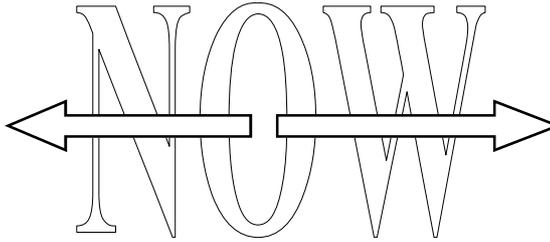


**Greville Street
Meetings
18 July 99
15 August 99**



**Issue No. 54
July 1999**

CONTENTS		Page
Are we in a Rut?	<i>David Clouston</i>	2
Emergence in Emergency	<i>Rome Warren</i>	4
Who am I? Where am I?	<i>Ingram Smith</i>	5
Separation - Energy, Consciousness & Life	<i>Lyn Willmott</i>	6
Rushcutters Park	<i>Warwick Wakefield</i>	7
The Art of Golf	<i>Peter Lightbown & Cecilia Croaker</i>	9
Thinking about Yourself	<i>Peter Crook</i>	9
Preparations for the Unknown	<i>Alan Mann</i>	10
Focusing Meeting	<i>Ring us if interested 9419 7394</i>	10

Editor's note,

The mailing list has now been completely updated. Please let me know if there are any remaining inaccuracies in your address or subscription month. I expected a drop in circulation as a consequence of the shake-up but it remains at about 65.

We have our first sports page in this edition but you will find it a sports page with a difference. So thanks to Peter Lightbown who has been on the list for several months. And thanks to all other contributors in this issue and the usual appeal for contributions from everybody about whatever aspect is of interest to you.

The last issue, No. 53 was the May issue. I have called this one the July issue as it will be read in July even if I get it away before the end of the month. The point is, don't think you missed the June issue, there wasn't one.

The Nowletter appears between 10 and 12 times every year and is a vehicle for news and views about awakening to what is really going on. Contributions from readers are considered the most valuable content so please think about letting me have your views, experiences, discoveries and responses .

Annual Subscription \$12

Are we in a Rut?

(Does dialogue engender change or does it just dig and deepen the ruts?)

At the end of the May meeting, if I recall correctly, David said that in all his involvement in Dialogue meetings at Greville Street he hadn't seen any evidence of anyone being prepared to give up their own experience in favour of something new which had arisen in a meeting. I understood this to mean that in spite of all the talk we are very dedicated to the assumptions, belief systems, etc., we have accumulated on our way through life. Warwick then said he knew most of those present well enough to play their role in any of the typical issues that are likely to come up. In other words, we and the dialogues we have are highly predictable. I later asked David to summarise his thoughts on this so we could carry it forward. He sent two messages which appear below.
Ed.

Hi, Alan -

I didn't actually say (or mean) that no change has been happening. Not at all. No.

What I was identifying was what seemed a recent trend in meetings towards "this is how it is" discussions about remote regions of the mind. Part of this may be sour grapes on my part. I feel that I have not yet reached such levels. But I also feel that whatever the merits or truth of what is being said, it could be more Dialogue-ishly discussed.

Warwick actually put it much better than me, when he said "Are we here for discussion and exploration of each others' experiences and ideas? Or are we here for a learned forum?" ... or words to that effect. I like Dialogue when it has the former flavour.

But again, what you said after lunch about just watching the process in yourself has made me re-assess the whole thing. I now feel that most of what I was feeling should be viewed as part of my process, which is the true value of Dialogue anyway.

So I don't really agree with what David Clouston said after lunch. The bastard.

David Clouston

This is what David said after lunch or rather an email version he prepared of what he said.
Ed.

Hi Alan -

Thanks for your message. I have mixed feelings about the Agenda, (*I had suggested we make this issue the agenda for the next meeting. Ed.*) mostly because of what you yourself said on Sunday afternoon about your own process at the meetings.

In one sense, I would indeed like to have the chance to

discuss the "rut" question in a Dialogue meeting. However, I also derive a huge amount of value from the agenda-less nature of the Greville Street meetings. It encourages me (when I am prepared to do it) to lay aside whatever I think OUGHT to be happening, in favour of what actually IS happening... including the nature of the content.

One reason for my hesitation in saying anything last Sunday - including waiting until after lunch to say it - is that I don't have any grounding in Krishnamurti's teachings on Dialogue; all I know of it is what I have experienced at the one meeting that I regularly attend. So I sometimes have the nagging suspicion that some of the others present know much more about what is "supposed" to happen than I do.

From another point of view, I realize that this is entirely irrelevant. There is no "right" way. But that statement is worth considering for a moment.

We know a few people who have attended Dialogue meetings and not fitted in to the spirit of the thing; at least one person has even been encouraged not to come any more. Fair enough. But it does show that there is some kind of "pattern" into which different forms of participation do or don't fit. Dialogue is not an unconditional business - it is conducted along certain lines. Therefore, it is reasonable to question whether or not we are holding the meetings in the appropriate spirit.

