

sister who's perspective

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Overview

I have encountered so many ideological perspectives over the years that espouse essentially "rewriting" reality to suit one's preferences instead of embracing what is perceived as good or bad, as diverse kinds of teachers. While I recognize that bad teachers can cause pain, I am usually able in retrospect to concede that they were still teachers. Being able to learn from them, however, does not usually include imitation.

The Painfulness of True Waiting

As peaceful as it may appear and thus without any obvious need for comfort or support, the existence of unmet needs offers a strikingly different interpretation of complex relational circumstances. I sometimes notice people who are not so much being content as they are being constantly distracted, so that certain needs are neglected rather than resolved, yet with corresponding negative effects. Be that as it may, grabbing such by the neck and shoving them into personal and direct engagement, rarely (if ever) produces lasting positive results.

In contrast to either of these possibilities, is either attentively waiting for or working toward genuine resolution, depending upon the particular resources and circumstances that are available. Either mode can prove to be quite exhausting. What both nonetheless have in common, is an enduring commitment to truth, to faith, and to hope.

Pretending that such a state doesn't hurt, however, is simply not being honest. The current stance of popular psychology may insist that such feelings can be effectively repressed, ignored, or denied, but careful observation will always be able to detect the ways in which threads are pulled from the fabric of one's being, until one's soul begins to resemble a ragged and worn patch

intended to conceal where the metaphorical cloth has genuinely torn. The ideal would be that the particular need is noticed and addressed by the surrounding community, instead of being pressured toward concealment and camouflage.

Just as everyone is insisting that one is never alone, their lack of response to the unmet need insists that exactly the opposite is true. Without a more honest truth, faith and hope lose vitality and are reduced to wishful thinking, instead of being the robust forces of positive change that genuine healing actually requires. Remaining silent about such states enables brokenness.

It is inherent in being human, to be a problem-solver; millennia of human history have demonstrated this within every time, culture, and circumstance. Part of such constructive processes, however, is carefully planning which resources to use, when to act in specific ways, and how to sustain all that is good within one's self until then. In truly loving one another, empathy, compassion, and understanding are what testify to true interconnection and the absence of isolation.

As much as I wish to respect whatever choices each individual may make, there is a quiet grief within observing a witness to human suffering who will not participate in addressing deplorable circumstances, purely for philosophical reasons. Wisdom may recommend a different timing or approach, but it cannot forsake the one in need without losing some of its own integrity. True love-- which by definition must be unconditional-- cannot remain unresponsive to any evil.

When the response is the sometimes extended phase of searching for an effective answer, it is therefore essential that we hold hands and wrestle with the unknowing together, in order to transform that dark time into one of growth for everyone concerned.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

Balancing Depression and Anger

I read somewhere many years ago and I continue to find it to be true, that depression is often anger that has been turned inward and denied expression--sometimes for very legitimate reasons, but this does nothing to change what it truly is. Dealing effectively with the negative effects of depression thus virtually always requires some sort of action; figuring out what has been repressed and giving it some sort of constructive action. If no acceptable expression can be found, the only alternative is finding some way to keep the negativity from becoming spiritually fatal.

Anything less and a part of the soul is at least momentarily lost. Whether or not it is gone forever, only time and circumstances can tell, but I cannot imagine any justification for embracing such a risk, instead of staying engaged in seeking constructive expression of the part that is in pain. It is quite accurate to insist that the life and health of one's soul genuinely requires such ongoing struggle.

Anger provides powerful energy and, like every other such force, must be carefully managed in order to be constructive rather than destructive. A significant part of current societal dysfunction, is the tendency to dismiss or trivialize either that which has given rise to the anger or the expression itself. Even as awkward outbursts, such moments are wake-up calls the surrounding community desperately needs to hear.

As much as my autistic directness shouts "now," a more mature part of my intellect recognizes that careful management of depression may be inseparable from implementing more effective strategies. A tool which seems to be largely neglected by contemporary human societies, is creative engagement in ritual that does not demonize any part of transitory human experience. As creatures of time, we move through a wide diversity of experiences without any ability to remain indefinitely within any one of them.

By pausing normal routines in order to fully face and address in creative, theatrical, and metaphorical ways, that which one experiences as troubling, the human reality of being a fusion of body, mind, and spirit is

both validated and empowered. As a triad of dimensions of being--all of which constantly affect and modify each other--a constant tension and even struggle is maintained, either constructively or destructively. There may be plenty of times when one does not particularly like being what one is, but truth is generally uncompromising--usually in ways that ultimately prove to be very good, when all details have been fully considered.

Perhaps this is among the reasons I personally maintain a significant distrust and skepticism of modifying emotions using pharmaceuticals. I do not wish to avoid any opportunity for personal and/or spiritual growth. That being said, I do recognize that for some individuals, special circumstances are an unavoidable part of the equation.

With or without such considerations, however, maintaining a balance between competing internal forces remains inherently part of being alive. The current generation of humanity might therefore be considered especially blessed by having a much wider arsenal of tools with which to address such challenges--constructive implementation of rituals, guided visualizations, cultural and linguistic comparisons, global dialogue and collaboration, and so forth. My central point, in any case, is that particular components do not need to be demonized, if one can instead understand their constructive capacities.

Constructive applications of depression and anger? Yes, most certainly--especially if the mode of engagement increases one's awareness and/or understanding. If one sees nothing more than the immediate experience without considering its past and future, it equates to a sort of emotional glaucoma or tunnel vision that blinds one to the larger dimensions of one's being.

