functionality of this triunity.

Within the triunity of substance, stuff and structure, the term “substance” signifies “that which serves.” The title, *Tao Te Ching*, may therefore be translated as “The Way of That Which Serves,” or more simply, “The Way of Service.” As incarnated in human form, one’s individual service is called “dharma” in a Buddhist context and “vocation” in a Christian context. “Dharma” and “vocation” both signify one’s “calling,” what one feel urged to be, have and do in service to the greatest good of the triune whole.

Tao is the implicit cosmic order that is beyond all phenomena and things, yet from which all phenomena and things emerge in explicit expression and to which all phenomena and things continually point while in their course of returning to their ever-present origin in Tao.

From the perspective of being, the word “Tao” signifies the universally implicit principles of reality that underlie the nature, dynamics and functionality of all that is and of all that is not. From the perspective of doing, “Tao” signifies the universal patterns of reality formation that establish, govern and maintain uniform cosmic order. From the perspective of realizing outcomes (a.k.a. “getting results”), Tao signifies the synchronically flowing holistic causal order within which everything is influenced by everything else, and of which the order of piecemeal “cause-and-effect” is a limited case.

The harmonial at-one-ment of all that is that we may signify as “Tao” is also signified in other ways to accord with the ideational and cultural contexts in which it is employed, whether religiously as “God”, “Lord”, “The Creator”, “Christ consciousness”, “Buddha consciousness”, “Atman”, “The Great Spirit”, “Watantanka” or “Manitou”; or philosophically as “The Absolute”, “First Cause”, “Ultimate Source” or Supreme Reality”; or metaphysically as “The Force”, “The Ground of All Being”, “Ultimate Principle” or (with Ernest Holmes) “The Thing Itself”; scientifically as “The Comprehensive Whole System” or “The Grand Order and Design” (also an acronym for “God”); or nondescriptly as “The Ultimate Something”, “The Great Whatever”, etc. As Wayne Dyer has suggested, we can just as readily call it “Ralph” for all that our naming ultimately means to what is being signified.

No matter what we choose to call the harmonial at-one-ment of all that is, we make a negligible difference (if any) to that which we thus signify. Yet what we do choose to call it does make a big difference to us, as when we call God by the last name “Dammit”. One also has difficulty imagining a small child kneeling with folded hands at his or her bedside to pray, “Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the comprehensive whole system my soul to keep.”

The word “Tao” was deliberately fabricated to signify (point to) that which is beyond all verbal description and definition: the circularly flowing inner essence of all that can be described and defined. One cannot say what Tao is, only what it signifies, and even what it points to exceeds our descriptive and definitional abilities, as Alan Watts once demonstrated when his daughter asked him, “What is God?”

I replied that God is the deepest inside of everything. We were eating grapes, and they asked whether God was inside the grapes. When I answered, “Yes,” they said, “Let’s cut one open and see.” Cutting the grape, I said, “That’s funny, I don’t think we have found the real inside. We’ve found just another outside. Let’s try again.” So I cut one of the halves and put the other in one of the children’s mouths. “Oh dear, “I exclaimed, “we seem to have just some more outsides!” Again I gave one quarter to one of the children and split the other. “Well, all I see is still another outside,” I said, eating one eighth part myself. But just as I was about to cut the other, my little girl ran for her bag and cried, “Look! Here is the inside of my bag, but God isn’t there.” “No,” I answered, “that isn’t the inside of your bag. That’s the inside-outside, but God is the inside-inside and I don’t think that we’ll ever get at it.”

Tao signifies the interior commonalities of order that are shared by all exterior diversities of form, a relationship that is acknowledged in the well-known Biblical statement, “Things which are seen are not made of things which do appear” (*Hebrews* 11:3). While our commonalities are simple, our diversities are complex, as acknowledged by physicist John D. Barrow: “The true simplicity and symmetry of the universe is to be found in the things that are not seen.” Accordingly, the overall mission of science is to understand the invisible pattern and dynamics of universal order, which gives credence to Vaclev Havel’s definition of education as “the ability to see the hidden connections between phenomena.”

Tao signifies the harmonial cosmology of “hidden connections between phenomena,” the mutually reciprocal universal interrelationship of all that is and is not with all that has and has not been, and with all that will and will not be. This flowing deep ecology of invisible interconnectivity integrates all of space with all of time, and all of space-time with the energy of all that moves and the stuff of all that matters. How this deep ecology manifests was also imaginally signified by Alan Watts:

A living body is not a fixed *thing* but a flowing *event*, like a flame or a whirlpool: the shape is stable, for the substance is a stream of energy going in at one end and out the other. We are particular and temporarily identifiable wiggles in a stream that enters us in the form of light, heat, air, water, milk, bread, fruit, beer, beef Stroganoff, caviar and *pate de fois gras*. It goes out as gas and excrement – and also as semen, babies, talk, politics, commerce, war, poetry and music. And philosophy.

Watts further noted that as a consequence of this flowing harmonial cosmology, “We don’t come into the world, we come out of the world. Trees branch, flowers blossom and Earth peoples.”

Tao exceeds our ability to describe and define what it signifies because it honors the reality and worth of what is not, as well as the reality and worth of what is. Its integration of what is with what is not accredits an essential quality of reality that the sensory-bound intellect that cannot see, hear, smell, taste nor touch. Yet even though we are therefore unable to describe and define what Tao is, we can describe and define what it resembles. And what Tao most resembles is

* an eye that can see what itself is
* an ear that can hear what itself is
* a nose that can smell what itself is
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* a touch that can touch what itself is
* a feeling that can feel what itself is
* a finger that can point to what itself is

and thus a knower who fully knows who is knowing, and an experiencer who fully experiences that which is experiencing. Tao is reality’s inside looking out *as* itself even as its outside is looking in *at* itself, thus seeing its inside from both perspectives and its outside from both perspectives.

The mutually inclusive realities of both what is and what is not are addressed throughout the 81 verses of the *Tao te Ching,* and especially in its 11th verse:

The wheel’s hub holds thirty spokes.

Utility depends on the hole through the hub.

The potter’s clay forms a vessel.

It is the space within that serves.

A house is built with solid walls.

The nothingness of window and door alone renders it usable.

That which exists may be transformed.

What is non-existent has boundless uses.

From the perspective of Tao, therefore, as are parachutes our minds are most useful when they are open. Hence the prescription in the *Tao Te Ching* to “educate a man by filling his belly and emptying his mind.” Tao advocates the cultivation of what it calls “beginners mind,” a mind that is emptied of all belief, all assumptions, all conceptions, all conclusions, all thoughts, all ideas – a mind that is so utterly empty of any and all *forms* of knowing that it knows all that is, in and as its pristine natural order, both the content and context of which is constantly modifying its form from moment to moment.

From the perspective of Tao, therefore, if by anything I may say today I mean exactly what it meant to me at this same time yesterday, I have learned nothing in the last 24 hours.

**TE**

Most simply stated, Te is (the xxx?) of all that is.

**Aspects of Te**

**The Te of Inclusivity:**

Everything in the universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part. The universe is forever uniting what is harmonious and diminishing what is not…. It is the unessential only that is vanishing, that the abiding may be made more clearly manifest. -Ernest Holmes

Xxxx

**Te ~ The Rules of Engagement in Practice**

**RDA: 1/6/07 – Let Your Life Speak (Part 1)**

Is the life I am living the life that wants to live in me?

[Tao: the hidden wholeness of all that is]

[Te: personification of the hidden wholeness]

Before you tell your life what you intend to do with it, find out what it intends to do with you.

Victimhood – object-hood, effect-hood, circumstance-hood, situation-hood

Failure is life calling us to take the next step. God is always calling us out beyond our comfort zone. We are always prepared to take the step.

**RDA: 1/20/07 – Let Your Life Speak (Part 3)**

Awake to and allow your divine unfoldment.

Our experience of the world around us corresponds to our thoughts and attitudes.

A life beyond oneself, that seeks to manifest as oneself.

A reality that is greater than the self can imagine.

[The “self” is a multidimensional feedback loop that we are to keep always open for perpetual reinvention.]

Claim your authentic voice and live it in the world. [The courage to be one’s authentic self.]

If you can’t get out of it, get into it.

[-ism = boxed-in thinking]

“My preferred outcome is a preferred income.” (C.W.)

Perpetual reinvention

Ernest Holmes’ birthday: 1/21/1887

Te in practice personifies Tao

“…vacancy, stillness…quietude, silence…” (Legge, p. 17)

virtue, power, pattern

**Ching:**

Xxxxx

**At-One-Ment:**

The term “at-one-ment” signifies the harmonial interrelationship of your local being with the universality of all being that ever was, is, or shall exist, and with the essence of universal non-being from the ever-present origin of which all that has existence is forever emerging.

Argon (The Tao of Experience)

One Hundred Percent American

Interbeing

Holocoenotic diagram

[See quotations on “Mind” at end?]

**Non-being**

Xxxx

**Non-doing**

The wind and the sun

**Inaction**

Xxxx

**Practice (Te-tripping?)**

Arab and Rolls Royce mechanic

Release and embrace.

Relax into the design (the obvious)

I am a human becoming, nurture my becoming.

Contemplating Tao opens us to an experiencing of the unspeakable and impenetrable.

On detachment:

Mitch Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie* (http://thinkarete.com/quotes/by\_teacher/Mitch%20Albom):

Learn to detach...Don't cling to things, because everything is impermanent... But detachment doesn't mean you don't let the experience penetrate you. On the contrary, you let it penetrate fully. That's how you are able to leave it... Take any emotion--love for a woman, or grief for a loved one, or what I'm going through, fear and pain from a deadly illness. If you hold back on the emotions--if you don't allow yourself to go all the way through them--you can never get to being detached, you're too busy being afraid. You're afraid of the pain, you're afraid of the grief. You're afraid of the vulnerability that love entails. But by throwing yourself into these emotions, by allowing yourself to dive in, all the way, over your head even, you experience them fully and completely. You know what pain is. You know what love is. You know what grief is. And only then can you say, 'All right. I have experienced that emotion. I recognize that emotion. Now I need to detach from that emotion for a moment.

**Meaning**

We exist to assist.

ex = forth

a =

sistere = cause to stand

On meaning:

Mitch Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie* (http://thinkarete.com/quotes/by\_teacher/Mitch%20Albom):

The way you get meaning in your life is to devote yourself to others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning.

Madeleine L'Engle 1918-2007 (http://www.beliefnet.com/gallery/leaders.html?pgIndex=3)

Best known as the author of the award-winning children's classic, "A Wrinkle in Time," Madeleine L'Engle wrote more than 60 books, many of which remain beloved and well read today. Her work spanned genres, including poetry, plays, autobiography, and spiritual reflections about her Christian faith. A graduate of Smith College and longtime librarian at New York City's St. John the Divine, she once explained why people tell stories: "It does indeed have something to do with faith, faith that the universe has meaning, that our little human lives are not irrelevant, that what we choose or say or do matters, matters cosmically."

**Understanding Te:**

**Orientation to Practice (Self-Taofication)**

Once upon a time there was a man standing on a high hill. Three travelers, passing in the distance, noticed him and began to argue about him. One said, “He has probably lost his favorite animal.” Another said: “No, he is probably looking for his friend.” The third said: “He is there only in order to enjoy the fresh air.’”

The three travelers could not agree and continued to argue right up to the moment when they arrived at the top of the hill. One of them asked: “O friend, standing on this hill, have you not lost your favorite animal?” “No, Sir, I have not lost him.” The other asked: “Have you not lost your friend?” “No, Sir, I have not lost my friend either.” The third traveler asked: “Are you not here in order to enjoy the fresh air?” “No, Sir.”

“What then are you doing here, since you answer ‘No’ to all our questions?” The man on the hill replied, “I am just standing.”

*The Gospel According to Zen: Beyond the Death of God,* pp. 123-24.

Practicing Tao: Chinese rainmaker (Peat 30, 32) and Hunang-Li’s mother.

Confucius was looking at the bottom of a waterfall, which fell from a height of two hundred feet, its foam reaching fifteen miles away. No fish could enter therein. Yet Confucius saw an old man go in, and thinking that he was suffering from some trouble and desirous of ending his life, bade a disciple run along the side and try to save him. The old man emerged about a hundred paces off, and with flowing hair went singing along the bank. Confucius followed him and said, “I had thought, sir, you were a spirit, but now I see you are a man. Kindly tell me, is there any way to deal thus with water?”

“No,” replied the old man, “I have no way . . . Plunging in with the whirl, I come out with the swirl. I accommodate myself to the water, not the water to me. And so I am able to deal with it after this fashion…” He then continues, in further explanation: “There was my original condition to begin with; then habit growing into nature; and lastly acquiescence in destiny. I was born upon dry land… That was my original condition. Growing up on the water, I accommodated myself to the water. That was what I meant by nature. And doing as I did without being conscious of any effort so to do, that was what I meant by destiny.”

Composited from:

*The Gospel According to Zen: Beyond the Death of God,* pp. 123-24.

http://www.sublimedesigns.net/yossarian/06%20-%20Taoism%20-%20On%20Earth%20As%20It%20Is%20In%20Heaven.pdf

Te is the accommodation of one’s original nature, via habituation to nature’s ways overall, in acquiescence to one’s destiny.

Openness = availability and accessibility.

Practicing the keys to inclusivity – the constancy of Tao (self-taofication)

Presuppositions.

* Tao is the essence that precedes all existence and which permeates all that exists by the infusion of its essence within all that exists.
* The *Tao Te Ching* is best understood as a book about the context of our perception and experience rather than a book about the content of our thoughts.
* “. . . no one has the power to make you uneasy without your consent.” (p. 162)
  + Steiner
  + Frankl
* Impartiality of Tao – no privileged vantage point in the universe and no privileged perspective on the universe.
  + “That’s right, that’s right.’
* Constancy of Tao (eternal = forever constant and enduring)
* Integrity of Tao
* Resiliency of Tao
* Appreciation of Tao – growing in value
* Xxxxx

Henley poem

**#11:**

The profit of what is in the use of what is not. LeGuin

People are able to use what is there only because of what is not there. –Montag

While the tangible has value(?) it is the intangible that makes it useful. – J.C.H. Hiu (?)

Presence gives these things value(?) but absence makes them work. - Hinton

**Te as Tao in Practice: Non-Interference and Non-Fixation**

**Untying Your Be Knots, Have Knots, Do Knots, Seek Knots and Give Knots**

It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude. -Emerson, “Self-Reliance”

The essence of these rules was instinctively known by you at birth. (Clasp)

**THE 32 FREEDOMS FROM**

Tao’s rules of engagement are rules of subtraction – the practice of cessation, of ceasing all behavioral, psychological and metaphysical malpractice.

Free yourself from all of the following:

**Be nots:**

* anxiety: especially in anxiety productive circumstances (Emerson)
* blamefulness - non-attachment to either positive or negative preferences, anticipations and assumptions. (“Hopes and Expectations”)
* judgment:
* absence-mindedness: non-attachment to loss, lack. “My Happiness Is All that I Can See”.
* unforgiveness: non-attachment to grievances.
* offensiveness: exercise no offence.
* defensiveness: exercise no defense.

**Have nots:**

* attachment: to your own or anyone else’s existence, experience or expression. Includes no attachment to being non-detached.
* expectation: expectancy
* distraction: non-attachment to irritations. (“If I had powers . . .”)
* belief and unbelief: neither believe nor disbelieve anything that you or anyone else says
* points of view: [*Entering*, p. 3; *Anna*, p. xx)
* ownership: . . . non-attachment to conditions. (“My leukemia”)
* explanation: non-attachment to reasons (Whatever has a reason has a season.)
  + To everything that is manifest there is a season, including our manifestation of reason. Reasons have no existence until we manifest them, and last no longer than those who have them (and often less long as our reasons change).
* plans: Ernest Holmes on patterns.

**Do nots (seek nots and give nots):**

* insistence: get off your yeah-buts.”

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace - that where there is hatred, I may bring love - that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness - that where there is discord, I may bring harmony - that where there is error, I may bring truth - that where there is doubt, I may bring faith - that where there is despair, I may bring hope - that where there are shadows, I may bring light - that where there is sadness, I may bring joy. Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted - to understand, than to be understood - to love, than to be loved. For it is by self-forgetting that one finds. It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.

* manipulation: non-attachment to forms of outcome.
* interference: Do less damage A Plea for Damaged Children **intervention instead**
* acting (pretend): authenticity of being.
* resistance (against-ness): non-attachment to others’ energy. (Aikido) (Previn – “I danced…” (no attempts to reform, convert, “save”, outwit, outfight, outwork or otherwise directly alter other persons or their situations other than by constructively altering your own relationship to them.
* struggle: Xxxxx
* striving: Xxxxx
* craving: Xxxxx
* wrong-making: non-attachment to experience. (“That doesn’t match my experience.”)
  + Holmes: talk to yourself (Our experience is always and only within.)
  + Laing: experience
  + The Tao creates the one as the . . .
* comparing: non-attachment to contrasts. (“No Comparison”)
* competion: Xxxxx
* advising: Xxxxx
* identification: Xxxxx
* accumulation : Xxxxx
* possession: Xxxxx
* angst/agonizing: Xxxxx
* intimidation: Xxxxx

**Be nots:**

* No anxiety: especially in anxiety productive circumstances (Emerson)
* No blame (a.k.a. “non-judgment”) - non-attachment to either positive or negative preferences, anticipations and assumptions. (“Hopes and Expectations”)
* No absence-mindedness: non-attachment to loss, lack. “My Happiness Is All that I Can See”.
* No unforgiveness: non-attachment to grievances.
* No offence:
* No defense:

**Have nots:**

* No attachments: to your own or anyone else’s existence, experience or expression. Includes no attachment to being non-detached.
* No expectations: expectancy
* No distractions: non-attachment to irritations. (“If I had powers . . .”)
* No beliefs or unbeliefs: neither believe nor disbelieve anything that you or anyone else says
* No points of view: [*Entering*, p. 3; *Anna*, p. xx)
* No ownership: . . . non-attachment to conditions. (“My leukemia”)
* No explanation: non-attachment to reasons (Whatever has a reason has a season.)
  + To everything that is manifest there is a season, including our manifestation of reason. Reasons have no existence until we manifest them, and last no longer than those who have them (and often less long as our reasons change).
* No plans: Ernest Holmes on patterns.

**Do nots (seek nots and give nots):**

* No insistence: get off your yeah-buts.”

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace - that where there is hatred, I may bring love - that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness - that where there is discord, I may bring harmony - that where there is error, I may bring truth - that where there is doubt, I may bring faith - that where there is despair, I may bring hope - that where there are shadows, I may bring light - that where there is sadness, I may bring joy. Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted - to understand, than to be understood - to love, than to be loved. For it is by self-forgetting that one finds. It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.

* No manipulation: non-attachment to forms of outcome.
* No interference: Do less damage A Plea for Damaged Children **intervention instead**
* No acting: authenticity of being.
* No resistance (against-ness): non-attachment to others’ energy. (Aikido) (Previn – “I danced…” (no attempts to reform, convert, “save”, outwit, outfight, outwork or otherwise directly alter other persons or their situations other than by constructively altering your own relationship to them.
* No struggle: Xxxxx
* No striving: Xxxxx
* No craving: Xxxxx
* No wrong-making: non-attachment to experience. (“That doesn’t match my experience.”)
  + Holmes: talk to yourself (Our experience is always and only within.)
  + Laing: experience
  + The Tao creates the one as the . . .
* No comparisons: non-attachment to contrasts. (“No Comparison”)
* No competition: Xxxxx
* No advice: Xxxxx
* No identification: Xxxxx
* No accumulation : Xxxxx
* No possession: Xxxxx
* No agonizing: Xxxxx
* No intimidation: Xxxxx

We are evoluted by reason of the divine pattern and not the divine plan – there are no divine plans. That would be finite. **SL 36/3**

No real thinker has ever taught a divine purpose or a divine plan. All, however, have taught the idea of divine patterns. Unpublished lecture 12/5/58

“What’s-so’s” to be learned:

* Tao creates the one . . . (ex**is**tence)
  + Oneness is the foundation of all existence, experience and expression. (Unity)
  + Twoness is the foundation of all contrast. (Relationship) (“Unity is plural and at minimum two.”)
  + Threeness is the foundation of all location. (Triune Dimensionality)
  + Manyness is the foundation of all manifestation.
* One’s being empowers one’s doing in proportion to one’s openness and stillness of being and doing.
  + Openness is the vacancy of “non-being” and stillness is the authenticity of “non-doing” (i.e., of expressing that is free of acting).
* Power is proportionate to the abilities and possibilities of individuals and groups to make choices.
* Whatever you choose to be your experience is also a choice of what will not be your experience.
* Unless you are looking at what is absent from your experience, your present happiness is all you see.
* The secret of attraction is to **be** attract**ing** and attract**ive.** (Verbs/descriptors of being, not of doing.)
* In all things intend only balance and harmony.

Quote from Emerson’s “Over-Soul”

Tao as the essence of desire-less, omni-participative integral causation, rather than of desire-full sequentially participative linear causation.

Two constants: change and the observer of change.

The circle of change and constancy: the more things change, the more they stay the same

Who is it that asks?

Greater can comprehend the lesser

though not vice versa: worms crawling out of water.

though not always: blind man touching a snowflake.

outgoing <> outgrowing

infinite expansiveness

Thinking the world together

**The Tao of Reality Formation**

Dear colleagues in inclusivity,

The term “reality” is sometimes equated with “truth”, which signifies absolute reality – that which is invariably so, and to which all change is relative, just as the speed of light in a vacuum is invariably so, and to which all other motion is relative.

In other words, perennial truth is a matter of principles of cosmic design and order, and not of material forms.

All reality other than principled truth is relative, and is best signified as “that which makes it possible for us to have experience.”

Reality is our experiencing of the encounter of mind and matter, as described in the seminar syllabus, pp. 25-27. Insofar as we agree on what our experience is, our respective realities are shared. Insofar as there is not agreement on what our experience is, our respective realities are not shared.

Everyone’s experience of reality therefore includes a mixture of agreements and disagreements that contribute to the shaping of each person’s experiencing of reality.

Experience is our only point of reference to reality. Nothing is more real to anyone than is his or her experience.

Presumably there is a reality independent of human perception thereof – such as the reality of a universe that preceded the existence of human perception by 13 billion years. But what reality is TO US will never be more than what we make of IT.

I therefore presume only the ability to address the question of “what is reality?”, because no person can answer this question to another’s complete satisfaction.

Nor have I yet succeeded in answering this question to my own complete satisfaction.

**The Tao of Reality Formation:**

Tao creates the one reality. (ex**is**tence)

* Oneness is the reality of all existence, experience and expression. (unity)
* Twoness is the reality of all differentiation and contrast. (dual unity) (“Unity is always plural and at minimum two.”)
* Threeness is the reality of all relationship. (triunity - triune dimensionality)
* Manyness is the foundation of all manifestation. (the cosmic unity of harmonial at-one-ment)

Reality is that which makes it possible for us to have experience.

Insofar as there is agreement on what is real, our experience of reality is shared. Insofar as there is not agreement on what is real, our experience of reality is not shared.

In any event, experience is our only point of reference to reality. Nothing is more real to anyone than his or her experience.

Presumably there is a reality independent of human perception thereof – such as the reality of a universe that preceded the existence of human perception by 13 billion years. But what reality is TO US will never be more than what we individually and collectively make of IT.

I presume only to have addressed your question, because no person can answer it to another’s complete satisfaction.

Nor has this person yet succeeded in answering it to his own complete satisfaction.”

Some doses of shared reality:

People don’t care what you think until they think that you care.

We cannot segregate the human heart from the environment outside us and say that once one of these is reformed everything will be improved. Man is organic with the world. His inner life molds the environment and is itself deeply affected by it. The one acts upon the other and every abiding change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions. -Mirza Husayn Ali (Baha'u'llah)

Looking for reality in the wrong places.

Dory Previn: Mythical Kings and Iguanas, I Danced and Danced

Looking for reality in the right places

Lee: Is That All There Is

Grateful Dead: Ripple (radiate waves of Tao)

**The Tao of causation:**

Talk to yourself, not to the world . . .

Self-forgetting

The futile piecemeal approach to locating presumably “chained” causation

* looking for it in higher and greater places (“Mythical Kings and Iguanas”)
* looking for it in lower and lesser places by taking things apart to see how they are put together. (“rabbit and bobcat”– “The Seeker”)
* looking for it in earlier or later places (past and future)
* looking for it somewhere else (wave finger)

Aristotle’s four causes (10,000 experiments to create a tungsten filament)

1) material cause gives an outcome its substance; (tungsten)

2) formal cause determines an outcome’s structure; (molecular restructuring of tungsten)

3)sufficient cause makes an outcome possible; (anything without which the outcome is not accomplished)

4)efficient cause makes an outcome actual. (the correct molecular structure) (“tipping point” – “The Weight of a Voice” – “The Sacrifice”) Efficient cause is ultimately and always to be found in mind.

Causation is both from the bottom up and from the top down, as well as diagonal and lateral. Each thing is caused by everything else. To understand the nature of integral causation requires a perceptual makeover.

When things don’t match your experience:

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace - that where there is hatred, I may bring love - that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness - that where there is discord, I may bring harmony - that where there is error, I may bring truth - that where there is doubt, I may bring faith - that where there is despair, I may bring hope - that where there are shadows, I may bring light - that where there is sadness, I may bring joy. Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted - to understand, than to be understood - to love, than to be loved. For it is by self-forgetting that one finds. It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.

**The Tao of Experience:**

**The Flowing Order of the Self-transformational Journey**

Three umpires

-Xxxxx

Tao is the authenticity from which emerges all so-called “experience.” We incarnate for the purpose of growing by means of newly experiencing ourselves, and everything that happens in our lives is a gift of new experience. There are three ways to accept our experience:

With enthusiasm: “Oh swell! Another opportunity to *grow*!!”

With resignation: “Oh well . . . another opportunity to grow.”

With petulance: “Oh Hell! *Another*  opportunity to grow.”

With ease: “Oh, another *opportunity* to grow.”

Tao is the self-transformational journey of inward and outward growth experienced with ease.

The word “experience” signifies “from source,” and therefore “from authenticity.” Experience is the eve-present means of our self-transformational return to authenticity.

The Myth of Eternal Return (the journey from allward harmonial at-one-ment, via inward~outward apart-ment, around to allward at-one-ment

The journey of Adam and Eve (a one-chapter condensation of the Bible)

Maori proverb

T. S. Eliot quote

i to I

The Waterfall

The Chasm

Descriptions of the self-transformational journey:

Kenosis~Henosis ~ Theosis

Dharma ~ Sangha ~Buddha

Spirit ~ Soul ~ Body

Conception ~ Gestation ~ Birth

Order ~ placement, location ~ structure

Intuitions of the self-transformational journey:

Ripple (Just don’t do something, be something . . . then do something.)

Bon Jovi

Yellow

The Gurgle

Flow

Bon Jovi

Yellow

(Participants write what each says with a one-sentence prescription beginning with the word “be”.)

Be-longings of the self-transformational journey:

Vann and Fox: lack of a centering cosmology

Vann’s *The Heart of Man:* to be reality; authenticity of being, which is being at one with all being.

Mythical Kings and Iguanas

Left Hand Lost

I Danced and Danced and Danced

The House Song

People Used To

Bird on a Wire

Joan of Arc

St. Elmo’s Fire

Suzanne

The Sisters of Mercy

Just a Dream

(Participants write what each says with a one-sentence prescription beginning with the word “do”.)

Distractions to the self-transformational journey.

(Dory Previn songs)

Bessie Smith

Tao is the allward that is beyond the inwardness~outwardness of all things expressed and experienced on the self-transformational journey of return to allward.

* Tao creates the flow of s-t order. (The Thing Itself *as* it is.)
* Order creates the flow of s-t presence. (The Way It Works in to accord with how it works itself.)
* Presence creates the flow of s-t reciprocity. (What it Does as a consequence of its doing unto itself.)
* Reciprocity creates the s-t flow of all that is. (How to Use It as an opening for the first three flows.)

We incarnate to have an experience of ourselves in journey with our self-transformation. The “lessons” and “learning” of life are in support of our journey of self-transformation.

The names we give to our experience shape our experience accordingly, and the extent to which they shape our experience is also the extent to which they limit our experience. Practicing the Tao of experience consists of allowing our experience to emerge and unfold before we name it, as when what we initially named “horseless carriage” was renamed “automobile”.

The Tao of experience is interrelationship of substance (intangible order) and form (tangible structure).

Tao is the principled cosmic order of substance and form. Te is our interrelationship with Tao’s principled ordering of substance and form. The feminine principle brings forth substance, the masculine principle brings forth form. We are told by the *Tao Te Ching* that when these principles function in harmony

Who knows his manhood's strength,   
Yet still his female tenderness maintains;  
As to one channel flow the many drains,   
All come to him, yea, all beneath the sky.   
Thus he the constant excellence retains;   
The simple child again, free from all stains.

Tao Te Ching, Chapter 28, James Legge: <http://classics.mit.edu/Lao/taote.html>   
<http://www.taoteching.org>

And we are told by Ernest Holmes that “To the [person] who can perfectly practice inaction, all things are possible.” (Also incident of white leather purse set on a bug.)

The *Tao Te Ching* addresses the never ending journey of correlated in-formation and ex-perience.

Tao is the enduring principled substance of all transient forms. The substance of Tao manifests as principles of in-formation and ex-perience.

In-formation: substance is enduringly patterned as energy.

Ex-perience: substance is transiently structured as form.

How old is your nose?

Argon (do this in remembrance of me = embodying the essence of truth).

As an example of how what we name something shapes and limits our experience of it, Jesus’ reported prophesy of the “end times” is an inaccurate translation of what he instead called “the time of the new beginning.” We are therefore living today, not in the end times, but in the time of the new beginning, the beginning of a perceptual makeover called “the second coming” of Tao-minded consciousness (a.k.a. “the mind that was in Christ”), via the emergence of a critical mass of Tao-minded consciousness whose outcome Ernest Holmes described as follows in *The Voice Celestial:*

The future man shall be so far above

The race that walks the earth today he would

Appear among us as a god; yet he

Will be the common man; nor will there be

Such selfish aims as now divide mankind;

Illusion of false values will dissolve

Into their native nothingness and things

Ephemeral and transient of this earth

Shall pass away, and by the second birth,

The field of consciousness shall so expand

All sons of earth shall reach the Promised Land.

The empowerment of limits. (Freedom and Fences)

Applying the power of limits: staying within the fence that surrounds this course; show-stoppers.

**The Te of Experience:**

**The Flowing Personification of the Transformational Journey**

Being available to the flowing order of the self-transformational journey, by *being in authentic journey with* the flowing presence of Tao. (Ripple, Gurgle)

Make choices that are intuitive rather than decisions that are intellectual.

Open yourself to the options that are choosing you rather than eliminate those options you think you don’t want. Intellect knows only what you don’t want to attract. Intuition knows what wants to attract you.

Here am I, send me. Many are called, yet few choose themselves to *be* the call’s answer.

I body, my body, embody.

Do what you love and some money will follow;

Do well what you love and money will follow big time;

Do what you love *so* well that money becomes incidental.

George Bernard Shaw’s intuition of living authentically in accordance with Tao:

This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one: the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap; the being a force of nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy…. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can…. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I've got hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

**Deconstructing the Anatomy of Againstness**

It’s hard to fight an enemy who has outposts in your head.

-Sally Kempton

Deconstructing the anatomy of againstness is a matter of removing one’s adversary’s outposts from one’s head. Two of these outposts are signified by the words “fight” and “enemy”.

The anatomy of againstness is like the anatomy of an A-frame house….

Against-ness is institutionalized in politics, competitive sports, and warfare. Institutionalized against-ness (Samuel Goldwyn – “include me out” – exclusivity by any other name is just as incomplete. It’s very difficult to neutralize an adversary who has outposts in our head.

That doesn’t match my information

**Bridging the Upside and Downside of the Cosmic Flow**

Be, as water is, without friction.