What I found difficult about the last two Dialogues was the extent to which various of us were making dogmatic statements about how things are. These statements were based on the internal reality of the speakers, and were thus unquestionably real. I had no sense that anyone was speaking from theory (which anyway tends to be quickly identified and pointed out at Greville Street). So they appear to be just the kind of thing we ought to be discussing at Dialogue meetings.

But

Such statements, particularly when they concern states of being under certain quite advanced spiritual disciplines, are not open to discussion or challenge. They have to be taken or left as they are. They are the esoteric equivalent of pointing at a table and saying, with great weight and seriousness, "That is a table". Yes, it is. But then what?

In "Be Here Now", Ram Dass describes the first experiments with LSD by him and his friends. The results were so astounding that they hurried to tell their colleagues on the Harvard Faculty of Psychology. But the experimenters quickly reached a stage where they could no longer communicate with the Faculty members about what they were experiencing. Because

it was a case of "to him who knows, no explanation is necessary: to him who does not, no explanation is possible".

That is completely understandable, and we all have had some version of that experience - from both ends. For example, a person who practices Hatha Yoga regularly, or sits regularly for meditation, or goes to Holy Communion every day, will have a different experience of life from someone who does not. And if that someone wants to know what life is like when those practices are observed, the only thing that can be said is "Go and do it yourself - then you'll know." That is completely real and legitimate. But it's not Dialogue. Is it?

There's another point to consider.

When it comes to thoughts about "how things are", I seem to have different levels of identification and attachment. They might be roughly arranged in ascending order, thus:

- 1 Theories
- 2 Ideas
- 3 Opinions
- 4 Facts
- 5 Experience

I call something a Theory when I don't care in the least whether or not it's true. This generally means that it doesn't affect me in any way I can relate to. For example, the reason the Hong Kong dollar has not had as rough a ride as other S.E.Asian currencies recently is that it is controlled by a Currency Board. Is this true? Maybe. I'm not interested.

Identification: 0%

An Idea is a proposition that excites my interest. I am keen to explore whether or not it has any relevance to me. The more direct relevance it appears to have, generally the more interested I become in whether or not it's "true" in a useful sense. I'm happy to discuss Ideas with very little attachment to whether someone agrees or disagrees with my current position.

Identification: 10%

An Opinion is something I've made up my mind about one way or the other. The D'Oyly Carte Opera Company should have received an Arts Council grant in

1981 to keep it going. No question. I'm prepared to discuss it, but mostly from the point of view of explaining why it's correct. Under duress, or if

I'm feeling very safe and spacious, I am genuinely prepared to "change my mind". At such times, I realize that the Opinion is not Me. It's a separate thing. So "I" can change "my mind".

Identification: 60%

A Fact is something that's obviously true. It's not open to genuine disagreement, although theoretical discussions about (say) how the Earth might actually be flat are sometimes good fun. Only under the most extreme circumstances will I let a Fact go. Very strongly associated with Me.

Identification: 85%

Experience is what I KNOW is true. This appears to be feeling-based, and absolutely a-rational. Discussion consists of justification. The things I have absolutely no real doubt whatever about. If I describe a room to someone, I don't say "In my opinion there is an armchair against the wall" or "There appears to be a coffee-table on the rug".

Identification: 100%

It seems to me that the Dialogue meetings are very good at encouraging us to let go of levels 1 to 3, struggle quite a bit at level 4, and splutter and die at level 5. No wonder. This is presumably what Andrew Cohen was referring to in his "are you ready to let the ego die" statement about Dialogue. Because Experience is the very seat of the Ego. It's the home-territory of Self-Righteousness, in the most literal sense of that much-abused word.

But we also know that it is precisely when we have to let go of our experience that we really shift. Going back to "Be Here Now", the key moment of Ram Dass's awakening was when he realized that Maharaji knew exactly what he had been thinking about the night before. Ram Dass describes his rational mind as simply giving up at that point.

Experience is the name we give the fence that we have built around our identity. Real growth is utterly dependent on our being willing to let go of it. And, as Dan said on Sunday afternoon, it is often an act of conscious will to be willing. If we can to any degree be prepared for this in Dialogue, we will really be doing ourselves and others a favour. Without that, we are to a certain extent amusing ourselves harmlessly and

constructively. I am quite happy to do that, too.

But remember Gary Hipworth's telling comment about "entertainment" a few months ago? In fact, that's one reason why I find Gary so difficult to listen to - because he catches me at that exact point, where I have to ask myself "Am I just filling in time, or do I really mean this?" Too often for my own comfort, I am just pleasantly filling in time.

As you can no doubt tell, the whole business of relying on experience as the basis for reality is a major bee in my bonnet. C.S.Lewis was fond of quoting (I think) George MacDonald: "Experience is the mother of illusion." Quite.

