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## Quote from the Voice of Mahadeva

### Shin Shiva Svayambhu

Sometimes you need to stand to the side of the path you have been following, then maybe you can see better where it is leading. From what you have seen you can decide how you wish to continue. If you simply proceed in your own direction, your own movement, without considering it from the outside from time to time, you will be unable to recognise whether what you are doing is good or bad, helpful or unhelpful. Place yourself in this landscape so that you can recognise the best way - towards the goal.

## Editorial

### Tineke Bak

Dear friends, thank you for your patience in waiting an extra week for this summer edition to come out. It was worth the wait as we received more articles (see Catherine Warner's Christmas experiences) and extra images we did not have at the usual publication time.

The theme that emerged this time seems to be a weaving thread of communication and sharing. Sharing our learning and experiencing is sometimes a daunting task for when we expose what is nearest to our hearts we also become more vulnerable to anything that hints at judgement or criticism. Yet it is through sharing what is nearest and most heart-felt that we discover a whole rich world of aliveness, of uniqueness and of the worlds of shared experience that bind us into a loving community anchored in friendship.

Henk and Helma had an idea that it might be fruitful if their articles, this time, were regarded more as an invitation for us all to explore the theme further, or as a short introduction into a longer, evolving conversation. They envisage that a series of articles and contributions by people from all over our community could arise, on the theme of sharing experiences in a way that allows the listener/reader to participate in our unique perspective and also to evolve our communication of what is alive in our inner world in ways that most contribute their richness and wonders to the larger whole. So please consider contributing any prose or poem, words or images that have something to say on this theme, however awkward it might seem. I, for one, enjoy how the Dewdrop comes alive when our contributions are authentically from the heart and from our living experience of learning - also our ongoing learning of how to share that living experience.

Enjoy this issue of late spring and summer abundance as trusted and trusting sharing from heart to heart.

It is by practising vulnerability of the heart  
that we discover courage.  
Chögyam Trungpa

## Evera Summer 1995-2009

### Henk Bak

This year's summer photos of Evera were taken on the very same spot and at the same time of year as 14 years ago, when Helma and I first explored our newly acquired block of grassland, empty with a few lonely trees. Kangaroos in the distance and an echidna had been there before to greet us. Kangaroos and echidna are still there, but now visitors are welcomed by gardens full of flowers, the first one a triangle with roses red, pink, yellow and orange, a row of lavender in front plus recently two large garden-pots with lilies. Memories came back to me when I was lying in the grass looking up into the filigrain-fine new shoots of an eucalyptus tree, amber-orange against a stark-blue sky. Helma was pruning the orange roses and binding them up with bright blue bailing twine. Before she needed my help again, I made some photos which I called 'studies in orange and blue'.

## A Moment in a Small Oasis

### Tineke Bak

For the first time in weeks I took a moment just to be in my usually neglected garden, to be present to my second year of attempting to turn my little strip of ground into an oasis... That morning's overcast sky made the narrow strip between house and fence inviting. Very often this south facing garden has a sharp line of shadow shifting back and forth along its edge, dividing it into harsh sunshine and barely alleviated shade. But just then the divide was diffused under the uniform light filtered through the cloud. The young stone Buddha (usually in shade) sat in the same light as the ancient Ganesha (mostly out in the sun's glare). The long suffering azalea showed a white bloom despite its sunless position, and the nasturtiums glowed with a more subdued light that nevertheless held their vibrancy intact.

The moment of unity did not last, reminding me that nothing does in this world of change. Yet I remembered in that moment that when I conceived my plan of a garden, I wanted to create an oasis, however humble and small. I jumped up and fetched my camera and played with it and the garden, the light and the shade, to see what face of oasis the garden would reveal in this shifting moment.

This narrow strip of garden is always there, the play of light and dark, sun and stars is constant. How often do I remember my oasis, though?



I watched my cats play and rest, practising the hunt in small confines. I watched the pigeons enact their mating dance. The noisy miner bird dragged a piece of rubbish half his size with unshakeable determination. The song of the neighbourhood was not yet resounding with cicadas, but the birds sang with deep absorption in the inner drives of late spring and early summer - unstoppable drives, their small souls utterly surrendered to its calls to dance, to mate, to build, to lay, to brood, to feed...



The cats played their way through the stylised ritual of hunt and pounce, lunge and fight, run and chase. Each movement of ear and paw, each swish of tail, each arch of the back a re-enactment of a primordial dance, full of primal meaning honoured by felines large and small, old and young, throughout the ages of humanity and beyond.

The birds, the cats, the plants, the bees and cicadas have no trouble remembering this garden is an oasis. For them paradise never closed its gates. Each opening bud greeting the day is living the oasis, the paradise from which I, as a human being, feel so far removed. So I thank you birds, and cats, and my small rag-tangle garden for reminding me, that though I may be feeling lost, paradise itself remembers.

*(All three photos on this page taken by Tineke Bak. For more photos you can visit my blog online: [www.tineke.bodywisesoulwise.com.au/blog](http://www.tineke.bodywisesoulwise.com.au/blog) and check under Home Albums)*



### Note:

Contributions for the Autumn Issue should be already typed and preferably sent by email to

hbak@westnet.com.au  
or

tjmbak@optusnet.com.au  
by 10th March 2010

If you send illustrations, photographs or scanned images please make sure the image format is jpg, gif, or png, and the resolution is suitable for printing (240dpi).

Donations towards costs are welcome and can be made out to:  
HR Bak, Bendigo Bank  
BSB: 633-000  
Account: 111 245 643  
Reference: "Dewdrop"

## See Me Beautiful

by Kathy and Red Grammer

See me beautiful,  
look for the best in me.  
That's what I really am,  
and all I want to be.  
It may take some time  
It may be hard to find,  
but see me beautiful.

See me beautiful,  
each and every day.  
Could you take a chance?  
Could you find a way?  
To see me shining through  
in everything I do  
and see me beautiful.

## Ceremony for Repatriation of Australian Indigenous Remains

*Natural History Museum, Vienna, 9 October 2009*

### Sally Duncan

It was a great honour to be invited to this event by the Australian Ambassador to Austria, Michael Potts, on behalf of the Australian people and the directors of the Pathologic-Anatomical Museum of Austria and the Natural History Museum of Vienna.

Over a hundred participants, including almost all of the Australian Embassy staff, several Australians living in Austria, press, museum staff etc gathered for this significant event - a ceremonial handover of the remains of sixteen individuals which had been held at the Natural History Museum and one individual which had been held at the Pathologic-Anatomical Museum. An Australian delegation of representatives of Indigenous communities from which the remains derived had arrived in Vienna the week before.