-Xxxxx

**TOI Session 6**

**Reality of Experience and the Experience of Reality:**

**The Politics of Reality-Formation**

OUR EXPERIENTIAL PREMISE:

We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience. -Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

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THE PURPOSE OF EXPERIENCE:

My life is a story of the self-realization of the unconscious. Everything in the unconscious seeks outward manifestation, and the personality too desires to evolve . . . and to experience itself as a whole. -Carl Jung

Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose. -Helen Keller

THE NATURE OF EXPERIENCE:

If you are eating bags of candy every day, you're going to have a sugar experience. –Leonard Nimoy

Experience is that marvelous thing that enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again. -Franklin P. Jones

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The culmination of knowledge is not conceptual but experiential: I feel God. –Jacques Maritain (Be still and know [experience] that I am God. –Brennan Manning, *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, p.43

**The essence of all experience is consciousness.**

It is the common element of all experience.

It is the one undoubtable fact of all life.

It is that within which all our experience is constructed.

It is the essence and substance of everything we know.

It is the ultimate reality.

This essence is the essence of everyone, whatever their race, age, gender, background, rich or poor; whatever their time. Whatever they think, experience or believe, they are all conscious beings like myself, and thus share the same inner essence. This essence is the essence of all sentient beings whatever their body, senses or nervous systems, whatever their perception of the world. Where we differ from other creatures is not in consciousness itself, but in the picture that is painted in our consciousness. Human beings are privileged in that they have the potential to become aware of this inner essence, to know God in this sense. This essence I choose to call God. -Peter Russell (For more on this on his website: [www.peterrussell.com/God/God1.php](http://www.peterrussell.com/God/God1.php) , [www.peterussell.com/SG/Ch7.html](http://www.peterussell.com/SG/Ch7.html) and [www.peterussell.com/God/God2.html#How](http://www.peterussell.com/God/God2.html#How) .

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I could not say I believe. I know! I have had the experience of being gripped by something that is stronger than myself, something that people call God. -Carl Jung

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THE PROGRESS OF EXPERIENCE:

Whosoever looks with heed into his thoughts will find that our science of the mind has not got far. He will find there is somebody within him that knows more than he does, a certain dumb life in life; a simple wisdom behind all acquired wisdom; somewhat not educated or educable; not altered or alterable; a mother wit which does not learn by experience or by books, but knew it all already; makes no progress, but was wise in youth as in age. More or less clouded it yet resides the same in all, saying Ay, ay or No, no, to every proposition. Yet its grand Ay and its grand No are more musical than all eloquence. Nobody has found the limit of its knowledge. -Ralph Waldo Emerson

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THE VALUE OF EXPERIENCE:

Life is not about creating an empire. Life is about the PROCESS of creating an empire. It's not about the empire, the new house, the perfect relationship .... Those are the reasons you use to flow the energy - but it's the flowing of the energy that is the reason for the continuation of existence... The purpose of the physical experience is joy! -Abraham-Hicks

My unique singular perspective is of enormous value to All-That-Is. There is not another anywhere in the Universe who perceives exactly as I do, right now. As my unique perspective joins other unique perspectives, we embark upon eternal unique combined experiences. As other unique perceivers observe those unique creations – perception continues to evolve. To Eternally Evolve. -Abraham-Hicks

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Expression is the one fundamental sacrament. It is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. It follows that, in the process of forming a common expression of direct intuition, there is a first stage of primary expression into some medium of sense-experience which each individual contributes at first hand. No one can do this for another. It is the contribution of each to the knowledge of all. -Alfred North Whitehead

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HOW EXPERIENCE WORKS:

Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced – even a proverb is no proverb to you till your life has illustrated it. -John Keats

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Experience is a hard teacher – she gives the test first, and then the lesson. –Vernon Sanders

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Experience is the best sculptor. -Marion Diamond, Ph.D., and Janet Hopson, *Magic Trees of the Mind*

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[I]t is the experience of the object, and only the experience of the object, that decides. ­-Alain (Émile-Auguste Chartier)

[Words don’t mean, people do]

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Experience is more forceful than logic. ­-Isaac Abravanel (1437-1508), *Commentary on the Bible*

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THE AMBIGUITIES OF EXPERIENCE:

We can see other people's behavior, but not their experience.... The other person's behavior is an experience of mine. My behavior is an experience of the other.... I see you and you see me. I experience you and you experience me. I see your behavior. But I do not and never have and never will see your experience of me. Just as you cannot see my experience of you... Your experience of me is invisible to me and my experience of you is invisible to you.

I cannot experience your experience. You cannot experience my experience. We are both invisible beings. All beings are invisible to one another. Experience is being's invisibility to being. Experience used to be called the Soul. Experience as invisibility of being to being is at the same time more evident than anything. Only experience is evident. Experience is the only evidence. -Ronald D. Laing

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The soul of another is a dark forest. -Russian proverb

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You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him to find it within himself. –Galileo Galilei

All ways of seeing are approximate. Each experience is an approximation abstracted from a larger context. We don't even know why scientific objectivity works as well as it does, he said, adding that if this workability is ever understood, such knowing still won't be the totality of truth. Consciousness itself is approximate, and our experience of consciousness is an interaction among approximations. -Geoffrey Chew (see Poincare, Neibuhr)

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Neither *God* nor *Being* nor any other word can define or explain the ineffable reality behind the word, so the only important question is whether the word is a help or a hindrance in enabling you to experience That toward which it points. Does it point beyond itself to that transcendental reality, or does it lend itself too easily to becoming no more than an idea in your head that you believe in, a mental idol? –Eckhart Tolle

It will be seen in the end how greatly metaphysicians and psychologists may err, who assume their own mental operations, instincts and axioms to be identical with the rest of mankind instead of being special to themselves. -Sir Francis Galton, *Inquiries into the Human Faculty*

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### If being right is your goal, you may find error in the world, and seek to change it to match your expectations. But don't expect peace of mind. If peace of mind is your goal, look for errors in your expectations; seek to change them, not the world. And always be prepared to be wrong. -Peter Russell

You are who you are regardless of who you think you are. Your thoughts control your experience of reality, but your thoughts cannot affect or change or control or even touch who you are. –Paul Williams

Why in the name of common sense need we assume that only one…system of ideas can be true? The obvious outcome of our total experience is that the world can be handled according to many systems of ideas. –William James (VRE, p. 120)

THE CONTEXT OF EXPERIENCE:

We cannot at the same time experience the artistic content of a Beethoven sonata and also worry about the neurophysiological processes in our brain. But we can shift from one to the other. –Victor Weisskopf

A human being is part of a whole, called by us the “Universe,” a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty. Nobody is able to achieve this completely, but the striving for such an achievement is in itself a part of the liberation and a foundation for inner security -Albert Einstein

The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the sower of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. That deeply emotional conviction of the Presence of a superior reasoning power as revealed in the incomprehensible Universe, forms my idea of God. -Albert Einstein

Experience without theory is blind, but theory without experience is mere intellectual play. -Immanuel Kant

Life amounts to what we experience, not what we consume, but I’m afraid we’ve become a nation of consumers. –Kevin Murphy

Great minds discuss ideas;

Average minds discuss events;

Small minds discuss people.

Inquiring minds ask questions of experience. -Eleanor Roosevelt

When I first heard of higher states of consciousness, I imagined they would bring awareness of subtler dimensions, possibly new energies, or some other aspect of reality that was beyond my everyday perception. Over the years, I have gradually realized that enlightenment is seeing the same world, but in a different light. It is not seeing different things so much as seeing things differently. – Peter Russell

I was sitting by the ocean one late summer afternoon, watching the waves rolling in and feeling the rhythm of my breathing, when I suddenly became aware of my whole environment as being engaged in a gigantic cosmic dance. Being a physicist, I knew that the sand, rocks, water and air were made of vibrating molecules and atoms, and that these consisted of particles which interacted with one another by creating and destroying other particles. I knew also that the Earth’s atmosphere was continually bombarded by showers of ‘cosmic rays’, particles of high energy undergoing multiple collisions as they penetrated the air. All this was familiar to me from my research in high-energy physics, but until that moment I had only experienced it through graphs, diagrams and mathematical theories. As I sat on that beach my former experiences came to life; I ‘saw’ cascades of energy coming down from outer space, in which particles were created and destroyed in rhythmic pulses; I ‘saw’ the atoms of the elements and those of my body participating in this cosmic dance of energy; I felt its rhythm and I ‘heard’ its sound, and at that moment I *knew* that this was the Dance of Shiva, the Lord of Dancers worshipped by the Hindus. –Fritjof Capra

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THE CHALLENGE OF EXPERIENCE:

The one common experience of all humanity is the challenge of problems. -R. Buckminster Fuller

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All growth is a leap in the dark, a spontaneous unpremeditated act without benefit of experience. **-Henry Miller**

In our description of nature the purpose is not to disclose the real essence of phenomena but only to track down, as far as it is possible, relations between the manifold aspects of experience. -Niels Bohr

Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. -Helen Keller

Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experiences of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved. -Helen Keller

I don't believe people are looking for the meaning of life as much as they are looking for the experience of being alive. -Joseph Campbell (Kipling?)

People say that what we're all seeking is the meaning of life... I think that what we're really seeking is the experience of being alive. –Rudyard Kipling

For most people, presence is experienced either never at all or only accidentally and briefly on rare occasions without being recognized for what it is. Most humans alternate not between consciousness and unconsciousness but between different levels of unconsciousness. -**Ekhart Tolle,** The Power of Now

Life is not a problem to be solved, nor a question to be answered. Life is a mystery to be experienced. -Alan Watts

Nature will not let us stay in any one place too long. She will let us stay just long enough to gather the experience necessary to the unfolding and advancing of the soul. This is a wise provision, for should we stay here too long, we would become too set, too rigid, too inflexible. Nature demands the change in order that we should advance. When the change comes, we should welcome it with a smile on the lips and a song in the heart. -Ernest Holmes

A change in consciousness does not come by simply willing or wishing. It is not easy to hold the mental attention to an ideal, while the human experience is discordant, but - it is possible. Knowing the Truth is not a process of self-hypnosis, but one of a gradual unfoldment of the inner self. -Ernest Holmes

THE PITFALLS OF EXPERIENCE:

Technology is the art of so arranging the world that we don’t have to experience it. –Max Frisch

The foundation of all mental illness is the unwillingness to experience legitimate suffering. –Carl Jung

Instead of waging war on himself it is surely better for a man to learn to tolerate himself, and to convert his inner difficulties into real experiences instead of expending them in useless fantasies. Then at least he lives, and does not waste his life in fruitless struggles. If people can be educated to see the lowly side of their own natures, it may be hoped that they will also learn to understand and to love their fellow men better. A little less hypocrisy and a little more tolerance towards oneself can only have good results in respect for our neighbor; for we are all too prone to transfer to our fellows the injustice and violence we inflict upon our own natures. -Carl Jung

To say you do not know what to do....is really saying that you are too lazy to determine your own experience -Raymond Charles Barker

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO EXPERIENCE:

Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him. -Aldous Huxley

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Ask the experienced rather than the learned. -Arabic proverb

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Talk to yourself, not to the world. There is no one to talk to but yourself for all experience takes place within. Conditions are the reflections of our meditations and nothing else. -Ernest Holmes (SOM xxx/x)

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In reality, every reader is, while he is reading, the reader of his own self. The writer’s work is merely a kind of optical instrument which he offers to the reader to enable him to discern what, without this book, he would perhaps never have experienced in himself. And the recognition by the reader in his own self of what the book says is the proof of its veracity. -Marcel Proust

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There's a dark side to each and every human soul. We wish we were Obi-Wan Kenobi, and for the most part we are, but there's a little Darth Vader in all of us. Thing is, this ain't no either-or proposition. We're talking about dialectics, the good and the bad merging into us. You can run but you can't hide. My experience? Face the darkness. Stare it down. Own it. As brother Nietzsche said, being human is a complicated gig. So give that ol' dark night of the soul a hug. Howl the eternal yes!" -DJ Chris in Northern Exposure

Life is fundamentally a matter of growing, a growth experience. Missing the mark is one of the ways in which we learn to hit the target. Failure is a vital part of achieving success. We have erroneously thought of success as "getting there" while actually success is "earning the right to be there." And earning means learning. Setbacks, even failures, may be an important part of that learning. –Eric Butterworth

A central teaching in most spiritual traditions is: What you wish to experience, provide for another. –The Dalai Lama

You are who you are regardless of who you think you are. Your thoughts control your experience of reality, but your thoughts cannot affect or change or control or even touch who you are. –Paul Williams

In such degree as our thinking is in accord with the original Nature, the same orderly procession of harmonious ideas will operate in our affairs that is already operating in that larger world which we experience but neither create nor control. This leaves us individual freedom within the law of universal harmony, individual will within a universal co-ordinating will. –Ernest Holmes

Personal leadership is not a singular experience. It is, rather, the ongoing process of keeping your vision and values before you and aligning your life to be congruent with those most important things. –Stephen R. Covey

Every choice we make contributes a subtle current of our energy to our universe. Managing the power of choice, with all its creative and spiritual implications, is the essence of human experience...Choice is the process of creation itself. -Caroline Myss

To experience and embrace the pain of loss is just as much a part of life as to experience the joy of love. Alan Wolfelt

Art is the imposing of a pattern on experience, and our esthetic enjoyment is recognition of the pattern. -Alfred North Whitehead

Action and non-action require great energy. Non-action requires far more energy than so-called positive [action]. Positive action is to control, to support, to escape. Non-action is the total attention of observation. In this observation that which is observed undergoes a transformation. This silent observation demands not only physical energy but also a deep psychological energy. We are used to the former experience and this conditioning limits our energy. In a complete, silent observation, which is non-action, there is no expenditure of energy and so energy is limitless. -Krishnamurti

Write from experience, and experience only. –James Joyce, *The Art of Fiction*

THE SOURCE OF OUR EXPERIENCE:

Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength, mastering yourself is true power. Lao-Tzu

A change in consciousness does not come by simply willing or wishing. It is not easy to hold the mental attention to an ideal, while the human experience is discordant, but - it is possible. Knowing the Truth is not a process of self-hypnosis, but one of a gradual unfoldment of the inner self. -Ernest Holmes

You do not belong to you. You belong to the universe. The significance of you will remain forever obscure to you, but you may assume you are fulfilling your significance if you apply yourself to converting all your experience to highest advantage to others. –R. B**uckminster Fuller**

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[O]ur experience of the natural world is based in the end not directly on behavior that occurs in nature, but rather on the results of our perception and analysis of this behavior. -Stephan Wolfram, p. 547

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Our perception of the world is our own construction. We don’t see the world the way the world actually is, we see the world the way we construct the world. Numerous experiments have demonstrated that the way we experience the world, both in time and in space, really is a construction, and that when you make very slight changes in your expectations of what you are going to see you will see completely different things. –Dean Radin

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[A]t the quantum level of reality, when we choose to “see” what we see, reality becomes both paradoxical and sensible at the same time. Our acts of observation are what we experience as the everyday world. -Fred Alan Wolf

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Eternity has nothing to do with the hereafter…. This is it…. If you don’t get it here, you won’t get it anywhere. The experience of eternity right here and now is the function of life. Heaven is not the place to have the experience; here’s the place to have the experience. –Joseph Campbell

Were I a good scholar, I would find enough in my own experience to make me wise. Whoever recalls to mind his last bout of anger . . . sees the ugliness of his passion better than in Aristotle. Anyone who recalls the ills he has undergone, those which have threatened him and the trivial incidents which have moved him from one condition to another, makes himself thereby ready for future mutations and the exploration of his condition. Even the life of Caesar is less exemplary for us than our own; a life, whether imperial or plebian is always a life affected by everything that can happen to a man. -Michel de Montaigne

When you plant lettuce, if it does not grow well, you don't blame the lettuce. You look for reasons it is not doing well. It may need fertilizer, or more water, or less sun. You never blame the lettuce.

Yet if we have problems with our friends or family, we blame the other person. But if we know how to take care of them, they will grow well, like the lettuce. Blaming has no positive effect at all, nor does trying to persuade using reason and arguments.

That is my experience. No blame, no reasoning, no argument, just understanding. -Thich Nhat Hanh, Peace is Every Step

THE TRIUMPH OF OUR EXPERIENCE:

We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything may be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way. -Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*

**If you know what, you know how. –Thomas Hora**

I have learned through bitter experience the one supreme lesson: to conserve my anger, and as heat conserved is transmitted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transmitted into a power that can move the world. -Gandhi

The greatest weapon against stress is an ability to choose one thought over another. –William James

Love is not something you do,

It is not how you behave.

There's nothing you can do that constitutes loving another,

No action that is of itself loving.

Love is a way of being.

And more than that.

It is simply being,

Being with another person, however they may be.

Holding no judgments, having no agendas,

No need to have them experience your love,

No desire to demonstrate love,

No intrusion upon their soul.

Nothing but a total acceptance of their being,

Born of your total acceptance of yours. -Peter Russell

Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience. ­–James Joyce

I think that in discussions of physical problems we ought to begin not from the authority of scriptural passages, but from sense experiences and necessary demonstrations; for the Holy Bible and the phenomena of Nature proceed alike from the divine Word, the former as the dictate of the Holy Ghost and the latter as the observant executrix of God’s commands. –Galileo Galilei

Hands-on experience at the critical time, not systematic knowledge, is what counts in the making of a naturalist. Better to be an untutored savage for a while, not to know the names or anatomical detail. Better to spend long stretches of time just searching and dreaming. -Edward O. Wilson

Each neuron is alive and altered by its experiences and its environment. As you read these words, neurons are interacting with each other, reforming and dissolving storage sites, and establishing different electrical patterns that correspond to your new learning. –David A. Sousa

All forgiveness is self-forgiveness. Your [experience of] the world is the result of your combined state of thought and feeling - [your arena] of consciousness. [Since your experience of the] world is a result of your state of consciousness, then if you hate anyone, you are disliking a part of yourself. -Raymond Charles Barker

**TOI Session 5**

**The Tao of inclusivity.**

Everywhere I Go, Here I Am > Each of us is a fixed point of reference in an ever-changing and everywhere changing universe, which is the only fixed point that s/he can know. (“X” in sidewalk – each of us is an individuated center of the universe.)

Inclusivity = the interconnection of all that is – of everything that has existed, does exist and ever will exist. (“Argon”) (“The Sound of Thunder”) (ancient starlight)

Many stars now visible to us ceased to exist millions or billions of years ago, yet their final burst of light has millions or billions of light years to travel nonetheless before it reaches our telescopes. It is quite possible to navigate at night by reckoning one’s way with reference to the position in the nighttime sky of ancient starlight that has long outlived its source.

Each of us is a whole-universe catalog.

The universal-local, whole-part ordering principle shows up in other ways as well, as it does for example in the composition of your own body. Every atom in your body had its origin either in the Big Bang itself or in subsequent star systems some of which may now be billions of light years distant from our own galaxy and quite possibly may have long since expired.

There are also in every human body at least some atomic trace elements of each of the universe’s 92 stable elements, in further demonstration that the unifying nature of reality-at-large is so thoroughly comprehensive that you – like everyone else – area whole-universe catalog.

Tao would have us leave nothing out. (“Interbeing”)

**The Tao of causation:**

“Environorganism” (Dyer, v. #53, p. 258 ) > Holocoenotic diagram – integral/aggregate causation.

* Let the center circle of your diagram represent your desire to become a more inclusive person.
* In the half-circles at the perimeter of the larger circle list 1) everything that is required for you to become a more inclusive person and 2) everything that hinders its possibility.
* Draw a line from each requirement and possibility to the central circle with an arrowhead at the end of the line nearest the central circle.
* For each requirement and possibility to which you are capable of altering your relationship thereto, put an arrowhead at the other end of the line as well.
* Now draw an additional line from each peripheral item to every other peripheral item that it in any way influences or is influenced by it.
* As you are cross-linking these peripheral items you may recall additional factors that hinder or contribute to the central circle, via the influence of either their presence or their absence. Note these on the periphery of your paper as well and draw all linkages they have with the other items already present.

You have diagramed the Tao of integral/aggregate causation. Note how this ensembled model of integral causation differs from the piecemeal model of successive causation in which one thing brings about another, which brings about yet another and so on in a sequential “chain” of cause-and-effect.

<http://glossary.gardenweb.com/glossary/holocoenotic.html>

The theory that environmental factors act as a [whole](http://glossary.gardenweb.com/glossary/whole.html) or [aggregate](http://glossary.gardenweb.com/glossary/aggregate.html) in their effect upon organisms.

<http://zipcodezoo.com/Glossary/holocoenotic.asp>

(Gr. olos: whole, entire; koinos: common) Denotes the interdependent parts of a coherent indivisible whole and applies to the interrelationship of nature and humankind; about the theory that environmental factors act as a whole or aggregate in their effect upon organisms.

[http://www.google.com/search?q=holocoenotic&rls=com.microsoft:\*:IE-SearchBox&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&sourceid=ie7&rlz=1I7SUNA](http://www.google.com/search?q=holocoenotic&rls=com.microsoft:*:IE-SearchBox&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&sourceid=ie7&rlz=1I7SUNA)

**A. Holocoenotic approach.**

The holocoenotic approach to a plant’s environment stresses that a plant responds simultaneously to all environmental factors that impinge upon it. This is a holistic approach to the environment in the sense that it recognizes that the environment as a whole affects the plant.

Holocoenotoic is derived from *holocoen* a term coined by the marine ecologist Karl Frederick in the 19th century to emphasize the interdependence and interconnections of organisms with their environment.

In forestry the concept of site (see Kimmins pages 363-364) is a holistic or holocoenotic approach to the tree’s environment.

The practical value of the holistic approach is that it reduces the chances that we will over-emphasize a single environmental factor in trying to explain plant distributions or plant performance. An example of an old-fashioned single-factor approach in ecology is C.H. Merriam’s life zone classification based exclusively on temperature.

**B. Factorial [piecemeal] approach.**

In a factorial approach to the plant’s environment (such as the Concept of the Operational Environment described below) we identify a number of parameters (i.e. environmental factors) to try to better understand the relative importance of different aspects of the environment in determining plant distribution and performance. For example, foresters often identify numerous *site factors* (e.g. elevation, soil depth, precipitation, etc.) in their attempt to quantitatively describe the concept of *site*.

Although at first glance the holocoenotic and factorial approaches may seem contradictory, actually they are compatible approaches. We will use a factorial approach in discussing the plant’s environment, but the holocoenotic approach will remind us that the plant actually responds to all environmental factors. This is important in reminding us that individual factors (e.g. temperature, moisture, etc.) are not independent variables (i.e. they interact among themselves).

*2. Concept of critical factors*

Whenever an environmental factor (resource) approaches a threshold for the growth, survival, and/or reproduction of a plant, its relative effect on the plant is *critical*.

Unless one says good-bye to what one loves, and unless one travels to completely new territories, one can expect merely a long wearing away of oneself and eventual extinction. -Jean Dubuffet

“The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths to it are not found, but made; and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination.” -- Peter Ellyard

**TOI Session 4**

On whiteboard:

non-being >emptiness (openness, needless receptivity)> blending with the fullness of Tao’s

essential nature

+non-doing> stillness (allowance, non-interfering acceptance)> blending with the movement of

Tao’s essential nature

non-acting> authenticity of being one’s essential (Tao) self

Celtics

On a half sheet of paper write:

In all that I have read in Wayne Dyer’s book and the e-mails I have received, what I would most like to know more about is:

Re-gather in your groups from last week and share with each other what you have done in the past week to be a more inclusive person.

Make a list of every person, thing, event, circumstance or situation in your life about which you presently have unloving feelings, include any unloving feelings you may have concerning yourself.

Reduce the list to a single item by successively subtracting the item that is least unloving.

Close your eyes and become aware of your most unloving feeling. I will walk around the room and touch each of you on the shoulder while giving you an instruction.

Love your ability to feel what you are feeling right now.

What was your experience of this exercise?

Loving our ability to experience something changes our relationship to and of that something.

Kite and Wind

When an inner situation is not made conscious it appears outside as fate. -Carl G. Jung

All crisis is a crisis of perception.

No trace. When you do something, you should burn yourself completely, like a good bonfire, leaving no trace of yourself. –Suzuki Roshi (GBS)

Fortune cookie: The moment you were born, a problem was solved.

Let us hope that we are all preceded in this world by a love story. -Don Snyder

The purpose of passion is to bring into manifestation.

Love recognizes only itself in others.

Never place a period where God has placed a comma. –Gracie Allen

The best way to predict the future is to invent it. –Alan Kay

Each of us has a trope to our soul. –HMM

Law of sacrifice: give up lesser for greater.

The only thing that I can’t have is what I can’t embody.

To be what we are and to become capable of being all that was can be is the purpose of our life.

It is only with the heart that one can see rightly. What is essential is invisible to the eye. –Antoine de Saint Exupéry.

Be what you is ‘cause if you be what you ain’t then you ain’t what you is. -The Ebonic gospel

Spiritual discernment is the foundation of character. -Charles Fillmore

[Read pp. 238-306 plus whatever I send.]

What I believe about my own and others’ power is that we are equally and innately powerful at birth to be as each of us is meant to be and do as each of us is meant to do. When power is thus understood I consider it to be good.

As we grow up our innately endowed power is subordinated to forces of social and political consensus that allow only certain ways of being and doing to be made manifest. Politics is the process of determining which persons have access to the means of force by which the power of all other persons is diminished, manipulated and controlled in conformity to the socio-political consensus.

I am a powerful person who seeks to liberate rather than conform the power of others, which works to the extent that I avoid being an instrumental outcome of the socio-politically enforced consensus, while instead supporting initiatives that make it obsolete.

Inclusivity:

Mythical Kings and Iguanas

Golas:

Every person who allows others to treat him as a spiritual leader has the responsibility to ask himself: Out of all the perceptions available to me in the universe, why am I emphasizing the ignorance of my brothers? What am I doing in a role where this is real? What kind of standards am I conceiving, in which so many people are seen to be in suffering, while I am the enlightened one?

The Sacrifice

Right and wrong – how to stop playing the game: Make no comparisons.

Wrongness and rightness are relative mental constructs that do not exist independently of an observer’s consciousness. They are discernments of fact, not facts of themselves.

We do not experience the world. We experience our mental constructs of the world, our labeling of the world:

[I]f we had no words for color at all, might we not see a world painted in the tens of millions of colors that the human eye is capable of discerning? How much richer and more alive such a world would be. Each moment a visual feast. Perhaps it is the increasing abstraction of ourselves from the world, to which language contributes, that explains why "fifteen years ago people could distinguish 300,000 sounds; today many children can't go beyond 100,000 and the average is 180,000. Twenty years ago the average subject could detect 350 shades of a particular color. Today the number is 130."[ii](http://www.ascentofhumanity.com/chapter2-3.php" \l "sdendnote2sym) By naming the world, abstracting it and reducing it, we impoverish our perception of it. Language is the basis and the model for the standardization, generalization, and abstraction that underly present-day science and industry. In science, it is the assumption of universal laws applying generally to a featureless substrate of fundamental particles. In industry, it is the standardization of parts and processes. And the price we pay is a loss of the original richness of the ground of being.

Heidegger: A person is neither a thing nor a process. A person is an opening.

An opening for the expression (pressing outward) of Tao.

Happiness <> Joy

Consequences

Ex*is*tence

Reason-season

Beginner’s mind: dismantle the structure of your knowing

Conceptual ping-pong

God gives us opportunities.

Vocation - feminine (verse 6)

Consumerism (verse 3)

Mystery (verse 1)

Paradoxical unity (verse 2)

…the primal cause is mind. Everything must start with an idea. Every event, every condition, every thing is first an idea in the mind. -Robert Collier

those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything. -George Bernard Shaw

Every person is surrounded by a thought atmosphere…. Through this power we are either attracting or repelling. Like attracts like and . . . we attract just what we are in mind. -Ernest Holmes

I have concluded that for our purposes the words *Tao Te Ching* are best translated as “The Book of the Integral Way.” This translation honors Tao as the essence of desire-less, omni-participative integral causation, rather than of desire-full sequentially participative linear causation.

Denver: The dwelling place of magnificent opportunities.

Maslow: 98 % of us die without tasting the nectar of our magnificence

*The Mandala of Being* – Richard Moss

Self <-> world interrelationship (one’s interconnectivity with all that manifests)

Origin <>destiny relationship (sequential order of emergence)

Destiny is a matter of choice, not chance.

Fate is the outcome of self-management .

Fritjof Capra at beach:

I was sitting by the ocean one late summer afternoon, watching the waves rolling in and feeling the rhythm of my breathing, when I suddenly became aware of my whole environment as being engaged in a gigantic cosmic dance. Being a physicist, I knew that the sand, rocks, water and air were made of vibrating molecules and atoms, and that these consisted of particles which interacted with one another by creating and destroying other particles. I knew also that the Earth’s atmosphere was continually bombarded by showers of ‘cosmic rays’, particles of high energy undergoing multiple collisions as they penetrated the air. All this was familiar to me from my research in high-energy physics, but until that moment I had only experienced it through graphs, diagrams and mathematical theories. As I sat on that beach my former experiences came to life; I ‘saw’ cascades of energy coming down from outer space, in which particles were created and destroyed in rhythmic pulses; I ‘saw’ the atoms of the elements and those of my body participating in this cosmic dance of energy; I felt its rhythm and I ‘heard’ its sound, and at that moment I *knew* that this was the Dance of Shiva, the Lord of Dancers worshipped by the Hindus. –*The Tao of Physics*

The boundary conditions of a seashore’s ecosystem allow for the existence of a greater diversity of creaturely interbeing per cubic foot of Earth’s surface than does any other ecosystem on our planet.

Another direct experience of omni-dimensional interbeingness is reported in the autobiography of basketball player Bill Russell, *Second Wind*:

Every so often a Celtics game would heat up so that it became more than a physical or even mental game, and would be magical. That feeling is difficult to describe, and I certainly never talked about it when I was playing. When it happened, I could feel my play rise to a new level. It came rarely, and would last anywhere from five minutes to a whole quarter or more. Three or four plays were not enough to get it going. It would surround not only me and the other Celtics, but also the players on the other team and even the referees.

At that specific level, all sorts of odd things happened. The game would be in a heat of competition, and yet somehow I wouldn't feel competitive--which is a miracle in itself. I'd be putting out the maximum effort, straining, coughing up parts of my lungs as we ran, and yet I never felt the pain. The game would move so quickly that every fake, cut and pass would be surprising, and yet nothing could surprise me. It was almost as if we were playing is slow motion. During those spells, I could almost sense how the next play would develop and where the next show would be taken. Even before the other team brought the ball into bounds, I could feel it so keenly that I'd want to shout to my teammates, "It's coming there!" --except that I knew everything would change if I did. My premonitions would be consistently correct and I always felt then that I not only knew all the Celtics by heart, but also all the opposing players, and that they all knew me. There have been many times in my career when I felt moved or joyful, but these were the moments when I had chills pulsing up and down my spine.

Sometimes the feeling would last all the way to the end of the game, and when that happened I never cared who won. I can honestly say that those few times were the only ones when I did not care. I don't mean that I was a good sport about it – that I'd played my best and had nothing to be ashamed of. On the five or ten occasions when the game ended at that special level, I literally did not care who had won. If we lost, I'd still be as free and high as a sky hawk.

Situational Aikido: messy room.

Two constants: change and the observer of change.

The circle of change and constancy: the more things change, the more they stay the same

Who is it that asks?

Greater can comprehend the lesser

though not vice versa: worms crawling out of water.

though not always: blind man touching a snowflake.

outgoing <> outgrowing

infinite expansiveness

Impartiality of Tao – no privileged vantage point in the universe and no privileged perspective on the universe.

That’s right, that’s right.

Thinking the world together

Tenderness

Who knows his manhood's strength,   
Yet still his female tenderness maintains;  
As to one channel flow the many drains,   
All come to him, yea, all beneath the sky.   
Thus he the constant excellence retains;   
The simple child again, free from all stains.

Tao Te Ching, Chapter 28, James Legge: <http://classics.mit.edu/Lao/taote.html>   
<http://www.taoteching.org>

Commotion

Sufficiency - Affording

**TOI Session 3**

Share what you wrote down at last session to do this week on behalf of being a more inclusive person. If you didn’t do this, answer instead the question, what would it take for me to be a more flowing person?

AT CONCLUSION: Write down one thing you could do between now and next session that would make you a more inclusive person.

[Read pp. 160-237 plus whatever I send.]