David Clouston

Emergence in Emergency

It was all there in issue 53; unspoken questions and hidden answers, a brain-bank of speculation, certainties and conclusions, heading for headlessness after all. What is surrender other than the dropping of obstacles; the greatest of which is the conditioned brain.? (Alan's no-head?)

Ingram's reading/writing DOES constitute the menu without "tasting the food", as does all such speculation on 'self-improvement', EXCEPT for the pleasure and interest in this form of entertainment. People watching cooking demonstrations on TV, with no intention of using the recipes, do the same thing. The major difference is that one format is seen as 'serious' the other as superficial. Ingram's 'ALIVE' sums up what most people are: A-LIVE. WHEN WE LIVE WE ARE ALIVE! Thought lives solely in the head and acts through a 'channel' which thinks it is alive; and this is the manufacturer of dualistic acts. The 'a' is the split.

As Peter Crook says: 'The thinker and the watcher of the thoughts is thought itself.' Like the I of 'Who am I?' it is easy to sink into the mire of illusion in which 'I' think 'I' can change/improve 'me'. When we look in a mirror we EXPECT to see a reflection, yet the brain ignores the fact that 'I' - like a ghost - have NO shadow/ reflection. So what does the brain do? Like a politician, it rationalises that the reflection is in "the mirror of relationship" (K). The reflection of the observed is as illusory as the observer! The evolving witness/ 'soul' is another matter altogether.

The 'witness' which I tend to regard as the I-dot, as the result of an enigmatic poem I awoke with from a deep sleep many years ago, is a physical manifestation from the non-manifest, in emergence. I also call it Mind, as it is a mere speck of 'individuality' as an aspect of consciousness, which is abidingly in evolution. Humankind is no longer evolving; it could even be regressing as demonstrated by an epidemic of dementia and neurological disorders. Global chaos also indicates a regeneration of the primitive ancient animal brain in increasing numbers of people.

We SHARE consciousness - along with all other species and physical manifestations - but we DO have the power to help its evolution in refining itself - by being attentive. To repeat the DEH quote from issue 53: "The solution is ATTENTION, attention instead of intention". To remain at attention is to remain awake. It has no objective, no 'what', it stands alone (all one). I often say that the one thing we need to understand is that "attention is where we are AT". That's it. Finito. Every human being has the capacity and ability to CHOOSE where they are 'AT'. Every thought, every action is a personal responsibility. We don't need to think about it, plan it or avoid it.

There is no 'inner', no 'outer'. Through the pulse of life, or Emergence, we are wholly manifest/physical or wholly unmanifest/invisible. There is no half and half. In the visible (physical) we CHOOSE to let the 'ghosts'/memories reincarnate in us; or shed them by exorcism. Unless our own brain resurrects and energises them they can no longer use this body as a vehicle or channel. (It's easy I can promise)! Fighting gives them strength Simply refuse to maintain them, even in mid-thought, by discontinuance. The brain will soon desist.

It is at this point, by virtually 'by-passing' the brain that the Mind cuts in and insights (NOT thought) come pouring in. Instead of living in a man-made (unmade) world, you begin to inexperience floating in a sea of consciousness from which you can select whatever you choose. What do I mean? I guess you can regard it as a conscious connection. As an aspect of consciousness there is access to Universal consciousness. Instead of listening to the idle chatter or static of the brain, ask fundamental questions, then remain at attention. The appropriate response comes in direct resonance with the question. As I see it, questions and answers are holograms. A messy question will get an equally messy answer, so you can't blame the Universe! Trivia will receive trivia so personal responsibility is the key to profound revelations. I wasn't too responsible when I jotted down the following quote from 236 of 'Unconditional Love' without reference to author:

The rishis say at a subtle level everything is made of light: light is the finest level of appearance before creation dissolves into pure consciousness.

For me, this reaffirms a perception of Emergence, (visible and invisible) , how I regard death (invisible) as part of life (visible) and both as aspects of consciousness . It also 'explains' to me WHY the only times people claim to see me 'disappear' except as light have occurred when I consciously let go/ surrender by no longer maintaining continuance.

One of the greatest threats to consciousness/'soul' evolution is the degree to which our brains fool us that they are NOT conditioned, even though they function solely through data fed in, just like computers do.

It was a delighted to read Katie's perceptive response to Phil Lanzon's article. Had I not been so involved in writing about other issues, I had some similar comments I would have made though based on observation not personal experience.

There was no doubting Phil's intensity of concern but, from the viewpoint of an outsider, it seemed apparent that he did not seem to see that he wants to 'condition' his children based on his own background or its

opposite. In other words to replace conditioning with alternative conditioning.