After a welcome by the Ambassador, we heard several speeches about how these remains came to the museums. This was difficult to hear and I remembered being at another event in Vienna some years ago when a young Abo-

## Holy Teachings of our Great and Beloved Spiritual Guruji Shin Shiva Svayambhu Maharaj...

### Manju Aswal, New Delhi, India

*Shin's teaching is all embracing. In His Integral teaching He teaches and shows us how we as human beings can live peacefully and happily in all areas of existence. Shin teaches us how our spirituality, our cultures and our social lives have the power to protect us and help us to lead a true and happy life. We must act truthfully, calmly and lovingly because whatever we give out to the world will sooner or later come back to us. He asks us to become the Divine children of the God and the world so that we live eternally in happiness and are united with the Creator so that we too can create beautiful and new worlds for ourselves.*

**Our Guruji Shin Shiva** also advises us to honour and cultivate our own religions in our own ways because He says it is the power which protects us from all evils and helps us to lead a true, simple, joyful and fruitful life. Shin Shiva also teaches us that our Mother Earth is like a divine present to all the living beings. We all nourish and enjoy ourselves here. Hence we all must learn to treasure this unique gift given to us by God as it gives life to us, re-

iginal shuddered at hearing this topic referred to. However, the speeches about the history of Australia's past were spoken in a dignified manner. The problem which museums face over such issues was mentioned, and I know that the Embassy in Austria had been working on this particular case for several years.

A film made by the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre was then screened. The film was technically superb; it overlaid faces, mostly elders - both men and women - over breathtaking landscape scenes. Each of these individuals gave their personal thanks for the gift of the return of the earthly remains of their ancestors, some saying why it was so important. This was extraordinarily moving. From the Aboriginal delegation, Jody Coghill, Goorenpul, Queensland, and Tom Nanbung and Terry Murray, Kimberleys, NT, all also personally expressed their thanks.

Tom Nanbung started the fire from wood which he had brought with him. When it was smoking well, he drew the smoke towards his body and then walked between the caskets which had been set up on tables and draped by two flags, one of which was the Aboriginal one. His hands blessed the caskets to his left and right as he walked between them. Every person in the room was then invited to follow suit. The ceremony had the effect of unifying the circle (as far as I could ascertain). It was both natural and dignified, and at the same time, utterly powerful.



*Photo from press internet:  
Tom Nanbung lighting the fire.*

freshes our souls and rejuvenates and lengthens our lives. Therefore we all must protect, cultivate and strengthen our beloved and life-filled Mother Earth. Shin Shiva also asks us to open ourselves completely to the Great God! Always learn to trust Him! Love, respect and honour all the living beings created by Him because the life given to all of us flows from Him to us, hence learn to be loving and generous to all human beings irrespective of our caste, creed, religion or nation, and then only we will be able to find Him in us. Once we are in a blissful unity with the Great, loving and Beneficent God then our pains and sorrows will start diminishing and we will be able to cultivate meaningful, loving and constructive thoughts which will ultimately bring joy, light and power in our lives and in the world in which we all live.

**Jai Gurudev Shin Shiva Svayambhu M.**

## Pictures of Christmas

### Catherine Warner

We think of Christmas as a time for family. It was not till the first Christmas when I was without one, having separated from Jack in July 1999 and being unable to travel to Scotland to be with my birth family, that I learnt of very different experiences of Christmas. About a week before the 25<sup>th</sup> December that year I began phoning around the charities with a view to helping out serving Christmas dinners somewhere in Melbourne, to be able to be of assistance and also to be surrounded by people. The response each time was the same: "We're booked out with helpers already. If you want to help in that way at Christmas, you have to book around the month of July each year."

I was then left with the bleak prospect of spending Christmas Day on my own. Telephone contact with Jack had informed me that he had been invited by his friend X to have Christmas with her and her family, so I knew he would not be left out. It was now the day before Christmas. I picked up the phone and dialled the number of the Hilton in East Melbourne. "I'd like to come for Christmas Lunch tomorrow," I said. "I'm sorry but we're booked out," Came the reply. I explained my situation and the understanding woman said, "Just a moment, I'll see if we can squeeze you in." After a few extremely long silent minutes, her voice came on the line once more. "Hello, we've found a table at which you can sit. Just tell the ushers at the restaurant your name and they will take you to the table." I was so thankful. And I felt that it was wonderful that, even in such a sorrowful situation, it had come to me that I could honour myself and that my voice had been heard. I had a wonderful Christmas meal in the company of two families at just one of the many tables in the huge ballroom of the Hilton.

Christmas 2000, I was invited to share Christmas lunch with a dear friend. I do not at present recall what happened in 2001 or 2002.

Christmas 2003 was different. I had visited Jack twice that year. As the end of the year was approaching I broached the subject of spending Christmas with him in Sydney. "I'm already booked to go to X (his dear friend who had looked after him so well since 1999)." I felt a pain in my heart, but said as lightly as I could "Oh, I'm glad for you. I'll have to see what I will do." A deep well of sadness expanded inside me when I hung up the phone.

A week later, on 20<sup>th</sup> December, I rang Jack up again. We talked briefly. In saying goodbye, I wished him a good time at X's. "I'm not going," he replied. "Why not?" I said in surprise. "It's X's relative who's always there for Christmas: I find the situation too hard to cope with." In the silence that followed I asked, "Can I come up and be with you for Christmas, Jack?" And so it was arranged. I took all our Christmas decorations with me including a small collapsible Christmas tree and some wrapped presents, and we spent a few days together.

And then Jack came back to live in Melbourne and Christmases 2004 to 2007 were celebrated in my home. I could feel Jack was content to be with me then and I was so happy that we were able to be together, even though I was suffering from chronic fatigue and it was a huge effort to have him with me for several days. Christmas 2008 was only three months after Jack died. As the buses from Warburton don't start early enough for me to get a connection at Lilydale in time for me to be at the Christian Community Church in Hawthorn, I was fortunate enough that a nearby friend happened to be driving down past Lilydale on Christmas morning. I had spoken to the priest, Lisa Devine, about my predicament of having no one to celebrate Christmas with. After the services were over, she and a few others stayed with me to share a cooked chicken and salad they had brought which I added to with my red bean rice dish. I was grateful for their company. As on 25<sup>th</sup> December 1999, the day was sunny and pleasantly warm and I made my way home in a peaceful frame of mind.

And this year? I was in for a couple of surprises. My Christmas plans began by me making a reservation at the Hilton again, in memory of the wonderful atmosphere I'd experienced there ten years ago. My friend, S, who celebrates Christmas with her family on Christmas eve, invited me to join them in going to a movie on Christmas Day afternoon. There was a hotel close to their place where I could stay the night and we could go to yoga together on Boxing Day morning. I accepted. Later she suggested my coming to the Christian Community Church on Christmas morning. And so it was that I booked a room for both 24 and 25 December in the hotel.

*(Continued on page 5)*

## A Christmas Eve Prayer in the Celtic Tradition

### Don't pass by me.

The light burns bright in the window tonight,  
Christ is passing by.  
The cattle are restless in the byre tonight,  
Christ is passing by.  
The shepherds are watching in the fields tonight,  
Christ is passing by.  
The inn is crowded with travelers tonight,  
Christ is passing by.  
Stop for a moment, Lord, hear my plea,  
Fill an empty heart,  
Don't pass by me.

