

Wisdom Reflections from Abuja, Nigeria

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The most enduring motivation for doing right is love not fear. Therefore self control is not forcefully controlling yourself or repressing your selfhood. Self control is letting go, widening the space between stimulus and response through consciousness. This is the highest expression of liberty and a sign of spiritual growth.

In the end mundane wants are illusory. When gratification is met what is left is an emptiness. Which makes you wonder why you struggled so hard. You complained, you fought, only to find out that what you had been seeking all these years that you thought your life depended on was not as it seemed. What then truly matters? The highest calling, the highest need to be met that would never be consumed by gratification is the longing for spiritual growth, for self realisation. Therefore, what would be more realistic is first starting with what truly matters. The things that truly matter are connected to your being, your essence; the source of all that you are and will ever be. In the end, externalities will always correspond to you, your inner reality, your being. Therefore, the greatest service you can ever do to yourself and the human race is to realise yourself.

As you grow older, maturing in mind, you would begin to achieve inner congruence and pure alignment with your Self and true nature. You would realise your Self back to the time of your innocence from social fabrications and cultural forces. Great peace, joy and contentment envelope you in this reclaimed reality. In the first place it is the unshedding of that which is not you that is truly frightening and full of suffering. If you would cross this bridge, you will arrive in the Paradise of your Self and your true potentiality.

Life is, just is. Your window to what is is your being. And if your being sources harmony, peace, equanimity, contentment, balance, poise, and truth, it will see what is as is. Therefore there will hardly be any distortion of your perception of reality. In this you will transcend much trivialities, worrying over nothing and maintaining your equanimity.

Each individual irrespective of the social construct she springs out from, the racial-cultural forces that shaped her, the environment that nurtured her, must at a point

in her growth transcend all these forces to locate the universal self. Catholic and not partisan in its ramifications the self is the greatest identity to identify with rather than race, culture or nation. The self does not need to prove itself, defend itself, fight for its right per se. It's effect is universal and if it speaks in Canada and is heard, so will it make its mark in Taiwan in the same magnitude and power.

I was walking back home yesterday night when I recalled an author's explanation about 'wickedness' and 'evil'. Before I say what that author said, I would like to quickly say that the terms 'wickedness' and 'evil,' and especially wickedness, are words that are endangered and will soon disappear out of our vocabulary as we humans grow and evolve. I think that in the next century the understanding of these terminologies would have come to the mainstream and replaced with more appropriate words. My own thesis is that wickedness is not as it is understood to be. It is more one-sided, always from the perspective of the victim and observer. It is the victim and the observer that judge the 'wicked'. But what about the 'wicked' or 'evil doer', how does he or she see their self?

If we look into the mind of the so called 'wicked', we see someone who could be any of helpless, frightened, defensive, escapist (of reality), bereft of self esteem, a distorted sense of self (an exaggerated and unrealistic sense of self probably as a defence against not being good enough in their deep subconscious; dismal sense of self), rudimentary positive value system, an unconscious and ignorant mind/self, has given up on life/hope, immature, possessing habitually built destructive values based on ignorance, also an internal sufferer, paranoid and on and on. All signs point to a fundamental weakness. A mind that is psychologically ill and or poorly developed.

When you understand this reality, you would stop using the term wickedness and stop calling people wicked. Rather, you would see the world through their own perspective of seeing and appreciate where they are coming from, their history and habitual patterns of treading the wrong mind map. Then you would be slow to judge, otherwise you reveal the level of your own ignorance.

Finally, I will now say what that author I mentioned in the beginning said – something like "all evil is ignorance" (once you reflect on these words you realise its profundity).

In the 21st Century spirituality is realizing a new meaning. It estranges itself from mainstream religion to grasp the profound completeness and sacredness of the Self and inner reality. Meaning in the new spirituality is intrinsic and not dependent on external validations from gods, superhumans and culture. It is a path trod in courage and the daring to transcend one's family upbringing, culture in other to find one's true self. It is a daring to liberate oneself and locate one's true identity throwing off the suppressive weight of imposed laws and rules that crush one's humanity, truncate potentiality and self expression to live a superficial and

inauthentic life that will eventually lead to neurosis or psychosis. True spirituality is liberating and expansive. It overflows with peak experiences. It is where right doing is not based on fear of punishment or want of reward but based on self knowledge, and love for humanity and knowledge of the laws of life. It is living life as it is now to the best of one's ability not expecting that things will be better when living in a golden house after death. It is fully stretching your psychological and spiritual growth to the best of your ability while on this earth and realising fulfilment and flourishing in the here and now. It is accepting the truism that suffering and misfortune is an aspect of reality that is indifferent to your religion, level of spiritual growth, status, gender, wealth or whether you are "good" or "bad". True spirituality is maturity. True spirituality is love and disciplined love for that matter. It is the height of human aspiration and everything outside it is a shadow or caricature.

The question of equality and superiority is a realistic question. And the way to tackle this question is to first accept it rather than being defensive... Being nullifies all figments of superiority perceived by the subject or projected from the object or entity in question. Yet in another sense, self awareness reveals our true state to us, fostering deep humility to acknowledge that indeed the individual or entity in question is superior in an aspect(s) of reality but definitely not in Being. In the end, in putting the conflict in our minds (of equality or superiority) to rest, we must come into the light of Being.

The first impression is not what really matters. What matters is essence.

In that first communication you might have been misconstrued or even considered as trustworthy. All that is inconsequential. Being and essence will prove your credibility or disprove it in the long arm of time. Never try to prove yourself after a wrong impression has been inadvertently made – just Be. Your character will reveal its true nature over time as circumstances unravel your Being and true essence.

A quick question that may arise in one's mind is what is "Being"? Have you ever felt the collapse of your own ego boundaries? What happens in that brief moment when you communicate with someone, especially someone you are deeply in love with or are in awe of, love and deeply respect? When your ego boundaries collapse during these moments, you access Being, your true essence. The frequency of this access across time reveals the level of your own growth and evolution as a human being.

On my way to work this morning, my musings centred on principles, their precision, integrity and unbending stance to all phenomena pervading the universe, in exactness and power. Principles are almost imperceptible even though extremely

real and in full control of all life and situations to the extent that individuals, institutions, countries, and the world in violating them are on the road to peril. Principles are so subtle, elusive and easy to violate yet strong and resilient in their affect. It takes years of hard knocks from reality, a deepening of self honesty and outgrowth of self delusion, a broadening of consciousness, consistent reflections, courage to encounter the unknown, to be able to unravel principles in their universality. Of course, principles cannot be outsmarted, neither is there a shortcut in circumventing them.

Now principles do not care about your race, religion, culture, nationality, level of education, status in society, intelligence, years of experience, level of spiritual growth or wisdom. Principles are final, sacred and inviolable. In the end when principles triumph, the principled mind knows an inexpressible joy and gratitude that few experiences surpass.