As a child I grew up feeling totally isolated until I was six and started in kindy with no idea whatever of how to 'socialise': I'm still learning! Also, it has been my observation that children relate much more to their peers than to their parents. Whatever their age, it is their friends they want to emulate not their parents' generation.

There was one exception to this that I can recall in regard to my youngest daughter. She begged and pleaded to go to a friend's first 'mixed' party because the whole class was going. When I knew no adults would be present, I remained obdurate.

When she came home from school on the Monday, imagine my surprise when she wrapped her arms around me and said she loved me. She then actually thanked me for loving her 'too much to let her go to the party'. The other girls had to call in the police due to problems with gatecrashers and were scared witless.

Probably the 'best of both worlds' exists when there is love, understanding, discipline and value taught in the home with social skills and education taught in schools which have good teachers?

Rome Warren

Who am I? Where am I?

Another inquiry into the entity - Me.

I am the centre of the Universe, as are you. Everything is measured by me, from where I am, both in distance from here and in time from now. All movement takes time (in which to happen) and space (in which to expand and contract, to develop or diminish; or in which to travel from here to there).

What I am and where I am is always at all times the centre, the viewing platform, the listening ear, the ever present witness, wherever I (my current consciousness) happens to be. And further, whatever engages my attention is my universe. No matter how young or old I am, this transitory point in eternity is me, a conscious centre in the universe. So what is this entity, with its cosmic capacities?

The understanding of this ancient question is important because all other observations stem from this primal, singular self-centre. Not only am I the centre of all time and space, you and I have the capacity to understand what is happening outside and inside ourselves.

We all know, are mindful of the sensible awareness that I am a separate human being, that all feelings are inside my body-mind, that until I am Conscious of it, it does not exist for me. Unless the heat of the sun has

been experienced in my body I do not know heat and only then do I say "I feel hot" Now what is the "I" that says it feels hot? Is it only a mental reflection of a physical sensation?

There is an assumption that because the body can feel both heat and cold (at different times) and has the knowledge that feelings can change, the mind that is aware of them, (say of temperature differences), the me, has permanence, even though I realise that this recognition has its roots in memory. So what is the source of my reality? Am I an isolated consciousness? Although a physically separate entity, I am not at any time, or in any way, unrelated to the air, earth, water, the food I ingest, the culture, language, society in which I live, the people I associate with. For instance sitting in a circle with a group of people, there is in fact only one reality, the people in the room all breathing, all sharing the same air, hearing the same words.

Of course each one is sitting in a different position and so having a different aspect and seeing a different part of the room. One may see a wall and a painting, another a door, or a view through a window, and each one will see everyone else from a different angle. The position from which one looks predetermines what one sees. At the same time, what each one longs for is a wholeness, a unison, a communion. I meet with others and dialogue in the hope of resolving my sense of isolation and our differences for the common good, through a pool of common knowledge.

That dream is perhaps the original source of all communication and discourse, of tribal gatherings, local council meetings, national governments, international conferences and their debating forums. Unfortunately, these discourses are no longer view sharing, harmonious meetings, but debating stadiums, contests with winners and losers, institutionalized structures - traditional and permanent and therefore never to be questioned.

Our need is to uncover the mischievous source of our personal and social discord and division. Most of us are aware that the sensing of a separate self is the primal division: me and the rest of the world. Yet somehow you and I also know a universal impulse to wholeness and onement. There is a realization that this desired state is not through the union of opposites, not through the fulfillment of myself, not through the expression of what I am though this is *the* accepted aphorism, the revered cultural goal of modern societies, the self-projected aim of the individual.

The time has come for this future-oriented illusion to be recognised as false, not to be pursued .

The needed revolution in consciousness is not more self perpetuation, more self promotion, but the unravelling of oneself, the letting go of the

accumulations I have acquired, and freedom from the continuity of the old. The Greek cry "Know thyself", and thus uncover the whole collection of unresolved information, is the needed and intelligent action.

Isn't it obvious that the centre, this central self, is quite aware of the diversity of everything surrounding itself? That the centre is the seer of the diversity? That the self is constantly creating division?

Isn't it obvious that the separate self has to be dismantled? At least that the "I" has to be given critical attention?

To think about this (as I am now doing), thinking about myself (and my future), the human race (and its future) is to come upon a crucial understanding that thinking, the process itself, is sequential and piecemeal, never wholly present and always fragmented. Thinking's conclusions become fixed ideas.

To be aware of the disorder, the disorderliness, the confusion, is still disorder; for there is still duality as order and disorder, in my consciousness.

However, when thinking is in abeyance I notice there is no division, that another dimension of consciousness exists: that the centre, me, is the creator of both the time and space in which I live.

And more, that where there is space and time I continue on my separate way, always hoping that I will find that wholeness, that serene feeling of belonging, of being at home. A complete turnaround from my normal thinking has occurred. There is no consciousness of order or of wholeness. None.

