



Purposeful Wanderings

A Monthly Newsletter for Clients and Friends of **The Road Not Taken**

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Choosing “Home” – Part 2: Self-Trust

“Give me a place to stand and I shall move the world.” --- Archimedes

(Part 2 in series on how a deep sense of *home* can offer you resilience and self-trust ... in a chaotic, uncertain world.)

When I ponder the limitless potential of the human spirit, I often recall those from the past who have had a profound and lasting impact on our world. A few who always seem to come to my mind: the Buddha, Jesus, Gandhi, M.L. King, Mother Teresa, the authors of the U.S. Constitution, Einstein, even Steve Jobs. We hold them in high regard not just for what they *did*, however, nor because they were somehow luckier, richer or smarter than most (which they weren't). We value who they *were* – their powers of consciousness ... self-trust, courage, awareness, non-judgment, passion, etc. All lived from personal truth deep *inside* them. This offered a renewable source of energy, which they could replenish easily, just by being who they already were. As in the quote above, that gave each a strong place to stand – so external forces didn't deter them. This, I suggest, allowed them to meet one seemingly insurmountable challenge after another.

With such strong foundations, they had the self-trust to work *within* the system of which they were a part, relentlessly *question* the system (with respect and curiosity, not anger or judgment), then take calm, considered *action* for change, action that denied no one their rights or privileges along the way. That's the ultimate in personal power.

Perhaps reflecting this way causes the upset I feel when I look at our world now. It seems the energy fueling much of today's 'doing' comes not from a deep sense of self-trust and inner knowing, but rather from attachment to ephemeral – and therefore *unsustainable* – winds and waves of opinions, positions and issues. Those without a source of inner strength have no source of renewable energy from which to draw. Replenishing that energy, therefore, has to come from the *outside* instead. But if others don't continually support their agenda, energy dissipates, so the voices of opinion and sense of entitlement get louder and more persistent, attempting to *justify* – why it's me vs. you, us vs. them, right vs. wrong, my story vs. yours, like vs. dislike – rather than *being part of* the authentic life right in front of their faces. One reason for the divisiveness we experience today is that a world built on the ephemeral doesn't feel like home. It can't, because it isn't. It survives on justification, not inner truth.

It's easy to slip into this shallow place. We've been acculturated to think small. The unconscious mind is a protective mechanism to help us avoid danger. Problem is that it perceives everything uncertain as danger. That's a tough deal in today's world. Other problem is that we listen to it, so unwittingly that we often believe its voice is who we truly are. But that's only because we've made such good friends with the voice all these years. To try to find *home* in winds and waves of opinion and agenda won't stand the test of time. Living a *story* about life isn't the same as living *life*.

So ... where do you “get” a belief in something bigger? You *discover* it. Its energy is everywhere, all the time, a universal web of connectedness, one that *includes* everything and *excludes* nothing. This energy of creation is part of *you* and you are part of *it*. When, or *if*, you stop long enough to listen for it, you find it. You not only *hear* the truth of your unique being, but you hear how that truth can meet a true need for your creativity out there in the world. That's what is meant by *resonance* – a vibrational match of energy, one that actually creates even more energy. This version of home is made up of truths that don't need proof or justification. (The other version is simply *made up*.) Because this energy is everywhere, it is available to everyone, not just a select few. Only a “select few” discover it, however, for it invites deep contemplation, which requires silent awareness – just what the voices in your head tell you not to tolerate. The problem, then, is not the potential you represent; it's the quiet contemplation and inquiry required in order to access it!

With courage to engage in deeper inquiry, you begin to see life's wholeness rather than the separateness you may have believed courtesy of the voices in your head. You soon realize that you're not “separate” at all, but part of something much bigger; and that your former, perhaps fear-based, viewpoint of believing small serves neither you nor the world. When you realize you *belong here*, fear and anxiety fall away, leaving you resilient and confident, despite society's attempt to steer you onto a narrower path. This awareness is powerful fuel for self-trust, resilience and truth – a life of purpose and intention. In addition, you see that living this way is a choice, a choice available to you in each moment.