**TOI Session 2**

Write down the word or phrase that best says in English what the term Tao signifies in Chinese.

[The dynamics of Tao may be defined as “omni-dimensional interbeing”.]

Write down the most important thing you have learned from your preparation for tonight’s class.

AT CONCLUSION: Write down one thing you could do between now and next session that would make you a more inclusive person.

[Read pp. 76-159 plus whatever I send.]

I have concluded that for our purposes the words *Tao Te Ching* are best translated as “The Book of the Integral Way.” This translation honors Tao as the essence of desire-less, omni-participative integral causation, rather than of desire-full sequentially participative linear causation.

Symbolic representations of omni-dimensional interbeing:

The level playing field: mountains and valleys

TheYin-Yang

*The Mandala of Being* – Richard Moss (Verse 7)

Self <-> world interrelationship (one’s interconnectivity with all that manifests)

Origin <>destiny relationship (sequential order of emergence)

Destiny is a matter of choice, not chance.

Fate is the outcome of self-management .

Just as a picture is worth a thousand words, a direct experience is worth a thousand pictures, and I am therefore going to share with you some profound experiences that I and others have had with water.

Waterbugs

Gurgle

Flow

Discussed:

Rightness and wrongness.

How old is universe?

How old is wrongness?

How old is rightness?

Wrongness and rightness are relative mental constructs that do not exist independently of the assumptions a discerning observer. They are discernments of fact, not facts of themselves.

Judgment – discernment.

Morality <> Virtue

Happiness <> Joy

Consequences

God gives us opportunities.

**TOI Session 1**

**Opening:**

**Harmonial at-one-ment**: The interconnection of all that is: all past, present and future being with all other being that has been, is, or shall be, and with non-Being from which all that exists emerges. Tao is the origin of all substance and all form, yet is itself without substance or form. If Tao had either substance or form, it would be a thing that is distinctive from other things. Tao is not a thing and has no thing, yet all things emerge from Tao to express Tao as Te.

So just what are Tao and Te?

Tao is the integrally and harmoniously flowing way of all being. Te is the integral practice of the principles of integral and harmonious flow. The essence of this practice was revealed to me in a series of experiences with water.

[The Gurgle, Flow]

I have subtitled our eight-week Tao of Inclusivity date with our harmonial at-one-ment “Xxxx” because the central purpose of our gathering together is to address the two most significant questions that face everyone on this planet today:

* How is it possible to be for peace without being against or resorting to violence?
* How do we become inclusive rather than abusive of our adversaries?

Like all questions for which we presently have no answer, the most we can do is address these two questions by looking where their answers may eventually be found. One of humankind’s oldest resources in which to find such answers is the *Tao Te Ching* . . . Among our most recently developed resources is Sharif Abdullah’s *Creating a World That Works for All*.

Since Tao has no particular point of view, we will focus on non-adversarial advocacy as a point *to* view while not having a point *of* view.

I talk Tao better than I walk it. In so saying, I do not speak for anyone else in this room. If anyone here is an accomplished master of walking the *Tao Te Ching’s* talk, it will be evident without your ever speaking a word. And if you are not a master of walking the *Tao Te Ching’s* talk, this too will be evident without your ever speaking a word.

An exercise in demystification and re-enchantment that facilitates the process of perceptual makeover.

The rules of engagement for dating your harmonial at-one-ment –

Although this six-week date with our harmonial at-one-ment is entitled “The Tao of Inclusivity” its focus is less on inclusivity *per se* than on our realization and actualization of inclusivity. Such realization is the essence of the *Tao Te Ching,* which is best translated from the perspective of today’s scientific, psychological and metaphysical understanding as “The book [*Ching*] of the Emergent Way [*Tao*] of Indwelling Authenticity and Self-Mastery [*Te*].”

Inclusivity – the interconnectedness of all being (a.k.a. “harmonial at-one-ment”) – is not just a good idea, it is a universal principle of the way everything works. Inclusivity is no less a universal principle than is gravity. The term “principle” signifies a universal truth that includes many subordinate truths, in contrast to “laws” which signify in words various expressions of principle. It is on behalf of our *mindfully* embodying and exemplifying the universal principle of inclusivity that our six-week date with our harmonial at-one-ment will focus on the attainment of authenticity and self-mastery.

“Mindfulness” is self-awareness of how one is creating one’s moment-to-moment experience by being fully present therein with conscious knowledgeability of how one’s own self is shaping it. Mindful authenticity is prerequisite to self-mastery, and self-mastery is prerequisite to the realization and actualization of inclusivity. In the absence of authenticity our egos distort the integrity of our essential state of being. And without self-mastery of, by, for and ***as*** our authentic being, we cannot exemplify the principle of inclusivity.

The keys to being an inclusive person are authenticity and self-mastery. In preparation for our focusing on authenticity and self-mastery, it is essential that we know what the word “inclusivity” signifies.

Interbeing – Argon – etc.

Holocoenotic diagram

[See quotations on “Mind” at end?]

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

**Understanding Tao :**

We begin with a definition of reality that is compatible with Tao:

Reality is that which makes it possible for us to have experience.

Insofar as there is agreement on what is real, our experience of reality is shared. Insofar as there is not agreement on what is real, our experience of reality is not shared.

In any event, experience is our only point of reference to reality. Nothing is more real to anyone than his or her experience.

Presumably there is a reality independent of human perception thereof – such as the reality of a universe that preceded the existence of human perception by 13 billion years. But what reality is TO US will never be more than what we individually and collectively make of IT.

I presume only to have addressed your question, because no person can answer it to another’s complete satisfaction.

Nor has this person yet succeeded in answering it to his own complete satisfaction.”

Some doses of shared reality:

People don’t care what you think until they think that you care.

Looking for reality in the wrong places.

Dory Previn: Mythical Kings and Iguanas, I Danced and Danced

Looking for reality in the right places

Lee: Is That All There Is

Grateful Dead: Ripple (radiate waves of Tao)

**Embodying Tao: Show Stoppers**

Our mission in this class is to reinvent our lives by transforming our perceptions – a perceptual makeover that facilitates self-mastery.

* What “self-mastery” means to me is . . .
* When I have accomplished full self-mastery, the difference this accomplishment will make is . . .

Whenever you are experiencing unloving feelings, love your experience of unloving feelings and love yourself for being able to have the experience. Whenever you experience being upset, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, psychologically, socially, politically, economically, etc., love your experience of being upset and love yourself for being able to experience being upset. While it may not be always possible to experience love, it is always possible to be loving of your experience.

Henley poem

Practicing the keys to inclusivity – the constancy of Tao (self-taofication)

Presuppositions.

* Tao is the essence that precedes all existence and which permeates all that exists by the infusion of its essence within all that exists.
* The *Tao Te Ching* is best understood as a book about the context of our perception and experience rather than a book about the content of our thoughts.
* “. . . no one has the power to make you uneasy without your consent.” (p. 162)
  + Steiner
  + Frankl
* Impartiality of Tao – no privileged vantage point in the universe and no privileged perspective on the universe.
  + “That’s right, that’s right.’
* Constancy of Tao (eternal = forever constant and enduring)
* Integrity of Tao
* Resiliency of Tao
* Appreciation of Tao – growing in value

**Hoffman: The Te of Piglet**

**What? Another One? (Introduction)**

Rationale for book ~ pp. 2-6

**Interjection**

Piglet (Te) and Pooh (Tao) ~ pp. 8-9

**The – What Was That Again? – of Piglet**

Ever-present origin ~ p. 13

Great Separation ~ pp. 13-21

Te > dehr ~ pp. 21-22

Te >“upright heart” ~ pp. 22-23

**Very Small Animal**

Agonizing ~ p. 26

The small (underdog) ~ pp. 32-39, 49-52

Power ~ pp. 39-42

Sensitivity ~ p. 52, (79-81), (183-85)

**The Eeyore Effect**

Eeyore effect ~ pp. 55-60

Negative news media ~ pp. 62-65

Critics ~ pp. 66-69

Educators ~ pp. 70-74

Hyper-masculinity ~ pp. 75-81

Sensitivity ~ pp. 79-81 (52), (183-85)

**The Tigger Tendency**

Tigger tendency ~ pp. 86-90, 91-97, 98-106

**Things as They Might Be**

Illusions ~ pp. 108-10, 123-26, 139-41

Chinese New Year ~ pp. 120-22

Abstract Value Society ~ pp.126-29

Religion ~ pp. 130-32

Nature ~ pp. 132-36, 158-60

Dangerous illusions ~ pp. 138-41

**Things as They Are**

Reality Appreciation ~ pp. 144-49

Chinese inventions ~ pp. 147-49

Observation/Living Wisely and Well ~ pp. 151-55

Effortless action ~ pp. 156-58

Natural world ~ pp. 158-60

Advertising ~ pp. 162-64

Things as they are ~ pp.169-75, 179

Good~Bad ~ pp. 175-78

**The Upright Heart**

Personification of Tao ~ p. 183

Sensitivity ~ pp. 183-85, (52), (79-81) [Mary Baker Eddy]

Cooperation ~ pp. 186-87

Contentment ~ pp. 187-88

Modesty ~ p. 189

Smallness ~ pp. 191-97, 210

Care of horses ~ p. 197

Non-interference ~ pp. 197-201

What If?/Worrst case scenario ~ pp. 204-05

Flow writing ~ p. 205

Non-intimidation ~ p. 207

Acceptance ~ p. 207

Smallness ~ p. 210

**The Day of Piglet**

Civilization- “conservatism ~ pp. 214-21

Eco(?)nomics ~ pp. 225-32

The Way that Can Be Followed (wayed) is “not a changelenss way” ~ p. 233

Way of transformation ~ pp. 233-35

Charles Dickens ~ pp. 236-239

Medicine ~ p. 242

Aggression ~ p. 242

Feminine ~ p. 243

Gandhi ~ pp. 243-49

Great Purification ~ pp. 250-51

**Farewell**

Flowers (Sherlock Holmes) ~ p. 254

Nightingale ~ pp. 254-55

End as beginning g ~ p. 257

**The Gospel According to Zen**

**The Most Serious Question of All (*Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*)**

Dumb and dumber (fingers and fists) ~ pp. 3-5

**Today’s Spiritual Crisis (Erich Fromm)**

“…split thought from affect” ~ p. 9

…”to be” is dominated by “to have”… ~p. 9

…”perfection of things [and] how to make them.” ~ p. 10

…”goal [to] escape insecurity and aloneness.” ~ p. 10

…”abandonment of theistic ideas in nineteenth century [and] plunge into objectivity.” ~ p. 10

…”Taoism and Buddhism had a rationality and realsm superior to that of the Western religions.” ~ p. 11

…”more congenial to Western rational though”t… ~ p. 12

**What Is Zen? (D. T. Suzuki)**

…”Zen merely points the way.” ~ p. 14

…”wiping off the dirt of intellect”… ~ p. 14

…”very denial involves something not denied” ~ p. 15

…”higher affirmation where there are no antitheses.” ~ p. 15

“Zen believes in his inner purity and goodness.” ~ p. 15

**Wash Out Your Mouth (Alan Watts)**

Agonizing ~ p. 26

The small (underdog) ~ pp. 32-39, 49-52

Sensitivity ~ p. 52, (79-81), (183-85)

**A Religious Man (Erich Fromm)**

Eeyore effect ~ pp. 55-60

Negative news media ~ pp. 62-65

Sensitivity ~ pp. 79-81 (52), (183-85)

**An Artist of Life (D. T, Suzuki)**

Tigger tendency ~ pp. 86-90, 91-97, 98-106

**Beyond Theology (Alan Watts)**

Illusions ~ pp. 108-10, 123-26, 139-41

Chinese New Year ~ pp. 120-22

Dangerous illusions ~ pp. 138-41

**The Zenrin (R. H. Blyth)**

Reality Appreciation ~ pp. 144-49

Chinese inventions ~ pp. 147-49

Good~Bad ~ pp. 175-78

**Satori (D. T. Suzuki)**

Personification of Tao ~ p. 183

Sensitivity ~ pp. 183-85, (52), (79-81) [Mary Baker Eddy]

Smallness ~ p. 210

**The Chess Game (Trevor Leggett)**

Civilization- “conservatism ~ pp. 214-21

Eco(?)nomics ~ pp. 225-32

Great Purification ~ pp. 250-51

**Salvation or Satori (Hubert Benoit)**

Flowers (Sherlock Holmes) ~ p. 254

Nightingale ~ pp. 254-55

End as beginning g ~ p. 257

**The Third Eye (*Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*)**

…”Zen merely points the way.” ~ p. 14

…”wiping off the dirt of intellect”… ~ p. 14

“Zen believes in his inner purity and goodness.” ~ p. 15

**It (Alan Watts)**

Agonizing ~ p. 26

The small (underdog) ~ pp. 32-39, 49-52

Sensitivity ~ p. 52, (79-81), (183-85)

**Riddles of Jesus (Robert M. Grant and David Noel Freedman)**

Eeyore effect ~ pp. 55-60

Negative news media ~ pp. 62-65

Sensitivity ~ pp. 79-81 (52), (183-85)

**The Sound of One Hand (*Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*)**

Tigger tendency ~ pp. 86-90, 91-97, 98-106

**East and West (D. T. Suzuki)**

Illusions ~ pp. 108-10, 123-26, 139-41

Chinese New Year ~ pp. 120-22

Dangerous illusions ~ pp. 138-41

**God and Meister Eckhart (C de B. Evans**

Reality Appreciation ~ pp. 144-49

Chinese inventions ~ pp. 147-49

Good~Bad ~ pp. 175-78

**Self-Knowledge (J. Krishnamurti)**

Personification of Tao ~ p. 183

Sensitivity ~ pp. 183-85, (52), (79-81) [Mary Baker Eddy]

Smallness ~ p. 210

**Instant Zen (R. H. Blyth)**

Civilization- “conservatism ~ pp. 214-21

Eco(?)nomics ~ pp. 225-32

Great Purification ~ pp. 250-51

**This Is My Body (Alan Watts)**

Flowers (Sherlock Holmes) ~ p. 254

Nightingale ~ pp. 254-55

End as beginning g ~ p. 257

**Tail Waggers (Chuang Tze – H. E. Giles)**

Personification of Tao ~ p. 183

Sensitivity ~ pp. 183-85, (52), (79-81) [Mary Baker Eddy]

Smallness ~ p. 210

**Credo (Erich Fromm)**

Civilization- “conservatism ~ pp. 214-21

Eco(?)nomics ~ pp. 225-32

Great Purification ~ pp. 250-51

**Alan Watts: Nature, Man and Woman**

**The Most Serious Question of All (*Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*)**

Dumb and dumber (fingers and fists) ~ pp. 3-5

**Today’s Spiritual Crisis (Erich Fromm)**

**Dyer: Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life**

**Preface:**

* Tao as supreme reality, the all-pervasive Source of everything (xii) – animates everything in the world of form and boundaries. (xii)
* Invites the forces of outer and inner life to inform [being and action]. (xiii)
* Doing nothing so as to leave nothing undone. (xiv)
* The cyclical nature of the world of the 10,000 things. (xiv)
* You are the Tao at work. (xiv)
* Our being comes from nonbeing and returns thereto. (xv)
* A world of extraordinary perceptions. (xv)
* Luxuriate in the simplicity, don’t attempt to complicate. (xv)
* Allow yourself to stay in harmony with your [inmost] nature, which can be trusted if you listen and act accordingly. (xvi)

**Verse 1: Living the Mystery**

* Letting go of attempts to see the mystery allows us to see it. (3)
* Desire (wanting) and desireless (allowing) exist on a continuum [between striving and thriving]. (3)
* Desire is receptive to our experience of manifestation, yet attaches us thereto and prevents the experience of non-manifest reality, which appears only to those with desireless non-attachment that allows it to do so. Plants growing – going to sleep. (4)
* “Desire is both the beginning and the ground of desirelessness, yet wanting is also the beginning of and the ground of allowing.” (4)
* The 10,000 things are the categorical world of identity, essential to communication. (4)
* “Consciously allowing this nameless mystery is ultimately the way to practice Tao.” (5)
* “…being in the mystery and allowing it to flow through you unimpeded.” (5)
* Let the world unfold . . . . Let relationships be . . . (5)
* Allow things to be the way they are. (5)
* “…nothing in this universe is what its named.” (6)

**Verse 2: Living the Paradoxical Unity**

* “…the sage lives openly with apparent duality and paradoxical unity.(10)

**Verse 3: Living Contentment**

* “Rather than seeking more, the Tao practice of gratitude is what leads us to the contented life. We must replace personal desires with the Tao-centered question: *How may I serve*?” (15)
* “…there is no way to happiness; rather happiness *is* the way. (17)
* When action is pure and selfless, everything settles into its own perfect place.” (14, 18)

**Verse 4: Living Infinitely**

* Tao cannot be constrained, quantified, or measured. (21)
* “…the co[-]operative presence of the invisible Tao. (22)
* “Stay with what can never be used up.” (22)
* “…view your life from the vantage point of an infinite observer.” (23)
* “Wisdom is knowing I am nothing, loving is knowing I am everything, and between the two my life moves.” (23)

**Verse 5: Living Impartially**

* “…the act of exclusion or partiality eliminates their functioning from their true self.” (26)
* “…if a thought or behavior divides it is not of God; if it unites us, it *is* of God.” (26)
* Appearances are “straw dogs” (27)
* Remove the word special from your vocabulary. (27)

**Verse 6: Living Creatively**

* “…the never-dying formative energy…” (29)
* “Listen to your inner callings, ignore how others might want to direct your life energies, and allow yourself to radiate outward what you feel so profoundly and deeply within you.” (30)
* “Whatever you feel within you as your calling – whatever makes you feel alive – know in your heart that this excitement is all the evidence you need to have your inner passion become reality.” (30)
* “…harmonize with the creative power…” (31)
* “Can you see some whose inherent nature is intact? [babies, small children] (31)

**Verse 7: Living Beyond Ego**

* “The sage emulates the natural philanthropy of the Tao, and all of his needs are fulfilled in the process.” (36)
* “…striving and never arriving.” (36)
* “Stop the chase and be a witness.” (37)
* EGO = edging God out. (37)

**Verse 8: Living in the Flow**

* “Be timely in choosing the right moment.” TTC(40)
* “One who lives in accordance with nature does not go against the way of things. He moves in harmony with the present moment, always knowing the truth of just what to do.” TTC (40)
* “You are water, water is you.” (41)
* “…see the parallels between you and [water].” (41)
* “Live as water lives, since you *are* water.” (41)
* “When you’re free to flow as water, you’re free to communicate naturally – information is exchanged, and knowledge advances in a way that benefits everyone.” (42)
* “Be like water . . . by not trying to do anything other than simply flow.” (42)
* “…we are water, and water wants to be free.” (42)
* “…our intentions can effect the entire planet…” (43)

**Verse 9: Living Humility**

* “…it knows precisely when enough is enough.” (45)
* “Excess is eschewed by the Tao.” (45)
* “…choice overload…” (46)
* “Come to grips with the radical concept hat enough is enough.” (46)
* “---trapped in believing that more of something is the cause of your happiness.” (46)
* “Seek the pleasure in what you are doing, rather than in how it might ultimately benefit you.” (47)

**Verse 10: Living Oneness**

* “…having yet not possessing…” (48)
* “Embrace oneness by seeing yourself in everyone you encounter” (49)
* “…view others as an extension of yourself.”(50)
* “Let go of your identification with your stuff and with your accomplishments.”(51)
* “…oneness thinking….” (51)

**Verse 11: Living from the Void**

* “The usefulness of what is depends on what is not.” (Wayne Dyer) [See also end of Verse 35, p. 170]
* [Finding the song of a bird]
* “Therefore benefit comes from what is there; Usefulness from what is not there.” (Gia-Fu Feng & Jane English)
* “Thus we are helped by what is not to use what is.” (Witter Bynner)
* “Thus what we gain is Something, yet it is by virtue of Nothing that This can be put to use.” (D.C. Lau)
* “…what exists serves for possession. What does not exist serves for effectiveness.” (Richard Wilhelm)
* “We work with being, but non-being is what we use.” (Stephen Mitchell)
* “Take advantage of Being, Make use of Non-Being.” (Patrick Byrne)
* “Benefit may be derived from something, but it is in nothing that we find usefulness.” (Victor H Mair)
* “The substance of your body is enlivened by maintaining the part of you that is unoccupied.” (Hua-Ching Ni)
* “Therefore, existence renders actual but non-existence renders useful.” (Paul Carus & D.E. Suzuki)
* “Therefore, as individual beings, these things are useful materials. Constructed together in their non-being, they give rise to function.” (Change Chung-yuan)

There can be no movement without an empowering stillness.

* “…separated parts lack the usefulness [of emptiness and stillness] that the center contributes…” (53)
* “…usefulness depends on a nonbeingness…” (53)
* “…it’s the empty space between the notes that literally allows the music to be music – if there’s no void, there’s only continuous sound.” (54)
* “What’s needed to have a tree is *what is not*, an imperceptible, invisible life force that eludes your five senses.” (54) [
* “…the movement of the wheel is can be likened to the void that’s vital for you to move through in your life. You have an inner state of nonbeing . . . the invisible essence that your existence depends on…” (54)
* “Take the time to shift your attention to the so-called nothingness that is your essence. What does it beckon you toward?” (54)
* “…a space contained by your physical self, from which all of your thoughts and perceptions flow into the world.” (54)
* “…spend some time each day just being attentive to the awesome power of your imperceptible vital essence.” (54)
* “…the ‘placeless place’ within you, where [from which] all of your thoughts flow outward.” (55)
* “…inviting your essence to reveal itself and allowing you to live in the void.” (55)
* “…just be in that space between – that void which is absolutely crucial to your very existence.” (55)

“Tao” signifies the presence (the benefit of nearness) and power (the utility of how-ness) of the immediate moment.

“Te” signifies being fully and freely available to the presence and power of the immediate moment, or as I prefer to signify it, being fully and freely available to the near and how of the immediate moment.

When I realized 30 years ago that what “here and now” is about is the near and how of the immediate moment, I wrote the following I-opener:

Somewhere this side of the rainbow I can meet the Wizard of Is

whose special magic leaves today's life undistracted

by the should be's, could be's and if only's

that cloud over my inner intentions

and distort my outward attentions.

"Good old days,"

childish ways

and other once-were's are as absent from the Wizard's view

as are apprehensions about tomorrow.

The Wizard of Is resides instead in the near and how of present moments only –

the time and place from which my being forever self-emanates.

If I would fathom the secret of overflowing from such moments

I must consult the Wizard of Is.

Fortunately, this Wizard inhabits my own domain,

within the being who bears my name.

All growth is a leap in the dark, a spontaneous unpremeditated act without benefit of experience. **-Henry Miller**

“When you’re free to flow as water, you’re free to communicate naturally – information is exchanged, and knowledge advances in a way that benefits everyone.” (42) [#8, Living in the Flow”]

“Seek the pleasure in what you are doing, rather than in how it might ultimately benefit you.” (47) #9, “Living Humility”]

Just as Christianity is all about representing Jesus, to the extent that it misrepresents what Jesus was about. Similarly, knowing about Tao in terms of nameable processes, structures and forms is of far greater benefit than it is useful. It is only as we know what Tao is about as primordial un-nameable essence that our knowing becomes useful to our enjoyment of knowledge’s benefits. (See *Tao Te Ching*, Verse #11)

Tao is far less the answer to all of our questions than it is the question to all of our answers. Accordingly, our study together is dedicated primarily to questioning our answers, and only secondarily to answering our questions. Answering a question is of far more benefit than utility, because (again recalling *Tao Te Ching* Verse #11) it tends to fill the space that was opened by the question it presumably “settles”. Answers are useful only to the extent that they are the seeds of further questions. Accordingly, the most useful answer to a question is often another question that keeps the space of inquiry open rather than closes it.

What Tao calls “beginner’s mind” empowers us to continually swim in our questions via ever ongoing and ongrowing inquiry, rather than drown in our answers via *dis*continuation of inquiry. Drowning in our answers is the essence of closed-mindedness, whose symptoms include “the paralysis of analysis”, “hardening of the categories” and “fundamentalism”. Fundamentalism is a symptom of mentalism that has become bankrupt for lack of further funds.

Only via continuous inquiry may we look for Tao in all of the right places as prescribed by Alan Cohen: “If you want to find God, hang out in the spaces between your thoughts.”

Tao’s principle of emptying the mind is violated by those whose minds are filled with answers, because the most effective way to close ourselves off to further thinking is to allow ourselves to be had by our conclusions, rather than allow our conclusions to be a point of departure for ongrowing inquiry. Answers serve us best when we employ them as a means to the further liberation that every conclusion provides: a new point of departure for emptying our mind of yesterday’s outworn answers in the light of today’s new questioning.

**Verse 12: Living with Inner Conviction**

* “…separated parts lack the usefulness that the center contributes…” (53)
* “…just be in that space between – that void which is is absolutely crucial to your very existence.” (55)

**Verse 33: Living Self-Mastery**

He who commands himself commands his experiential world.

* “…twin ideas of *knowledge* and *power*.” (of self-understanding and self-command in all situations) (161)
* “---evaluate your level of self-mastery by turning your gaze inward and seeing the world, and your place in it, in a new light.” (161)
* “A Tao-oriented life focuses on understanding yourself, rather than on the thinking and behavior of others. You shift from the acquisition of information and the pursuit of status symbols to understanding and mastering yourself in any and all situations.” (161)
* “Power over others is replaced with an inner strength that empowers you to behave from a wisdom that is inherently the Tao.” (161)
* “…as you realize that you are responsible for your reactions in any given moment, others will cease to have any power or control over you.” (162) [Hopes and Expectations]
* “…permit the flow of inner responses, examining them with tolerance directed toward yourself…. By seeking *your* stream of thoughts and simply going with them, the conduct of that person immediately loses its potency. You begin seeing your world suffused with the harmony of the Tao eternally (and *in*ternally!) flowing through you” (162) [Dalai Lama and Mao]
* “By refusing to turn the controls of your existence over to anyone or any set of circumstances, you’re exercising personal strength instead of force.” (162)
* “Focus on understanding yourself instead of blaming others.” (162)
* “Tell yourself that no one has the power to make you 8neasy without your consent, and that you’re unwilling to grant that authority to this person right now.” (162-163)
* “Flow in the Tao now! In this way, with this simple exercise at the moment of your dis-ease, you’ve made a shift to self-mastery.” (163)
* “…bypass blame and even your desire to understand the other person; instead, focus on understanding *yourself.”* By taking responsibility for how you choose to respond to anything or anyone, you’re aligning yourself with the Tao.”(163)
* “Dismiss any desire to extend power over other through the forceful nature of your actions and your personality….demonstrate your inner strength by abandoning such tactics.” s
* “…practice allowing them to learn their own lessons without interference from you.” (163)
* “Remind yourself to remain quiet and send loving energy.” (162)
* “When your judgments dominate, the flow of Tao slows.” (163)
* “…sincerely desire that others follow their own life paths . . .” (163)
* ACIM: “I am responsible for what I see. I chose the feelings I experience.” (164) [See full quote]

**Verse 53: Living in Harmony**

* “Imagine that you were able to view the world from a position of complete honor and oneness: Everywhere you looked you saw the Great Way…and saw all of it as you.” (257)
* “…seing the whole globe as part of ourselves.” (257)
* “…we stil take ‘devious paths’…” (258)
* “Begin by seeing yourself as the environment, rather than as an organism within it.” (258)
* “…coined a word to describe when life-forms are whole, rather than separate: *environorgamisms*.” (258)
* “…change the way you look at the blatant imbalances in your world, noting how your world changes when you align with the Tao when you live honorably.” (258-259)
* “Make compassion the essebtial foundation of your personal philosophy…. This is one of the most significant ways of initiating the growth of a critical mass.” (259)
* Mother Theresa: “[I]n each [person I see] I see the face of Christ in one of his more distressing disguises.” (259)
* Compassionate action in the Koran. (259)

**Dyer: Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life**

**Chapter sequence:**

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**Verse 8: Living in the Flow**

* “Be timely in choosing the right moment.” TTC(40)
* “One who lives in accordance with nature does not go against the way of things. He moves in harmony with the present moment, always knowing the truth of just what to do.” TTC (40)
* “You are water, water is you.” (41)
* “…see the parallels between you and [water].” (41)
* “Live as water lives, since you *are* water.” (41)
* “When you’re free to flow as water, you’re free to communicate naturally – information is exchanged, and knowledge advances in a way that benefits everyone.” (42)
* “Be like water . . . by not trying to do anything other than simply flow.” (42)
* “…we are water, and water wants to be free.” (42)
* “…our intentions can effect the entire planet…” (43)

**Verse 32: Living the Perfect Goodness of the Tao**

* “xxx

**Verse 43: Living Softly**

* “xxx

**Verse 58: Living Untroubled by Good or Bad Fortune**

* “xxx

**Verse 78: Living like Water**

* “xxx

Inclusivity is the ultimate ground of all boundary conditions, upon which it draws dotted lines rather than builds walls. All boundaries other than those of human fabrication serve as intersections, being permeable zones of mutually inclusive interaction rather than barriers designed to exclude interrelationship. In accordance with the boundary conditions of inclusivity, all exclusion is self-executed á la Ralph Waldo Emerson’s dictum that “Those who are exclusive exclude themselves.”

The walls I place

between myself and others

have many textures:

blame,

self-pity,

busy-work,

competition,

self-righteousness,

saving the world,

cynicism,

the turn off,

the put down,

and so many more.

I erect my walls to keep out

criticism,

hurt,

disappointment,

let-downs,

and the like –

yet all to no avail.

My defenses meant to keep out others

only keep me in,

where I fester in my flailing to exclude from my awareness

others’ unwanted presences and points of view.

Though I may one day pound

against my walls to get out

my bombardment will likewise not avail,

for such beholding of my walls is only half.

I shall liberate myself only as I understand

my walls are built for yielding from the other side.

There is no getting out

without a letting in.

Healthy boundary conditions facilitate the wholeness of interbeing that sustains the interrelationship of all that is, in contrast to the separative tendencies of counter-being that characterize our arbitrary blockages in part of the wholeness of our existence. For example, the boundary conditions of a seashore’s ecosystem allow for the existence of a greater diversity of creaturely interbeing per cubic foot of Earth’s surface than does any other ecosystem on our planet. It was at a seashore that Fritjof Capra, author of *The Tao of Physics* and *The Web of Life*, experienced a heightened realization of universal common unity from the omni-dimensional perspective of interbeing:

Wherever two or more are gathered in the name of any game, the co-operative dance of interbeing is immediately at hand, be it a specialized game of sport or the planetary game of life. Russell experienced the local immediacy of the extra-dimensionality that was termed by Alan Watts the “humanvironment”, and described by him in terms of inclusive rather than exclusive boundary conditions:

A living body is not a fixed *thing* but a flowing *event*, like a flame or a whirlpool: the shape is stable, for the substance is a stream of energy going in at one end and out the other. We are particular and temporarily identifiable wiggles in a stream that enters us in the form of light, heat, air, water, milk, bread, fruit, beer, beef Stroganoff, caviar and *pate de fois gras*. It goes out as gas and excrement – and also as semen, babies, talk, politics, commerce, war, poetry and music. And philosophy.

Watts’ description puts flesh on the bones of Emerson’s assertion that “We live in a liquid universe that appears as a solid fact.” This extra-dimensional perspective was metaphysically affirmed two millennia ago in the Biblical assertion that “Things which are seen are not made of things which do appear” (*Hebrews* 11:3). Such discernment remained solely metaphysical until it was physically confirmed by the 20th century science of quantum mechanics, and is now proclaimed in assertions like that of physicist John D. Barrow: “The true simplicity and symmetry of the universe is to be found in the things that are not seen.” This intuition of extra-dimensionality is also embodied in Vaclav Havel’s definition of education – “the ability to see the hidden connections between phenomena” – as well as in spiritual philosopher Ernest Holmes’ understanding of salvation: “We do not save that which is lost, we merely discover that which needs to be found.”

Watts perceived a living body as a “flow-through” of its environment, which in turn flows through the environment that is flowing through it. It is only by the means of such interbeing can anything exist, whether it is “living” or otherwise. Human bodies flow the mutual dance of interbeing so effectively that they contain at least traces of every one of the 92 chemical elements that comprise the universe. Physically as well as metaphysically, each of us is a whole-universe catalog.