When I am fully healthy, there is a sense of wellbeing and I am not conscious of any feeling of dis - ease, when every part of my body, every organ, nerve, cell is functioning naturally, there is no distraction, no twitch of disturbance. That is the joy of wholeness. Action is simple and effective without an awareness of the mechanism of its function, of the how of its happening. For instance, I want to stand up. All the muscles, joints and sinews, function to raise me to my feet. Yet there is no actual awareness of this complex operation. It is done without any consciousness of the intricate physical processes. It is only when some muscle, joint fails or when there is a twinge of pain, do I know something is wrong. Only then am I aware that "I" will have to do something to correct the situation, to resolve the stress.

Only when the natural wholeness of my body is no longer operating freely does thinking come into operation, and the very search for an answer is itself a duality. All our lives are a search for wholeness, for non-duality, for non-fragmentation. The process of self observation is in itself a revelation of that duality, my "I" observing and the object that is seen.

The question is can I observe and see, without making

some idea out of what is seen. Is pure sight, clear hearing, free from any interpretation possible? Of course it is. There is an observation of disorder, of malfunctioning in which awareness itself is not disturbed, wherein awareness remains stable. There is a seeing, as of a drama being played out, with me an attentive audience.

The essence of each person is an awesomely empty consciousness, surprisingly still. Egoless, egolessness - the eternal moment in an ephemeral transcendence of selfless reality.

Ingram Smith

Separation - Energy, Consciousness & Life

One of mankind's most intriguing mysteries is the question of Consciousness, yet at a certain level many of us find words have become a barrier, and intellectual understanding seems almost a contradiction in terms. Perhaps the pictorial world of metaphors and symbols may be one way to bypass this ugly verbal knot, allowing understanding to come in at a 'gut ' level. (It's interesting to note that in some Eastern philosophies, the energy centre over the pancreas is considered another brain)

Metaphorically, if we are able to accept the flow of life as a continual movement, we could begin to picture 'the flow' as a majestic sea of energy. Pause for a moment and look at your hand. See it as simply a conglomerate of cells, constantly awash with energy, and like all matter, this hand consists of a myriad of separate cells adrift in the emptiness of space. Suppose this space was a vibrant sea of energy. Suppose all matter lived in this ocean of energy. Is this one way of picturing the 'life process'? A thought worth considering is the notion that if matter did not swim in such an ocean of energy, it would not be matter, it would be something else.

We see this same cosmic energy activating consciousness, and within consciousness is another process. The ego process. But for a moment we'll examine consciousness. This time see consciousness as an enormous pool of still water. Eternal Consciousness - perhaps Jung's collective unconscious - like a body of still water with no boundaries, no limit to depth or size. Across this stillness of eternal consciousness floats clumps of 'stuff'. You can make this transparent stuff, or coloured stuff - whatever. When I first saw it, this stuff was like a foamy white residue floating silently on a dark stillness, and I got the feeling it was almost superfluous to the over-all scheme of things, almost like floating rubbish, even though I knew it to be human 'stuff'.

Within this body of limitless consciousness suddenly there is a shimmer of concentrated energy. Immediately a few clumps of 'stuff' are sucked to this

place of energy and as they meld we realise an ego has been formed. A properly processed ego, with a personality and a memory. As these assemblages of 'stuff' take form, a boundary is created and a new identity now lives within this limitless pool of consciousness. Mysteriously, with this new identity comes a perception of separation. It is only a perception because although each particle of the individual consciousness remains in this eternal pool of consciousness, with no division, no movement, no change, the actual ego process has created an illusion of separateness. This clump of 'stuff' believes it is separate because its view has been limited and its conscious cellular awareness has been cut off. Before, the 'stuff' simply floated on the dark pool, but when the energy rippled out drawing matter to it, a strange event took place. The 'stuff' wrapped itself, layer by layer – like a cabbage – around the central node of energy, smothering cosmic consciousness.

This is what we are stuck with. We believe we are separate, even though our conscious state sits in, and is cellularly connected to the pool of consciousness around us. Our awareness is so limited by this process of individualization that we can but sense the Greater Presence. Some believe this is God, and although I'm splitting hairs, I think that this awareness we have of something precious within us - yet greater than us - is the original central node of energy in that pool of cosmic consciousness. Of course this state is energized by something else - even greater – and for want of a better word or a better understanding, we call this God.

Let's go back to that conglomerate of 'stuff' floating on that vast stillness. There is a clue here. The overlaying, or cabbage like form of matter, is made up of cellular particles, and each cell of that body lives in a state of consciousness, part of the greater whole but unaware of this because of the 'smothering' Every part of us is alive with cosmic consciousness. This intellectual knowledge inches us forward but it does not draw the veil. We still function in isolation, conscious of the flesh of our boundary, unaware that we are just a clump of ideas.

