

sister who's perspective

Sister Who's Perspective, Issue 219, September 2017, copyright

Overview

Considering how overfilled the world currently is with information and attempts at communication, feeling overwhelmed is not exclusively the experience of people with autism. It is quite understandable, therefore, if something slips by unnoticed. It is specifically because of this possibility, that taking time out for thoughtful contemplation can be so very important. For those with the ears to hear, truth may have more to say.

The Complexity and the Focus

Among the most common and potentially most damaging unstated assumptions is that what is perceived is all there is. The moment one reflects consciously and directly upon this assumption, however, agreement is virtually unanimous that such an assertion could not possibly be true. Without such conscious contemplation, however, actions and behaviors generally suggest that it is.

While it logically makes sense that one responds first and foremost to what one perceives, the process of growth into maturity is one of integrating an ever greater number of understandings and relationships, such that even when one's thoughts and perceptions are not directly turned in a particular direction, one lives in harmony and love with as much of the totality of one's world as one can. A point of focus is inherent for each and every creature experiencing the reality of a physical body, but every individual being is equally and inescapably encompassed by a constellation of interdependent relationships. Specifically because of the inherent limitations of each identifiable physical body, however, perception of the totality of surrounding reality within any single moment is beyond that body's capabilities.

More concisely, there are limits to all

forms of perception. Communication and collaboration, however, allow creatures to accomplish more together than any could do all alone. Recognizing how very important that collaboration is, provides all the reason necessary to care for each individual within the community as if he, she, or it could make the essential difference during a time of crisis--because sometimes that's exactly what is discovered when the time of crisis unexpectedly arrives.

Among our limitations are those inherent within any and every linguistic system. We do not yet have words for things that have not yet been discovered. Within most processes of perception, while it is necessary to focus upon a particular aspect in order to learn its qualities, it is essential to remember that every object and dynamic one can perceive does not exist in isolation.

Even the words one devises for new things must be integrated within existing grammatical systems in order for discoveries to be effectively communicated and shared with one's local or global community. Any discovery that is not shared, will fall back into mystery when the individual is for whatever reason no longer available by any means to the surrounding community. This is why I have gone to great lengths to place copies of as much of my creativity and as possible, within the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library--it is, in a sense, a collective message in a bottle that I hope future generations will find and by which they will be empowered toward ever-greater practices of love and wisdom.

Failing to remember the complexity while addressing the focus, however, enables one to produce only limited reality capable of only isolated existence that is quickly forgotten once the individual has passed. Holistic practices of love offer much, much more.

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

The Focus and the Complexity

In reaching for deep understanding and empowering relationship with whatever is my current focus, it can be insightful to list what the surrounding complexity has contributed to the creation and/or development of that focus. Presuming that the focus can be no more than what the surrounding constellation of relationships has contributed, however, denies the unique creative force within the specific individual or topic. Even an idea can recombine and transform its contributed elements into a new configuration.

Where the trouble starts is within the imposition of judgmental expectations--those which insist that if it is not a particular way, it is inherently wrong. In truth, it simply is what it is. What makes it right or wrong (that is, either life-affirming or life-denigrating) is not its identity but rather its actions.

Having contemplated a great many things for literally years, the one conclusion that has withstood all of the academic deconstruction and questioning I have thrown at it, is that life is primarily concerned with the growth of the soul. That being the case, one must respect that--in their fullest and most holistic sense--wisdom and love are not inherent but rather must be learned. Specifically because of the vastness of their holistic reality, it is unlikely that such learning will ever be completed within a single lifetime (e.g. it is ongoing).

Every creature one will ever encounter is consciously or unconsciously surrounded by complexity and preoccupied with some kind of process of development that could benefit from some sort of communal involvement--even if that contribution is as indirect as the provision of an environment with adequate resources. If the ignorant actions of the creature that is still learning, sadly become destructive toward others, however, more direct management may be required. This does not mean, however, that imposing the managers' limited understanding is best.