©R.J. Boland, December, 1999

*(Continued from page 4)*

As I had been extremely busy till the last minute, I did not manage to pack my bags in time to take the last bus of the evening down to Lilydale and I ordered a taxi. Amongst the others waiting for the 9:39 pm train into the city was a man with his left arm bandaged. I said to him that I wanted to buy something from the vending machine but didn't want to go there because of the group of loud-speaking youths standing right in front of it. "They're all right", he said. As I came back from buying myself a cookie, I overheard one of the station personnel say to the man, "You'll be right."

We boarded the train and I sat just inside the doors on the side seat facing the man with the bandaged arm. He said he was going into the city and he didn't know what he'd do then, a sound of desolation in his voice. We talked and he revealed to me that he was 43 and had just had an operation on his arm. The woman he'd come to be with for Christmas in the Yarra Valley, whom he was saving to buy an engagement ring for, had just thrown him out for no apparent reason. It turned out she was on anti-depressants. From his frame of mind and because of the time of year, I imagined that he might end up in a very sorry way indeed. I suggested that he book into the hotel I was going to, so as to have somewhere to go for the night. That done, it transpired that he hadn't eaten for 24 hours. And so at nearly 11 pm I found myself wheeling my suitcase along the streets of Melbourne CBD in search of a restaurant for a bite to eat. We ended up in an Italian restaurant in Lygon Street, having got there by taxi. Another taxi took us to our hotel where, on booking in, he said goodnight. I shook hands with him and said "Tomorrow will be a new day and you will be united with your family." The clerk finished booking me in and I turned in for the night.

On Christmas morning I went to church with S. as planned and the pre-arranged taxi took me to the Hilton after that. I was early. I went to the venue and asked to be shown my seat. I felt as if someone had punched me in the nose when the attendant showed me to a table for two set for one person. It stood between two tables for larger gatherings of people in the centre of the long narrow room. I had come to be with others. The attendant explained that they were no longer doing the ballroom Christmas parties and this is the only way they could approach the situation. She advised me it was still too early and could I come back at twelve noon. I went to the lounge and ordered a herbal tea. Then a shot of Laphroaig - the single malt scotch that Jack and I liked best. I felt that would help me to face the situation. I took the scotch in to my table. I took a few sips of the whisky. Then just sat there. I could see the other groups of people had filled their plates with seafood. Like an automaton I went to the buffet, took a small plate and placed two oysters (Jack loved oysters), two shrimps and half a crab on it with a slice of lemon. Back at my table I mechanically began eating. It was the first time I actually enjoyed oysters. As I pried the meat from the shrimps and the crab it became harder and harder for me to see what I was doing as, try as I might, I could not stop the tears popping out of my eyes and coursing down my face.

I got up and went to the toilet to cry in private, washed my face and with my second plate of food from the buffet I went back to my table, being careful not to look at anyone. Seated once more I began eating. I shut my eyes to try and centre myself. And the tears began to flow once more. I continued eating through the tears. Then I felt I was a disgrace and tried to pull myself together to get up and walk out of the restaurant. "Are you all right?" A woman's voice. I shook my head. "I miss my husband," I managed to say. "Aww" said the voice and the arms belonging to the voice enveloped me. I sobbed.

"Come, join us," said her husband. "No, we'll join you" he added, seeing my inability to move. And the whole family - father, mother, grandmother and two little ones, moved their table and chairs up to mine. What a gift that was. Despite the fact that they had a long trip ahead of them, they stayed with me till I had finished my plate and returned from the buffet with my desserts. When they left, it was the family to my right who asked me to join them. By the end of lunch, not only had I received warmth and kindness from two families, they had also given me their business cards for me to keep in touch and the second family invited me to join them next Christmas.

I wrote a poem very recently about dear Jack. This Christmas he was with me as I partook of things we had enjoyed together which had me shed copious tears. The poem "With You" will give you a broader picture of our continuing relationship.

### With You

As I walk in the places I walked with you  
I'm amazed at how I meet you anew  
How you're there at the table in a restaurant  
Or in any of our common haunts

Though you've left the world in your physical form  
And at times I feel lost and all forlorn  
Now and then you come to bid me cheer  
Whispering gentle love things in my ear

Then I wonder at all the places we've been  
At all we've done and all we've seen.  
Your presence revives many sights and sounds  
Magical carpet to lands where treasures abound -

Lands to the east and lands to the west,  
Lands dreamed of and lands of test -  
You bring all these as precious fuel  
To ignite our love with eternal renewal.

© Catherine Warner, 10.12.09

## The Way of the Horizon

By Hugo Keukelhaus

*'Two things fill my mind with increasing wonder and awe  
[ ]:  
the starry heavens above me and the moral law within  
me.'*

*Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)*

### I

Heaven does not collide with earth; the world is not nailed shut with boards either. If it were the way of the ones without death, then the heaven would collide with the earth at the horizon. But no thing collides with anything. And no thing is blocking the way. Everything alive enters the other in the way shadows mix; it does not affect them at all. If it were the way of the dead-less, everything would collide with everything else - like billiard balls.

There behind is the horizon. There the earth should stop, there the heaven would collide with it. I walk up to the spot. On arrival I notice, that the line of collision is pushed further. I walk to follow it. I never reach it.

Borderlines are not collision lines They are a sign that one thing lives in and with the other. The earth lives with the heaven: their connections never end. Exchange takes place.

Every boundary is of the nature of the skin or membrane. The boundary is membrane-like: letting through as well as keeping at a distance. Absorbing as well as fending off. It takes in by choice. Yes, the choice which the boundary makes when confronted with the outer, is at the same time and exactly actually this: integration, incorporation.

The skin (as form in which boundary appears, the plane of bordering) is the germination-ground of the sense-organs; their nursery. It should not be too far fetched to interpret the sense-organs as invaginations, the outer surface of the skin turning inward.

In the domain of what is alive, there is no one-after-the-other, no one- outside-the-other. No: 'first this, then that.' No: 'because this is, therefore that is.' Such considerations only have the value of being processes that are worth overcoming. Thus, like the eye perceives, not by being glued in a stare to the object, but through peripheral release from object-ness: so knowing is not staying put and hanging on to knowing-processes (including thought-forms and viewing-frames), but in overcoming them. I can ride on nothing without turning into a ghost. (p51)

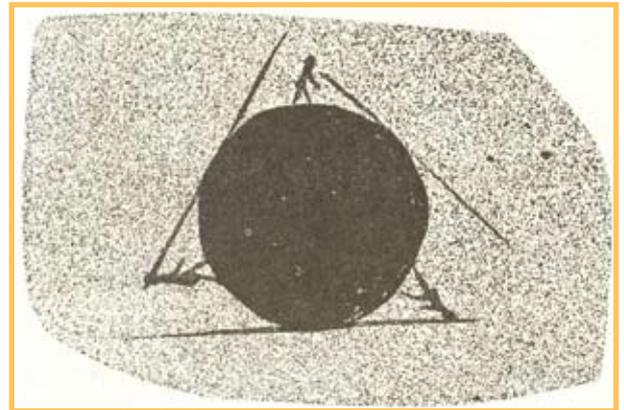
### II

Every time when I want to approach the horizon, it shifts away from me. And after a certain while of walking I have again arrived where I began to walk. Catching up with myself from behind, the One appears and presents itself through its many shapes and forms..