Let me try another image. Imagine the ego as a new moon. Only a tiny sliver of light can be experienced amidst the dense blackness of daily life, gradually over time light alters the ego's shape. As more of its body is subject to the light it continues to alter and expand. Suddenly the moon is full and its true identity is revealed. The ego is not what it thought it was! This revelation, (or internal ego-switch) is sometimes triggered by prayer, or by a dramatic life-threatening event, even by a simple bang on the head. Reports of such examples appear through out our literature, but because it seems such a mystery normal folk regard it as a miracle. But it does happen. The boundary separating us from the whole is often breached.

Finally there is the question of why we have the experience of being separated. Is it because we need to experience isolation to become aware of the whole? So why do we have to know this? Why can't we continue to be a part of the greater whole without having to be so traumatised by this terrible separation? And the answer came, "Because every particle of God needs to be aware of itself, alive within the whole. This awareness energizes the whole and lifts its to a higher state of consciousness."

Lyn Willmott

Rushcutters Park

Green grass of Rushcutters Park
in the soft autumn light.
A path skirts the playing fields,
passes the kiosk,
winds through the trees.

A small boy kicks a soccer ball
to an even smaller boy.
Includes me as I pass;
"You can kick it if you like."
"I'm seven."

The path unrolls,
legs move in their own way
the trees grow larger.

The London Plane Tree approaches
but keeps to the left;
shakes off a few brown leaves.

The Port Jackson Fig
expands like a storm.
Huge branches gird the sky.
Buttressed column demands attention,
Its darkness fills space
creating space
for the small and distant lights
of cars.

Legs move and the fields, and the boys, and trees
disappear from sight
exist only in memory
faintly.

Warwick Wakefield

The Art of Golf

A Guide to Playing through Self Awareness

The following is the introductory chapter of the Peter Lightbown & Cecilia Croaker book 'The Art of Golf'. Peter is a Nowletter subscriber and this is reprinted here with his permission.

Ed.

Introduction

How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold?

*Because the lovely lithe flower is free
Down to its roots, and, in that freedom bold;
And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree
Comes not from its casting in a formal mould,
But from its own divine vitality.*

Wordsworth

The inspiration for this book lies in my belief that within each one of us is a natural golf swing waiting to flower, a spontaneous movement with a freedom and vitality of its own. In my experience it is only when this individual and expressive movement starts to emerge that playing golf becomes satisfying and truly pleasurable. Unfortunately traditional golf teaching has denied our individuality and spontaneity by insisting that by insisting that in order to learn we must conform rigidly to a pattern. The swing is thus broken up into a series of complicated operations which we are required to copy. In attempting to perform all the steps correctly our swing becomes something to be controlled and worried about, and the joy that can be found in a free use of the body is entirely lost to us.

Since the traditional method is so destructive of individuality and pleasure, I am advocating here a fundamentally different approach, one which seeks to draw out an innate swing that is unique to you. Such a movement by its very nature can never be copied or constructed, rather we must focus our attention entirely on creating the best possible conditions for its emergence. In the same way living things, be they animal or vegetable, cannot be made to grow, all we can do is use our knowledge to create an environment that fosters growth.

What then are the most favourable conditions for the growth of your swing? In my experience they are the qualities of balance relaxation and rhythm, which I feel are the basic foundations on which all effective movement is built. As we will see later in more detail, balance is vital because it gives us the stability and security from which to move freely; relaxation is essential since it removes unnecessary tension, thus allowing us to release the full power of our muscles; rhythm plays the crucial role of blending or connecting movement into a co-ordinated powerful whole. As you learn to weave these qualities into the fabric of your movements a free and natural swing will of its own accord unfold.

Since balance, relaxation and rhythm are bodily feelings, we can never learn them by rote but need to perceive them actively through our senses. My principal task is to help increase your awareness of these vital qualities in your own body so that you experience them with ever more subtlety. It will take time and disciplined work to gain the sensitivity required but a greater bodily awareness is well within the scope of us all.

I came to these ideas because after fifteen years of constant work on traditional technique I arrived at a point of total frustration. For me golf had ceased to be a pleasurable activity and had instead become an arduous struggle to perform all the movements correctly. I realised that I had to either give up the game or find a more satisfying approach. It occurred to me about this time that the most accomplished players, while differing in many respects, all had three qualities in common those of balance, relaxation and rhythm. Thus I began to work on introducing these qualities into my game rather than trying to construct a perfect technique. There was no instant transition. My game was littered for some time with mechanical considerations, but I gradually became aware of what it feels like to be really balanced and relaxed, and to have my movements flowing to the natural rhythm of my body. You could say that the game went from being predominantly external or mechanical to being internal or something of feeling. I have been using this approach and teaching it now for ten years and the results both in my own game and in those of my pupils are most encouraging.