Remembering that complexity is relatively inseparable from degrees of mystery--at least to human minds at our current level of general understanding--a carefully worded question may be the essential pivot point. It

is equally essential to recognize and respect, that perceiving both focus and complexity is not a matter of having all relevant answers, but rather of consciously acknowledging both the dimensions and the specific population of the workspace to be explored. When I take good care of both my individual tools and the particular materials available, for example, the images I paint onto canvas have far more potential than they otherwise would.

It is in posing empowering questions to my specific focus that it becomes something much more beautiful and expansive than the imposition of my current answers could ever produce. Each creature and moment is in a sense a divine gift to the growth of my soul, but I sometimes fail to respond appropriately if I am preoccupied with whether the specific experience hurts. The damage my failure may create, however, can be limited by the intervention of a nurturing community that metaphorically lifts me out of that awareness and back into a more loving space of growth.

When narcissism imposes itself upon a community, however, blindness to the pain and struggle of others quickly follows and empowering collaboration is rendered highly improbable at best. In viewing life and the world as if one's own experience were the only one that mattered, both complexity and focus fade from view and relationships that could be empowering are stripped of their ability to act constructively. Truth disappears behind a cloud until reawakening occurs.

In deciding one has had enough of such clouds and that the return of awareness is clearly overdue, the initial focus with which one is presented may be quite surprising--especially because of various shifts in perception which generally follow such times of reawakening. Having survived an intense struggle, one cannot view life as one did prior to the experience. Having met an exceptional individual, one's perspective may be similarly shifted in new directions.

It is not a question of choosing one or the other, but rather of engaging both in mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship.

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

Confidence and Mystery

I feel a bit irritated and perhaps even annoyed when I hear one person command another to be confident, to be happy, or to have an ability that may or may not actually be present. All such things have constitutive elements without which they cannot exist. If genuine compassion is present and the wish for such experiences is real, one must be willing to engage in creating or acquiring whatever constitutive elements are missing.

Like the vast darkness of outer space around the planet earth and the inability of human eyeballs to rotate in such a way that one could see inside of one's own head, mystery is both all around us and within us, inviting exploration and discovery. There is no need to manufacture more challenges, because an abundant supply is already within reach. The relevant question is the degree to which this mystery is perceived as adversary or opportunity.

One must remember, however, that because the world is a shared space, the same dynamics exist in reverse. That is, whenever I enter a new societal space, I am (at first, at least) a mystery to everyone else there. Their initial reactions reveal whether or to what degree they view mystery (and thus me) as adversary or opportunity.

Developing confidence before engaging with an unknown person, environment, or circumstance, is very much like the process of developing a positive predisposition with mystery and/or the unknown. Although many of the dynamics and components involved are not physical or material, their reality cannot be effectively questioned and may have a profound impact upon whatever experiences of life follow. More concisely, what makes the difference is often not what it is, but rather how I feel about it.

So what are the constitutive elements of feelings (of which confidence is merely one example)? I defer at this point again to the

"Remember the complexity while addressing the focus."

-- Sister Who

author Elaine de Beauport and her book, "Three Faces of Mind: Developing your Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Intelligences," within which she describes emotional experience as a reflection of the mind's ability or inability to meet its needs. A first component of confidence would thus be awareness of what specifically one's current needs are and to what degree they are met.

More obviously and specifically related to the presence or absence of confidence, is the question of preparation. The actor who has not adequately rehearsed, will have a much more difficult time onstage doing his or her actual best. The auto mechanic who arrives where a roadside repair is needed without the proper tools or new parts, may have much less confidence that he or she will be able to get the vehicle going again.

Another significant part of preparation is the development of basic cognitive abilities--which must be learned and developed, rather than presumed. Critical thinking, for example, is not the same as being overly critical, but rather involves examination of the unknown in a way that inventories, analyzes, and evaluates constitutive pieces and relationships. Dissection is another common method, but done prematurely can destroy insufficiently documented evidence.