Human beings have only a limited time within which to experience and learn from their individual lives. Unfortunately for most, we are too close to the experiences to see all there is to see. Yet that may actually be good, if it drives us toward community and mutually empowering relationship.

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Transforming Experience

What life most often provides is raw material, specifically to create opportunity for human ingenuity to expand and grow. No matter where one looks throughout the natural world, everything is continuously in the process of renewing either itself or its species. Why, therefore, should anyone expect human life to be otherwise?

Yet the vast majority of current human thinking and societal orchestration is oriented resolutely and perhaps even obsessively with self-sabotaging stagnation. As much as I utilize routines to manage a wide range of tasks of daily maintenance, it is imperative that these routines respond to evolutionary shifts in my circumstances and needs. I do not see things as I once did, nor do I feel the same needs as I did in the past, so expecting yesterday's answers to satisfy today's questions is inescapably foolish.

Specifically because I was often too busy managing chaos to fully consider all of its details, however, it may be wise to set aside time for contemplating overlooked details. In much the same way that I have books within my bookcases that I have yet to fully read but which I have no intention of culling from my personal library, potentially empowering information is among the resources I have retained, each time I have changed my physical address. When the time is finally right, I want this information to be available.

A significant part of transforming my past experiences, is applying new information and understanding to their details. As a child, I recall seeing an episode of an animated cartoon entitled, "Tom and Jerry," about an ongoing competitive relationship between a cat and a mouse, that depicted scenes

inspired by elements of the historical event of the French Revolution. I did not understand the conclusion of that particular episode, however, because I had no understanding of what a guillotine was or when it was used.

Was it irresponsible of the artists to integrate such a horrible device into work intended for presentation to children, in a way that could not be fully understood? One could equally ask whether children should be protected and shielded from all awareness of violence and/or relational problems. My preference would be for such presentations to be responsibly educational, but in regard to the example presented within the previous paragraph, I think the French Revolution was far too complex to be introduced within a short animated cartoon.

Within most if not all transformations of experience, however, the shift is from having just a little information to having a more complete understanding--specifically by cataloging and considering the range and diversity of related details. Suppressing awareness of diversity has never resulted in any sort of holistic understanding. It may be more efficient to standardize, homogenize, and replicate whatever forms and methods have worked in the past, but that provides no opportunity for renewal or expansion.

So as much as I value efficiency, I strive to keep it from being a wall around the perimeter of my experiential world, denying me any and all perceptions that could otherwise be discovered. If administrators' adversarial policies should ever become my obsession, for example, I may momentarily forget that they are not the divine authority they claim to be and overlook the ways in which policies, laws, and rules are always available to revision. Nothing in the future is constrained to being no more than it was in the past, except as decided by individual administrators and agents--which, at times, could be any one of us.

What is most essential to give to each other, consequently, is the freedom to invent something new from which all can learn and because of which all can grow.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

"If I focus upon anything other than demonstrating what sort of person I am, I will sabotage the truth I would otherwise embody."

-- Sister Who

The Manifestation of True Goodness

If I am no more than the embodiment of others' expectations or definitions, neither they nor I will become anything more than has already been and all of the struggle and pain that any are currently enduring, will be without meaning or constructive purpose. If I do not aspire to create more good than I have received throughout the adversarial moments of my life, brokenness will be all I replicate within the diverse contributions I make--and I definitely want to leave a better legacy than that. The final measure of life, when all has been carefully considered, is not what it's moments have included, but rather what has been created that echoes into eternity.

A quote attributed to President Dwight Eisenhower asserts that "Those who value their privileges more than their principles, soon lose both." Literally millions of cemeteries around the world have far more stones bearing names of forgotten persons, than of those who continue to inspire the best within persons still living. That being said, I'm uncertain which is worse: that some are driven only by selfishness and greed or that they are unconcerned at how meaningless and forgettable their lives have become.

From one perspective, this is an amazing and pivotal time. From a contrasting view, however, this is a time of desperation, dysfunction, and discouragement having become signature qualities of human societies. As within every other historical period, however, only the surface of our species' potential has been barely scratched.

The question to which I return more and more frequently is simply, "what sort of person will you show yourself to be?"

Whether I am victimized or rewarded, empowered or dismissed, valued or ignored, what sort of person will I show myself to be?

Whether the world is coming to an end or about to embrace a new beginning, what sort of person will I show myself to be?

What presence am I able to give, perhaps more in spite of my circumstances than because of them? I can only promise to try.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

On a Personal Note

It has been an intense month. While the final photo shoot for The Tarot of Sister Who was successfully completed and the actual cards will soon be all done, hopefully soon to be followed by completion of a book offering interpretive methodology and publication of both together, my efforts to move toward a less oppressive and more empowering home environment have been mostly unsuccessful.

My only hope at this point seems to be an effort to raise sufficient funds to buy a small fixer-upper home in a rural area. A number of people have been quite generous, but many more need to follow their example.

For those unfamiliar with such things, interested persons go to the Internet at www.GoFundMe.org/Autistic-Needs-Home and make whatever donation they wish, using a debit card, credit card, or other means of online financial transfer. I post various updates there nearly every day and will be adding some video requests soon as well, hoping that enough people consider this ministerial work important that they will support its continuance.

A focus upon autism was chosen due to how difficult it is for autistic adults to survive, in spite of unique and amazing personal gifts. An estimated 85% of high-functioning autistic adults are unemployed--not because they are unwilling to work, but because no one will hire them at a living wage.

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