What happens here: boundary between heaven and earth (by the same token boundary as such) running away from me - return of the beginning, presents itself in stereometric space in the form of a sphere.

When I focus on the boundary, the end turns and bends itself toward the beginning.

Meanwhile, though, I have walked, I have experienced, have experienced richness, fullness, alternation, cold and warm, sea and land, day and night, the course of stars, peoples, individuals. All this I experienced when I focussed completely on the boundary between heaven and earth. While I focussed on their boundary, reality welled up, shapes and forms ever rich. In all this, however, I was steadily on the way to myself. I returned home in the farewell. From behind I caught up with myself.



Source:  
Hugo Kuekelhaus. *Das Wort des Johannes*. (1956)  
Page 51 and 67. Provisional translation, Henk Bak.

### Note:

**Henk Bak**

As in space so in time: A day, a week, month or year have their own kind of 'horizon' borders of ever new beginnings. We dread 'deadlines' for the very reason, that they don't allow us to look beyond them. 'Deathless' is Keukelhaus's term for the lifeless eternity of total control and power. On the other hand, we—the living—celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, passings, Samhain or Diwali, New Year. And after each cycle we hope to have become more ourselves, richer in experience, stronger, wiser, with greater gratitude and love...

## Desert Jewel

Angelique Stefanatos (2000)

*This poem was inspired by my work as a zookeeper at the Alice Springs Desert while I was training in Venomous Snake Handling. I was asked to catch and hold my first venomous snake: A Western Brown Snake (Pseudonaja nuchalis) that was a black-headed, orange-bodied colour type. Up close, the unworldly beauty of the snake seemed heightened by the inherited fear and suspicion of snakes in our culture. However once my fear was overcome, I felt an incredible connection with this creature of God's.*



Photo: Western Brown Snake, taken by Greg Fyfe

Primeval creature rippling like a wave across sand.  
Ancestral dreamings of carved gorges  
and watery elements.  
Scales glistening like dew in the morning light.

Innocent child-like wonder or sinful, Biblical temptation?  
Wanting to touch, explore, experience or  
fear, guilt, loathing?  
A mixture of all aspects fighting within me.

After watching, waiting, assessing the risks, I am ready.  
Fear controlled by my will.  
The beauty of the creature distracting me,  
tempting me to abandon myself and touch it.  
I calculate and time it perfectly, then plunge  
in beyond the point of no return...

I have it in my hands now.  
The cool, smooth body and the sensuous way  
it moves reminds me of water,  
a living wave,  
the guardian of water holes.

My ignorance is replaced by knowledge.  
From potential victim, I become powerful.  
My fear is replaced by overwhelming love  
pouring from my heart.

With fear no longer blinding me,  
I see its beautiful, multicoloured scales,  
like the sparkling jewels of a mystical kingdom...  
that I am now holding in my hands.

## Snippet from Samhain, 2009

Angelique Stefanatos

*The following is an extract from a lecture from Shin given at Samhain - Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2009. These notes are not word for word, as they were taken with the help of an English translator.*

Shin was talking about Cernnunos' RAM-HEADED SERPENT STAFF: SAMAN-SEGOMAN, which Shin carried into the room with him as he entered (Shin's staff is made from ivy wood).

Saman-Segoman is a symbol of a new beginning, and Cernnunos also accompanies Saman-Segoman. The golden head of the Ram represents the spring of the Golden Epoch. The long, wavy serpent body of the staff shows THE WAY, a path from the beginning to the NOW (from the snake's tail moving towards the ram's head). There is a golden secret; MIN-AMIN is the Ram, offering the Lamb. The ram is also a symbol of reproduction, and the Ram's horns are also a weapon to defend the light - with the golden horns of evolution, evolution, evolution.

The staff is a vegetable serpent (ivy)! At first the ivy gets its power from the tree as it climbs up to the light, but then when the tree is old and weak, the ivy supports the tree! Saman-Segoman is the Kundalini (is Shin), and that is why Cernnunos carries the staff. The path of the ivy staff and its length represents galaxy after galaxy (at some stage Shin indicated a spiraling movement forward with the staff in his hand) right up to the Ram's head - the Earth (here and now?). Saman-Segoman is gliding through all times, and always has the victory of life and love. He doesn't know his origin (because he comes from infinity). All his offerings (his magnificent body) are his creations. From the Egyptians, the Celts etc there is the Good Serpent who is the creator; the serpent that carries your offerings forward. If we've done bad things they carry them too (this is the bad serpent that holds back, that cannot rise). Because serpents can be dangerous, they can cause panic in us, but then we forget the good serpents; their body - etheric body - allows them to glide through time. Ivy climbs and gives contact between the highest light and the lowest ground/ rocks. It CONNECTS! These plants have something special for evolution. The good snakes carry all their jewels of creation behind them (like a comet!) but the bad snakes carry and show all the sins from the past.



Photo: albino snake, image taken by Greg Fyfe

## Kundalini - Serpent Power

Swami Kipananda

*Quoted from The Sacred Power - A seeker's guide to Kundalini, Siddha Yoga Publications 1995, (Chapter1).*

...the regenerative power of Kundalini has been represented universally by the image of the serpent. Although in the West the serpent has come to stand for man's sinfulness, the mystic traditions take another view. According to the mythologist Joseph Campbell, the usual association of the serpent "is not with corruption, but with physical and spiritual health. It is symbolic of the power that casts off death to be resurrected".

The modern French novelist and dramatist Romain Rolland once wrote, "I have discovered the key to the lost staircase, the staircase in the wall that spirals like the coils of a serpent, that winds from the subterranean depths of the ego, up to the high terraces crowned by the stars."

Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the sixteenth-century mystic, wrote in his autobiography that there was a period when he would often see something very beautiful in the air near him, which gave him great consolation. It appeared to be shaped like a serpent and was shining with light. That vision lasted for many days, and soon afterward he began to experience great changes in his soul, and knew that he was embarking on a new life.

The Aztecs of ancient Mexico worshipped the Plumed Serpent, Quetzalcoatl, known to the Mayas as Kukulcan. This feathered serpent-deity was regarded as the divine force of transformation and regeneration.

On the original alter of the Church of Saint Ambrose in Milan, dating from the fourth century, is a stone carving of a serpent coiled three and a half times - the same form in which we find the sleeping Kundalini in the Indian Tradition.

And among the Australian aborigines, "the medicine man receives his power from a rainbow serpent or a water snake which can be seen in the sky. It is this snake that makes the man a medicine man..."



Aboriginal Rock Art Rainbow Snake

Man must let his true nature blossom, for there is inside him a light that asks only to shine.