An amusing paraphrase of a common saying advises, "Remember: first pillage, then burn." The common expression I've heard throughout my life was always "burn and pillage," but no explanation was given for why the two actions would be arranged in a way that is ultimately self-sabotaging. A lot of having confidence when confronted with mystery, is likewise a matter of creating an empowering sequence.

In gardening, for example, attempting to till the soil too aggressively after planting, would be disruptive to the seeds which may have already begun to sprout. Mystery can provide new and unexplored spaces, but to avoid the disaster of charging forward prematurely, confidence must be given time and room in which to grow.

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

Mystery and Confidence

Deepening a relationship with mystery can ultimately create greater possibilities than any thus far consciously conceived by humanity, specifically because doing so makes a bridge between the known and the unknown. The challenge for each generation of humanity, however, is integrating sufficient confidence to forge a new path with enough wisdom to avoid the pitfalls over-confidence generally brings. This is why I persist in describing "walking by faith" as a matter of ongoing relationship rather than as any sort of recipe or intellectual exercise.

The fusion of mystery and confidence is thus, among other things, an integration of head and heart; of science and spirit. The former is fixated upon definitions and concrete understandings. The latter's very substance is the expansiveness of life itself.

In a similar way, a fusion of sadness and joy is also required, just as a painting, drawing, or photograph must integrate both light and shadow before all three dimensions of any object can be perceived. Whenever I am engaged in conversation with others and broadly stated generalities are declared, it is thus an invitation to embrace degrees of blindness--deliberately overlooking any and all contrasts in order to promote either an exclusively optimistic or pessimistic view. A closer look at any and every topic, however, can quickly reveal potentially empowering anomalies that must be carefully studied before one can even begin to understand.

Within an age characterized by pathological narcissism, however, the practice of humility and the prevention of arrogance requires a bit more effort and rarely (if ever) occurs on its own--which reveals narcissism (of which hypocrisy is merely one possible form) to be adversarial to spiritual practice. When we study the face in the mirror each morning, it must not be merely to identify a hair out of place or a face that needs washing, but rather to maintain a constructive relationship with the mysterious soul which animates the body therein seen.

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

On a Personal Note

"Stone walls do not a prison make..." is a verse I was required to memorize while in high school that persists in inviting more empowering perspectives within the more frustrating and limited seasons of my life. It makes no sense to me that I carry within myself transformative understandings, but have so few opportunities to share any of this non-monetary wealth with others. As often as I tell myself that the day will come when I am able to share more of what lies within me, I also sometimes wonder if I will live long enough to see it.

The hope is that within the next three days, the remaining twelve episodes of "Sister Who Presents..." promised for 2017 will be recorded. Once the related editing is complete, that leaves only the 2018 calendar to complete. An exciting related event is that on Saturday, October 21, a friend and I are planning to engage in an all-day photo-shoot just south of La Junta, Colorado, near some fossilized dinosaur tracks.

What was surprising but encouraging to my sometimes weary soul, was that when I began uploading new episodes of my TV show to the Internet, positive responses from viewers appeared within my email Inbox within the very first hour thereafter. Perhaps I am not so alone and unnoticed as it may sometimes seem--for which reason I persist.

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

Subscription Information:

"Sister Who's Perspective" is a free monthly newsletter. If you appreciate this newsletter, please consider supporting the ongoing work by either a check payable to Denver NeVaar or an online donation through www.PayPal.com to the email address of dn@sisterwho.com. Comments, questions, and suggestions are always welcome.

Sister Who a/k/a Rev. Denver NeVaar, MTS

POB 16074, Golden, CO 80402

email: dn@SisterWho.com

Internet website: <http://www.SisterWho.com>

Additional Informational Internet Websites:

www.GodSpaceSanctuary.org

www.DenverNeVaar.info

www.YouTube.com/DenverNeVaar

www.SpiritusErosqueIntertexti.org