Inclusivity, indeed!

**The Tao of Self-Expression**

**(The Rules of Engagement for Self-Taofication)**

The place to find is within yourself.

-Joseph Campbell

The rules of engagement for self-taofication are identical with those for self-deification.

There is a single supreme principle of engagement for either self-taofication or self-deification, from which all rules of engagement are derived, the principle of **presence**, of being consistently present right here and just now. Only via such presence are we able to satisfy the greatest of human hungers, which was cited a half century ago by priest and ethicist Gerald Vann in his book, *The Heart of Man* (Longmans, Green and Co., 1945):

The heart of man is a hunger for the reality which lies about him and beyond him...a hunger not to have reality but to be reality.

Until the advent of modern scientific cosmology, our sense of the universe was what a contemporary cosmologist, Joel Primack, calls a “centering cosmology” in his book, *The View from the Center of the Universe: Discovering our Extraordinary Place in the Cosmos* (Riverhead Books, 2006). A centering cosmology is one in which we feel that we integrally participate in and make a difference to the greater reality of which our existence is a part. Modern science put an end to this cosmic perspective by pronouncing our relationship to the universe to be a meaningless and purposeless and utterly inconsequential accidental byproduct of purely mechanical natural forces, and therefore asserting that we are totally devoid of any causal influence on the outcome of anything that is cosmically real. From this perspective many scientists maintain that nothing in the entire universe, including the function of our planet, would be any different than it is today if human beings had never existed. Among these scientists was Bertrand Russell, who wrote:

The world which science presents for our belief [tells us] that man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve the individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins – all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only in the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul’s habitation henceforth be safely built.

Russell addressed this prospect with the question

How, in such an alien and inhuman world can so powerless a creature as man preserve his aspirations untarnished?

Russell addressed his own consequent feeling of powerless in the face of his self-negating cosmology:

I must, before I die, find some way to say the essential thing that is within me, that I have never said yet – a thing that is not love or hate or pity or scorn, but the very breath of life, fierce and coming from far away, bringing into human life the vastness and fearful passionless force of non-human things.

Gerald Vann accounted the existential malaise in which we are of no consequence to non-human reality as follows:

We of the modern West are the only people in the whole history of the world who have refused to find an explanation of the universe in a divine mind and will; and it is worth wondering whether perhaps that refusal is not at the root of the chaos and misery in which we find ourselves.

The consequences of our lacking a centering cosmology have also been addressed by Matthew Fox:

When a civilization is without a cosmology it is not only cosmically violent, but cosmically lonely and depressed. Is it possible that the real *cause* of the drug, alcohol, and entertainment addictions haunting our society is not so much the "drug lords" of other societies but the cosmic loneliness haunting our own? Perhaps alcohol is a liquid cosmology and drugs are a fast-fix cosmology for people lacking a true one. An astute observer of human nature in our time, psychiatrist Alice Miller, understands the opposite of depression not to be gaiety but *vitality*. How full of vitality are we these days? And how full of vitality are our institutions of worship, education, politics, economics?

The first rule of engagement that operationally follows from the principle of being present right here and just know is the exercise of such presence itself.

**Appreciating Our Worth**

The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated.

-William James

This course honors Ralph Waldo Emerson’s recognition of Jesus’ relationship to our craving to be appreciated:

Jesus Christ belonged to the true race of prophets. He saw with open eyes the mystery of the soul... He saw that God incarnates himself in man and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of this world ... He declared he was God; thus He is, and as I think, the only soul in history who has appreciated the worth of man.

As any broker or appraiser of real estate knows, “appreciation” of worth results in an increase of value. Accordingly, this course facilitates an increase of its students’ value, which occurs as we emulate Jesus’ appreciation of the Godly worth that all of us, as did he, incarnate equally.

**Service:**

When you do something for the Highest Good for all people, those are the fingerprints that Angels leave behind. -Carlos Santana

**Tao Te Ching:** The book (Ching) of the Supreme Way (Tao) of expressing virtue~power~shape (Te); the way that things most appropriately emerge from formlessness into form.

Tao is the Supreme Reality, the all-pervasive substratum; it is the whole universe and the way the universe operates. Te is the shape and power of Tao; it is the way Tao manifests, it is Tao particularized into a form or virtue. Tao is the transcendent reality; Te is the imminent reality. Ching means a book or a classic work. – Jonathan Star, *Tao Te Ching: The Definitive Edition* (Tarcher/Penguin, 2001), p. 2.

It is important to remember that manifest reality is merely evidential of Tao, and never Tao itself.

**Co-operation:** struggle-free working together of all concerned. (Distinguished from “cooperation” that signifies merely “getting along”.)

**The principle of least action: (a.k.a. “correct action”, “right action”, “non-action” “inaction” and “non-doing”):** being~having~doing that is co-operative with and precisely proportionate to its circumstances. All other action is at least somewhat operatively dysfunctional.

**Correct thinking (a.k.a. “right thinking”):** thinking that if fully co-operative with the principle of least action.

**Incorrect thinking (a.k.a. “wrong thinking” and “erroneous thinking”):** thinking that dis-operative with the principle of least action.

**Beginner’s mind:** thinking that is cleansed of non-co-operative perceptions and conceptions, and is distinguished by its clarity, tranquility and elasticity.

**Tao Te Ching:** The book (ching) of the Supreme Way (tao) of expressing virtue~power~shape (te); the way that things most appropriately emerge from formlessness into form.

Tao is the Supreme Reality, the all-pervasive substratum; it is the whole universe and the way the universe operates. Te is the shape and power of Tao; it is the way Tao manifests, it is Tao particularized into a form or virtue. Tao is the transcendent reality; Te is the imminent reality. Ching means a book or a classic work. – Jonathan Star, *Tao Te Ching: The Definitive Edition* (Tarcher/Penguin, 2001), p. 2.

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**Everywhere I Go, Here I Am**

We didn’t know when we signed up for forever

that it would be in here.

-Ani DeFranco

An ancient Persian king promised his wise men a great reward if they could provide him with a statement that is forever true. The statement they presented him was, “This, too, shall pass.” When Albert Einstein was similarly asked “What do we know for sure?” he replied, “Something is moving.”

Perennial passage and constant motion are likewise the occasion of two well-known proclamations of the ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, “You cannot step into the same river twice, for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you" and “The only thing that is permanent is change.” Passage and motion are again the occasion for the opening words of *Ecclesiastes* (1:4-9): 1

One generation passes away, and another generation comes;

But the earth abides forever.

The sun also rises, and the sun goes down,

And hastens to the place where it arose.

The wind goes toward the south,

And turns around to the north;

The wind whirls about continually,

And comes again on its circuit.

All the rivers run into the sea,

Yet the sea is not full;

To the place from which the rivers come,

There they return again.

All things are full of labor;

Man cannot express it*.*

The eye is not satisfied with seeing,

Nor the ear filled with hearing.

That which has been is what will be,

That which is done is what will be done,

And there is nothing new under the sun.

Finally, in Oklahoma folk philosopher Carson Robison’s translation of *Ecclesiastes* in a1930’s depression song, 2

The sun comes up, and the sun goes down,

the hands on the clock keep goin’ around,

ya just get up and it’s time to lay down,

Life gets teejus, don’t it?

While such may be the commonplace views of passage, motion and change when being viewed, the passage, motion and change of the viewer is quite novel:

Nothing new under the sun?

I am proof this is not so.

No matter what has been done before,

And no matter what has been thought before,

I am the one doing and thinking right here and now.

Never before has the universe happened

in just the way that I do.

There is always something new under the sun

whenever someone new is doing it.

In my life and through my hands

the universe continues to shape itself

as never before.

The ongoing dance of stability and change is proclaimed in the French proverb, “The more things change, the more they stay the same.” No matter what passage, movement or change we may observe, at some fundamental level the same thing often prevails amidst the flux. Accordingly, while we cannot step into the same river twice, it is nonetheless the same river that we cannot twice step into. As was observed by the man who became the Buddha in Herman Hesse’s novel, *Siddhartha,* despite a river’s constant journeying to the sea, so long as it is flowing it remains fully present in and as each of its parts, whether the part be its source, its end, or any stretch in between.3

As the Grand Canyon and the world’s other canyons attest, the constancy of a river as a whole transcends and outlasts its changes in part so long as it continues to flow, and does so regardless of its meanderings. And so do we: 4

A living body is not a fixed *thing* but a flowing *event*, like a flame or a whirlpool: the shape is stable, for the substance is a stream of energy going in at one end and out the other. We are particular and temporarily identifiable wiggles in a stream that enters us in the form of light, heat, air, water, milk, bread, fruit, beer, beef Stroganoff, caviar and *pate de fois gras* [and goes out as] babies, talk, politics, commerce, war, poetry and music. And philosophy.

From its atoms to its galaxies to its cosmos as a whole, the universe is a nested hierarchy of local fluctuations, each of which is embedded within the constancy of a larger encompassing whole. The constancy of the universe in its entirety regardless of the fluctuations of all its parts, is attributed in Albert Einstein’s special theory of relativity to the constancy of light. Thus yet another statement of ongoing truth is that light travels at a universally constant speed of 186,282.397 miles per second.4+ Although its speed is lessened as it passes through air, water and glass, the reduced speed remains constant and identical in all identical mediums, and even light’s own changes (of color) take place at the same speed.

Light’s constancy of movement is unique to light itself. For instance, if one throws a ball forward at 50 mph from a vehicle moving at 50 mph, the ball will travel at 100 mph as it incorporates the vehicle’s speed. Thrown in reverse at 50 mph, however, the ball will merely drop downward. Yet when we measure the speed of light we discover that it never varies, no matter how rapidly forward or in the opposite direction its source of emission is travelling, and no matter how rapidly we are moving toward or away from a light’s source as we are making our measurements. Two persons moving in opposite directions at different speeds within a beam of light will nonetheless register identical measurements of the light beam’s speed. Why and how the motion of light is thus independent of all other motion is among the greatest of all scientific mysteries, and is the ultimate basis for many other scientific mysteries as well.

Not only does light have an invariant motion, each of us has an invariant location, in support of yet another statement of ongoing truth: “Everywhere I go, here I am.” Each of us always and only experiences our self as being “in here” rather than being anywhere else “out there.” Even those who have so-called “out-of-body experiences” continue to perceive whatever they are experiencing from the vantage point of their “here” rather than from the perspective of a “there” whose experience is taking place elsewhere. Each of us is always and only experiencing from within the permanence of our being here, no matter what may be happening elsewhere.

Just as 186,282.397 miles per second is the absolutely constant speed of unimpeded light, being *here* is the absolute constant of each person’s experience, and this continues to be our sense of self-location regardless of any impediments. Our experience of being here is foundation of all our other experiencing, because nothing happens of which we are knowledgeable until it (or a report thereof) happens to us. All experience is in*here*nt to the being that is having the experience. For example, even when we’re “thrown for a loop” it is *here* that the thrown-ness and looping is experienced. We are so irrevocably committed to being here where everything is experienced from within, that even when we are “beside ourselves” or we “meet ourselves coming and going” our experiencing of such also takes place within us, and never somewhere out there.

Our experience of being in here is a constant of our self-identity amidst a universe of fluctuations, including those that occur in the self thus identified. Our experience of being here is an absolute to which all of our other experiencing is relative. Being here is a lifetime sentence without parole, nor with any time off for good behavior or the prospect of a divorce, whether no-fault or otherwise. No matter what comes to pass in our lives, or moves through our lives, or changes in our lives, all such fluctuation takes place from our vantage point of being here. All of the world’s passages, movements and changes come and go from our ongoing perspective as a passenger whose source of experience invariantly stays put.

Since all experience of inconsistency elsewhere is embedded in an experience of ourselves being consistently here, no matter what is present in our experience, or is absent from our experience, or is passing by in our experience, the way it is experienced is caused by the one to whom it is present, absent or passing. The implication of this **principle of prime location** in our self-world interrelationship is appreciated by few of us as fully as it was by a little girl who was seen sitting atop her family’s baggage as her parents were being processed for immigration at Ellis Island as “displaced persons” of World War 2. When a passing social worker remarked sympathetically, “It’s too bad you don’t have a home,” the little girl brightly replied, “Oh, we have a home, we just don’t have a house to put it in.”

The one and only thing that we can absolutely count on throughout our entire lives is that our being is never without a home base of operation, regardless of the state of its housing and other surroundings. This is invariantly the case because no matter where I go, and no matter what happens around me, to me, within me, or as me, *here* I consistently am.

**Xxxxx**

Even a proverb . . . .

-John Keats

Passage and motion take place in the phenomenal (see it, hear it, touch it, taste it, smell it) domain of reality that is manifest to and detectible by our senses and our sensory extensions (telescopes, microscopes, EKG, EEG and other mass and energy detecting and monitoring devices) Yet universally underlying all of manifest reality is a non-phenomenal pre-manifest reality from which all of manifest reality emerges.

Concerning the relationship between the phenomenal reality that we can sense and the non-phenomenal reality that we can at most only infer from phenomenal evidence and intuit via our other non-sensory sensibilities, Paul wrote pre-scientifically in *Hebrews* 1:13, nearly 2000 years ago: “Things which are seen are not made of things which do appear.” Ralph Waldo Emerson portrayed this contrast somewhat differently: “We live in a liquid universe that appears as a solid fact.” Not until the 20th century would the things that we see become explainable scientifically in terms of dynamics that do not otherwise appear to us unless they are viewed in smashing images of the subatomic activity that we unleash in particle accelerators.

Paul’s statement in *Hebrews* was purely an intellectual knowing to me until I had a direct experience of a manifestation that emerged out of seemingly nothing. I was sitting just below a mountaintop in Aspen, Colorado on a relatively cloudless day, taking in the panorama of the Roaring Fork River valley, when suddenly a tiny wisp of vapor appeared a few hundred feet away. As it drifted out over the valley it grew into a small cloud, and then dissolved again. I had literally beheld the appearance of something that is made of things that do not appear. In that moment, the existence of the invisible quantum field from which all matter emerges and into which it eventually disintegrates became as real to me as is the atmosphere from which I saw a cloud take form and disintegrate.

While physics concerns itself with the universal principles of physical truth, such as the principles of gravity and electromagnetism that regulate the order and function of the manifest phenomenal domain of reality that shows up as materialized “stuff” – New Thought metaphysics is the study of the universal principles of spiritual truth – such as the laws of attraction (like attracts like) and co-respondence (as above, so below; as within, so without) – that regulate the order and function of the pre-manifest, non-phenomenal domain of reality that governs consciousness. It is New Thought’s consistent focus on pre-manifest, non-phenomenal reality that distinguishes it from so-called “New Age” metaphysics, which tends to be tied in with such instrumental phenomena as crystals, card decks, oils, flower scents, dreams, visions, etc. New Thought employs no instrument other than consciousness itself, and is also unencumbered by any historical scenario. While every formal religion requires its adherents to believe that certain persons did certain things at certain places at a certain time (i.e., that Jesus rose from the dead near Jerusalem 2000 years ago), New Thought is bound to no such formality of person-place-thing-time belief. New Thought transcends its past rather than packs and carries its history along as baggage.

New Thought metaphysics is the study, learning and practice of the universal truth principles that regulate the order and function of consciousness. Several formulations of New Thought study, learning and practice have been developed in the past 120 years. Each is a *formulation*, not a formula, doctrine, -ism or any other fixation of belief. The moment we believe in a formula, doctrine, -ism, or other fundamentalist frame of reference that boxes in our thinking, we establish a dogma that is subject to being run over by our karma.

In addition to Religious Science/Science of Mind (“Religious Science” is the name of a spiritual movement, “Science of Mind” is the name of its spiritual perspective) there are several other formulations of New Thought worth our knowing about. Including Religious Science, and in the order of their historical emergence they are:

The Unity formulation of New Thought via the founding work of Myrtle and Charles Fillmore;

The Hopkinsonian formulation of New Thought via the founding work of Emma Curtis Hopkins;

The Divine Science formulation of New Thought via the founding work of Nona Brooks and others;

The Religious Science formulation of New Thought via the founding work of Ernest Holmes;

The Seicho-No-Ei formulation of New Thought via the founding work of Dr. Masaharu Taniguchi; 5

The Living Enrichment Center formulation of New Thought via the founding work of Dr. Mary Mannin Morrissey.

Each of the foregoing formulations of New Thought represent the same universal principles of truth, and they all do this similarly even though each does it in language, metaphors and symbolism unique to itself. The diversity of New Thought is explained in the same way that a Sufi once explained the diversity of scriptures: “In all of his bestsellers, the Divine has told the truth, custom-tailored to the comprehension of the times.” It was with such just custom-tailoring in mind that Ernest Holmes called his formulation “The Science of Mind.” In the 1920’s “science” signified universal knowledge, and “mind” signified what we today call “consciousness”. Because the term “science” is today closely associated with technology, and the term “mind” is closely associated with thinking, the phrase “science of mind” tends to come across to contemporary minds as “technology of thinking.” Accordingly, were Ernest Holmes custom-tailoring the universal truth principles to the comprehension of our times, he might have chosen instead “The Ecology of Spirit.”

From John Giunta:

The beautiful and amazing truth is that not only will Science of Mind heal   
many conditions, but properly applied other techniques from other belief systems   
will also work. Read about the work of the people from whom Ernest Holmes   
learned and you will start to see the mechanisms.  
A great book is, "The Isaiah Effect", by Gregg Braden. I have some other   
titles on my huge reading list on the Internet. Contact me privately if you   
can't find my website, or just search my name.

With whatever name or term we choose to signify ultimate truth, whether religiously as “God”, “Lord”, “The Creator”, “Christ consciousness”, “Buddha consciousness”, “Atman”, “The Great Spirit”, “Watantanka” or “Manitou”; or philosophically as “The Absolute”, “First Cause”, “Ultimate Source” or Supreme Reality”; or metaphysically as “The Tao”, “The Force”, “The Ground of All Being”, “Ultimate Principle” or (with Ernest Holmes) “The Thing Itself”; scientifically as “The Comprehensive Whole System” or “The Grand Order and Design” (also an acronym for “God”); or nondescriptly as “The Ultimate Something”, “The Great Whatever”, etc. As Wayne Dyer has suggested, we can just as readily call it “Ralph” for all that our naming ultimately means to what is named. No matter what we choose to call the allness of everything that is, we make no difference whatsoever to that which we thus signify. Yet what we choose to call it does make a big difference to us. For example, one has difficulty imagining a small child kneeling with folded hands at his or her bedside to pray, “Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the comprehensive whole system my soul to keep.”

How we experience whatever we choose to call upon ultimately depends far more upon the quality of our calling than upon the name with which we call it. As written in *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*

Sir, we ought to teach people that they are doing wrong in worshipping the images and pictures in the temple.

Do you think God does not know that he is being worshipped in the images and pictures? If a worshipper should make a mistake, do you not think God will know his intent?

Ernest Holmes’ intent was to articulate the universal truth of the normative/prescriptive principals of The Thing Itself and the operational/manifestive principles of The Way It Works, which together regulate the form, order and function (What It Does) of universal consciousness and all embodiment thereof (How to Use It).

**Xxxxx**

Everything in the universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part.

The universe is forever uniting what is harmonious and diminishing what is not. . . .

It is the unessential only that is vanishing, that the abiding may be made more clearly manifest.

-Ernest Holmes

Insofar as it is possible to appraise in three short sentences the normative/prescriptive principles of The Thing Itself and the operational/manifestive principles of The Way It Works, Ernest Holmes did this in the three assertions above. Their implications for What It Does and How to Use It may be stated with comparable simplicity: What these principles do is to work accordingly, and how to use them

does is work for the inclusive good of all concerned, and how to use it is to let it do what it knows best.

epigraph theErnest Holmes examined the non-phenomenal principles of universal truth that regulate and govern the order and function of consciousness, via a four-fold exposition of what they are (The Thing Itself )of , the way that they work, of what they do, and of how to employ them. These principles are the context of

As scientifically understood, “a principle is a basic general truth, comprehending many subordinate truths, in contrast to a law, a statement in words [that is an] expression of a principle.”

Pre-conditional to the conditioning influence of physical principles.

The 10 core concepts of Religious Science are a formulation of the universal principles of truth as understood metaphysically by Ernest Holmes. Ernest Holmes stated the universal principles of truth both normatively with reference to what he called “The Thing Itself”, and operationally in terms of what he called “The Way It Works”. The Thing Itself is synonymous with all of our names for God. The Way It Works operationally is synonymous with the way that *we* work with the norms of The Thing Itself, whether in harmony with God’s norms in order to have a heavenly experience, or in disharmony to have a hellacious experience.

CHART on p. A-15:

* Spirit~Soul~Body – all of it is mind (cf warm~salty~green water). Mind and consciousness is not a split-level dwelling in which Spirit occupies the top floor. The perception of penthouse spirituality is grossly in error, the consequence of which is questioned by Thaddeus Golas in *The Lazy Man’s Guide to Enlightenment:*

Every person who allows others to treat him as a spiritual leader has the responsibility to ask himself: Out of all the perceptions available to me in the universe, why am I emphasizing the ignorance of my brothers? What am I doing in a role where this is real? What kind of standards am I conceiving, in which so many people are seen to be in suffering, while I am the enlightened one?

* The “V”: Open at the top. It is not, however, open at the bottom. Its center eternally holds.

The Way It Works: a metaphysical format, not a behavioral formula; the five steps of spiritual mind treatment~affirmative prayer: RURTR

Recognition

Unification

Realization

Thanksgiving

Release

R + U > our acknowledgement of The Thing Itself by embracing it.

R > our acceptance of The Thing Itself in the form of our willed (i.e., willing, not willful) desire by empowering it on our behalf.

T + R > our allowance of The Thing Itself to work through us *as* its instruments by expressing ourselves on its behalf.

Our lives don’t happen to us or for us, they happen through and as us.

We are here tonight not as a class *and* its members, we are this class *as* its members.

Five songs to anchor the five thought forms that make up the format of affirmative prayer.

While we are not accountable *for* these principles, we are constantly and irrevocably accountable *to* them, and when we ignore Jefferson’s advice to stand on them with a firmness that matches their own it is we ourselves and not the principles that get let down. His instruction is well taken, because whenever we break any lawful principle that governs our self-world interrelationships, we succeed only in breaking ourselves upon the principle.6+

Nor can one’s stand on any principle be any more firm than one’s stand on the principle of prime location, the ideal prescription for which is the self-fidelity advised by William Shakespeare: “To thine own self be true, and thou canst not then be false to any man.” Being thus true insures one’s consciousness with what author Ernest Hemingway called a built-in “crap detector,” a fidelity meter that works on all concerned, as observed by transformationalist Anthony DeMello: “If you are not yourself deceitful, you will not be deceived.”

As we mindfully empower ourselves to detect and avoid both our own and others’ compromises of principle, then while we are in Rome we can quite safely do what the Romans do, so long as the way we do it is consistent with the flow of our own current:

Be,

as water is,

without friction.

Flow around the edges

of those within your path.

Surround within your ever-moving depths

those who come to rest there—

enfold them, while never for a moment holding on.

Accept whatever distance

others are moved within your flow.

Be with them gently

as far as they allow your strength to take them,

and fill with your own being

the remaining space when they are left behind.

When dropping down life's rapids,

froth and bubble into fragments if you must,

knowing that the one of you now many

will just as many times be one again.

And when you've gone as far as you can go,

quietly await your next beginning.

1. For more on Heraclitus’ view of relativity, see www.iep.utm.edu/h/heraclit.htm. For *Ecclesiastes* (New King James Version) see www.biblegateway.com/passage/?book\_id=25&chapter=1&version=50. For the philosophy underlying *Ecclesiastes* see http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/heraclitus.
2. “Life gets Teejus” is at http://www.cowboylyrics.com/tabs/misc/life-gets-teejus-3424.html. Biography: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carson\_Robison and www.cmt.com/artists/az/robison\_carson/bio.jhtml.
3. Alan Watts quote it at http://michiel48.blogspot.com/2006\_07\_01\_archive.html.
4. The speed of light is visually demonstrated at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speed\_of\_light.
5. Herman Hesse, *Siddhartha* (Bantam Books, 1951). Hesse’s/Siddhartha’s full perspective on the continuous and holistic nature rivers is the subject of chapter x, “By The River”, which may be read online at www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext01/siddh10.txt). For book’s overall philosophical implications are examined at www.sparknotes.com/lit/siddhartha/summary.html.

5. <http://www.snitruth.org/>

1. Johnson O’Connor, *Science Vocabulary Builder* (Human Engineering Laboratory, 1956), word 92.

Consciousness:

Illusion

Neurological fabrication

Property of material universe

Fundamental property of reality.

People tend to be either fixer-users or server-menders, and are most often alternately one or the other.

From: "In the Service of Life", by Rachel Naomi Remen

A Fixer  
  
A fixer has the illusion of being causal.  
A server knows he/she is being used in the service of something greater,  
essentially unknown.

We fix something specific.  
We serve always the something: wholeness and the mystery of life.

Fixing and helping are the work of the ego.  
Serving is the work of the soul.

When you help, you see life as weak.  
When you fix, you see life as broken.  
When you serve, you see life as whole.

Fixing and helping may cure.  
Service Heals.

When I help, I feel satisfaction.  
When I serve, I feel gratitude.

Fixing is a form of judgment.  
Serving is a form of connection.

Announcement:

Chaperones are assigned to situations in which someone is likely to be led astray.

When I read something I often attempt to reduce my understanding of its essence to a single sentence. When I first read the Tao Te Ching in high school, I reduced my understanding of it to the sentence, “Don’t just do something, stand there.” I didn’t find this very helpful, however, until I read John Milton’s poem about his being blind, in which he stated “They also serve who stand and wait.” The Tao Te Ching is all about standing and waiting for the appropriate moment of being in which to take the appropriate action of doing. Waiting for the appropriate moment for the expression of one’s being is what the Tao Te Ching calls “non-being”. Waiting for the appropriate moment for an expression of doing is what the Tao Te Ching calls “non-doing”. And “right action” takes place. And only at an appropriate intersection of non-being and non-doing does “right action” take place.

This 6-week class date with your harmonial at-one-ment is a date with the question of your own identity, all but one answer to which leaves something out. This is why, when a novitiate Tibetan monk asked the Dalai Lama “Who am I?” the Dalai Lama replied with the one and only answer that is complete: “Who is it that asks?” What made this question a legitimate answer is that I and only I am that self-questions of my own identity, therefore mine is the only self that can satisfactorily answer the question.

No answer is of greater value than the value of whatever it includes, and since answers exclude everything that doesn’t fit them, only questions have the potential to be all-inclusive. Hence the name that was chosen for this 6-week dating service: “The Tao of Inclusivity.”

The Tao includes all that ever has been, all that is, and all that will ever be, *and more!* And since all that has ever has been, ever is, and ever will be is nothing more than a set of answers, our six-week date will focus on the questions raised by the *and more!*

To all of you who participate in this six-week dating service, I guarantee that at its conclusion you will have the question to every one of your answers. And it won’t cost you anything until its conclusion, because there is no way you can know what your participation has been worth to you other than in retrospect.

**The Tao of Inclusivity**

as understood by Noel McInnis

and shared with colleagues in mutual study of the *Tao Te Ching*.

**Note:** words that initially appear in **bold capital letters** are defined in the concluding glossary.

We’re all students at M.S.U. – making stuff up.

-Marilyn Ferguson

According to the *Tao Te Ching*, “If you would educate a man, fill his belly and empty his mind.” In other words, education is a process of fertilizing and weeding one’s body/mind.

A hungry body/mind can dwell on little else than thoughts of eating, which is why Mohandas Gandhi advocated that the best way to prove God’s existence to a starving man is to show up with food for his stomach before attempting to engage his mind, a strategy that is employed with notable success by the Salvation Army. Without food for the body to digest, the brain is short of the energy it requires to digest food for thought, and especially for the deep contemplation required to fathom the mysteries we signify with terms like “Tao” and “God”.

Tao’s wisdom in this regard is corroborated by psychological wisdom as well, as represented in Abraham Maslow’s well-known “hierarchy of needs.” This hierarchy is a from-the-bottom-up progression of needs fulfillment presented in the form of a pyramid, which is available with helpful commentary online at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s\_hierarchy\_of\_needs.

In all religions the term “God”, however alternately named, signifies the ultimate originator of all being, the provision of which leaves the driving to us. Life’s driver-training curriculum consists of Having and Doing 101, in which we learn according to 1) what we have of Earth’s abundance, 2) what we do with it and 3) how we do it and how we do with it.

The lower levels of Maslow’s pyramided hierarchy of needs define the scope and sequence of the HD101 curriculum. What he signified as our lower level “deficiency needs” of having and doing must reach a critical threshold of self-fulfillment prior to our satisfaction of the uppermost “growth needs” that bring to fruition the undistorted expression of our inmost being, so that (á la Emerson’s essay on “Self-Reliance”) “the inmost becomes the outmost.” Because our *suf*ficiency needs are represented at the top of his pyramid, he signified their fulfillment as “peak experiences”.

How we go about the fulfillment of our being is correlated with how we go about our business of having and doing, and vice versa. From the perspective of linear causation, the behavioral equation for this relationship is “be+have = do”, an equation that works both ways. A change of being alters the way of our be-having, which in turn alters our behavioral doing, just as changing our doing alters our way of be-having, which in turn alters our way of being.

Yet neither Maslow’s pyramidal hierarchy nor the foregoing linear equation does full justice to the interrelationship of being, having and doing, which is an outcome of **integral causation** rather than of a linear chain of cause and effect. Their integral impact of each on all is more fully represented by a triangle whose sides have arrow-heads at both ends to represent the influence of each point of the triangle – being, having, doing – on the other two points and vice versa.

However we may go about portraying the interrelationship of being, having and doing, its implications for our self-mobilized **behavioral trajectory** remain the same. Whether we have more or less than enough, whether we have the right or the other stuff, and whether we do well or ill, all such concerns represent our options for the driving that is left to us.

Tao is the center lane – neither too slow nor too fast – of life’s enoughness, right stuffness, well-doing and well-being. Tao’s instruction to fill the belly acknowledges the necessity of fulfilling our psychical and psychological needs for food, shelter, clothing, safety, belonging and esteem for self and others. Emptying the mind represents our weeding out of any and all experience and perception of deficiency that we associate with self, with others and with our circumstances. This weeding is most difficult when we are experiencing physical and psychological deficiencies.

Assuming that we are all taking sufficient care of our respective bellies prior to our sessions together, our primary function during our time together is to assist one another in emptying our minds by extracting therefrom all weeds of erroneous perception and conception. In this regard, the movement of Tao is sometimes like a toothache that eventually drives us to extraction. And at all times Tao’s movement behooves us not to allow ourselves to be driven to *dis*traction.

A case in point, from my own experience of Tao:

Many years ago, I was disturbed during my daily early morning meditations when a pick-up truck stopped in front of the house next door and the driver honked his horn to alert our neighbor that his ride to work had arrived. I became increasingly irritated with the truck’s driver for disturbing my meditation. One morning I angrily exclaimed, "If I had powers, I’d give that guy four flat tires!" To which my wife gently replied, "That's why you don't have powers."

I immediately saw her point. Like the sorcerer’s apprentice, I am incapable of reliably wielding my inner “powers” – which do actually exist! – until I am sufficiently centered to effectively command them. I replied, “You’re right. If I had powers, all I'd really do is bust his horn." Again ever so gently, she said, "That's a bit better." And again, I saw her point: I was still in forceful reaction to my awareness of the horn.

Following our meditation a day or two later, having mellowed considerably, I announced, "If I had powers, I'd see that his horn didn't work in this neighborhood." And again my wife said, "That's a bit better."

I was now miffed, because I thought I had really resolved the issue. Though I thought I had clearly seen my wife’s point from the beginning, I obviously wasn’t “getting” it. I felt certain that selectively silencing the horn was the ultimate solution.

I eventually recognized the real issue, as my wife had from the start: I was looking for the forceful resolution of my distress "out there," as if the honking horn were my problem rather than my choice of relationship to it.

From this perspective I also recognized that changing the time of our meditation to an hour when the neighborhood would be even noisier (during the day) or when we would be tired (in the evening) would also be a reactionary solution. Such capitulation is no less reactionary than the flattening of tires, even when I make myself the target of my reaction rather than someone else. The only satisfactory resolution of my inner turbulence was a non-forceful response to the honking.