I must emphasise at this point that I am not advocating the total abandonment of all technique. In my approach, however, technique exists solely in the service of the qualities we wish to foster and not for its own sake. So rather than giving you a collection of arbitrary do's and don't's to follow, I will be describing in detail practical ways of introducing balance, relaxation and rhythm into your game. This is in no way a soft or passive option since it requires you to give your complete attention to experiencing something for yourself. One might therefore describe this method as an active process of self discovery, whereas the traditional method, which hinges on doing what one is told, could be described as profoundly passive.

Golfers of all levels will find this approach helpful, from advanced players who can subtly improve their game by becoming more sensitive to the qualities I recommend, to the beginner who has never played before. I realise that the beginner, and in particular a person with little or no sporting background, may find it difficult to believe that they have an individual swing to be uncovered. I can fully understand this situation because as a youth I felt myself to be something of a sporting outcast. However from my own experience as a player and as a teacher I can assure you that we all do have natural potential. It may show itself only rarely or perhaps not at all, but the fact that it is not on the surface does not mean that it does not exist. This is not to say that we all have equal amounts of natural ability, because some people are obviously more at home in a sporting environment than others. But I do feel that we limit ourselves more than necessary, in many cases by believing the restricted view of ourselves and our potential with which parents and teachers have saddled us. A step

forward in any field is always a step into the unknown which requires us to take courage and have faith in ourselves and our unseen potential. If we can conceive of the possibility of our own growth we can in my view by our own efforts help to make it come true.....

Peter Lightbown & Cecilia Croaker

If you are interested in getting a copy of the book give Peter a ring on (02) 9858 2295

Thinking about Yourself

Why do we self-refer? It seems, if you watch yourself carefully, that every time you listen to anyone, look at something or are faced with some problem, this movement of the mind occurs. The "I" which is doing all of this referring is never still. It is constantly consumed with itself. My feelings, my unhappiness, my needs, my thoughts etc. It is with this tool we try to learn and fix all of our inner problems. We become aware of an inner pain or problem. We stand back and look at whatever it is and analyse what we are aware of. That energy that stands back to be aware is thought. But you call this thought "Me" or "I". We then say, I am aware of this or that". Then the I, which is thought, tries to look at and analyse what it is aware of. It tries to fix its problem with the tools of its own self knowledge. This inner process which we use is the cause of the division which everyone feels in themselves. The sense of me and the world out there. My sense of myself and what I am doing. My sense of me and you. Me and my ideas and you and yours.

This movement of the mind must be given careful observation. Otherwise you become a victim of its never-ending movement. The mere knowledge of this is of no use whatsoever. The I which is continually struggling to change itself, trying to be still, free of itself, can never come about by the mere knowing intellectually about the movement of thought. It is only when you actually look at yourself to see if this is what is happening to you, can this winging of thought come to an end. This watching is not thinking. It is a quality of observation which ~ the movement of self-referral happening as you talk, listen and act in your daily life. It is a seeing that is not interfering with anything, trying to change what it sees. It is a quality of looking at the fact of what you are doing. Neither acknowledging or deliberately looking at what you are aware of. With this seeing of what you are actually doing, something of immense beauty happens.

Put this question to yourself. Why do you self-refer? Why does this happen within yourself? Because to be able to look into the problems of life and at the way we are, we must be able to look without this movement of thinking about ourselves. But this is meaningless unless you first see that you are constantly shifting back to yourself before you look at, speak about or even think about anything. You must watch carefully. Otherwise everything we say and do

is a mere repetition of the past. You live a life which is conditioned. It is a series of repeated actions and situations. It is conditioned because we self-refer to thought. Is there a quality of being where there is action and relating which is not according to a preset pattern? Where self-referral does not occur? To see if this is possible we must first see if we do shift back to ourself and our own thoughts and feelings before we act.

We are continually trying to change this idea we have about ourself. Trying to make this thing called 'myself better, more aware, more silent, happier and peaceful. We are trying to change it with the tools of self-help - from books, words of someone else, courses and tapes. But the self remains no matter what shape we manage to change it into.

Why do you want to change yourself, your self image? Change from what? From being sad, lacking confidence, irritable, unaware and nasty, to being happier, calmer, more aware or kinder? If this is your approach then you will need tools to become these other ideas, which is away from what you are now. Maybe if you looked into your state of sadness or irritation, etc. - what you are - and see what the root cause is, then it will dissolve naturally. Calmness will come about through the observation of what you actually are. Calmness and peacefulness will flower out of your sorrow. Then the need to become something does not arise

Peter Crook

Preparations for the Unknown

Slides/Talk - by Gladney Oakley

There were a number of Now groupers at this talk which we advertised in the last issue and which was sub-titled - 'Previously unrecognized origins of some traditional figures in world mythology and religion'. My attempt to summarise is based on some very scratchy notes I made as we went along and I half expect some stern corrective comments from Gladney. I will put them in the next issue.