Exercise: Finding Your Home: We tend to get lost in old ways of thinking. It's ... unconscious. One of the problems with *old* ways of thinking is that they offer no clues that *new* ways of thinking even exist, say nothing of hold amazing potential. As Buckminster Fuller once said, "There's nothing in a caterpillar that tells you it's going to be a butterfly." This is why we can stay stuck as caterpillars, sometimes for a lifetime, completely unaware that we're here to become butterflies. Contemplation changes this. When you stop, look and listen, you *see* your old beliefs and thinking, as an *observer*. This affords you objectivity about your life completely unavailable to you as a participant alone. As you get to know your thinking, deeply and consciously, you begin to see openings to new ways. You quietly shift from seeing "what's wrong" to seeing "what's possible." You see wholeness rather than separateness. Your life *expands* – to fill the space you've created by being open to larger truths. Notice that you don't "make yourself change." Awareness alone creates change – naturally. This exercise is perhaps the most powerful catalyst for change you could ever adopt.

Observe your thoughts: Stop what you're doing several times a day. During a few moments of quiet reflection, replay in your mind thoughts you've had since the last replay, as if a movie with you as its audience. *Listen* to what they tell you. Resist judging or trying to change them. Just notice. Get to know them. Simple. Every day; for a life-time. With regular practice, you will (1) come to know your own thinking, (2) hear subtle messages of your inner truth, (3) see that only your thoughts determine your experience of reality, (4) separate life's events from the *interpretation* of those events you created with your thinking, which releases judgment from your life, (5) see life from a much broader perspective, thereby *creating* greater possibility, (6) make new choices easily, naturally (simply because you now *can*), and (7) become an observer skilled enough to see thoughts *as* they occur.

A client recently said to me, after steadfastly denying that 'noticing his thinking' could change much of anything, "I can't believe how centered and peaceful I feel, how I just *know* where life is leading me; I know who I am; I feel at home with myself for the first time ever. Why the #*^\$& didn't you *make* me do this exercise sooner?" Well, I have no power to make anybody do anything. He was ready. If I "did" anything, it was perhaps prodding him to accept an old friend's invite to visit him in Hawaii. I had an intuitive sense the energy there could provide the missing ingredient. We'll never know. It doesn't matter. What matters is his breakthrough ... from which there is no return to old ways.

Life lessons from nature: Separateness doesn't exist in nature; no boundaries. That's because nature is ... *natural*. Unity, connection, community. Everything *belongs*. At the foundation of things, *belonging* is what it's truly about for us, too. Our sense of self, and therefore self-trust, is built on belonging – which is the home of the soul, not the home of stuff made up in your head. You belong when you've connected your deepest self to the biggest world – the ultimate in "what is." If you don't find a way to connect what resonates inside you with the energy of "life," then both you and life miss out on your potential. This idea might be conveyed by a few thoughts on our connection to our world.



- The "celebration of life on earth" has been a 4.6-billion-year-long party. Look at all that's been created. Wouldn't life be far more meaningful if we were join it instead of fighting it?
- Even if one "side" were to win the war of divisiveness, it still leaves 49% of the population pissed, a world divided. Might there be a different *approach*, rather than a continued, and futile, quest for that "one right opinion/answer."
- Facebook won't be around in 100 years (hey, maybe even one year, given recent news). Yet our concern for respect, integrity and privacy will live on. What truly matters here?
- Cockroaches have lived on earth for 300 million years. They were here before dinosaurs, survived them all, and will likely survive us as a species. Why? Perhaps because they keep doing "what works," not fighting "what doesn't."
- Trees don't have to *try* to grow. Everything needed to become a tree is "hidden" in the seed.
- The farther away from earth you go, the fewer divisions you see. You don't have to go all that far before it looks like one ecosystem – which, of course, it is. Which means that:
- There won't be "home" for *any* of us until there's "home" for *all* of us – and *that* is part of a personal consciousness, a worldview ... not a house in the country.
- Every original culture on this planet *lived* these ideas, without "needing proof." How much wisdom have we lost?
- Mountains, trees, birds, waves and winds have seen this all. Might we listen to what they know? Might we learn?

Book of the month: *The Great Work of Your Life*, by Stephen Cope. I've recommended this book before, and it's so apt for today and for this topic. Through stories of people we know (and people we don't), Cope shows how you can discover your own unique path in life – which is not only a path to your truth, but a path to personal freedom as well. And if you're on Cape Cod, you'll find this book at the Market Street Bookshop in Mashpee Commons; 508-539-6985.