Tseng-tzu

## Development of Soul Awareness

Henk Bak

With the rise of individualism, especially in Western culture, our inner life became increasingly precious and private. Over the centuries it was often suffocated by lack of airing and sharing. Since Freud our souls have been gradually allowed and enabled to open again, first in doctor-patient relationships, later between therapist and client (e.g. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow) and finally in group therapy and self-development courses. Since the 1970's the emphasis in this work on the soul has shifted from 'how can I heal my hurts?' to 'how to heal to myself in order to heal the world?' (e.g. Landmark education; Robert Sardello). This meant not only a shift from inner to outer world, but also a shift from someone else to oneself as responsible for one's healing: from psychology to spirituality, from soul to the spirit I AM. With Nonviolent Communication (Marshall B. Rosenberg) a spiritual impulse makes its way in social life - on many levels: politics, business, families, relationships etc. - through which empathic connection and sharing become an instrument for peace.

A similar development happens in stages of individual development. The first half of one's life centres on growing up, getting educated, travel, start a family, build a career, all for the sake of one's own development. During the second half one works on oneself for the sake of the world.

For the Greeks 'soul' was 'psyche' 'butterfly', fragile, airy, beautiful, shadowy... For Medieval man 'soul' was a garden, with virtues to be cultivated... In modern times 'soul' became space, a landscape, widening by lowering the horizon, reflective of moods, tranquil or stormy, like the weather. The Twelve Virtue paintings by Carol Fraser and her meditations on them are a beautiful example of imagination as key to this our inner landscape. With the great novelists of the nineteenth century and then psychoanalysis, the soul went underground, subconsciousness like deep waters or dormant volcanoes, or in more material terms water-works with reservoirs, pipes, valves and taps: metaphors reflecting developments of material urban comfort and linking soul with what happens in our organism on a vital or physiological level, hence the near identification of soul with digestive or genital processes. The heart becomes a pump, the brain a computer...

To report what happens inside us has become a way of coping, managing, developing, learning and activating our soul-life. The way to gain access to what is alive within us is through images, metaphors, not thoughts or concepts. It is observations, sensings, experiences that allow us to 'commune' -icate what is happening. Karl-Heinz Stockhausen once composed an orchestral piece in which every player with their instrument had to think of an organ in a neighbour's organism, then a tissue, then a cell, then a molecule, then an atom... the resulting sound was for the composer the most 'ecstatically destructive' music he had ever experienced. He had named this composition 'communion', implying that by

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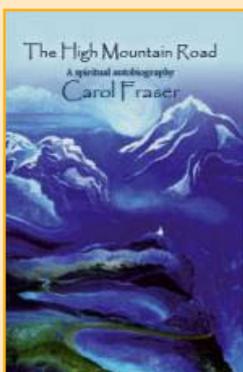
accessing one another's internal organism with thoughts, the whole orchestra would be linked. However the experience that resulted was destructive and explosive which perhaps demonstrates what happens when one enters into inner life with lifeless concepts.

In contrast, it has been said that in his music Schumann was in touch with his own suffering, while Schubert was in touch with the suffering of the world...And the result is a totally different quality of music.

The didgeridoo can evoke the creation of the world, cosmic, earthly, rocks, water, winds, fire, life... Shin's drumming can guide us through our organism and chakras. Meditations and movements, dances and songs can lead to experiences that open up what is hidden in our inner life, soul-wise and body-wise.

Sharing personal observations, feelings and experiences in a seminar situation, or in articles, then, becomes a training in discernment, in feeling into situations to find out what is relevant and helpful in the process of learning together. Discernment here is not meant as judgement, rather as a form of perceptive tact. In different situations different things might be 'relevant and helpful'.

The more we can share our experiences, feelings etc, with authenticity, the less likely other members of a group will feel called upon to come to the rescue, to judge, to give good advice, etc. And the more we, as a group, can listen for the essence of the person, the easier it is for that person to find his or her authenticity. And the more the world is poised toward a collective, all pervading shift in consciousness, the more the art of sharing and listening, of what one of our friends calls 'comparing notes', is mastered, the more we will be prepared as WE for this coming epoch.



PS.I found *The High Mountain Road: A Spiritual Autobiography* by Carol Fraser, to be a good example of objectively sharing a whole range of observations, experiences, feelings, learning and understanding, search for spiritual guidance and finding Gideon and then Shin and working with their teachings etc. Very down to earth, warm-hearted, witty and clear. Through its objectivity and

authenticity, and written by a person who lived through many of the rough and disorienting situations of our time, a valuable witness to a diversity of spiritual teachings which are not diminished by what Gideon and Shin are bringing, but become richer and clearer in this new and integrating context...

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## Sharing from Experience

Helma Bak

One Spring morning a magpie was carolling in the eucalyptus tree close to the house. The sky was a clear light blue, the sun not too strong. The bird sound had a beautiful warm mellow tone which entered my heart directly. It opened a gate so I could step out of the monotonous thinking about difficult life problems that bothered me. I sighed and relaxed and realised that cheerfulness was more important than depression. With depression I close myself off from the world. With cheerfulness I ray into the world, ready for contact and empathy with this world.

Through speaking from experience a different element enters the conversation. A direct feeling reality which comes from the integration of one's feelings in relation to a problem, for instance a learning situation, a comic situation, or friendship in general or the death of a loved one, in other words: life. Not about it, but life itself, as it is or was. The art is to bring what you have felt and learnt from a life situation in an objective way, an empathic way. Then others are enriched even by the most difficult personal circumstances because one is in touch with human essence, empathic reality.

For instance, a friend tells you she is very depressed. Your sharing can be acknowledging how hard it is in the darkness and loneliness of a depression, how there is seemingly no way out, no possibility of sharing and contact. Or it can be a simple response like "Gosh, that's a difficult place to be!" Your voice will indicate that you know that place.

It is not always necessary to bring the picture from which your essence grew. The richness of it will be in your voice.

Another area where speaking from experience has an advantage is a 'Listening Conversation', where a group of people converse with each other about a specific topic and pay attention to really listening to each other. Say the topic is friendship. Then you will see that sharing from experience, from the heart's insights into friendship, brings deeper understanding, and with less words, than only sharing your thoughts about it.

It still is so, that many people are used to conventional thinking about realities in the language of reporting via the (abstract) thinking realm. Though we are trained in ordered thinking, we are not trained in expressing ordered feeling.

Objectively talking from personally gained experience is somewhat unusual. But as empathy with oneself and others is growing the sharing from experience will also grow. It is good to build up familiarity with this approach together with some friends.

Women used to grow into it quicker than men, but today that might be different.

## NVC (2): Communication That Blocks Compassion

Tineke Bak

### Introduction

Marshall Rosenberg comments that most people notice two things about his work. First that it is simple, and secondly that it is very difficult to put into practice.

I have found it fiendishly difficult. While I read and reread the books, and listen to the tapes and YouTube videos, I find myself bathing in the life-giving promise of giving and receiving empathy and compassion free from judgement, demand, denial or rewards. But when it comes to practising it in real life, I feel embarrassingly like a baby trying to walk and falling down with every attempt. Rather than bathing in the bliss of having one's heart fully heard and understood, I feel more like I am in a white water raft bouncing and slicing, diving and swirling through the rapids of conversation, going much too fast to identify and translate any of the judgements and demands flying through my mind and through the conversation.