Gladney offered us the fascinating proposal that the shapes and patterns of the magnetic fields surrounding planetary bodies are the foundation of our traditional ways of representing angels and other heavenly beings.

He pointed out that the relatively recent satellite and spacecraft technology has given us, for the first time, the opportunity to map and portray the magnetosphere with great accuracy. The images generated by the magnetic plotting reveal shapes and patterns which bear an uncanny resemblance to the way we have portrayed our gods and angels over the centuries.

Most of Gladney's talk involved the presentation of a selection from his slide collection of famous and not so famous works of art which demonstrated the similarities. I have copied two artist's representations of the magnetosphere from the website shown below. The recognition of a human-like shape doesn't require much imagination. Gladney suggested that, in earlier times, human consciousness accessed these patterns through clairvoyant impressions and thereby provided a foundation for religious iconography.

FOCUSING

At our last Dialogue meeting we briefly discussed Focusing, a gentle body-centred process which can be used to bring clarity and freshness to life issues. Based on research into successful personal change, it is a skill that helps us befriend our emotions and maybe unstuck some blocks.

“When you pay attention to this body-knowing with interested curiosity, positive change, insight and physical release can occur.”

Based on research at the University of Chicago in the 1960's, studying tapes of hundreds of therapy sessions, certain patterns emerged and the findings were used to successfully predict which clients would be able to make changes in their lives.

Eugene Gendlin determined to teach these skills, and developed Focusing. You can use the skills of Focusing with a facilitating partner or on your own. Like most self-awareness skills, they are quite subtle and require practice, but the results are worth it.

Marian Nisbett, who comes to our Dialogue group and has facilitated Focusing groups, has agreed to facilitate a 3 hour Focusing session at Greville Street for any interested people, on a Saturday morning to be decided. **Please let Margot know if you would like to come (02) 9419 7394**

The reason the fields around a planetary body are assymetrical as opposed to the usual symetrical pattern, i.e., iron filings around a bar magnet, is the effect of the solar wind on the side facing the sun. The magnetosphere and associated phenomena such as the auroras demonstrate activities which are captured in both Eastern and Western traditions by the 'horned' wings of angels, ribbons, the tilted head of most holy figures not to mention the Earth Mother and Madonna & child figures. There is an enormous amount of detail involved and I hope Gladney is planning to write it up as I can only provide a taste of what he was trying to communicate.

In an effort to make the taste something like the real thing that Gladney provided on the night I have reproduced some images. I think the two artist's impressions of the magnetosphere, illustrations 1 & 3, are the same as Gladney's slides the others are examples of angel art which I have selected and might not be what Gladney would consider good examples.

One of the results of this research is the clear demonstration of the parallel streams of science and religion which are revealing the phenomena. However, I am unclear as to the consequences of making this connection. For example, a scientist might say “this is wonderful, we now see that the whole iconography of the angelic is rendered obsolete as a result of seeing the physical basis of all this symbolism”. I'm sure Gladney is not saying this and considers the important aspect is the dimension of our lives which these images have been chosen to represent. However, this is an assumption. I didn't pick it up from his talk.

I suggested he might consider this question as the basis for a follow-up talk but he told me I had to work it out for myself! A great enterprise and a wonderful night.

Alan Mann

Illustration 1 - Artist's impression of the Earth's magnetosphere.

*Some of the parallels which Gladney draws
will be apparent from these illustrations.
Human shape, Halos, 'Horned' wings,
Ribbons, etc.*

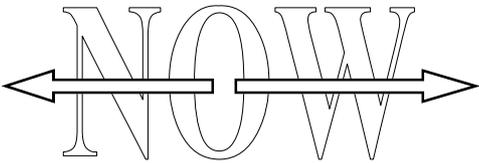
<http://science.nasa.gov>

Illustration 3 -St Michael

**Illustration 2 - Christ in Glory - Tapestry at Coventry
Cathedral**

**Illustration 3 - Artist's impression of the Earth's
magnetosphere and the effect of the solar wind.**

**Illustration 5 - The Great Red Dragon & the
Woman Clothed in the Sun** *Blake*



If unable to deliver please return to:

81 Greville Street, Chatswood 2067

DIALOGUE MEETINGS SYDNEY AREA				
LOCATION	DAY OF MONTH	MEETING PLACE	TIME & CONTACT	Phone Nos.
Clontarf	First Wednesday	49 Peronne Avenue Clontarf	7.30pm Terry O'Brien	02 9949 8379 0415 410 127
City	Third Saturday	Theosophical Society Level 2, 484 Kent St., City	2.30pm Terry O'Brien	02 9949 8379 018 410 127
Chatswood	Third Sunday	81 Greville St. (off Fullers Rd) Chatswood	10.30 am Alan & Margot Mann	02 9419 7394
Clontarf	Fourth Sunday	49 Peronne Avenue Clontarf	11am Terry O'Brien	02 9949 8379 018 410 127