In due course, such resolution was forthcoming. "If I had powers,” I announced to my wife one morning, “I wouldn't be distracted by that horn."

“Yes,” she smiled.

Thereafter, I allowed the honking horn to be integral to my meditation and no longer experienced it as a distraction. I had finally recognized that my upset and distraction were not caused by the horn. If they were, then my wife would be comparably upset and distracted when horn was being blown. Thus my serenity was being forsaken in the same place that it might otherwise be realized, within myself rather than in my outer world. The horn itself was neither upset nor distracted by its honking. My upset and distraction was originating and sustaining its existence in me, not in any stimulus that may evoke it.

Similarly, none of the other incidents in my life is causal of my response to it. My reactions and responses are caused *by* me, albeit often unconsciously according to established patterns of habit, rather than by the effects to which I attribute them. This is indeed fortunate, for if the state of my own being were dependent on the state of the world around me . . . well, as they say, “There goes the neighborhood.”

Shortly after this incident, I heard about a guru who observed one of his devotees taking an LSD pill. "What are those for?" the guru asked. "They change your reality," replied the devotee. "Let's see," said the guru, and he gulped several down—a lethal dose. But the pills were without any effect on the guru whatsoever. His body/mind’s consciousness wasn’t distracted by the pills’ customary effect.

The purpose of weeding the body/mind of all distractions is to make room for correct thinking. And the state of mind most conducive to correct thinking is what the *Tao Te Ching* signifies as “beginner’s mind”, which is consciousness that has been emptied of all inaccuracy of perception and conception in full recovery of its pristine freshness, clarity, tranquility, elasticity and creative quietude. One’s mind must be empty of all else before we can become **mindful** of the way we go about creating and driving our individual experiences of being, having and doing..

The *Tao Te Ching* does not maintain that we create the whole of cosmic reality, either individually or collectively. The cosmos was already in place when we were born, and not one of us can recall having earlier set off the Big Bang that gave it birth. Our absence of oversight in this regard was reportedly called into question by God, in response to Job’s complaints about the world’s shortcomings: “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?” (*Job* 38:4).

The shortsightedness of the statement “we create our own reality” – that our reality is caused solely as an outcome of our own fabrications – is illustrated in an anecdote that circulated the Internet several years ago:

Emboldened by humankind’s increasing command of molecular, atomic, and genetic engineering, thereby wielding powers that were formerly attributed to God, the scientific community decided that our species had no further requirement for a deity. A representative was therefore deputized to inform God that He could take the rest of eternity off.

God was unconvinced. “Do you really think that you can create life from scratch exactly the way I did?”

“No problem,” said the scientist, as he stooped to pick up a handful of dirt.

“No, no,” said God. “That’s not the way I did it.”

“What do you mean?” asked the scientist.

“Get your own dirt.”

Creating reality is not as dirt simple as we are led to believe by the proposition that we are its sole creators, for while tailors we can somewhat be of our own reality, what we thus stitch together is a fabric neither initially nor entirely of our own weaving. Even materialistic realists do not create the raw material of their reality, they merely shape their perception and conceptions thereof to fit their experience, and *vice versa*.

What we do bear total responsibility *for* is the way we go about creating our *experience* of reality and how we relate to the consequences of our doing so. We are response-able both for and to our self-creation of our experience as well as both for and to any experience and consequence thus self-created. To the extent that our self-creativity makes stuff up, we are not purely objective cosmologists, we are also subjective cos*met*ologists.

The embodiment of Tao in action consists of being responsible cosmetologists, for as we go about making up our own experience we are continually responsible as well *to* the principles that order the processes, outcomes and consequences of our creative thoughts, words and deeds, even though we are not responsible for the fact of these principles’ existence. We are, for instance, responsible *to* gravity’s influence, though not for gravity’s influence itself as if it is among the stuff that we make up.

Because there can be no exceptions to the universal principles and laws that give order to our self-created experience, whenever we presume to break them we succeed only in breaking ourselves upon them. Such default of responsibility invariably drives our karma into a ditch.

**Getting to No Me**

Rather than know about Tao,

I would know what Tao is about.

-from *The Gospel of Yet to Be Common Sense*

Tao is the supreme principle of universal co-operation that orders all things past, present and future in omni-reciprocal harmonial at-one-ment, and which I often hereafter signify more briefly as “the supreme co-operative principle” or “universal co-operation.” It is this supreme principle to which all processes, outcomes, circumstances, persons and things are ultimately beholden and responsible, and from which all other universal principles and laws are ultimately derived. It is also this principle which balances all that is relative with all that is constant.

The hyphenated word “co-operation” (literally, “together-working”) signifies unified rather than divisive action, while for many the unhyphenated word “cooperation” signifies mere “getting along” via self-compromise. The unified action of the universal co-operative principle is portrayed by Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hahn in his book, *The Heart of Understanding*,

If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper. Without a cloud, there will be no rain; without rain, the trees cannot grow; and without trees, we cannot make paper. The cloud is essential for the paper to exist. If the cloud is not here, the sheet of paper cannot be here either. So we can say that the cloud and the paper inter-are. Interbeing is a word that is not in the dictionary yet, but if we combine the prefix "inter-" with the verb "to be," we have a new verb, inter-be. Without a cloud we cannot have paper, so we can say that the cloud and the sheet of paper inter-are.

If we look into this sheet of paper even more deeply, we can see the sunshine in it. If the sunshine is not there, the forest cannot grow. In fact, nothing can grow. Even we cannot grow without sunshine. And so, we know that the sunshine is also in this sheet of paper. The paper and the sunshine inter-are. And if we continue to look, we can see the logger who cut the tree and brought it to the mill to be transformed into paper. And we see the wheat. We know the logger cannot exist without his daily bread, and therefore the wheat that became his bread is also in this sheet of paper. And the logger's father and mother are in it too. When we look in this way, we see that without all these things, this sheet of paper cannot exist.

Looking even more deeply, we can see we are in it too. This is not difficult to see, because when we look at a sheet of paper, the sheet of paper is part of our perception. Your mind is in here and mine is also. So we can say that everything is in here with this sheet of paper. You cannot point out one thing that is not here—time, space, the earth, the rain, minerals, the soil, the sunshine, the cloud, the river, the heat. Everything coexists with this sheet of paper. That is why I think the word inter-be should be in the dictionary. "To be" is to inter-be. You cannot just be by yourself alone. You have to be with every other thing. This sheet of paper is, because everything else is.

Suppose we try to return one of the elements to its source. Suppose we return the sunshine to the sun. Do you think that the sheet of paper will be possible? No, without sunshine nothing can be. And if we return the logger to the mother, then we have no sheet of paper either. The fact is that this sheet of paper is made up only of "non-paper elements." And if we return these non-paper elements to their sources, then there can be no paper at all. Without "non-paper elements," like mind, logger, sunshine and so on there will be no paper. As thin as this sheet of paper is, it contains everything in the universe in it.

While the Bible reports that “all things work together for good to them that love God” (Romans 8:28), the *Tao Te Ching* maintains that all things work together for good to them that co-operatively manifest their respective inmost natures. As we are mindfully conscious of the so-operative principle, we empower correct thinking that is effectively and efficiently aligned with it. The word “effective” signifies congruence with the co-operative principle, which is often also signified as “right action”, while the word “efficient” signifies precision of co-operative action. The self-empowerment that emerges from effective and efficient co-operative right action is epitomized in Sun Tzu’s book, *The Art of War,* in its statement that “Ultimate skill is not to defeat your enemy in a hundred battles, ultimate skill is to defeat your enemy without battling at all.”

As one may clearly see in contemplation of one’s own reflection in Tao, what Sun Tzu signified as ultimate skill depends on getting “me” out of the way of “I”. As Emmet Fox noted,

The fact that I is watching Me means that you have taken one of the greatest steps forward. When you find yourself doing things that are useless, or perhaps even mean or petty, stop them. When you find that I can laugh at Me, it means that your life is commencing to change for the better. Finally, you will find that Me is beginning to get in step with I, and when that happens you are truly on the road to having dominion over your life.

Self-aware I-consciousness is the ever ready and always steady fulcrum upon which rests our dominion over me-consciousness and its relationship to the surrounding context of others’ consciousness. The leverage thereby at our command is the power of self-governance that was prescribed by Rudolph Steiner:

If it depends on something other than myself whether I should get angry or not, I am not master of myself . . . I have not yet found the ruler within myself. I must develop the faculty of letting the impressions of the outer world approach me only in the way in which I myself determine.

Whatever is “out there” is neither the source nor the realm of my self-dominion here within. Everything that I perceive as being “there” is the here-within of someone or something else, over whom or which I have no self-dominion. I cannot know another’s experience of being here within, nor can anyone else know mine. As a Russian proverb acknowledges, “The soul of another is a dark forest.”

The distribution of self-dominion has been portrayed by psychologist Ronald Laing:

We can see other people's behavior, but not their experience.... The other person's behavior is an experience of mine. My behavior is an experience of the other.... I see you and you see me. I experience you and you experience me. I see your behavior. But I do not and never have and never will see your experience of me. Just as you cannot see my experience of you... Your experience of me is invisible to me and my experience of you is invisible to you.

I cannot experience your experience. You cannot experience my experience. We are both invisible beings. All beings are invisible to one another. Experience is being's invisibility to being. Experience used to be called the Soul. Experience as invisibility of being to being is at the same time more evident than anything. Only experience is evident. Experience is the only evidence.

Since experience is the ultimate evidence that any of us has, and because this ultimate evidence is invisible to all others who are not the one that inwardly has our experience it, each of us is the ultimate judge and jury of his/her own experience. The most that can be made of our evidence is transparent fidelity to one’s own inmost nature, which William James acknowledged when he wrote,

Seek out that particular mental attitude which makes you feel most deeply and vitally alive, along with which comes the inner voice which says, ‘This is the real me,’ and when you have found that attitude, follow it.

Broadcast journalist Diane Sawyer was similarly counseled by her father: “Find the place where your greatest love meets the world’s greatest need.” This synthesis marks the difference between making a living and living what one is made of. Sawyer set out on the path to her present profession in response as well to three self-empowering questions asked by her father: “What is it that you love? Where is the most adventurous place you could do it? And are you certain it will serve other people?”

Self-transparency acknowledges that our experience of the world is the outcome of the combined state of thought and feeling that comprises the arena of our consciousness. The prerequisite to self-transparency was prescribed by Ernest Holmes:

Talk to yourself, not to the world. There is no one to talk to but yourself for all experience takes place within. Conditions are the reflections of our meditations and nothing else.

Fidelity to self, which can be transparent only as it is also apparent to others, is the meeting point of all that is relative to one’s self-world interrelationship and all that is constant thereto. The practice of transparent fidelity to self is one’s salvation from all deception, as Shakespeare acknowledged in his famous prescription, “To thine own self be true, and it must follow as night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.”

Fidelity to self is what author Ernest Hemingway called a “crap detector,” whose further service is acknowledged by Anthony de Mello: “If you are not yourself deceitful, you will not be deceived.” Being loyal to anything at the expense of fidelity to oneself is not only deceitful of everyone else, it attracts to oneself the fruits of others’ deceits as well. Only fidelity to oneself provides sufficient vision to see both faithfulness and unfaithfulness in others as well. Hence Emerson’s admonitions of self-reliance:

Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of our own mind. . . . No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature.

The key to all self-dominion is clarity of vision in the I of the beholder, which empowers one to travel Tao’s in formation “I” way freed at last of my way’s clutter and wide open to the few sure. Or to quote James Joyce directly rather than approx-him-emulate:

Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.

**Everywhere I Go, Here I Am**

It’s hard to fight an enemy who has outposts in your head.

-Sally Kempton

Spiritual philosopher Ernest Holmes’ understanding of Tao as the universally supreme co-operative principle was both evolutionary and cosmological in its scope:

Everything in the universe exists for the harmonious good of every other part. The universe is forever uniting what is harmonious and diminishing what is not. . . . It is the unessential only that is vanishing, that the abiding may be made more clearly manifest.

Holmes understood co-operative alignment in terms of “being for something and against nothing,” which perfectly balances what is constant in our experience with what is only relative therein. So long as we perceive our experience from the either/or perspective of duality, being for something automatically separates us from and sets us against whatever is unlike the experience we prefer. Only from the both/and perspective of Tao’s dual unity do we perceive the potential for mutual co-operativity where others can see only mutual contradiction.

The essence of non-adversarial consciousness informed by the mindful application of principled co-operation has been stated by Marianne Williamson

Creating the world we want is a much more subtle but more powerful mode of operation than destroying the one we don’t want. . . . The new activist is one who wields power by standing for what could be, as opposed to fighting what is.

The strategy for such activism was prescribed a half century ago by architect-engineer-inventor R. Buckminster (“Bucky”) Fuller:

You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.

Mindful application of principled co-operation also informs the martial art of Aikido, whose foundational rule of engagement is to greet all incoming energy as an offered gift, which includes others’ “gifts” of harmful attack. Attack is greeted and engaged without reciprocal assault on the part of an Aikido practitioner, who allows all energy of attack to remain solely in the adversary’s possession, thereby fulfilling Sun Tzu’s prescription to “defeat your enemy without battling at all.” The Aikido practitioner co-operates with an adversary’s harmful energy without resisting or struggling with it, by instead responding in such a way that the attack is deftly dodged, effortlessly neutralized, or is aptly redirected so that not only is no harm done to oneself, neither is any harmful energy of one’s own imparted to one’s adversary. Aikido is the art of engaging your own energy with that of your adversary so that your energy remains centered and balanced as you either neutralize your adversary’s energy by uncentering it or deflect it by reversing its course with boomeranging effect. Either way the “gift” remains with its giver, who is given in return nothing more than an adept “no, thank you.”

The practice of Aikido, like all other **right action** of Tao, consists of using one’s own outgoing energy as a fulcrum for the co-operative leverage of incoming energy. Such leveraging exemplifies the principle of “least action,” which is right action precisely proportionate and attuned to its circumstantial context. Also exemplary of the least action principle, neither the fulcrum that supports a teeter-totter nor the fulcrum from which a pendulum swings resists or struggles with the energy that it leverages, and fully co-operates instead. Hence the boast of Archimedes upon discovering this principle: “Give me a lever and a place to stand and I can move the world.”

Tao’s understanding of leverage is just the opposite: “Give me leverage and a place to stand, and the world cannot move me.” This understanding does not, however, counsel us to “Don’t just do something, stand there.” Co-operative outward action is emergently derived and directed from inward quiescence, in contrast to outward action that is forcefully contrived and driven by inner turbulence. The outward mobility of least action emerges from a state of inner tranquility, which leverages subtle movements within one’s body/mind to leverage right action without.

The principle of least action was embodied in the Japanese Samurai code of combat, which forbade a warrior from doing battle while in a turbulent emotional and mental state. This prohibition was in recognition that a troubled emotional and mental state distracts one from co-operative engagement with an adversary, and thereby renders one correspondingly unbalanced and vulnerable in battle. Above all, therefore, a Samurai warrior was not to engage an adversary while in a state of anger.

Though not all Samurai lived up to this code of combat at all times, such was their code in any event. Its faithful application on one occasion occurred when a warlord was murdered by the Samurai bodyguard of a rival warlord, whereupon the dead warlord's own Samurai bodyguard went forth to take the murderer’s life in retribution. He engaged his master’s assassin in a sword fight, and was about to deal a lethal blow when his adversary spat in his face. This so enraged the avenging Samurai that he was obliged him by his code of combat to sheathe his sword, withdraw from doing battle, and resume his mission only after his anger had subsided.

The Samurai ideal of being perfectly centered in co-operative right action is epitomized in a 14th century Samurai prayer that translates into English as follows:

I have no parents, I make the heavens and Earth my parents.

I have no home, I make awareness my home.

I have no life and death, I make the tides of my breathing my life and death.

I have no miracles, I make right action my miracles.

I have no tactics, I make emptiness and fullness my tactics.

I have no armor, I make benevolence and righteousness my armor.

I have no castle, I make immovable mind my castle.

I have no sword, I make absence of self my sword.

In my own understanding of this prayer, I replace the word “make” with the phrase “allow . . . to be,” which more accurately reflects my own understanding that co-operative Tao is not something that we make to happen, it is something that we allow to emerge. Thus the prayer reads instead

I have no parents, I allow the heavens and Earth to be my parents.

I have no home, I allow awareness to be my home.

I have no life and death, I allow the tides of my breathing to be my life and death.

I have no miracles, I allow right action my miracles.

I have no tactics, I allow emptiness and fullness to be tactics.

I have no armor, I allow benevolence and righteousness to be my armor.

I have no castle, I allow immovable mind to be my castle.

I have no sword, I allow absence of self to be my sword.

I would also add one more line to the prayer:

I have no guidance, I allow fidelity to my inmost nature to be my guidance.

And in even further keeping with the Samurai code of combat, I would declare also that

I have no enemies, unless I allow unconsciousness of my inmost nature to be my enemy.

However one may choose to word it, the Samurai prayer’s intent remains the same, the raising of one’s allowance to an optimum level.

Many say that the Samurai code of co-operative action in combat is impossible to live up to with consistency. The same persons are just as likely also to maintain that the Golden Rule is impossible to honor with consistency. Poet Robert Browning's view of such skepticism was that “A man’s reach must exceed his grasp, else what’s a heaven for?”

Tao’s supreme principle of universal co-operation is the context from which emerges all centeredness, right thinking and right action. So long as we attribute any off-centered and non-co-operative feelings or actions on our part to some outer circumstance or other person(s), we are distractedly at the effect of that circumstance rather than in command of it.

**Everywhere I Am, Tao Is**

We didn’t know when we signed up for forever

that it would be in here.

-Ani DeFranco

The principle of least action governs every interrelationship in the universe, including our own self-world interrelationship, and it does so with utmost effectiveness and efficiency. Effective thinking empowers us to have a co-operative interrelationship with the world of our experience, while efficient thinking empowers us to do this with corresponding precision.

Such effectiveness and efficiency are at present both in short supply. Before there were human brains, everything that took place in the known universe happened in accordance with the principle of least action. Human behavior is a gross exception to this rule, and is presently becoming ever more gross on a planetary scale. It takes wholesale misguided intelligence to globally persist in doing what doesn’t work, and only human beings have the magnitude of collective misguided intelligence that is required to persistently misdirect their own and the planet’s energy as ineffectively and inefficiently as we are doing so at present.

Only as we recover and act from the co-operative being of our inmost nature can we establish right relationship to self and world. Such recovery is what Tao is about.

Just what, therefore, *is* Tao all about?

**glossary**

**behavioral trajectory:** A sequence of behaviors whose direction, momentum and action lead to the realization of an outcome.

**integral causation:** The realization of outcome’s via the interactions of multiple co-causal factors, each of which is both a creation of and creative of the whole in which it is embedded.

**mindful ~ mindfully ~ mindfulness:** Conscious awareness and knowing of how one is creating one’s moment-to-moment experience. Being fully present in and to one’s experience by being consciously aware of how one’s own self is shaping it.

**principle of least action: (a.k.a. “correct action”, “right action”, “non-action” “inaction” and “non-doing”):** Being~having~doing that is co-operative with and precisely proportionate to its circumstances. All other action is at least somewhat operatively dysfunctional.

**right action:** Behavior that is congruent with the supreme principle of universal co-operation.

[to be conned in you’d]

**NEW THOUGHT IS UPGRADED ANCIENT WISDOM ABOUT THE NATURE OF MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS**

What New Thought has to say about mind isn’t all that new, and can be traced back at least 2500 years to the *Tao Te Ching*, which is all about how our experience reflects our mindset. It has been nearly 2000 years ago since Roman emperor and philosopher Marcus Aurelius noted that

Your mind will be like its habitual thoughts; for the soul becomes dyed with the color of its thoughts. Soak it then in such trains of thoughts as, for example: Where life is possible at all, a right life is possible.

A contemporary author has similarly noted that

Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens. Circumstances and situations do color life but you have been given the mind to choose what the color shall be. -John Homer Miller

Over 200 years ago Martha Washington wrote that

The greater part of happiness or misery depends on our dispositions, and not on our circumstances. We carry the seeds of the one or the other about with us in our minds wherever we go.

And it was 100 years ago when American psychologist William James proclaimed that

The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitudes of mind.

**THE NATURE OF MIND**

**The nature of mind was proclaimed in Ralph Waldo Emerson’s mid-19th century statement that**

**There is one mind common to all individual men. Every man is an inlet to the same... Who hath access to this universal mind is a party to all that is or can be done, for this is the only and sovereign agent.**

**A contemporary spiritual teacher, John-Roger, has similarly affirmed that**

There is one mind, the mind of God. There is one consciousness, God consciousness. All else are tributaries of the One. If you can get on a tributary leading back to God, you can follow it back into the mainstream of God's energy. - John-Roger (From: The Path to Mastership)

**This metaphysical perspective on mind has a counterpart in a statement my Max Planck, the father of quantum physics:**

All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force. We must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent Mind. This Mind is the matrix of all matter.

**Planck further asserted that**

According to everything taught by the exact sciences about the immense realm of nature, a certain order prevails – one independent of the human mind . . . . this order can be formulated in terms of purposeful activity. There is evidence of an intelligent order of the universe to which both man and nature are subservient.

**Planck even went to far as to proclaim that**

**Religion and natural science are fighting a joint battle in an incessant, never relaxing crusade against skepticism and against dogmatism, against disbelief and against superstition, and the rallying cry in this crusade has always been, and always will be: "On to God!"**

Two of Planck’s contemporaries, astrophysicists Sir Arthur Eddington and Sir James Jeans made similar assessments:

The stuff of the universe is mind-stuff. -Sir Arthur Eddington

Today there is a wide measure of agreement, which on the physical side of science approaches almost to unanimity, that the stream of knowledge is heading towards a non-mechanical reality; the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine. Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter; we are beginning to suspect that we ought rather to hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter. -Sir James Jeans

It may be that each individual consciousness is a brain cell in a universal mind. -Sir James Jeans

And in our own day, astrophysicist Freeman Dyson is noted for making statements like the following

The universe is like a fertile soil spread out all around us, ready for the seeds of mind to sprout and grow.

Another contemporary scientist, biophysicist Harold J. Morowitz, observes that

The awesome cosmic intelligence that surrounds us is also within us. The universality of the laws of nature is at least one way in which we are part of the world mind. Even if transcendence is beyond our grasp, the immanence of god is awfully impressive all by itself.

**THE WAY MIND WORKS**

The most important of all factors in your life is the mental diet on which you live. It is the food which you furnish to your mind that determines the whole character of your life. It is the thoughts you allow yourself to think, the subjects that you allow your mind to dwell upon, which make you and your surroundings what they are. -Emmet Fox

There is always a reciprocal action between the Universal and the individual mind. **-Ernest Holmes**

The collective energy generated from the feelings, thoughts, and attitudes of the almost six billion people on this planet creates an atmosphere or 'consciousness climate.' Surrounding us like the air we breathe, this consciousness climate affects us most strongly on energetic and emotional levels. –Doc Lew Childre

All minds are joined. Therefore, all healing is self-healing. Our inner peace will, of itself, pass to others once we accept it for ourselves. -Gerald G. Jampolsky

The strength of our species lies not in sharp fangs or piercing claws.  It lies in our ability to use our minds to cooperate with each other... **-Ken Keyes, Jr.** the hundredth monkey

It is not your environment, nor your history, nor your education or ability, it is the quality of your mind that predicts your future. –Los Angeles Graffito

One assumes the form of that which is in one's mind. -Maitri-Upanishad

Every person is surrounded by a thought atmosphere…. Through this power we are either attracting or repelling. Like attracts like and . . . we attract just what we are in mind. -Ernest Holmes

It is not events that disturb the minds of men, but the view they take of them. -Epictetus

The eye sees only what the mind is prepared to comprehend. -Henri L. Bergson

The mind is its own place, and of itself can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven. –John Milton

You give birth to that on which you fix your mind. -Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Perhaps the only limits to the human mind are those we believe in. –Willis Harmon

The raspberry within itself does not contain its sweetness, nor does the tongue. It is in the interaction between the two that this glorious manifestation of the divine resides. –Matthew Jacobson >>> It is we who make wine drunk. –Rumi **Is it the bell that rings, is it the hammer that rings, or is it the meeting of the two that rings? –Zen** Ultimate reality is encountered neither in our minds nor in the physical cosmos, but at the point where these meet. –Alan Smithson

The mind, once expanded, does not return to its original dimension. –Oliver Wendell Holmes

**HOW TO WORK YOUR MIND**

No human being on earth has power to do anything for you or against you. If you can see the significance of this, your relations with spouse, friend, and stranger undergo bright transformation. You will never seek to influence others, you will never worry whether they like you or not, you will be at peace with everyone, even though they are not at peace with you. But this must be seen with the spiritual mind, the Supermind, not with human logic or conditioned reasoning. -Vernon Howard

Minds are like parachutes. They only function when they are open. -Sir James Dewar, Scientist (1877-1925)

We want our minds to be clear – not so we can think clearly, but so we can be open in our perceptions. –M.C. Richards

A central teaching in most spiritual traditions is: What you wish to experience, provide for another. –The Dalai Lama

Your mind is your instrument, not your master. -Brad Jensen

Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything. -George Bernard Shaw

Faced with the choice between changing one’s mind and proving that there is no need to do so, almost everybody gets busy on the proof. –Author Unknown

Formulate and stamp indelibly on your mind a mental picture of yourself as succeeding. Hold this picture tenaciously. Never permit it to fade. Your mind will seek to develop the picture. Do not build up obstacles in your imagination. -Norman Vincent Peale

Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind. -Dr. Seuss

Mind is substance,

Thought the chisel,

Phenomena the result.

See to it that you do

your carving right-eously.

-Wm. W. Walter

Most of us are just about as happy as we make up our minds to be. -Abraham Lincoln

Deep within you lies the security you seek. This security is nothing less than the power to control your mind, and therefore create your world anew. –Unknown

There are no limitations to the mind except those we acknowledge. –Napoleon Hill

The strong man is the one who is able to intercept at will the communication between the senses and the mind. –Napoleon Bonaparte

Great minds have purposes, others have wishes. -Washington Irving

Age is a question of mind over matter. If you don’t mind, it doesn’t matter. ­-Satchel Paige

**THE TAO OF MIND**

The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, worry about the future, or anticipate troubles, but to live in the present moment wisely, and earnestly. -Buddha

You have to allow a certain amount of time in which you are doing nothing in order to have things occur to you, to let your mind think. –Mortimer Adler

You cannot find out what a man means by simply studying his spoken or written statements even though he has spoken or written with perfect command of the language and perfectly truthful intention. In order to find out his meaning, you must also know what the question (a question in his own mind and presumed by him to be in yours) to which the thing he has said or written was meant as an answer. -R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography*, p. 31

Do everything with a mind that lets go. Do not expect any praise or reward. If you let go a little, you will have a little peace. If you let go a lot, you will have a lot of peace. If you let go completely, you will know complete peace and freedom. Your struggles with the world will have come to an end. -**Ajahn Chah**

**If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything; it is open to everything. In the’s mind there are many possibilities; in the expert’s mind there are few. -Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind***

When a man lacks steadiness, unable to control his mind,

His senses are unmanageable horses.

But if he control his mind, a steady man,

they are manageable horses.

He who calls intellect to manage the reins of his mind

reaches the end of his journey, finds there all-pervading Spirit.

-Katha Upanishad

The mind verily is the world (samsara)

One should purify it strenuously.

One assumes the form of that which is in one's mind.

This is the eternal secret.

-Maitri-Upanishad

Running away from fear is fear; fighting pain is pain; trying to be brave is being scared.  If the mind is in pain, the mind is pain.  *The thinker has no other form than his thought.* -Alan Watts,*The Wisdom of Insecurity*

There is a Zen saying: the finger does not point at itself, the eye does not see itself, the mind does not know itself. Of course, the person who said that knew very well that the finger only points at itself, the eye only sees itself and the mind only knows itself. (if you think I have ruined this koan, do not worry, it is safe.) -Brad Jensen

The Real Work: It may be that when we no longer know what to do/ we have come to our real work,/ and that when we no longer know which way to go/ we have come to our real journey.// The mind that is not baffled is not employed.// The impeded stream is the one that sings. -Wendell Berry

**In the beginner’s mind, there are many possibilities, but in the expert’s mind there are few. - Zen**

If you let cloudy water settle, it will become clear. If you let your upset mind settle, your course will also become clear. -Zen

To the mind that is still, the whole universe surrenders. -Lao-Tzu

Do everything with a mind that lets go. Do not expect any praise or reward. If you let go a little, you will have a little peace. If you let go a lot, you will have a lot of peace. If you let go completely, you will know complete peace and freedom. Your struggles with the world will have come to an end. -**Ajahn Chah**

Patience serves as a protection against wrongs as clothes do against cold. For if you put on more clothes as the cold increases, it will have no power to hurt you. So in like manner you must grow in patience when you meet with great wrongs, and they will then be powerless to vex your mind. -Leonardo da Vinci

He who is of a calm and happy mind will scarcely feel the pressure of age. –Author unknown

Friendship is one mind in two bodies. -Proverb

God said that the only way I can be forgiven is by my forgiving you. If I don’t forgive you, and I hold some kind of resentment or grudge inside of me, it’s not going to bother you. You’ll go right on with your life, but I’ll be suffering. I’ll have backaches, nervous tension, or disease from the festering sore of this unforgiveness of you in me. My attitude about that is that it’s not worth that much to me. I won’t give a person free rent in my mind when I don’t even like that person.” –Della Reese, SOM Magazine, 10/97 p.p. 47-8

Creative minds have always been known to survive any kind of bad training. -Anna Freud

Great minds discuss ideas;

Average minds discuss events;

Small minds discuss people.

Inquiring minds ask questions of experience.

-Author unknown

"What is as important as knowledge?" asked the mind.

"Caring and seeing with the heart,” answered the Soul. - ???

Truth consists of the mind’s giving to things the importance they have in reality. –Jean Daniélou

**SCIENCE AND MIND**

You watch your mind to see who you are not. I watch my mind to gain a sense of its content, which has always been my pain. As I watch it, I get a sense of its impermanence. Thoughts come and go as part of a process. I see how content dissolves into process and begin to see the patterns in the process. Realizing it isn’t MY suffering, MY pain, it becomes THE pain. I’ve gone from the tiny, the small, and the individual to the universal. I feel OUR pain. When we do, we go from fear to compassion. Fear is MY pain, compassion is THE pain. -Stephen Levine

Any theory or premise we impose on nature is only a quiet eddy in the currents of mind. It is destined to disappear. –Bob Samples

"What is as important as knowledge?" asked the mind.

"Caring and seeing with the heart,” answered the Soul. -Anon

There are no limitations to the mind except those we acknowledge. –Napoleon Hill

Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all. -Aristotle

It is the part of the wise instructor to tempt forth from the minds of his pupils the facts of their inmost consciousness, and make them apprehend the gifts and faculties of their own being. Education, when rightly understood, will be found to lie in the art of asking apt and fit questions, and in leading the mind by its own light to the perception of truth. -Bronson Alcott

The process that we call "thinking" is in fact nothing more than an ongoing review of our personal history.  There is only One Mind; only One Thinker.  We can consciously be One with It or we can continue to be historians.-Bert & Christine Carson

I believe human beings are not violent by nature. Unlike lions and tigers, we are not naturally equipped to kill with sharp teeth and claws. From a Buddhist viewpoint, I believe that the basic nature of every sentient being is pure, that the deeper nature of mind is something pure. Human beings become violent because of negative thoughts which arise as a result of their environment and circumstances. -the Dalai Lama: Message Supporting a Global Moratorium on the Death Penalty

*Moriarty:* “All that I have to say has already crossed your mind.”