After 30 years of journaling I prided myself on being in touch with my feelings, and now I find that it was mostly 30 years of analysis and judgement and diagnoses. Chapter 2 of "Nonviolent Communication: a Language of Life" gives an introduction into how widely our language is infiltrated by judgement, and thought, rather than observation and heart. This article is my attempt to weave together some of the questions and exercises of this chapter in the Workbook.

### Life Alienating Communication

There are many forms of communication that seem to breed dissent, spark judgement, or fill one with fear and guilt, to name but a few 'life-alienating' ways of communicating. Marshall B. Rosenberg coined the term 'life-alienating communication' to refer to all forms of language that distract us from our natural ground state of being: compassion. He identifies four main forms of this we can keep a sharp lookout for:

- Diagnosis (includes moralistic judgements, evaluations, put downs, insults, labels, criticisms, comparisons, blaming),
- Denial of responsibility (e.g. making external factors responsible),
- Demand (not giving the other person a chance to say no without judgement), and
- Deserve (deserving better, more, or deserving punishment or suffering).

These forms of language permeate our everyday thinking and speaking like salt in the sea - they are everywhere. Here are just a few common examples:

- Judgement: *you are inconsiderate.*
- Comparison: *I'm not as good as she is.*
- Denial: *I can't do that, it is against the regulations.*
- Demand: *I need you to do this for me.*

Marshall Rosenberg believes all that judging and comparing, all that blaming self and others, all that analysing and demanding is because we have been educated to deny our own feelings and needs. It has been a tragic education over centuries or longer to express our feelings and needs in ways that makes it more and more unlikely that the people with whom we communicate this way, can actually hear what we really need and what we really feel. A classic example is that when we feel most vulnerable, we lash out and exclaim: *you idiot!* At that time what we need most is empathy and understanding from that person, and our judgement and labelling and blaming is going to make it almost impossible for that person to respond to us favourably.

If someone yells at me - *you idiot, give me that, I'll do it* - even if they do it politely (e.g. *look, that is not a good way to do it, I'll show you how it should be done*) I might well give in - but it is likely to be out of fear, or guilt or shame, and over time my good will is worn away, and it is easy for me to become resentful and feel less and less good about myself.

Rosenberg points out that there are value judgements (qualities we value in life, like honesty, integrity, clarity) and moralistic judgements, which usually arise when we encounter people or behaviours that do not match our values, such as: I value community and safety on the road - and then when something occurs on the way to work I might say *'slow drivers are bad'* or *'aggressive drivers are really bad'*.

Denial of responsibility is also insidious, particularly because we are educated in our culture that other people's behaviour is the cause of our own feelings, so we come out with statements like: *'you made me mad, it is your fault that I kicked the cat'*. Some of these statements of denial are quite subtle and pervasive: *'I have to work because it is expected of me'*. Bureaucratic language is often filled with denials of responsibility (*'No, we can't replace this item for you because it is company policy and the government won't let us do it.'*)

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A demand on the other hand directly or indirectly threatens the listener with blame or punishment if they fail to comply. *'If you do not behave properly, you will be a bad person and I will withdraw my affection and compassion....'* *'If you do not accept this job description I will make sure that you are not hired in any other position in this organisation.'* Demands in all shapes or forms are great for generating fear and resentment. Mostly we either walk out, or we comply and suppress our own life energy, becoming more and more depressed.

Nonviolent communication invites us to listen to these judgements and denials, these comparisons and demands, and all the ways in which we tragically communicate our feelings when the beauty of our needs is not met. But it invites us to listen to the heart of the speaker (or our own selves) and not the head, it invites us to hear the feelings and needs of the speaker and not the judgements and blaming of the pain they experience when their need is not met. When we hear the need behind the judgement, the denial, the demand, we are listening much closer to the soul, the heart, the centre of the person's being. There we can hear their dignity, their wholeness, their beauty - even if their language is alienating.

It asks us to translate the language of the head into the language of the heart. To do this it is important to first separate the trigger (event) from the internal response (feelings and needs). For example:

*You are inconsiderate* - might become: when you have the radio on so loud I cannot hear anything else, I feel frustrated because I need calm.

*I'm not as good as she is* - might become: when she writes such a touching poem, I feel overwhelmed and insecure and I need to reconnect with my own trust in myself before I can write.

*I can't do that, it is against the regulations* - might become: I choose not to do that, because I value the regulations in place and I need to honour that.

*I need you to do this for me* - might become: I have this job that needs doing urgently, would you be willing to do it for me?

*If you do not accept this job description I will make sure that you are not hired in any other position in this organization* - might become: if you do not accept this job description, I feel very frustrated and fearful and because I desperately need some hope that I can find another solution to this problem that would meet both our needs for safety and acceptance, and would you be willing to accept this job description as it stands?

*You made me mad, it is your fault that I kicked the cat* - might become: when you said what you did I felt very hurt

and frustrated, full of pent up anger, I needed some relief from this anger and I kicked the cat. I am sad that I lashed out at the cat and wasn't able to tell you honestly how I feel and what I need.

*I have to work because it is expected of me* - might become: I choose to work to fulfil my need to be a part of my community and share in its values.

*No, we can't replace this item for you because it is company policy and the government won't let us do it* - might become: No, we cannot replace this item because we have made an agreement not to replace items and I have a need to honour that agreement.

*Slow drivers are bad* - might become: when someone drives slowly, I feel irritated because I have a need for efficiency and safety on the road.

*Aggressive drivers are really bad* - might become: when someone drives fast and without looking so see what other drivers are doing, I feel anxious because I have a need for safety and equity on the road.

Marshall Rosenberg tells of sharing these concepts and empathic listening for feelings and needs to Nigerian chieftains who were waging bloody tribal wars. When one of them heard this he exclaimed, 'If we could speak like this we wouldn't need to kill each other anymore!' When I hear and practice this way of understanding myself and other people, I feel a huge relief as well, a hope that I no longer have to travel this journey of life with the burden of my heart essentially unheard, not understood by another heart or even by my own. Even if others have not learnt the knack of translating judgements into universal needs for me, I can offer myself the translation service and keep my own heart's burden much lighter. And when I do this really authentically for myself, I notice how much more space there is in me for the individual needs of others to be heard, freely and with open interest.

Sources:

**Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life**, Marshall B. Rosenberg, PuddleDancer Press, 2003  
**Nonviolent Communication: Companion Workbook** (Chapter 2), Lucy Leu, PuddleDancer Press, 2003  
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Light must come from inside.  
 You cannot ask the darkness to leave,  
 you must turn on the light.

Sogyal Rinpoche

## Secret of Renewal Seminar with Shin January 2006 (Fri. morning)

### Shin (transcribed/edited by Henk & Tineke Bak)

...In integral learning another important element is that we repeat, we go over what we just did. One or two could recall back and tell us all what it was exactly that we did since we came into the tent?