*Holmes:* “Then possibly my answer has crossed yours.” –Arthur Conan Doyle

The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift. -Albert Einstein

A house is not a home unless it contains food and fire for the mind as well as the body. -Margaret Fuller

I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet. -Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869-1948)

A good teacher bids you not into his house of wisdom, rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind. -Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*

The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green earth in the present moment, to appreciate peace and beauty that are available now…. It is not a matter of faith; it is a matter of practice. We need only to find ways to bring our body and mind back to the present moment so we can touch what is refreshing, healing, and wondrous. -Thich Nhat Hanh

There are only two emotions: love - our natural inheritance, and fear - an invention of our minds which is illusory. --Gerald G. Jampolsky, MD, [*Teach Only Love*]

[I] hate being alone, but I’m even more afraid of finding myself alone because of someone else’s decision to leave me. This mind-set keeps me alone. –Geoffrey Kurland

All people dream; but not equally.

Those who dream by night,

in the dusty recesses of their minds,

wake in the day to find it was vanity.

But the dreamers of the day are dangerous people,

for they may act their dream with open eyes

to make it possible.

**-T. E. Lawrence**

The best thing for being sad is to learn something. That is the only thing that never fails. You may grow old and trembling in your anatomies; you may lie awake at night listening to the disorder of your veins; you may miss your only love; you may see the world about you devastated by evil lunatics or your honor trampled in the sewers of baser minds. There is only one thing for it then -- to learn! That is the only thing which the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear or distrust, and never dream of regretting. Learning is the thing for you." -Merlin the Magician in "The Tales of King Arthur"

Stone describes the process: "He was not working from his drawings or clay models; they had all been put away. He was carving from the images in his mind. His eyes and hands knew where every line, curve, mass must emerge, and at what depth in the heart of the stone to create the low relief." (*The Agony and the Ecstasy.* Doubleday, 1961: 6, 144.)

In the fields of observation, chance favors only the prepared mind. ­–Louis Pasteur

When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, all your thoughts break their bonds; your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction, and you find yourself in a new, great and wonderful world. Dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive, and you discover yourself to be a greater person by far than you ever dreamed yourself to be. *-*From the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (c. 200 B.C.E.)

I try to see through people’s faces into their minds and listen through their words into their lives, and what I find there is beyond imagining. - ­Richard Preston, *The Hot Zone*

The goal of every person is, in the final analysis, a comfortable state of mind. –Peter Russell

### If being right is your goal, you may find error in the world, and seek to change it to match your expectations. But don't expect peace of mind. If peace of mind is your goal, look for errors in your expectations; seek to change them, not the world. And always be prepared to be wrong. – Peter Russell

Dear Ben,

Whew!

This morning’s dialog was for me the single most fruitfully culminating conversation we have thus far enjoyed. In the six hours that have since passed, I have at last found a way to elucidate the “a”-word that allows me to feel comfortable with launching its formal appearance in print!

As an indication of how thoroughly comfortable I feel, I have entered “allward” into my spell-checker so that it is no longer being red-lined in my text. Like the Velveteen Rabbit, the word “allward” is at last sufficiently well-worn to be real.

The attached statement is representative and inclusive of our on-growing co-creative dialog, without which I could not have articulated it thus. I immensely treasure our association, and have so indicated in the attachment as well.

What a wonderful foundation from which to launch our mutual experiencings of another co-creative New Year, as we conclude one beginning and commence another ending.

I am sending this attachment to dozens of prospective seminar students and many others world-wide, and will thus have no objection to your sharing the ***full*** statement with whomever else you please, as long as you retain the request for feedback and contact information at the statement’s conclusion.

I am not copyrighting the statement because only those who grok it could credibly pass it on and respond thereto as their own work. And if and when they have *fully* grokked it, the work actually will have become their own.

**The Tao of Inclusivity:**

**Negotiating the Slippery Slope**

**of Reality Formation and Management**

Reality isn’t what it used to be.

John Lennon

**Orientation to Terminology**

Following is an overview of the conceptual context that frames its author’s periodic convenings of a seminar entitled “The Tao of Inclusivity”, in which the word “inclusivity” signifies the inextricably interrelated and mutual contingency of all living creatures and all life-supportive systems and processes.

The next seminar is scheduled to begin in Portland, Oregon on February 6, 2008, and to continue weekly for a total of eight Monday evening sessions from 7-9 p.m.

The seminar’s two-fold mission is

* to facilitate the emergence of a social-activist paradigm of non-adversarial advocacy, of being for peace without being against violence or resorting thereto, and of being inclusive rather than abusive of those who do resort to violence.
* to facilitate the emergence of a world that works for *all* living creatures and for *all*of the contingent natural and human systems and processes that are required to support such a world.

The source materials for this seminar, in addition to numerous writings by many individuals including the author of this document, are in two books: Wayne Dyer’s rendition of the *Tao Te Ching* and his commentary thereon, *Change Your Thoughts ~ Change Your Life: Living the Wisdom of the Tao* (Hay House, 2007), and Sharif Abdullah’s *Creating a World that Works for All* (Berrett-Koehler,1999).

The seminar is available in a variety of time frames, as requested by hosting groups and organizations. Contact information for the seminar convener is provided at the conclusion of this document.

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**The Varieties of Realistic Experience**

…I not only see all things as if through another pane of glass, which is myself, but…the various movements I make, be it intentionally if I act, or emotionally if I am afraid, or simply through the continual transports of respiration and circulation which sustain life, never cease to distort what I see, what I hear, what I taste, what I smell, what I touch.

Alain (Émile Chartier)

I am afraid of this word Reality, not connoting an ordinary definable characteristic of the things that it is applied to but used as though it were some kind of a celestial halo. I very much doubt if any one of us has the faintest idea of what is meant by the reality or existence of anything but our own Egos.

Sir Arthur Eddington

Sir Arthur Eddington was one of the great cosmologists of his time, whose scientific genius flourished several decades before any scientist was actually called a “cosmologist.” Eddington wrote the above words in 1927, when Einstein’s theory of relativity and the aborning science of quantum physics were wreaking havoc with what reality used to be.1 Yet by his countryman John Lennon’s time, many had become so fearless of reality that they were open to sampling and getting high on its alternative varieties of self↔world interrelationship.

Given reality’s elusive nature, it is essential for participants in the Tao of Inclusivity seminar to cultivate an understanding of what the word “reality” signifies, as well as with what is signified by several other words that are pertinent to the inclusivity paradigm, including “relativistic”, “experience,” “emergence”, “entanglement”, “ “co-operation”, “co-creation”, “co-respondence”, “consciousness”, “constructivist”, “convergence”, “contingency”, “congruency” – and to begin with, what is signified by the verb “to signify” itself.

“Signifying” indicates how words are used as pointers to what their meaning defines. The word “dog,” for instance, can indicate any one of millions of animals world-wide, whose shapes, sizes and breeding are so variously diverse that only when we know which animal is signified by a given use of the word “dog” can we distinguish the particular creature thus pointed to.

Because we give our made-up meanings to words, rather than speak and write words that have made up their own meanings and given them to us, it is ultimately we who mean and not our words themselves. As is sometimes said, “words don’t mean, people do,” and no two people understand the same word with precisely the same meaning, even when they are looking at the same dog. This is because every word’s ultimate meaning at the moment of its usage is derived from far more than the content of the meanings formally assigned to them.

For instance, meaning is additionally derived from the context of a word’s usage, which includes the context of the mindset from which one perceives what the word is pointing to. Therefore, along with the diversity of content that is signified by the word “dog” we must take also into account the diversity of contexts in which dogs are experienced, whether by lovers thereof, by those who dislike dogs, by those who have been attacked by a dog, by those who have been rescued by a dog, by those who grow up in cultures where dogs are eaten, etc.

In other words, the doggone truth of reality is that we can know it only via the form it takes in our consciousness.

Given the mutually intertwined (a.k.a. “entangled”) diversities of dog-related content and context, the known reality of dog-ness is a systemically slippery slope. The same slipperiness equally applies to all other words as well, because no two people’s mindsets identically contextualize our common experiences, including our experiences of word meanings. Even when our experienc*es* are being shared, each individual’s experienc*ings* thereof are exclusively confined to his or her own mindset, for just as our mindsets are totally within us so are our experienci*ngs*.

Because being conscious is an inside job, everywhere I go, *here* is where my experienc*ing* takes place, and always and only in accordance with my mindset. And so it is likewise for everyone else. Every experience we have *of* reality is an experienc*ing* thereof that takes place *within* a consciousness that is itself within the reality of which it is aware. Insofar as the consciousness that our reality exists within is coextensive with the reality that our consciousness exists within, they function as a dual unity.

Our experiencing of reality is both outward and inward, as well as both referential and inferential. From our outward referential perspective we perceive “objective” experiences that happen *to* us to be distinct from ourselves. From our inward referential perspective we perceive “subjective” experienc*ings* that happen *as* us to be an integral part of ourselves.. Yet from a fully inclusive inferential perspective, our objective experienc*es* *of* reality and our subjective experienc*ings* *as* reality mutually reinforce (co-respond) and work together (co-operate) as an integral dual unity of wholeness and harmonial at-one-ment. Most briefly put, therefore, inward-ness and outward-ness are subsets of a universally integral dimension of allward-ness. 2+

All directional polarities, as well as operational polarities like magnetism and electricity, function as a co-operative dual unity rather than a contentious duality, just as do consciousness and reality. Our objective experienc*e*s and subjective experienc*ings* are likewise complementary poles of an operational dual unity. Accordingly, even though we differentially perceive our objective experienc*es* to be other-meant, and our subjective experienc*ings* to be inner-meant, both may be jointly perceived as the inseparable polar complements of a mutually ongrowing process that may be experienced more congruently as between-meant and at-one-meant. In accordance with its numerous dual unities (which may also be signified as a chord-dance and a cored-dance), reality is forever somewhere “between the lines” of even its most linear formats.

In short: All inward and outward experiences (as well as all forward, backward, upward, downward, onward and sideward ones) are interrelated subsets of a single integral reality whose operational dynamic is omni-directionally allward. Within this reality, as noted by Teilhard de Chardin: 3

Like the [planet’s] meridians as they approach the poles, science, philosophy and religion are bound to converge as they draw nearer to the whole.... The time has come to realize that an interpretation of the universe – even a positivist one – remains unsatisfying unless it covers the interior as well as the exterior of things; mind as well as matter. The true physics is that which will, one day, achieve the inclusion of man in his wholeness in a coherent picture of the world.

Author Flannery Connor epitomized Chardin’s integral cosmology in an axiom that likewise pertains to reality overall: “Everything that rises must converge.” 4

Reality’s convergence point, as experienced in our consciousness, *is* our consciousness. The only reality we know is our experienced consciousness thereof, and the only consciousness we know is our experienced reality thereof. Thus reality’s con-verging con-texts and con-tent in our con-sciousness is an extraordinary “con-” job of human awareness, in which every relationship is an *inter*relationship whose between-ness we experience as a mutually co-creative self↔world interrelationship.

The integrally alining between-ness that mutualizes the polarities of our self↔world interrelationship is portrayed as an operational interface of mind and matter by quantum physicist Brian Josephson, director of the mind-matter unification project at England’s University of Cambridge:

The raspberry within itself does not contain its sweetness, nor does the tongue. It is in the interaction between the two that this divine manifestation resides.

In alignment with this portrayal of an integral mind-matter interface, operations researcher Alan Smithson proposes a constructivist model of mind-matter between-ness: 5

[U]ltimate reality is encountered neither in our minds nor in the physical cosmos, but at the point where these meet.

Smithson views this “marriage of mind and matter” as a wedding of referential and inferential consciousness in which “Each person lives at a succession of unique points at which the reality of the whole structure is experienced as a simultaneous presentation of external and internal events.” 6

Smithson identifies our successive experiences of mind-matter conjunction as “kairos” points. The Greek word, *kairos,* signifies “fullness of time,” as the Sanskrit word, *Rţa,* similarly signifies “the well-formed instant.” We shall see during our unfolding seminar experience that the designations “fullness of time” and “well-formed instant” are both indicative of what the *Tao Te Ching* prescribes as the practice of “Te”, individual virtue that is congruent with cosmic design.

**The Slippery Slope of Reality Formation**

The difference between fiction and reality is that fiction has to make sense.

-Tom Clancy

Fiction’s appeal as a form of “escape” may be accredited to our experience that it more readily seems to make sense than reality does. Yet this is mostly because fiction reflects the fruitful labors of someone else’s sense-making. Making sense of the workings of one’s own life requires the resolution of far more variables than does one’s eavesdropping on another’s already worked-out make-believe scenario, hence our “escape” to their fictionalized offering of soft-core reality.

Yet in “real life” there is no escape from the variables of our immediately experienced reality. Regardless of how we perceive our self↔world interrelationship, our diversities of perception present numerous troublesomely contending variables, which emerge from past and current experiencings that both form our mindsets and are given form by them. These variables include, among many other things, our diverse emotional, psychological and neurological states and our multiple cultural heritages.

Therefore, when Alice points to a dog she is signifying it with her uniquely self-constructed experiential history of dogs in general and her present experiencing of a particular dog at a particular moment. And when Bob looks at the dog that Alice has signified, he is likewise signifying it with his uniquely self-constructed experiential interrelationship with dogs both past and present. Both of them overlay their respective histories of dog-ness on this dog, which makes each of their experiencings of it unique.

We see everything through a mental-emotional lens that is uncleansed of our conceptual and perceptual baggage. Accordingly, the extent to which we are unmindful of our diversities of perception and meaning is the extent to which we incompletely and inaccurately communicate at best, and miscommunicate – if not fail to communicate – at worst. Given the range and multiplicity of our conceptual and perceptual diversities, it is a wonder that we can communicate as well as we do. For however true may be Ralph Waldo Emerson’s metaphysical axiom that “There is a single mind common to all individuals,” it is simultaneously true that there are as many diverse mentalities and mindsets as there are people on our planet.

Since each mentality differs from all others in the way that it constructs and interprets its minder’s experience, each mindset features an internally constructed map of reality that is unlike the reality map of any other individual’s mindset. Even if pristine reality – the way that things are prior to any perception or experience thereof – is not itself a slippery slope, there is no way for us to certify this to be so. This is because the process by which reality is uniquely mapped in each of six and a half billion human mentalities, and the diversity of their entangled individual and collective outlooks overall, coalesce to make consciousness of reality a slippery slope indeed.

The word “consciousness” therefore signifies the operative process by which reality is accessed, experienced, perceived, interpreted, given form and managed in one’s awareness. The operational slipperiness of this systemic self-constructing process has been illustrated by psychologist Gary Zukav, who begins his portrayal by signifying reality as “what we take to be true.” According to Zukav, it ishow we *experientially* take reality to be true that in turn determines what we *factually* take to be true, and this linkage of experience to fact involves a uniquely individualized, self-constructing and self-confirming feedforward ↔feedback loop: 7

What we take to be true is what we believe.

What we believe is based upon our perceptions.

What we perceive depends on what we look for.

What we look for depends upon what we think.

What we think depends upon what we perceive.

What we perceive determines what we believe.

This is the point at which *how* we take reality to be true becomes retro-linked to *what* we take as true, thus completing a full circuit:

What we believe determines what we take to be true.

What we take to be true is our reality.

So . . . We create our own reality.

In accordance with this self-constructing and self-confirming process:

* Our experience of reality entangles us in a co-operatively interpenetrating and persistently ongrowing self↔world interrelationship;
* Our respective self↔world interrelationships are themselves mutually intertwined with one another.
* Our knowledge of reality is experientially approximate rather than precisely reconstructive.

The relativistic implications of any constructivist model of personal reality formation and management, whether it be Smithson’s, Zukav’s or someone else’s, were cited by high-energy physicist Geoffrey Chew at a scientific conference on consciousness held in Berkeley, California in 1982: 8

All ways of seeing are approximate. Each experience is an approximation abstracted from a larger context. We don't even know why scientific objectivity works as well as it does [and] if this workability is ever understood, such knowing still won't be the totality of truth. Consciousness itself is approximate, and our experience of consciousness is an interaction among approximations.

Because reality is knowable to us only as a milieu of multiple sets of interacting approximations, none of which is completely explanatory and some if not many of which are mutually contradictory, Chew concluded that we are fated to "living in paradox." 9+ As co-founder of quantum mechanics Niels Bohr similarly observed, “In our description of nature the purpose is not to disclose the real essence of phenomena but only to track down, as far as it is possible, relations between the manifold aspects of experience.” Bohr’s contemporary, theologian Reinhold Niebuhr comparably asserted that we forever face life’s challenges with only "proximate solutions to insoluble problems.”

As we are tracking down reality’s “manifold aspects of experience,” mathematical physicist Jacob Bronowski warned us to beware of an intellectual pitfall: 10

There is no absolute knowledge. And those who claim it, whether they are scientists or dogmatists, open the door to tragedy. All information is imperfect. We have to treat it with humility. That is the human condition; and that is what quantum physics says. I mean that literally.

To embrace any one map or model of reality as if it accounts for all things was considered idolatrous by Bronowski, as it was likewise by Nobel laureate author Andre Gide, who forthrightly prescribed, “Follow the seeker after truth, but beware of him who has found it.” Genuine truth-seekers welcome with open heart and mind reality’s largesse of nonetheless-ness and furthermore-ness. The patron saint of such seekers is eighteenth century German literary critic and dramatist Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, who proclaimed that “If the Lord God held out to me in his right hand the whole of truth, and in his left hand only the urge to seek truth, I would reach for his left hand.”It has thus been said of Lessing that he “[searched] for elements of truth even in the arguments made by his opponents [because] for him this truth was never solid or something which could be owned by someone but always a process of approaching.” 11

Lessing would have heartily agreed with the assessment of 20th century French philosopher Alain (Emile Chartier): “Nothing is more dangerous than an idea when it is the only one we have.” This is why, whenever one is approached with a claim of absolute truth, one does best to turn away as one would from a *re*proach.

**Making It Up as We Goal**

The status quo is blind to our creative power. Create a brand new world for yourself, one that meets your deepest needs, and you will help raise the quality of consciousness of the entire world. You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

–Mohandas Gandhi

The word “reality” signifies the total field of interacting approximations that makes possible our experiential maps of self↔world interrelationship, maps that are dynamically contingent upon our diversities of experience and meaning, as well as emergent therefrom (unfolding outwardly from within them) and convergent thereof (bringing them into mutual alignment). Insofar as we agree on our respective experiences, our outlooks on reality tend to be harmonious, while insofar as we disagree they tend toward dissonance.

In either case, whether of agreement or disagreement, each person’s own experiencing is his or her only point of access and reference to reality, as well as to his or her formative and managerial processing thereof. Nothing can be real to anyone in other than the way that he or she perceives it in his or her experiencing of self↔world interrelationship. As poet John Keats wrote, “Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced – even a proverb is no proverb to you till your life has illustrated it.” Given the remarkable relativity of our experiential anchoring to reality, both we and the world of our experience are forever moving targets on a slippery slope of personal reality formation and management that is constantly travelled by and trammeled with billions of differing mindsets.

There presumably exists a pristinely unalterable reality that is independent of and unaffected by those who experience it, as was the universe’s reality during the 13 billion years that preceded the advent of humankind’s perception thereof. (In character with reality’s slippery slope, 13 billion years is the current “best of show” calculation, whose generous margin of error is acknowledged in estimates that vary from 12-15 and 12-20 billion years. In accord with science’s aspiration to both theoretical and factual parsimony, it is common to presume that the lower end of such ranges is the most probably accurate one.)

Whatever reality may be as its pristine self, our experience thereof is in every instance individually and socially constructed to correspond with our personal and interpersonal histories and current circumstances. What we take reality to be can never be more or other than what we individually and collectively make of it in our consciousness. Thus the closest we can come to specifying what reality *is* is to identify what it “seems to be like” in our individual and collective experiencings of self↔world interrelationship.

Once again in short: Reality assessment is an intriguingly elastic process of differential diagnosis, whose pursuit is conveniently housed in our neuroplastic heads.

All that we actually create, therefore, is our *experiencing* of reality, not reality itself, and our experiencing is in keeping with the insight of social theorist Marilyn Ferguson: “We’re all students at M.S.U. – making stuff up.” Changing reality, therefore, is a matter of changing the way we experience it, as architect-engineer-inventor R. Buckminster (“Bucky”) Fuller proclaimed half a century ago in a statement that today is quoted on several thousand websites: 12

You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.

From the perspective of Fuller’s constructivist approach to personal reality formation – or of anyone else’s constructivist approach – reality, *as experienced*, is contingent on our perception of it, and perceptivity is a dynamic of which we all are students, including those who are experts on its neurological substrates. Yet as we accredit constructivist approaches, we are mistaken if we do so as though our make-up of reality’s stuff – our cosmetic-ological experiencing thereof – is preceded by our pre-fabrication of the cosmological stuff that supports our make-up artistry. This tendency is portrayed in an anecdote that circulated the Internet a few years ago, which cautions against exaggerating our ability to “make stuff up.”

Emboldened by their increasing command of molecular, atomic, and genetic engineering, and thereby wielding powers that were formerly attributed to God, the scientific community decided that we had no further requirement for a deity. A representative was therefore deputized to inform God that He could take the rest of eternity off.

God was unconvinced. “Do you really think that you can create life from scratch exactly the way I did?”

“No problem,” said the scientist, as he stooped to pick up a handful of dirt.

“No, no,” said God. “That’s not the way I did it.”

“What do you mean?” asked the scientist.

“Get your own dirt.”

Creating our own reality is not the dirt-simple proposition whose “secret” some claim to know with undue finality. Though tailors we may somewhat be of our own reality, what we thus stitch together is a fabric not initially of our own weaving. Even the most boldly materialistic realists do not presume to be the creators of reality’s raw materials, and take credit only for their shaping of raw material already at hand.

The impracticality of arguing that reality is totally of our own creation is evidenced in the fact that none of us recalls having ignited the Big Bang that presumably gave reality its initial send-off in the first place. Our absence of oversight in this regard was reportedly called into question thousands of years ago by God in response to Job’s complaints about the world’s shortcomings: “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?” (*Job* 38:4).

In short: the cosmological stuff of reality precedes our cosmetology thereof. As philosopher Alan Watts once put this, “We don’t come into the world, we come out of the world. Flowers blossom, trees branch and earth peoples.” Reality emerges developmentally from the interactions of its diverse constituents, and is not constructed and assembled piece-by-piece like so many Lego parts. Reality is a convergence of organic contingencies that only under rigorous human direction sometimes take form by means of a mechanical assembly of parts.

In accordance with Watts’ emergent perspective, each of us is something that dirt turns into while Earth does unto us as it would have us do likewise unto it – a favor that we are instead today returning by ignorantly doing Earth in. Nor is this attitude of ignorance excusable when it signifies our active ignoring of reports from the global scientific community of how degrading our planet in is proportionately downgrading its ability to sustain our own existence as a species.

In the meantime, all that it takes for any of us to verify that we create only our experience of reality’s stuff, and do not originate the stuff itself, is to look around at everyone else that Earth’s dirt has likewise turned into. Is anyone prepared to claim that he or she has created everyone else in the world, including the way that all six and a half billion of them appear and what each of them thinks, says and does?

To more fully appreciate why nobody feels able to make such a claim, one may read chapter 29 in physician Gordon Livingston’s book, *And Never Stop Dancing: Thirty More True Things You Need to Know Now*.13 The recommended chapter is entitled “Every snowflake in an avalanche pleads not guilty.”

For instance, while it sometimes seems to take just one person like Adolph Hitler or Mohandas Gandhi to unloose an avalanche of reality, the avalanche itself is the activity of a multitude of people. In worst case scenarios of avalanched reality, the multitude subsequently pleads itself to be innocent on the grounds that they were individually “forced” to do what they did and could not have chosen to do otherwise. This argument is utterly refutable on firm neuroscientific grounds, for we now have extensive experimental confirmation that the only brain that makes any person’s choices is the one in his or her own head. And even when others mess with a person’s power to choose, the mess that results is nonetheless the outcome of ultimately self-made choices.

**Playing Reality’s Hand**

You cannot walk the path until you are the path.

-Buddha

Write from experience, and experience only.

–James Joyce

The extent to which even our *experiencing* of reality is self-fabricated is open to debate. Some persons vigorously deny that they have anything whatsoever to do with the instigation of experiences that happen *to* them without provocation or other prior participation on their part. An extreme example cited by some who advance this argument is that of a meteor landing on one’s head.

Giving this argument its due in the context of emergent, contingent and convergent self↔world interrelationships, the assertion that we create our experiencing of reality may be qualified by noting that all experiences, falling meteors included, are *co*-creations in which we and reality are co-participating partners. Self and world are always working together in co-operative co-creation of whatever we are experiencing. Thus while we don’t deal to ourselves all of the cards in a deck that includes the reality of inconveniently falling meteors, we do make our own way with whatever cards turn up on our individual and collective watch-outs.

While constructivist models of co-creative reality are exceptional in Western thinking, such as those of Josephson and Simpson cited above, their contextual reference frame of contingent, emergent and convergent co-creativity is implicit in Taoist, Buddhist, Zen and other Eastern philosophical thought, as represented for instance in such questions as “Is it the bell that rings, is it the hammer that rings, or is it the meeting of the two that rings?” Eastern philosophical literature is riddled (pun intended) with anecdotal allusions to the contingently co-creative self↔world interrelationship that emerges from the interface of matter with mind:

Two monks began to argue after noticing a windblown flag. “The flag is waving,” one asserted. “No,” insisted the other, “it is the wind that is waving.” To resolve their debate, the monks agreed to solicit and accept their master’s verdict on which of them was right.

“You’re both wrong,” their master said when they informed him of their dispute.

“How can that be?” the monks exclaimed.

“Your minds are waving,” their master explained.

Tibetan Buddhist lore is an especially rich source of insight on the integrally co-creative nature of our emergent self↔world interrelationships. For instance, a former Dalai Lama customarily answered anyone’s question, “Who am I?” with the further question, “Who is it that asks?” From a Buddhist perspective, whoever asks this question is his or her only path to its ultimate answer.

Such insight was also explicit in St. Augustine’s observation that “What we are looking for is what we are looking with.” In both Buddhism’s and Augustine’s assessment, the ultimate “who” and “what” of our identity is no more literally measurable, tangibly locatable or ultimately pin-down-able than is the consciousness with which our endlessly waving minds weave the tapestry of our ongrowing self↔world interrelationship.

Regardless of how ineffable our felt being-ness within that tapestry seems to be, one’s knowing of either self or others can proceed from only from one’s own mindset and only as that mindset is shaping what one thinks, feels and is assuming what one’s self and one’s world are like. Each individual’s interface of interpenetrating mind and matter assures that whatever one experiences is a co-created outcome of his or her self↔world interrelationship of inner and outer realities.

While this interface does incorporate our sometimes unwitting presence at kairos points where unwanted manifestations of reality occur, such as the accidental death of a loved one or the untimely prospect of one’s own, this is yet additional evidence that what we co-create even in moments of innocent non-complicity does not include the raw “dirt” of our experience itself. What we nonetheless do co-create in *every* circumstance is an understanding and engagement of reality that corresponds to our experiencings thereof. Even an oncoming meteor is subject to a variety of experienc*ings,* depending on how soon one sees its approach, how quickly and effectively one reacts or responds, whether one feels terror or resignation, etc.

In short, as computer-science professor Randy Pausch asserted in his farewell lecture to his students subsequent to a diagnosis of terminal cancer – which was also witnessed at least in part by 100 million others via evening news telecasts and the Internet as well, “We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand…. It’s not about how you achieve your dreams, but the way you lead your life. If you lead your life the right way your karma will take care of itself. The dreams will come to you.” 14

**Reality in a Nut’s Shtetl**

Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.

–James Joyce

From the foregoing account of the maddening slipperiness of reality’s slope from which emerges humankind’s teeming global village is in full emeregence, several conclusions may be drawn concerning the co-operatively teaming nature, dynamics, and function of personal reality formation and management:

* Reality is developmentally contingent, emergent and convergent rather than arbitrarily constructed and imposed.
* Every relationship is a convergent interrelationship, and every relationship involving human beings is an ongrowing emergent, convergent and mutually contingent self↔world interrelationship.
* Our experiential presence in reality’s milieu is a co-operative focal point of numerous mutual co-entanglements of contingent circumstance.
* Even when our experience seems to be happening *to* us, our experienc*ing* thereof always and only happens *as* us.
* Every creative act is a co-creative act.
* In the absence of any individual or collective human experiencing of one or more contingent aspects of reality, the actuality thereof is undetectable and unknowable by us.
* In the experienced presence of reality’s contingencies, the ultimate form and quality of one’s experiencing depends on the form and quality of one’s interaction with the world, not solely on the world itself.
* No matter what and how the world contributes to one’s circumstances, one’s experienc*ing* thereof is entirely and uniquely one’s own.

Humankind’s intuition of its integrally co-creative self↔world interrelationship has withstood the test of time, even though it has yet to be the cultural paradigm of other than indigenous societies. To cite a cloud of post-indigenous historical witnesses to what some proclaim to be our self↔world interrelationship’s best-kept though oft-repeated “secret”:

* Epictetus: “It is not events that disturb the minds of men, but the view they take of them.”
* Marcus Aurelius: “It is our own power to have no opinion about a thing, and not to be disturbed in our soul; for things themselves have no natural power to form our judgments.”
* Martha Washington: “The greater part of happiness or misery depends on our dispositions, and not on our circumstances. We carry the seeds of the one or the other about with us in our minds wherever we go.”
* Benjamin Disraeli: “Man is not the creature of circumstances. Circumstances are the creatures of men.”
* Henri L. Bergson: “The eye sees only what the mind is prepared to comprehend.”
* G. W. F. Hegel**: “Man, insofar as he acts on nature to change it, changes his own nature.”**
* Aldous Huxley: “Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him.”
* Winston Churchill: “We shape our dwellings, and then our dwellings shape us.”
* Parks Cousins: “How things look on the outside of us depends on how things are on the inside of us.”
* Eric Butterworth: “Attitudes are the forerunners of conditions.”
* Werner Heisenberg: “**What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning.”**
* Barbara Dewey: “Nature is not physical reality, but physical reality as it makes itself known through inner, subjective reality.”
* Ilya Prigogine: “Whatever we call reality, it is revealed to us only through an active construction in which we participate.”
* Margaret Wheatley: “It is the existence of observers who notice what is going on that imparts reality to the origin of everything.”
* Stephan Wolfram: [O]ur experience of the natural world is based in the end not directly on behavior that occurs in nature, but rather on the results of our perception and analysis of this behavior.
* Art Linkletter – “Things turn out best for those who make the best of the way that things turn out.”
* Neville Goddard: “The world is ourselves pushed out.”

In short: The prospects of one’s outlook depend ultimately on the one who is looking out.

**Footnotes**

If we have not peace within ourselves, it is in vain to seek it from outward sources.

Francois de La Rochefoucauld

. . . and nonetheless . . .

When a man or a woman has a spiritual awakening, the most important meaning of it is that [s/he] has now become able to do, feel, and believe that which he could not do before on his unaided strength and resources alone.

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

1. Arthur Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World* (Kessinger Publishing, 2005), p. 282
2. And what does the word “allward-ness” signify? Please see the report, “An Allward Visitation”, that follows these notations.
3. Margaret M. O'Byrne and William P. Angers, “Jung's concept of self-actualization and Teilhard de Chardin's philosophy” (Journal of Religion and Health, Springer Netherlands, Vol. 11, # 3 July, 1972), pp. 241-251.
4. Flannery Connor, *Everything That Rises Must Converge* (Faber and Faber Limited, 1968).
5. Alan Smithson, *The Kairos Point: The Marriage of Mind & Matter* (Element, 1997), p. 6
6. *Ibid*. p. 12
7. Gary Zukov, *The Dancing Wu-Li Masters: An Overview of the New Physics* (Harper Perennial, 2001), p 310. Douglas Hoffstadter’s *I Am a Strange Loop* (Basic Books, 2007) is a current scientific constructivist model of self↔world interrelationship.
8. Quoted from notes taken at the conference, when the author of this document was the managing editor of Marilyn Ferguson’s *Brain/Mind Bulletin*.
9. Philosopher Stephen C. Pepper, in *World Hypotheses* (U. of California, 1942), maintained that a thorough overview of reality requires at least four distinct yet overlapping and necessarily co-existent meta-paradigms thereof, no one, two or three of which is comprehensive of reality overall: formism, mechanism, contextualism and organicism. Yet even these four became insufficient in light of philosopher Ervin Laszlo’s refinement of a fifth world hypothesis that was just emerging in Pepper’s time, the paradigm of systemism. See Laszlo’s *The Systems View of the World: A Holistic Vision for Our Time* (Hampton Press, 1996).
10. Jacob Bronowski, *The Ascent of Man* (Little Brown, 1973), p. 353.
11. One of Lessing’s most well known plays, *Nathan the Wise*, a plea for mutual acceptance of one another by Christians and Jews, is available for download at www.gutenberg.org/etext/3820. A brief biography from which the attribution to Lessing is taken is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gotthold\_Ephraim\_Lessing.
12. One of the several thousand websites is http://www.onemillionawake.com/Letter.htm.
13. Gordon Livingston, *And Never Stop Dancing: Thirty More True Things You Need to Know Now* (Marlowe and Company, 2006).
14. Pausche’s farewell address is at http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Story?id=3633945&page=1

**An Allward Visitation**

Neither *God* nor *Being* nor any other word can define or explain the ineffable reality behind the word, so the only important question is whether the word is a help or a hindrance in enabling you to experience That toward which it points. Does it point beyond itself to that transcendental reality, or does it lend itself too easily to becoming no more than an idea in your head that you believe in, a mental idol?

Eckhart Tolle

For the benefit of those who are encountering the term “allward” for the first time, my use of it is inspired by my viewing four decades years ago of an animated film entitled *Flatland,* and my subsequent reading of the book on which the film is based. Both tell the story of a square in a two-dimensional world who had an anomalous experience of the three-dimensional realm. When subsequently asked by others of this additional dimension’s whereabouts, he attempted to indicate its direction by saying that it is “upward.” Yet being only a two-dimensional creature he couldn't signify upward’s location by pointing to it, just as we are ourselves unable to point in the direction of fourth dimensional space that thus far is only mathematically describable.

Without a signifier to indicate his life’s most significant experience, the square was unable to facilitate others’ comprehension of a place “above” their two-dimensional plane, from which there was no perceivable upward-downward dimension. He was consequently institutionalized for insanity.

Fourteen years ago I had a non-invoked, profoundly *omni*-dimensional experience of infinity that defies signification within the contextual reference frame of a three-dimensional mindset. By “non-invoked” I mean I wasn’t meditating at the time, nor was I under the influence of any consciousness-altering or trip-inducing substance. My experienced affinity with infinity “just happened” one night in my sleep, yet it was as unlike all dreaming as is dreaming unlike wakefulness. It made even wakefulness seem to be no more than a dream itself.

Upon my awakening, the closest I could come to specifying the location of what I had experienced was to say that it was “allward.” When asked where allward is, my best approximation was “between.” And when asked “between what?” my best approximation was “between everything.” (Parsimoniously correct usage in this regard – “among” everything – seemed less specific.)

When my encounter of infinity and my signification of its being “allward” and “between” succeeded in eliciting from others only worrisomely raised eyebrows and otherwise doubtful facial contortions, I ceased attempting to speak further of it until quite recently. Upon meeting Ben Young, an innovative organizational consultant in Tiburon, California, and in appreciation of his full-time dedication to the fine art of conceptual context framing, I felt moved to make reference to my allward experience as an incidence of *perceptual* context framing. We have ever since been having our way with the “a-word” while simlutaneously allowing it to have its way with us. Without our on-growing co-creative dialog about conceptual, perceptual and operational context framing, I could not have articulated this document as it presently stands. I continue to immensely treasure our ongrowing co-creation.

In today’s omni-diverse world, where people are free to have – as well as be for others – three-dimensional experiences that seem to me far more improbably bizarre than was my trans-dimensional allward visitation, I feel no likelihood of being institutionalized for openly acknowledging its anomalous occurrence. Although I wrote a description of my allward experience while it was in fresh memory [insofar, that is, as description was even possible, which was approximately nil because the allward that one can signify is not the allward that is], I share it only with persons whom I sense will be likely to appreciate it by increasing its value with constructively open-minded feedback.

Such feedback to this document will be similarly appreciated.

Noel Frederick McInnis, 30256 SW Thomas Street, #1106, Wilsonville, OR 97070 ~ 503/570-4331 ~ life@mediamessage.com

. . . and furthermore . . .

Others are best served when they are directed back to themselves for their answers. All paths lead to God and each is a very personal and private matter. You stay in integrity with yourself and with others by facilitating the process for each to return to his/her Source, going within instead of without.

Bobbie Gonder

It's great to have a creed to guide us as long as we don't feel that we have to stop there. The creed we adopt should always be a continually edited document. Consciousness never stops. Learning never stops. Life never stops.

John Giunta

**An Allward Visitation**

Neither *God* nor *Being* nor any other word can define or explain the ineffable reality behind the word, so the only important question is whether the word is a help or a hindrance in enabling you to experience That toward which it points. Does it point beyond itself to that transcendental reality, or does it lend itself too easily to becoming no more than an idea in your head that you believe in, a mental idol?

Eckhart Tolle

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**Sunday announcement (first draft)**

I’m going to show you something that everybody’s heard about but never seen until now….

There’s a paradigm shift that will take us from Good to Great in 2008, and it was articulated by Ernest Holmes three years before the term paradigm shift became public language:

It would be wonderful indeed if a group of people should arrive on earth who were for something and against nothing. This would be the highest good of human organization, wouldn’t it?

I first read Holmes’ vision of a non-adversarial group of people in 1979, when I was proofreading the 1959 speech in which he made that statement. I immediately wanted to be a member of such a group, and despaired of ever finding one until three years ago. In the three decades that have passed since I was moved to such membership, no group has evidenced more than NTMO the potential to live the principle of being for something and against nothing. Thus my life-culminating mission has become to facilitate this community’s learning, understanding and practice of non-adversarial being. This practice brings into focus all metaphysical truth principles, including those which we only dimly understand and some of which we probably are not as yet aware of.

As Reverend David has been telling us quite specifically for the past few months, there is a hidden wholeness that wants to express itself as we let it speak in our lives as we be here on behalf of that wholeness while being against none of its parts. There is a cosmic affinity that is self-expressed in everything other than the human species, and which will not allow us to be at peace until it is likewise self-expressed in, through and as us.

Ever since Ernest Holmes articulated his non-adversarial vision, it has been like the weather. As Mark Twain said, everybody talks about the weather but no one does anything about it. The day has come when we can no longer choose to do nothing about the weather, and the same holds for non-adversarial being. It is time for us to do something about the hidden wholeness that yearns in every one of us to be for something and against nothing.

Reverend David shared with us that Bishop Carlton Pearson and Sheriff Abdullah have both said that NTMO is an authentic voice of New Thought. What they are hearing is the echo of Spirit’s calling of our spiritual community to express its authentic voice by being for something and against nothing. Most people say about this call what was once said about going to the moon: “It can’t be done.” There was always a way to the moon, and we became able to find it. There is a better way to the moon, and that will be found within the lifetime of most of us in this room. There also has always been a way to be for something and against nothing and this community is able to find it by personifying and actualizing our authentic voice in authentic action.

All of us know more than any of us about how to be for something and against nothing, and the TOI seminar will empowers all of its participants to realize an outcome that is yearning for its expression in every one of us. This community is ready for that realization, beginning Monday evening, February 4, from 7-9 p.m. and for seven Mondays thereafter in the NTMO conference room. As we begin the seminar on February 4, none of us will have the answer for anyone else’s way to be for something and against nothing. By the seminar’s conclusion, each of us will know how to find his or her own way.

The evening seminar is limited to the first 20 persons who sign up for it. Afternoon sessions from 1-3 p.m. will also be convened for those who prefer daytime classes and are able to attend. I have a 2-page description of the workshop for anyone who would like a copy.

Let’s roll.

**Sunday announcement (second draft)**

I’m going to show you something that you’ve heard a lot about but have never seen until now….

There is right now under way in our spiritual community a paradigm shift from separation to inclusivity that will take us from Good to Great in 2008, the principle and practice of which was articulated by Ernest Holmes three years before the term “paradigm shift” was introduced in a book about the evolution of science:

It would be wonderful indeed if a group of people should arrive on earth who were for something and against nothing. This would be the highest good of human organization, wouldn’t it?

In the three decades that have passed since I was moved to be part of such a non-adversarial group, no group has evidenced more than NTMO the potential to live the non-adversarial inclusivity principle of being for something and against nothing. Thus my self-appointed life-culminating mission has become to facilitate this community’s learning, understanding and practice of non-adversarial being, which is grounded in the kindom of all life and all that sustains life and which yearns to create a world that works inclusively for all.

Two years and two Sundays ago Reverend David coined the term “common unity,” which is the essence of what we signify by the word community,

has told us for the past few months, there is a universal kindom of hidden wholeness that wants to be uniquely lived in each of our lives as we inclusively exemplify the wholeness of its kindom while being against none of its parts. (That’s “kindom,” not “kingdom,” since the universe had only kindom without kingdoms until we came along. The universe is a unified kindom in which we are the only creatures who fail to understand that this is so and live accordingly.) A deep cosmic kindom interconnects all things throughout the universe, which will not allow us to be at peace until we mindfully kindom mindfully conduct our lives accordingly. The ancient wisdom in which this cosmic kindom is revealed is the root of New Thought as a whole, as well as of the principle of inclusivity.

Reverend David has also shared with us that Bishop Carlton Pearson and Sheriff Abdullah have both said that NTMO is an authentic voice of New Thought. What they are hearing is the echo of Spirit’s calling of our spiritual community to express its authentic voice by demonstrating the inclusivity principle of being for something and against nothing.

Therefore, the Tao of Inclusivity seminar’s mission is to cultivate in its participants a custodial global consciousness that beneficially sustains the kindom of all life. Because our position atop the planetary “food chain” obligates us to the processes that sustain our own existence, the quality of our lives can ultimately be no better than the quality of lifekind’s kindom as a whole. In adopting a proactive custodial consciousness of the kindom of all life, we cultivate the further evolution of our species as the mindful caretakers of lifekind’s kindom overall. As a custodial species, we are evolving beyond our historical legacy of doing battle on behalf of local interests, in order to do peacefully whatever is required to restore and sustain the harmonial balance of our planet’s peak vitality.

All of us know more than any of us about how to be for something and against nothing, and the TOI seminar will empower all of its participants to realize an outcome that is yearning for its unique expression in each. This community is ready for that realization, beginning Monday, February 4 and for seven Mondays thereafter in the NTMO conference room. As we begin the seminar on February 4, none of us will have the answer for anyone else’s way to be for something and against nothing. By the seminar’s conclusion, each of us will know how to find his or her own way to be such.

The evening seminar is limited to the first 20 persons who sign up for it. Afternoon sessions from 1-3 p.m. are also being convened for those who prefer daytime classes. I have a 2-page description of the workshop for anyone who would like a copy.

Let’s roll.

**Sunday announcement (final draft)**

I’m going to show you something that you’ve heard a lot about but have never seen until now….

There is right now under way in our spiritual community a paradigm shift from separation to inclusivity consciousness that will take us from Good to Great in 2008. This perceptual makeover was foreseen by Ernest Holmes three years before the term “paradigm shift” came into usage:

It would be wonderful indeed if a group of people should arrive on earth who were for something and against nothing. This would be the highest good of human organization, wouldn’t it?

What is most required of us to be for something and against nothing is to take the “g” out of the word “kingdom” and thereby shift from the paradigm of local kingdom consciousness to the paradigm of universal *kin*dom consciousness. Being for something and against nothing is the all-inclusive harmonial kindom consciousness that’s mindful of the kindom all life and yearns within every one of us to create a harmonial world of all-inclusive common unity that works for all.

It was two years and two Sundays ago this morning that Reverend David coined the term “common unity” to signify the essence of harmonial kindom consciousness. And in recent months he has told us about the source of kindom consciousness, the hidden wholeness that yearns to be uniquely lived and expressed in each of our lives as we allow our lives to speak on its harmonial behalf.

This hidden wholeness interconnects all things throughout the universe, and its cosmic kindom will not allow us to be at peace until we mindfully conduct our lives in harmonial accord with its planetary common unity. Our souls have a deep hunger for the experience of harmonial reality – not just to know and have a harmonial reality, rather to exemplify and *be* the outer harmonial reality of our inner hidden wholeness.

Reverend David has also shared with us that both Bishop Carlton Pearson and Sheriff Abdullah have acknowledged NTMO as an authentic voice of New Thought. What they have both heard is our answer to Spirit’s calling of our spiritual community to demonstrate the inclusivity principle of harmonial common unity.

The ancient wisdom in which the hidden wholeness of harmonial common unity was first exposed is the root of both New Thought and the principle of inclusivity, and is most clearly revealed in a twenty-five hundred year old book, the *Tao Te Ching*. This book, along with Sharif Abdullah’s book, *Creating a World that Works for All*, is a major source of wisdom in “The Tao of Inclusivity” seminar, whose mission is to cultivate in its participants a consciousness that sustains both the immediate harmonial kindom of our NTMO spiritual community and the greater harmonial kindom of all life on Earth.

Because all of us know more than any of us about being for something and against nothing, the seminar’s format will be that of a learning community in which each of us learns from all of us. We will be learning from one another how to be more inclusively, actively and harmonially kindom conscious.

The seminar’s mission is to *activate* our inclusivity consciousness in greater service to NTMO’s common unity.

The evening seminar is limited to the first 20 persons who sign up for it. Afternoon sessions from 1-3 p.m. are also being convened for those who prefer daytime classes. I have a 2-page description of the workshop for anyone who would like a copy.

So let’s roll . . . which begins with enrolling at the circle of tables at the far end of the lobby.

**Sunday announcement (next draft)**

We teach best that which we most need to learn.

Coming out in support of inclusivity consciousness.

Dear Sharif,

I’m delighted that you are available to participate in a Tao of Inclusivity gathering on February 17th. The vision of this gathering grew out of the ongoing work with module three of Carolyn Crawford, Paula Hannon, Connie Weiss and myself, who feel that it is time to create a follow-up event that further empowers the 50-plus persons who have already studied your inclusivity modules, while initiating further module study groups.

At the same time, we also feel that the occasion has to be framed and structured differently than the last enrollment opportunity, which was disappointing in its outcome. Some of the feedback we received

**ANNOUNCING SHARIF’s AFTERNOON PROGRAM**

Several dozen members of our spiritual community have read all or parts of the book, *Creating a World that Works for All,* which was written by this morning’s speaker, Sharif Abdullah. They have also participated in one or of Sharif’s study modules on the transformative practice of inclusivity. These materials are assisting our common unity in the practice of being inclusive rather than abusive of those with whom we disagree.

Rev. David introduced Sharif to our spiritual community three years ago, and we have invited him back annually to update us on his world-wide Common Society movement that is leavening our planet with inclusivity consciousness. For this afternoon’s annual update, which will take place in this room from 1-2:30 p.m., we have invited the members of several other communities of faith, including communities of New Thought, Baha’i, Muslim, Jewish and Christian faith.

We will also be able to share with Sharif our experience with his modules of inclusivity study, and those who would like to begin or further their studies of inclusivity will have a chance to form new study groups of Sharif’s modules for that purpose, which is an exciting new opportunity for those who are hearing of this program for the first time.

The only charge for this afternoon’s program is the love offering of your own beneficial presence and the payment of your attention to what the Common Society movement is about.

Afternoon:

Introduce with my discovery in 1965 while diagnosed with leukemia:

The ecology of the planet. Common unity

The ecology of spirit.

The ecology of the future: Harrison Brown, *The Challenge of Man’s Future*

Announce contest, collect e-mail addresses.

At Sunday afternoon’s meeting we will announce an Inclusivity Essay Contest for those in attendance. The contest’s theme will be framed with the following three statements, plus any other(s) known to you that you feel is/are complementary:

* It would be wonderful indeed if a group of people should arrive on earth who were for something and against nothing. This would be the highest good of human organization, wouldn’t it? -Ernest Holmes
* Creating the world we want is a much more subtle but more powerful mode of operation than destroying the one we don’t want. . . . The new activist is one who wields power by standing for what could be, as opposed to fighting what is. -Marianne Williamson
* You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete. -R. Buckminster Fuller

The essay’s title: “Being for Something and Against Nothing”

The essay will address both the rationale and practice of non-adversarial advocacy. The essay’s content may be anecdotal, expository, explanatory, metaphysical, motivational, inspirational, poetic – however the writer is moved to address the question. The essay’s length is to be limited to its author’s ability to make his/her point effectively, efficiently and completely with no more words than are necessary.

The prize for the three winning essays (not ranked ordered) will be an acknowledgement of the winners at a Sunday morning service, the featuring of their essays on NTMO’s website, and our announcement to the global online New Thought community of their Internet presence.

We would like you to be one of two judges, the other being Rev. David. As there most likely will be only a modest number of entrants, this will not be burdensome.  Although the idea for the contest is mine, I would rather not be a judge because some of the entrants are likely to be present or former students of the Tao of Inclusivity seminar.

Since we are announcing this contest on Sunday afternoon, we would like to have your response to this request by mid-day Saturday so that we may announce your role as judge on the contest flyer.

**BOARD MEETING - SETTING THE ARENA**

Every man is some part of the essence of God, not as a fragment, but as a totality.

-Ernest Holmes

God hath made man upright, but they have sought inventions.

*-Ecclesiastes* 7:29

God is not found in the soul by adding anything, but by a process of subtraction….. God does not ask anything else except that you let yourself go and let God be God in you*.*

-Meister Eckhart

Nothing requires fixing.

To be even-minded is the greatest virtue. Wisdom is to speak the truth and act in keeping with its nature. -Heraclitus

Insofar as even-mindedness is concerned, the single most empowering metaphysical insight is the relationship between prepositions and propositions, especially as this relates to our spiritual freedom. Freedom *from* what we cannot be free *of.* Without freedom *from* we have very little freedom *as* and freedom *to* (infinitive rather than preposition, i.e., signifying unboundedness).

Those who share responsibility equally share the management of that responsibility.

Effectively efficient causation is most assured when each thing a person does is supportive of everything that s/he does, and everything a person does is supportive of each thing that s/he does. This strategy is also essential in the management of our self↔world interrelationships with others. Applying the strategy of each-supports-all-supports-each in all of our interrelationships, whether they be informal interactions or highly formalized and institutionalized management and leadership roles, is a three-fold operation:

* Support all of those with whom you are interacting to stay out of each other’s way.
* Stay out of everyone else’s way yourself as you are thusly supporting them.
* Devote all the rest of your time and energy to doing what is no one else but yours to do.

No matter what theoretical or practical approach one may take to management theory and practice, whether of self-management or organizational management, if theory and practice fail to actualize this three-fold strategy one’s progress will be impeded by one’s own internal contradictions.

**The Tao of Self-Dominion: Session One**

**Living Beyond Our Explanations + Descriptions = Stories**

[Oh, How Lucky I Am, etc.]

How many of you have had the experience of knowing something that you can’t put into words?

Philosopher Michael Polanyi called such knowing “Personal Knowledge,” which he signified as “the more one knows than one can say.” A classic example of the more we know than we can say is “Tao.” Tao cannot be fully explained to anyone who doesn’t already understand Tao – and who therefore has no requirement for an explanation. Nor can those who do understood Tao explain it even to their own satisfaction.

You may notice that the term “Tao” is employed herein without a preceding “the,” for the same reason that God is likewise not thus referred to. The word “the” signifies an object, and neither Tao nor God is an object. Nor is either of them a subject, because neither is subject to anything other than its own nature. Tao and God “just are,” and whatever “just is” defies explanation because explanations do nothing more than signify (point to) what’s so. Hence the opening two sentences of the *Tao Te Ching* as rendered by Wayne Dyer: “The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao. The name that can be named is not the eternal name.” Most other translations of the *Tao Te Ching’s* first verse begin with similar language. Yet the ultimate insufficiency of language to explain Tao is perhaps best acknowledged in Witter Bynner’s translation of the *Tao Te Ching*, which differs considerably from most others. For example, contrast Dyer’s rendition of the first verse (p. 2) with the following translation thereof by Bynner:

Existence is beyond the power of words

To define:

Terms may be used

But are none of them absolute.

In the beginning of heaven and earth there were no

words,

Words came out of the womb of matter.

And whether a man dispassionately

Sees to the core of life

Or passionately

Sees the surface,

The core and the surface

Are essentially the same,

Words making them seem different

Only to express appearance.

If words be needed, wonder names them both:

From wonder unto wonder

Existence opens.

The thousands of differential translations of the *Tao Te Ching* into the world’s major languages are perhaps the best testimony we have that no matter what may be said about Tao, our saying thereof is not Tao itself. Tao only is as Tao does, not as anything else says that it is or it does. Yet even though no explanation is the equivalent of the what’s-so that it explains, whether the what’s-so of Tao or of anything else, we nonetheless spend most of our lives immersed in our explanations.

What allows for such wide latitude in translations of the *Tao Te Ching* is the ambiguity of symbolic Chinese pictograms in contrast to the specificity of alphabetical English words. The units of meaning in pictograms allow for many different interpretations, both of their individual; construction and their collective arrangement, giving rise to multiplicities of simultaneous meaning – philosophical puns, as it were, and sometimes humorous for those who understand the Chinese language of their era. Dyer honors this ambiguity by calling his version of the *Tao Te Ching* a “rendering” based on his reading of many English translations, while Bynner’s version is an actual translation from the Chinese original which is among those that Dyer consulted for his rendering.

NOTE: Whenever I consult a specific verse of the *Tao Te Ching* for study, I read several versions thereof. You can do this also by consulting the numerous online editions of the *Tao Te Ching.* My own preferred translation, by Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English, is online at <http://www.dailyi.org/archive_tao.html>. Among other similarly popular and useful recent translations is Stephen Mitchell’s at <http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/taote-v3.html> One of the most widely respected translations (in the 19th century by James Legge)  is at <http://classics.mit.edu/Lao/taote.html> A very simple translation is at <http://www.taoteching.org/> and a modern, humorous and loosely phrased translation by Ron Hogan is  <http://www.beatrice.com/TAO.html> Many other translations are accessible at <http://www.religiousworlds.com/taoism/ttc-list.html> And a Google or Yahoo search for “Tao Te Ching” (including the quotes) will lead you to many, many more.

There are also many excellent online resources for study of the *Tao Te Ching*, including <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tao_Te_Ching>

I strongly recommend that whenever you find it difficult to understand a given verse of the Tao Te Ching you consult several other translations of the verse as well. Doing so can sometimes be as helpful as my discovery that what Wayne Dyer renders (and many others translate) as “the eternal Tao” is elsewhere translated as the “constant” or the “enduring” Tao. From an operational perspective of “how it works,” constancy and endurance seem more to the immediate point than eternality.

In the Zen tradition, words are perceived as analogous to a finger that is pointing to the moon. Just as the finger is not to be mistaken for the moon, neither are our words to be mistaken for whatever they signify. They are an experience of pointing rather than an experience of that to which they point. Accordingly, language communicates second-hand experience, and only our use of it qualifies as first-hand experience. First-hand experience of what language secondarily signifies occurs outside the realm of language, so that new words follow new experience. For instance, the term “horseless buggy” was coined only after one was experienced in an inventor’s conception thereof, and was eventually replaced by another word following widespread experience of the automobility that was thus invented.

The finger-pointing-at-the-moon analogy furthermore suggests that we are twice removed from what our finger is pointing to, insofar as we cannot point to the moon during the portion of each month when its face is dark. When we point to the lighted moon, we are pointing to its reflected sunlight which is everywhere else invisible to us at night, except for its additional reflections by other planets, the space station, and other artificial satellites. Light is as invisible when there is nothing to reflect it as is our thinking when there are no thought-forms reflecting it. Thus all our words are pointing to in actuality are their reflections of the thinking from which they emanate. Insofar as these reflections represent the three fingers that point back to us, this is the basis for the universality that is indicated by the affirmation, *Tvat tam asi,* “Thou art that,” which signifies that all things are an expression of a universally unified and ultimately singular reflection.

**The Primacy of First-Hand Experience**

The difference between fiction and reality is that fiction has to make sense.

Tom Clancy

Since we can never explain what Tao *is*, we can at most only explain and describe what Tao is *like* and then live in our fictional explanations and descriptions. Since the word “fiction” signifies fabrication, even the words you are reading right now are a fabricated and thus fictional work. Accordingly, all that ever has been or ever will be said or written to explain, describe or otherwise “make sense” of Tao, including the *Tao Te Ching* itself, is only a fictional account of what Tao is about and of what it is like, rather than what Tao is. Tao transcends all references thereto, because without preexisting Tao there could be no words – nor could there be anything else for that (or any other) *matter*. Yet even were there neither words nor matter, there would still be Tao, which is presumed to preexist all that matters. Hence verse #42 of the *Tao Te Ching:*

The Tao gave birth to one.

One gave birth to two.

Two gave birth to three.

And three begat the 10,000 things.

In other words (a rendering, not a translation):

Tao gave birth to the unity of all that is.

The unity of all that is gave birth to the dual unity of polar co-operation.

The dual unity of polar co-operation gave birth to the triunity of stable form.

And the triunity of stable form gave birth to the multiplicity of forms.

In any event, Tao begets all that is from *beyond* all that is, and accordingly is neither a container *of* all that is nor is contained *by* all that is. If this all seems somewhat arbitrary, unduly abstract, or overly mental, thus rests the case that language is insufficient to tell what Tao *is*. It tells us only what Tao is about and what Tao is like, in the form of explanations and descriptions that add up to a story, *i.e.,* a mindset that structures our explanations and descriptions into a narrative.

Tao and God are not the only things within which we live out our “making-sense” fictional explanations and descriptions thereof. Take gravity, for instance. Nobody knows what gravity is, only what gravity is like and what it does. Or take electricity, for another instance. Nobody knows what electricity is, only what electricity is like and what it does. Or take hard-core pornography, for yet another instance. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart testified that he didn’t know how to say what hard-core pornography is, “But I know it when I see it.”

When all is said and done, therefore, “gravity”, “electricity” and “pornography” represent the stories we tell ourselves and one another concerning what these three words signify.

Whatever *anything* actually is (and what anything *actually* is), we can know the thing itself and what it does only by experiencing it at first hand. To the principle of first-hand experiencing there is ample testimony:

* the Arabic proverb, “Ask the experienced rather than the learned”;
* novelist James Joyce’s advice, “Write from experience, and experience only”;
* brain behavior researcher Marion Diamond’s proclamation that “Experience is the best sculptor”;
* and the assertion of French social philosopher Alain (Émile-Auguste Chartier) that “[I]t is the experience of the object, and only the experience of the object, that decides.”

Among other enduring testimonials to the primacy of first-hand experience is a poem by Edgar Guest:

I’d rather see a sermon than hear one any day;

I’d rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way.

The eye’s a better pupil and more willing than the ear.

Fine counsel is confusing, but example’s always clear;

And the best of all preachers are the men who live their creeds,

For to see good put in action is what everybody needs.

I soon can learn to do it if you’ll let me see it done;

I can watch your hands in action, but your tongue too fast may run.

And the lecture you deliver may be very wise and true,

But I’d rather get my lessons by observing what you do;

For I might misunderstand you and the high advice you give,

But there’s no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.

Another poem by Dale Wimbrow, originally entitled “The Man in the Glass” and degenderized to “The One in the Glass,” brings the primacy of first-hand experience about as close to home as it gets:

When you get what you want in your struggle for self

And the world makes you king/queen for a day,

Just go to a mirror and look at yourself,

And see what that one has to say.

For it isn't your father or mother or spouse,

Who judgment upon you must pass;

The person whose verdict counts most in your life

Is the one starring back from the glass.

S/he's the one to please, never mind all the rest,

For s/he's with you clear up to the end,

And you've passed the most dangerous, difficult test

If the one in the glass is your friend.

You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years,

And get pats on the back as you pass,

But your final reward will be heartaches and tears

If you've cheated the one in the glass.

The primacy of first-hand experience is also witnessed in Buddha’s proclamation that “You cannot walk the path until you are the path,” in Gandhi’s admonition to “Be the change you wish to see in the world,” and in Gandhi’s confession, “My life is my message.” And so it is with everyone’s life, for as Ralph Waldo Emerson noted, “What you are speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say.”

Nobody knows what anything *is,* only what it is like from the perspective of his or her own experiencing of it, which incorporates far more second-hand hearsay than it embodies first-hand engagement. Accordingly, our lives are mostly spent living in our explanations + descriptions = stories of what life is about and what life is like, rather than living life as it “just is.” We always do best, therefore, to hear no one – ourselves included – as if s/he is telling it like it is, because the most that can be told about any “it” is what “it” is like.

Living in our explanations and descriptions (= story) is for the most part our only option, which we suspend only when we are in the state of being between stories. Many people never experience life as it pristinely is beyond his or her explanations and descriptions thereof, while many others do so only rarely or at most occasionally, and very few do so frequently. Only a handful of people throughout recorded history have consistently lived in the beyond of their explanations + descriptions = story, of whom Jesus is probably the most prominently known example in Western culture. (I say “probably” because we likewise have only explanations + descriptions = stories about Jesus as our source of verification, not the person of Jesus himself.)

Since none of us is ever without explanations and descriptions woven into a story, the best we can hope for is to be free *from* our stories even though we cannot be free *of* them. The whole purpose of Taoism, Zen Buddhism, and other quasi-mystical non-linear traditions is to free us *from* self-imprisonment in our current story and return us to the state of being between our current explanations + descriptions = stories and all other potentially different ones. Eastern thought calls this state “beginner’s mind,” in which our knowing is not wedded to any particular form and is thus flexibly free to take whatever successive forms work best in our life’s successive situations.

T.S. Eliot described the return to beginner’s mind as “arriving at the place we started and recognizing it for the first time.” A contemporary Western thinker, Maria Nemeth, calls the process of arriving at beginner’s mind “dismantling the structure of our knowing” (*i.e.,* the structure we call “mindsets”, such as victimhood, unworthiness, “I can’t”, “life sucks”, etc.) All knowing (and behavior), whether new or old, corresponds to the mindset of our knowing. Dismantling our knowing’s mind-settled structure, which is our entry point to beginner’s mind, is appropriate whenever our current knowing disserves us by being either insufficient, errantly structured or both.

It is the *structure* of our knowing that disserves us, not our knowing *per se*. What we know is no problem in and of itself. It is being *had* by what we know that is the problem, especially in the utterly misleading circumstances recognized by 19th century American humorist Artemus Ward: “It ain't so much the things you don't know that get you in trouble. It's the things you know that just ain't so.” The consequences of being had by what we know have also been cited by Stephen Covey: “You can’t talk yourself out of problems you’ve behaved yourself into.” We can behave ourselves out of a problem only with a new behavioral pattern that replaces the one that created the problem and now holds it in place.

Whenever we feel that our knowing is right, yet things aren’t working for us, we are being had by what we know. Being had by our knowing calls for its dismantling, which is prerequisite to any return to the beginner’s-mind state in which our knowing is freed of all particular and permanent structures, yet remains intact and open to additional or corrective knowing and workable on-the-fly restructuring.

It is only by dismantling and restructuring our knowing that we are empowered to correct it so that life works out best for us, á la 20th century TV host Art Linkletter’s observation that “Things turn out best for those who make the best of the way things turn out.” It is no more possible to more workably restructure our knowing without first dismantling our current mindset, than it is to reorganize a kitchen cabinet or tool chest without first dismantling the presently structured distribution of its contents. Yet we nonetheless tend to resist the dismantling of our knowing’s current structure.

For instance, as psychiatrist Karen Horney testified, “People come to me expecting to have their neuroses fixed rather than to release them.” Since a neurosis is a behavioral pattern that doesn’t work, it can never pass the test of the First Law of Workability:

Doing what doesn't work does not work.

Doing more of what doesn't work does not work.

Trying harder at what doesn't work does not work.

Improving what doesn't work does not work.

Getting better at what doesn't work does not work.

Mastering what doesn't work does not work.

Committing to what doesn’t work does not work.

The only thing that works is what does work.

The First Law of Workability is the basis for a popular definition of insanity: doing the same thing over and over, expecting a different outcome. It is also the basis for a workable perspective on so-called “right” and “wrong.” Since the only thing that works is what works, what we judgmentally signify as “right” or “wrong” is far better signified operationally as “workable” or “non-workable.” Nineteenth century French physiologist Claude Bernard said this best: “Theories in science are not true or false. They are fertile or sterile.” Fertility is what works, sterility is what doesn’t work.