[What followed was a conversation during which various participants attempted to recall what they remembered and what they experienced. Sometimes Shin elaborated on someone's comments.]

**Participant:** We drew awareness to ourselves, ...bringing awareness to the environment and to ourselves, and we have to listen to ourselves and concentrate ....

**Shin:** Thank you.

**Participant:** We were in silence, for a time. Then you came in and you began to speak to us about the importance of 'not doing' in Integral learning. And from there you introduced the activity of [clap] interrupting, at various times during the day. We did a little exercise and experiment with that and you were giving some more hints about how we can be more present to our work in daily life, more calm. And this is one way of doing it, interrupting after something.... You told us about the exercise, about arriving in the body. We formed a flower about our head with our hands and moved in different ways; we imagined, felt the flower, the body rose up, higher and higher, ever transcending the plane of consciousness that we are in at the moment and finding this shining, shimmering, tender soul body, slipping down along the ray into the body, filling up the body like water in a pot, and then we were rocking a little forward and backwards

**Shin:** Thank you also. Perhaps a third [recapitulation] - did we forget something or can we point out perhaps some specific elements and I ask you very much because this is also a part of integral learning but anyway it is just good if we hear each other.

**Participant:** I would like to elaborate on the exercise, the doing [aspect] of getting more energy and some less stress: the flower was the first part of it. And then the moving forwards and backwards. There was a point where we allowed the etheric body to take over, so the movement did it by itself and then tended to be smaller and then we stopped completely. It felt the way from above to below. We didn't forget the flower. Then we moved from left to right, did the same thing, noting the etheric body taking over and the movement becoming smaller. We rested in the move-



Photo: Henk Bak, study in orange and blue.

ment and there was a very interesting sentence which was new to me: that rhythm is the key to understanding ritual and ceremony and culture. And then the ray again, then relaxing, finding a position which your body wants after that work, and then we were asked to concentrate on particular parts of the body and - just as a little interruption in there, I found it really interesting that the word for the container of the sword or the sheath has so many possibilities.

**Shin:** Thank you very much. Now it would be beautiful if we could give some first glimpse of experiences that we can share with each other, for example: in this exercise or in that activity we were doing, I could feel this or that. Now you could say: 'But what do you want after such a small beginning? How could we experience anything when we are only studying how to do something and we have not had time to feel anything?' [laughter] I know on one side this is naturally true, but it can be so that just in the first beginnings of practising that very little things can occur, and we should treat them like a seed. We should not forget that the little elements and the most tender elements, the most refined elements can become very great, very strong. We should not neglect or deny or so easily pass over these little things. If you affirm, honour, respect your small experiences, they can grow, or they can create a door opening to higher, deeper, more beautiful and strong experiences. But if you neglect them, if you forget the easy happiness, small warmths, little loving and lovely things, the beautiful or clear things, then you must not be astonished that after a while you will not feel anything anymore because you gave your inner spaces and to the other spaces outside yourself the clear sign: 'I am not interested', I am not in. Sometimes you don't trust yourself. Sometimes there are hidden poisons of anxieties or of hatred against yourself. Perhaps not in your case but in other cases, which just don't allow you [to be in yourself]...

So that was a little introduction; we shall come across this theme again. What do you allow yourself? What do you not allow? Why do you allow this? Why do you allow other things? And why are some automatic behaviours holding your consciousness and your experiences in little frame. Who is the indicator? Who is the judge? Who is the one who allows you to come to happiness, to a higher fulfilment of love, of knowledge, of noble things, noble purposes?

Now please, share with us what you experienced.

**Participant:** I had an experience that I could imagine a flower on my head and was helped because I was picking flowers this

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morning. Then I got stuck and I breathed into it and then I remembered yesterday I was watching the falcons circling slowly up and up into the thermals and I just thought about it and just let my energy move up.

**Shin:** Thank you. We are still listening. She was sharing her experience and perhaps we got it rather quickly intellectually, but the soul needs a more time. So we give a little more time for us, for her, and in respect also for the next person. So - no express train, we are not obliged or pressured to speak and we have time to hear.

**Participant:** I have to say that in making the flower I had the sense of reconnecting with somebody who was lost and I had tears, in part it was very precious and being in the ray felt important, precious.

**Shin:** This is wonderful. Thank you.

**Participant:** When we entered I almost experienced the whispering of the wind and I felt my etheric somehow became connected with that and so the movement contained in the structure felt very much like the wind even when you were mentioning different parts of the body ...

**Shin:** Thank you. Let us remember a little more of what was said because - imagine how it was with the Aborigines if one said something in the old times, not nowadays, they are also busier than in the old times. Back then one could sit for half an hour with what was said by one person, only then perhaps one other person would say something concerning these studies. Naturally, when solving a problem it is not exactly the same, but worldwide, in respect of what one said it was done in quite another way than it is these days. The deeper you listen the more time you need. It is only the intellect, not only the intellect, but mostly in our time it is the intellect that takes things very quickly. And it must go fast because if you always need half an hour for this and that you will never reach a higher position in the professions.

**Participant:** I noticed when you visited the details of our bodies, we were first asked to visit our right eyebrow and I didn't have one at all. And I had no experience of the right eyebrow. I put my finger up there to reassure myself that it was actually there. [laughter] After that I could be there in the body, in the feeling of having an eyebrow. There was an experience of having an eyebrow and then my consciousness realised there was a very definite choice placed between my picture of the eyebrow, the idea that I have an eyebrow or any other thing and the actual visiting of that place as a reality, as a thing that I could feel. So for the rest of that exercise when we had to visit our fin-



Photo: Henk Bak, study in orange and blue

gernail and different places, I noticed that I would sometimes get an image of the place immediately, but then it was a choice whether I was at the image of the place or the place itself. So I found myself working between the imagination in a sense and the sensation. And I was trying to develop the sensation because I felt that was much more present to the body. So this tiny moment became quite a research for me.

**Shin:** Thank you very much. Interesting, what one is doing or how it happens. Because both elements are there. What you are doing and what happens. It is like a conversation but it is a conversation within the space of your self, of your own being, not someone else; it is still yourself but different depths and areas of yourself.

**Participant:** I had so much going on in my mind, I really appreciated you saying that respecting and noticing small things, allowing them to grow and allowing that respect for something so small. I remember that when I was in the process—and I wasn't commenting about head not right, this not right, that's a bit soft—I had a moment of feeling really fantastic. And then I judged it like somehow that wasn't OK, and then I was in discussion as to why it was not OK. So when you said 'what do I allow myself and what don't I allow myself' I felt like that was in the realm of 'I am not allowing myself to feel good, to feel peace, feel open'. Really, thank you for just reminding me to recognize this.

**Shin:** There is a richness present with all the friends here, and in beginning to share we can slowly learn how to make a discernment between some illusions and some very personal elements, and laws, elements which always appear, again and again, in thousand variations, but having a special form or heart or way of manifesting. And then we also have to thank you because it is not easy to dare to say 'look, it was like this for me'. This is already a process which is strengthening the real contact with the I AM presence.