It is from a similar perspective of workability that both atheist Robert Ingersoll and spiritual philosopher Ernest Holmes drew the same conclusion:

Ingersoll: There are in nature neither rewards nor punishments, there are consequences.

Holmes: There is no sin but a mistake, and no punishment but an inevitable consequence. . . . We are not punished *for* our sins but *by* them. Sin is its own punishment and [virtue] is its own reward.

Both Ingersoll and Holmes perceived cause *as* its effects rather than cause *and* its effects. For example, we are not assembled here as a weekly gathering *and* its members, we rather are an assembled weekly gathering *as* its members. This is why our gathering would not be the same if one or more of us were absent, or if one or more others were present. Such is the law of cause *as* effect: Things are only as they are and they are never other than their as-is at any given instant.

This perspective is best stated without making any references to “reward”, “punishment”, “sin” or other righteous assessments. In the exercise of reality formation that accompanies our weekly gatherings, therefore, we will assess our individual and collective actions according to their workability (fertility) or non-workability (sterility) as instrumental means of realizing (making real) our gathering’s anticipated outcome of facilitating more mindful self-dominion .

**Truth As a Left-Handed Complement**

If the Lord God held out to me in his right hand the whole of truth,

and in his left hand only the urge to seek truth, I would reach for his left hand.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing

The 18th century German literary critic and dramatist who declared for God’s left hand is the unofficial patron saint of all those who would rather continue to seek than finally find. It has been said of Lessing,

[He searched] for elements of truth even in the arguments made by his opponents [because] for him this truth was never solid or something which could be owned by someone but always a process of approaching.

A 20th century exponent of this perspective was Nobel laureate author Andre Gide, who forthrightly prescribed, “Follow the seeker after truth, but beware of him who has found it.” Both Lessing and Gide felt that it is idolatrous to embrace any one map or model of reality as if it accounts for all things. And both would have agreed with the assessment of 20th century French philosopher Alain (Emile Chartier): “Nothing is more dangerous than an idea when it is the only one we have.” This is why, whenever one is approached with a claim of absolute truth, one does best to turn away as one would from a *re*proach.

As noted by high-energy physicist Geoffrey Chew at a scientific conference on consciousness held in Berkeley, California in 1982:

All ways of seeing are approximate. Each experience is an approximation abstracted from a larger context. We don't even know why scientific objectivity works as well as it does [and] if this workability is ever understood, such knowing still won't be the totality of truth. Consciousness itself is approximate, and our experience of consciousness is an interaction among approximations.

Because reality is knowable to us only as a milieu of multiple sets of interacting approximations, none of which is completely explanatory and some (if not many) of which are mutually contradictory, Chew concluded that we are fated to "living in paradox."As the storied co-founder of quantum mechanics, Niels Bohr, explained, “In our description of nature the purpose is not to disclose the real essence of phenomena but only to track down, as far as it is possible, relations between the manifold aspects of experience.” Bohr’s contemporary, theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, accordingly asserted that we forever face life’s challenges with only "proximate solutions to insoluble problems.”

As we track down reality’s “manifold aspects of experience,” mathematical physicist Jacob Bronowski warned us to beware of the same intellectual pitfall that Lessing, Gide and Alain were likewise so wary of:

There is no absolute knowledge. And those who claim it, whether they are scientists or dogmatists, open the door to tragedy. All information is imperfect. We have to treat it with humility. That is the human condition; and that is what quantum physics says. I mean that literally.

Yet most of us live in the pitfall of unwarranted certainty, and thus do not find ourselves in beginner’s mind (*i.e.,* between our explanations + descriptions = stories) until our existing perceptions have become so inadequate that we are painfully unable to make sense of our lives. It is only under such duress that most folks open themselves to new and more serviceable explanations. And there is no one who knows this better than someone who has had an actual experience of being redeemed from a former explanation, description or story.

All redemption consists of being freed from our imprisonment by a former story, and all imprisonment consists of self-condemnation (literally, “with damnation”) to a current story. We are self-condemned to imprisonment in our story’s explanations and descriptions in proportion to the degree that we believe in them.

It is our belief in what we know, not what we know itself, that consigns us to imprisonment in our knowing. Belief is petrified knowing that causes hardening of the categories, paralysis of analysis and rigidly cognitive dysfunctions. Yet because in the final analysis of anything there can be no final analysis, it is our release of static belief that redeems us from its imprisonment of our knowing. This release empowers us to develop a more workable relationship between what we know and what’s so.

All redemption, therefore, is a release from bondage to the limitations of belief. And since every belief is its own limitation, including the misguided belief that there are no limitations, the best way to live our lives is one that was prescribed by media forencicist Marshall McLuhan: “I neither believe nor disbelieve anything I say.”

Having some structure of knowing is essential, for otherwise we would experience only chaos. Yet the rigid stasis of having a belief in our knowing is optional. Only as our knowing is freed of belief can it serve us best in any and all seasons of our experience. Since all experience that has a reason also has that reason’s season, our belief in a given reason tends to prolong our knowing’s season beyond its reason’s pertinence to further growing our experience.

Redemption is another of those ineffables like God, Tao, gravity, electricity and pornography. We can explain and describe what redemption is like, but we can’t say what it is. Only those who have actually experienced being redeemed from a former explanations + descriptions = story can know what redemption *is*, and even they can at best only explain and describe what redemption is *like*. Yet the good news is that the best explanations and descriptions of what redemption is like are also forthcoming only from such persons.

The further good news is that life is constantly stretching our knowing, as in John Lennon’s quip, “Life is what happens while we’re making other plans.” Yet our knowing cannot possibly stretch to accommodate life’s happenings so long as it is imprisoned in an obsolete belief system (a.k.a. “b.s.”).

**Everywhere I Go, Here I Am**

It’s hard to fight an enemy who has outposts in your head.

Sally Kempton

It is impossible to live beyond our explanations + descriptions = stories without exercising the power of mindful self-dominion. Accordingly, the purpose of our weekly gatherings is to become more mindful of our individual and collective self-dominion. No one has stated the case for our experiential self-dominion more clearly than Rudolph Steiner:

If it depends on something other than myself whether I should get angry or not, I am not master of myself . . . I have not yet found the ruler within myself. I must develop the faculty of letting the impressions of the outer world approach me only in the way in which I myself determine.

“Mindfulness” signifies conscious self-awareness of how we form our own experience from the raw data of our existence. “Self-dominion” signifies the exercise of being in charge of our experience, which means being in charge of what we think, of what we feel, of what we say, of what we do, and of the consequences of what we think, feel, say and do. Self-dominion is a perpetual given that places us *always* in charge of our experience, whether mindfully, unmindfully or by default. Accordingly, unless we are mindfully in charge of our experience, we tend instead to be unconsciously at the effect of our experience.

In so many words, therefore, mindful self-dominion is about being consciously in charge of the formation and consequences of our experience. Thus self-dominion is the practice of reality-formation. Each of us is always forming his or her experience of reality, either mindfully or without conscious notice.

Your own further development of mindful self-dominion begins with writing your home address on the slip of paper I have given you.

How many of you have written your street address? If so, turn the paper over, and consider an incident that took place when I was about ten years old, as reported anecdotally in *Readers’ Digest.*

A little girl was sitting atop a pile of baggage as her parents were being processed for immigration at Ellis Island as “displaced persons” shortly after World War 2. When a passing social worker sympathetically remarked, “It’s too bad you don’t have a home,” the little girl brightly replied, “Oh, we have a home, we just don’t have a house to put it in.”

With that Ellis Island incident in mind, once again write down your home address.

Now what have you written?

Self-dominion is based on the principle of permanent prime location. There is only one home address of your being, which is its permanent prime location: here-I-am. Thus is all experiencing relative to a self<↨>world interrelationship in which there are only two constants: the self’s constant of here-I-am and the world’s constant of the speed of light. Since all experience of our inner world is relative to “here-I-am” and all experience of the outer world is relative to the speed of light, everything that we experience is an engagement of these two self<↨>world universal constants. And given the common origin of both constants, it is best that we take our experience lightly by winging it rather than by wringing it out.

Dear colleagues in Tao,

I have upgraded considerably the notes from which our convening of last Thursday’s session emerged, and the outcome is attached. In addition to incorporating some of your contributions and some other things that occurred to me in class, in the process of thereby updating the notes I also upgraded them with additional material that came to mind during the updating process.

I will continue with this process each week, with the intention of having a book on the Tao of Self-Dominion by the conclusion of our weekly gatherings.

I will be delighted if you succeed in enticing others to begin participating in the class next week. If such is the case, we will collectively orient them to what we have touched upon thus far. No child of God will be left behind.

Please let me know by e-mail (or on Sunday morning) that you were able to open the attachment and found it readable.

Stay in the grace!

Noel

Dear colleagues in Tao,

Attached is the first of two items with which I am reporting on our discussion last Thursday evening, the portion that addressed the nature of commitment.

More will follow.

Stay in the grace,

Noel

>>Though I don’t always get what I am looking for,

>>I do always get what I am looking from.

**The Reality-Forming Power of Commitment**

Success is consistently doing what you said you would do with clarity, focus, ease and grace.

Maria Nemeth

Our last gathering (6/24/2008) began with an ad hoc discussion of the nature of commitment. Our adhocracy touched on the following points:

* Suzan viewed commitment as a promise or an agreement that is kept.
* Chuck viewed commitment as alignment with divine will, so that the best for all concerned is served.
* Paul viewed commitment as operation from a malleable point or position.

With reference to divine will, Noel inquired about the relationship between will and willpower, as well as between will*ing*ness and will*ful*ness, and the relationship of all of these to “won’t power.”

Noel suggested that willpower is the ability to do what one has willed, and further suggested that those who claim that they would like to stop overeating but haven’t enough willpower to do so, don’t actually lack willpower so long as they *will* continue to overeat. What they instead lack is “won’t power.”

Willingness is being open, while willfulness is forceful doing. Willingness is in alignment with Tao, and with the prescription that “To the person who can practice perfect inaction, all things are possible.”

The difference between willingness and willfulness is illustrated in a Tao-like story of a contest between the wind and the sun. The wind, upon noticing a man dressed in an overcoat on a cold and cloudy day, boasts to the sun that it is strong enough to blow the man’s coat off. “That remains to be seen,” replies the sun, whereupon the wind begins to blow mightily on the man. Yet no matter how fiercely the wind blows, even to the point of lifting the man into the air, the man continues to clutch the front of his coat ever more tightly to his body. When the wind finally stops, the sun evaporates the clouds and shines down upon the man, who thereupon removes his coat.

Thus may a person be moved to shed what is unessential from his or her own being in the heartwarming light of the willing, rather than willful, expression of another’s being.

Noel defined commitment as the non-divertible intention to keep a promise or an agreement. The following paragraphs are from the current draft of his forthcoming book, *The Reality-Forming Power of Commitment:*

An intention’s non-divertability is evidenced by our consistent and persistent dedication to maintaining a behavioral trajectory whose direction, action and momentum is aligned with the realization of the intention’s anticipated outcome. What thereby ultimately distinguishes a committed intention from our well-meant though unrealized “good” intentions is not a total absence of diversion, rather an unfailing return to a behavioral trajectory that is in alignment with our commitment’s intended outcome whenever we recognize that we have strayed from the course to its accomplishment.

True commitments are those that we sustain until they are kept, no matter what may get in our way, while commitments that are merely presumed and professed yet are not ultimately sustained amount to no more than agreements, promises and pledges that turn out to be faulty. *Bona fide* commitments are those that we fully sustain no matter what. Commitments that are in any way contingent on circumstances or are otherwise provisional can qualify only as pronouncements that we may or may not keep in whole or in some part. Therefore, the ultimate test of what “commitment” means to the coauthors’ understanding of experiential reality is this: commitments are agreements, promises and pledges of outcome that are kept *no matter what*.

A common example of non-divertible intention that distinguishes solid commitment from fragile agreements, promises and pledges is that of airplane pilots whose job is essentially full-time course correction. Since airplanes are being constantly deflected from their intended trajectory by variable wind patterns, they tend to be at least somewhat off course as much as 98% of the time. The pilot, whether human or automatic, functions from an internalized equivalent of already being at the plane’s destination, a state of intentionality that leadership expert Steven Covey calls “beginning with the end in mind.”56 Pilots are thereby committed to maintaining their plane’s course regardless of any diversionary circumstances. In the event of an endangering circumstance such as an engine malfunction, their generic commitment to life-preservation immediately takes over in support of an equally non-divertible intention to quickly and safely land the plane wherever and however possible. At that point the necessary “detour” is returned to course by the airline’s provision of alternative transportation to the original destination.

In this instance, as in all others, the evidence of an intention’s non-divertability is its commensurate outcome. Accordingly, *the conclusive proof of any commitment is one’s manifestation of a commensurate result.*

Prior to its manifested result, the only evidence of commitment is behavior that is commensurate with its intended result. The relationship between behavior and outcome has been attested by a scientist, Jacob Bronowski, a psychiatrist, Alfred Adler, and a shaman’s apprentice, Carlos Castenada:

Bronowski: The world can only be grasped by action, not by contemplation.

Adler: Trust only movement. Life happens at the level of events not of words. Trust movement.

Castaneda: You should know now that a man of knowledge lives by acting, not by thinking about acting, not by thinking about what he will think about when he has finished acting. A man of knowledge chooses a path with heart and follows it.

A “path with heart” is any path that is taken to heart, via action that is commensurate with the heart-felt expectancy of a committed intention.

**The Tao of Self-Dominion: June 24, 2008 Session**

Success is consistently doing what you said you would do with clarity, focus, ease and grace.

Maria Nemeth

In addition to our discussion of commitment (see earlier report) we also addressed the following:

Dear Rev. David,

Please let me know that you got this message and that the attached image (one of my all-time favorites) can be successfully converted to Keynote.

To precede the image, please make a Keynote  announcement of my seminar:

The Tao of Embracing Global Transformation:

Appreciating Our Common Unity

Thursday seminars, 7-9 p.m.

September 25- November 13

NTCSL Conference Room

Love offering ~ $50 ~ $100

The attached image will follow the previous slide on the verbal cue:

        “I have a picture of what this looks like when our planet is sustained by the up-righteous wholeness of Spirit.”

A couple of sentences later the image will flip upside upon the following verbal cue:

        “ . . . the down-righteousness that Sharif Abdullah signifies as “The Mess”.

The image will then once again flip to right side up on the verbal cue:

       “ . . . empower us to develop a sustainable uprighteous relationship with the Earth.”

Thank you.

Stay in the grace!

Rev. Noel

Dear David,

Here, as promised, is Part One of the overview for my forthcoming co-authored book, *The Reality Forming Powers of Commitment*.

Stay in the grace!

Noel

Brain scientists have confirmed beyond all doubt what metaphysics has maintained all along, that our experience of the world and all within it can be no way other than the way that we think it is. This means that Rev. Dr. Noel McInnis is a whole, complete and perfect figment of my imagination, and that the Rev. and Dr. parts are a full-blown legend in my own mind. It necessarily follows that the Noel McInnis you see standing before you right now is also a figment of your own imaginations. And even though the figment of my imagination now standing here is about to clue you into how it wants you to experience and respond to it, the choice of how you actually do experience and respond is entirely your own. [First service announcement of The Tao of Global Transformation.]

After 55 years of studying the emerging paradigms of new thought metaphysics, cosmology, ecology, higher consciousness and a variety of holistic sciences, I have concluded that in God’s imagination the world is a planet sustained by the up-righteous wholeness of Spirit, and looks something like this:

[Image of hand upholding the Earth.]

When God finished setting all of the Creation in motion, God pronounced it to be “very good.” Unfortunately, human beings have since imagined a planet that looks quite different, in accordance with the Biblical statement that “Man was born upright, but he has sought many inventions.”

We were indeed born upright because dogs and cats petitioned God to create suitable two-legged caretakers. Yet our off-duty inventions have forsaken our planet’s wholeness and oneness by attempting to loosen ourselves from Spirit’s grip. We’ve invented global warming, extreme weather, energy and food shortages, millions of young children dying yearly from starvation and all sorts of other global calamities, when far more useful inventions are sorely called for – such as, for instance, a sure cure for dandruff.

According to some reports, therefore, instead of going to the dogs (and cats) like we’re supposed to do, we’re going the way of the dinosaurs and taking 95 percent of the world’s plant and animal species with us, and all because we’ve imagined a forthcoming global drop-kick whose beginning looks like this:

[Invert image of hand upholding the Earth.]

The good news is that the bad news has been highly overrated, because our planet is now in the midst of a POSITIVE global transformation, relative to which the bad news is nothing more than growing pains. The forthcoming eight-week seminar series on the Tao of Global Transformation presents all of the rapidly aborning good news of a positive planetary makeover that is in keeping with the two greatest historical prophesies for our time. One is a Biblical prophecy that has been totally misrepresented, because. what the Bible calls the “end times” represents a mistranslation of language that actually signified “the time of the new beginning.” A new beginning is also signified by the end of the Mayan calendar on December 23, 2012. According to Mayan astronomy, every 13,000 years our planet enters either the negative or positive half of a larger 26,000-year cycle of our solar system relative to the center of our galaxy, and December, 24, 2012 will usher in a 13,000-year upturn of planetary consciousness. Just four and a quarter years from today our solar system will commence a positive cycle in which the accumulated negativity of a now-ending downward cycle will be neutralized via a positive makeover.

Even though things may seem to be darkest just before dawn, the cycle of positive planetary transformation about to dawn is already visible to those who have the sensibility to see it. Therefore, the objective of this course is to empower our ability to experience the early dawning light of our own global transforming consciousness and to activate our ability to create a world that uprightly works for all. It is high time for us to relate to the world as God has imagined it from the beginning, by developing a brand new sustainable uprighteous relationship with the Earth.

[Restore upright image of hand upholding the Earth.]

It is one thing to know that all is one and to know that we are one. It is quite another thing – and a far greater thing – to *appreciate* our oneness. Thus the purpose of this seminar series is to evoke a greater appreciation of our oneness. Ask any realtor what the word “appreciation” means and s/he will tell you that it signifies increase of value. Accordingly, these seminars will increase our valuation of our oneness with all of Creation.

Since all of us know more than any of us, the more people who attend this series the more we can learn from one another, and the closer our spiritual community will come to being for something and against nothing as well. The eight-week series is available by love offering to persons of any faith who have certified ministerial, healing, counseling, coaching, therapist or theological credentials. Anyone who has taken any other class with me may register for a $50 tuition fee. For all others the fee is $100. Couples can enroll for the price of one in honor of their own oneness.

We are the Sovereign Eye of the universe

Joel Primack

Numerous current and presumably "scary" developments – which include potentially ominous changes in solar and galactic activity, global warming, increasingly extreme weather, growing energy and food shortages, the end of the Mayan calendar in December 2012, and the discovery that 95% of the universe's energy and matter is "dark" and undetectable – may all be seen as POSITIVE signs of a planetary transformation of consciousness. How we may individually and collectively embrace these challenges as the Sovereign Eye of the universe, and create greater planetary well-being for the common unity of all concerned, is the subject of this eight-week seminar series.

The eight-week series is available by love offering to all practitioners and persons of any faith who have certified ministerial, healing, counseling, therapist or theological credentials. All former students of Rev. McInnis may register for a $50 tuition fee. For all others the fee is $100.

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### Oregon, September 25 - November 13

#### The Tao of Embracing Global Transformation

A series of eight seminars convened by Rev. Dr. Noel McInnis

New Thought Center for Spiritual Living *(NTCSL)*

September 25-November 13

NTCSL Sylvan Hills Conference Room, Portland.

Discover and explore the positively redeeming potentials of the seemingly ominous changes in galactic, solar and planetary activity that are currently giving rise to global warming, growing energy and food shortages, increasingly extreme weather, the end of the Mayan calendar in December 2012 (*i.e.,* the end of history as we know it), and the discovery that 95% of the universe's energy and matter is "dark" and of unknown nature. How we may individually and collectively embrace these challenges and create greater planetary well-being for all concerned is the subject of this seminar series. Study material: Wayne Dyer’s recent book on the *Tao Te Ching* and Joel Primack’s *The View from the Center of the Universe*.

The full eight-week series is available by love offering to all practitioners and persons of any faith who have certified healing, counseling, therapist, ministerial or theological credentials. All former students of Rev. McInnis may register for a $50 tuition fee. For all others the tuition is $100.

For more information and to register, contact Rev. McInnis at 503-570-4331 or via email to [noelmcinnis.is@gmail.com](mailto:noelmcinnis.is@gmail.com).

Last night’s class was a joy for me.

The books required for the class are Wayne Dyer’s recent book on the *Tao Te Ching,* entitled *Change Your Thoughts ~ Change Your Life* and Joel Primack’s *The View from the Center of the Universe*, both of which will be available at the NTCSL book table at Sunday’s service. I’ll send your reading assignments no later than Monday.

The books from which I quoted last night were Lancelot Law Whyte, *The Next Development in Man* (Mentor Books, 1950), p. 9, and William H. Calvin, *Global Fever: How to Treat Climate Change* (University of Chicago Press, 2008), front cover overleaf.

Dear colleagues in self-transformation:

The Primack book, T*he View from the Center of the Universe*, is now available, and will be at the book table on Sunday. The reading assignment therein for next Thursday's class is pages 1-39.

Please read also Chapters 38 ("Living within Your Own Nature") and 53 ("Living Honorably") in Dyer's *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life.*

Please note any questions or comments you may have about what you have read in both books.

Dear colleagues in self-transformation:

Next Thursday's week’s assignment in T*he View from the Center of the Universe* is to read pages 39-86.

Attached is last night’s commentary on the some of the book’s early passages, which provides a context for appreciating the book’s relevance to the global shift in consciousness that is presently taking place.

Please read also Chapters 43 ("Living Softly") and 76 ("Living by Bending") in Dyer's *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life.*

Please note any questions or comments you may have about what you've read in both books.

Stay in the grace!

Rev. Noel.

Dear colleagues in self-transformation:

Next Thursday's assignment in T*he View from the Center of the Universe* is to read pages 89-121.

Attached is further commentary on the book’s early passages, only some of which was shared at last night’s session. This material provides additional context for appreciating the book’s relevance to the global transformation of consciousness – from self-world destabilization to self-world harmonious alignment – that is urgently called for yet just barely under way.

Please read also Chapters 3 ("Living Contentment"), 42 ("Living by Melting into Harmony"), and 46 ("Living Peacefully") in Dyer's *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life.*

Please note any questions or comments you may have about what you've read in both books.

Stay in the grace!

Rev. Noel.

Dear colleagues in self-transformation:

Next Thursday's assignment in T*he View from the Center of the Universe* is to read pages 122-155, "What Is the Center of the Universe?"

While some of you are finding this book a "difficult read," it is moving you to ask the questions that it addresses, and merely by virtue of getting in touch with these questions you are way ahead of 99.9 percent of the rest of the human species.

Attached is further commentary on the book's early passages, only some of which was shared at last night's session.  This material provides additional context for appreciating the book's relevance to the global transformation of consciousness now under way.

Please reread  Chapters 3 ("Living Contentment"), 42 ("Living by Melting into Harmony"),  and 46 ("Living Peacefully") in Dyer's *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life,* which were not discussed at last night's class.

Please note any questions or comments you may have about what you've read in both books.

Stay in the grace!

Rev. Noel.

Dear colleagues in self-transformation:

Next Thursday's assignment in T*he View from the Center of the Universe* is to read pages 156-205, two chapters entitled "What Size Is the Universe?” and “Where Do We Come From?.”

Attached is further commentary on our cosmic kindom and centrality, most of which was shared at last night's session.

Please also read  Chapters 18 ("Living without Rules"), 19 ("Living without Attachment") and 20 ("Living without Striving") in Dyer's *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life.*

Please note and bring to our next session any questions or comments you may have about what you've read in both books.

Stay in the grace!

Rev. Noel.

Dear colleagues in self-transformation:

I apologize for my tardiness in sending this announcement.

There was no class session this week because of last night’s Harvest Home festival, and there will be no session next week because of Thanksgiving.

Our next to last session will be on December 4. The assignment in T*he View from the Center of the Universe* is to read pages 206-268, two chapters entitled "Are We Alone? The Possibility of Alien Wisdom” and “Think Cosmically, Act Globally.”

Attached is further commentary on our cosmic kindom and centrality that I shared at the last session, concluding with two statements about the power of mindful listening.

Please also read Chapters 2 ("Living the Paradoxical Unity"), 4 ("Living Infinitely") and 5 ("Living Impartially") in Dyer's *Change Your Thoughts – Change Your Life.*

Please note and bring to our next session any questions or comments you may have about what you've read in both books.

Stay in the grace!

Rev. Noel.

[cumulatively: 33 &11, 14 & 28, 43 &76, 38 & 53, 3 & 42 & 46, 18 & 19 & 20, 2 & 4 &5]

**The Sacred Union of Strength and Loving Care**

**The Sacred Union of Strength and Loving Care**

**(A Seminar for Those Who Care Enough to Be Their Very Best)**

           Why have we been seduced into abandoning the timeless inner strength of woman for the temporal outer strength of man? -Anne Morrow Lindbergh

DESCRIPTION:

Amidst today’s troublesome news is the heartening news that humankind, after over-valuing the divine masculine principle of strength for thousands of years, is beginning to equally value the divine feminine principle of loving care. This is in large part because, for well over a century, New Thought has been nurturing the practical emergence of the divine feminine in our worldly affairs.

When loving care is deficient our strength becomes cruelly heartless, and when strength is deficient our loving care becomes sentimentally fruitless. This seminar accordingly facilitates the deeply heartfelt and abundantly fruitful living that results when we are strong enough to care as well as caring enough to be strong, thereby assuring that we shall continue to be both sufficiently strong and caring to make troublesome news uncalled for in our NTCSL spiritual community.

Tuition: The ten-week series is available by love offering to all practitioners and persons of any faith who have certified healing, counseling, therapist, MSW, ministerial or theological credentials. All former students of Rev. McInnis may register for a $50 tuition fee. For all others the tuition is $100. Couples may enroll at these same fees.

E-mail announcement:

Dear colleagues in The New Conversation,

My next Sunday morning 9 a.m. seminar series begins this coming Sunday, June 28, and is entitled “The Sacred Union of Strength and Loving Care (A Seminar for Those Who Care Enough to Be Their Very Best)."

The seminar addresses the question raised two generations ago by Anne Morrow Lindbergh: “Why have we been seduced into abandoning the timeless inner strength of woman for the temporal outer strength of man?”

The seminar illuminates what Rev. Michael Beckwith calls “The New Conversation,” a conversation in which women have an equal voice with men for the first time in 10,000 years!

The primarily masculine old conversation has talked us into a globally unworkable set of socioeconomic and environmental circumstances that threaten the well-being of all living creatures.

The new conversation is about taking care of humanity’s business in ways that will transform these unworkable circumstances via the use of our power to nurture what is right for all concerned rather than exercise the might of the few at the expense of the many.

Most women take care of business mush more effectively than most men do, whether it’s the business of raising a family or raising a profit.

* According to the new book, *Womenomics*, companies under women’s management are considerably more profitable.
* Hardly any banks owned and managed by women have ever been in trouble.
* Muhammad Yunus won the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for initiating the worldwide practice of funding small business start-ups with micro-loans made almost exclusively to women, because 97% of women's business ventures succeed while only two-thirds of small-business ventures managed by men do so.

The new conversation reflects the union of masculine strength and feminine loving care on behalf of creating a world that works as well for women, children and our planet’s other species as it does for men.

The eight-week seminar series explores the globally compassionate quality and transformational energy of the new conversation. If your summer travel plans will take you away from the seminars for a few weeks, please don’t let that deter you from participating in its other sessions. You can still do the reading between the sessions you miss.

The reading will be announced at the first seminar session.

The seminar will meet each Sunday morning from June 28-August 9 from 9-10:30 p.m. at the former Kingstad center.

You can enroll for the laughably low price of only $50 for individuals as well as $50 for couples. Half of this tuition is allocated to support our spiritual community’s other programs.

I am offering this modest tuition to facilitate the enrollment of 26 persons, which is seven percent of our spiritual community’s active population.

As the global advertising/marketing industry consistently demonstrates, once seven percent of a targeted population becomes aware of a new idea, product or brand name, that entire population subsequently becomes saturated with such awareness.

Therefore, as 26 persons participate in this seminar, it will further transform the already remarkable conversation of our spiritual community.

I invite you to be part of the initial target for this seminar’s transformational aim. When the 26th person signs up, each of us will qualify as our spiritual community’s transformational hundredth monkey.

Stay in the grace!

Rev. Noel McInnis

The class will last eight weeks (missing)

Sunday morning announcement:

Many of us heard Rev. Michael Beckwith on Wednesday evening speak of the new conversation now taking place all over the world. On Friday, Laurie Perkins put a Chinese proverb on her Facebook page that relates to the new conversation. Etc.

The most dramatic aspect of the NC is that women are centrally involved in it. As we saw on Wednesday night, women are asking for and getting a microphone in the new conversation.

The old conversation was primarily masculine, has lasted for 10,000 years, and has talked us into a globally unworkable set of socioeconomic and environmental circumstances. As Anne Morrow Lindbergh asked two generations ago, “Why have we been seduced into abandoning the timeless inner strength of woman for the temporal outer strength of man?”

The new conversation is about taking care of humanity’s business in a way that is transforming our use of power from exercising the might of the few to nurturing the rights of all concerned.

Most women take care of business with much greater care than most men do, whether it’s the business of raising a family or raising a profit. According to the new book, *Womenomics*, companies under women’s management are considerably more profitable. Hardly any banks owned and managed by women have ever been in trouble. Muhammad Yunus won the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for initiating the worldwide practice of funding small business start-ups with micro-loans made almost exclusively to women because 97% of women’s business ventures succeed, while only two-thirds of small-business ventures managed by men do so.

The new conversation reflects the union of masculine strength and feminine loving care, and it’s about taking better care of all of humanity’s business on behalf of creating a world that works as well for women and children and all of the planet’s other species as it does for men.

The eight-week seminar series is about the compassionate quality and global transformational power of the new conversation. It meets each Sunday morning from 9-10:30 p.m., and you can enroll for the laughably low price of only $50, whether for individuals or couples, half of which directly supports our spiritual community’s other programs. If your summer travel plans will take you away from the seminars for a few weeks, please don’t let that deter you from participating in its other sessions.

I’m keeping the tuition low because I’m looking forward to an enrollment of 25 persons, which is about 7% of the active population of our spiritual community.

The advertising and marketing industry consistently demonstrates that once 7% of a targeted population becomes aware of a new product or a new brand name, the entire targeted population subsequently becomes saturated with such awareness. As 25 persons participate in this seminar, it will transform the conversation of our spiritual community even more.

Please be part of the initial target for this seminar’s transformational aim. When the 25th person signs up, each will qualify as our spiritual community’s transformational hundredth monkey.

Each of us is endowed with the temporal outer strength for fabricating our individual and collective self-world interrelationships as well as with the timeless inner strength for the loving nurture of our self-world interrelationships. When timeless loving nurture is deficient in our lives, our temporal outer strength becomes cruelly heartless, and when temporal outer strength is deficient, our loving nurture becomes sentimentally fruitless.

Although we are presently fabricating an increasingly unworkable set of global economic, political and environmental circumstances via an overly-masculine approach to our individual and collective self-world interrelationships, we are beginning to balance this excess with a feminine approach of nurturing service to self-world interrelationships on behalf of enjoying a world that works for every living thing and for everything that is life supportive.

This eight-week seminar series is laughably low-priced at $50, half of which directly supports our spiritual community’s other programs. If you summer travel plans will take you away from the seminars for a few weeks, please don’t let that deter you from participating in its other sessions.

E-mail announcement:

My next Sunday morning eight-week 9 a.m. class, which begins next Sunday, June 28, is entitled “The Sacred Union of Strength and Loving Care (A Seminar for Those Who Care Enough to Be Their Very Best). This class addresses the question raised two generations ago by Anne Morrow Lindbergh: “Why have we been seduced into abandoning the timeless inner strength of woman for the temporal outer strength of man?”

The class is about what Rev. Michael Beckwith calls “The New Conversation,” a conversation in which, for the first time in 10,000 years, women have an equal voice with men.

LOOKING AHEAD:

The Tao of Being Your Own Person