You feel something. You remember this and you try to tell it. But if you want to do it concretely and very well you have to follow the way you experienced it the first time again, which is at the same time a gift for the other as well as a gift for yourself, because you reclaim it through the way you repeat it for yourself. You don't lose it as quickly as when you have the one experience and then run on to the next. So in this work we do this again and again, and always a little longer. The activity will be always a little longer in order to come into the experience, then to experience what we experience, and to exchange the experiences again.

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Why do I proceed in this way? First I give only a little time for experiences, I indicate it, we go there - and I thank you for this because it is a matter of trust. You shall never be disappointed in trusting here. You follow trustingly, and already I am moving on to the next thing. For some it might have been too short. Don't be angry with me because it was too short, but I know how these activities are working, and in the beginning it is a protection for those who are co-working when I give a shorter time to it. Next time when we already know a little more, we will have a little more time for the experiences. We don't glide away, but we gain from it. We can have a real little harvest, even if perhaps only a small harvest. We [proceed] as if we are in a city, we have never been in before. But in the evening, from the hotel or where ever you are sleeping, we might travel down a street, and when you walk along some road in order not to loose yourself, you go back after a while. And you remember where it was, and you find your way back next time. When you already know this part very well then you can explore again.

You can gain the whole for yourself. You can extend your consciousness, and you can reach more and more parts of this city. You, yourself, are this city. Somehow you explore your own house, your own city, your own forest, whatever name you want to give this. When you want to go to attain the highest oneness with God and the highest oneness with your real entity-identity, you must dare to learn about the other places of your self. You are not just what you have experienced up till now. You are much more than the space you have explored and experienced already. That is why I told you that 'you have a big house and you might know some of the spaces in it'. This is not meant in a negative sense, and it is not intended to wound anyone, or to point to how low or unconscious someone is. On the contrary: be awake, be as interested as a child in having a knowledge of your full house, or more and more place, because what are we here for?

The animal cannot do this. In some transformational times, like we are experiencing now, the angels can give an indication, can push something, give some new energies and impulses of life, and then we will see some mutations in the animal world or a mutation in the plant-world even, but the animal itself can not explore in the same way. It is living but perhaps much better off living in its own space and time and world. The animal has the time, if we let the animal have its time, it has the time to explore its life.

Human beings nowadays, more so than in older times, are in danger of losing themselves—in always running to other things, everything one has to do, everything one must fulfill, because of thousands of reasons. Often we lose, in everything we are doing, the one for whom it was intended. In time before machines were the main element of the world, people did not have the machinery of the industrial world within. Because when you are so busy, so nervous, in time stress, in the stress of having no time, this is a contradiction.

Time is not money, time is life and we should come back to gain life. That means also to give others time, to spend your time. And also to understand what time really is, because it is not this. When I asked what was the time now, to have a measure of what we can do together... somehow it is an interruption. In India I always try not to work like this and there it is easier to do that, because for me this is not time. I have another measure of time. This is just a help in order to measure a certain amount, a part of the sun-movement, or the moon-movement which we want to spend together.

In integral learning is not only a learning in the space we know, but it is a learning with an interest in understanding the conditions of other spaces. It is not only a learning in a particular time-measure, but in the time stream, in the stream of time. And to understand that, for example, an oak tree lives in a completely different time than you do. For me it is absolutely clear from the beginning that when I live in the time of a tree, I am just living in different time-space than when I am living with human beings, or than when I am living with a cockatoo or an elephant or a turtle, because all three can reach a very old age. Or if I am just with the fly on my nose or on my shoulder and then my ear in another moment.

And the tendency of our time is still - just as in the last three centuries - to understand only the time of the human being and measure everything according to this time measurement. It has not been always like this, especially for the aborigines, for example, who speak a lot about dream time. Not only in the sense of what you are dreaming about at one time or another, or having dreams, for those who still live in this consciously, the time, the space, the consciousness offers other qualities than for those who are living under current conditions.



Photo: Henk Bak, studies in orange and blue

## Warringah - The Sea

### Naiura (Tales of the Dreamtime, 2004)

When time began - after the land had cooled and become hard - all the lands were one, with many lakes and rivers, many trees, plants and animals, and many tribes.

However, the tribes had little respect for tribal boundaries and often crossed onto each other's land without permission to kill the animals and take whatever they wanted. This led to much fighting and killing. Even related tribes - those who shared a common ancestor - began to fight.

Things became so bad that Baiame, the Great Spirit, summoned all the tribal spirits to Oobi Oobi, the sacred mountain in Bullima, to discuss the situation. Sadly, even the spirits began to argue amongst themselves.

Baiame became very angry, and in a voice that sounded like thunder, he called them to order.

"I see little chance for the people when the spirits themselves cannot agree," he told them. Then added, "perhaps it would solve the problem if I destroyed everything."

"I agree," said Maamu, the leader of the evil spirits, "that would be best."

"Oh, foolish Maamu," Baiame sighed, "I expected nothing less from you. For it is you and your evil followers that have caused most of this trouble." He paused for a moment to consider the situation, then added, "But for once, you are right. I shall destroy everything that I have created, which, of course, includes all those present."

This had the effect that the Great Spirit intended.

Maamu was shocked. "I didn't mean that you should destroy us also."

"Why shouldn't I?" Baiame asked. "Once everything has been destroyed your existence will no longer be necessary."

It took a moment for Baiame's words to sink in, then, as one, the spirits wailed in despair and began to weep.

Such was their weeping, their tears fell from the sky in torrents that flooded the land.

This continued for many, many days and, when it ceased, all that remained was the highest land surrounded by many miles of open water that they called Warringah.

This is how the sea was formed, dividing the world into separate nations, allowing the people to make their own laws so that individual tribes could share the land, respect each other's boundaries and live in peace.



## The Great Pumpkin

Nasreddin Hodja was lying in the shade of an ancient walnut tree. His body was at rest, but, befitting his calling as an imam, his mind did not relax. Looking up into the mighty tree he considered the greatness and wisdom of Allah.

"Allah is great and Allah is good," said the Hodja, "but was it indeed wise that such a great tree as this be created to bear only tiny walnuts as fruit? Behold the stout stem and strong limbs. They could easily carry the great pumpkins that grow from spindly vines in yonder field, vines that cannot begin to bear the weight of their own fruit. Should not walnuts grow on weakly vines and pumpkins on sturdy trees?"

So thinking, the Hodja dozed off, only to be awakened by a walnut that fell from the tree, striking him on his forehead.

"Allah be praised!" he exclaimed, seeing what had happened. "If that had been a pumpkin that fell on my head, it would have killed me for sure! God is merciful! He has rearranged nature only to spare my life."

- *Things are as they should be.*
- *Man is unable to understand just how complex nature actually is.*
- *To achieve the fruit (spiritual perfection) one needs to be humble as the big fruit grow on the vines which are on the ground. Tall trees cannot bear the weight of big fruit and hence only produce walnuts.*
- *What we think should be best, and what really is best, are often very different things.*

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