

## **On Authenticity: “acting” natural, and the limitation of hierarchy**

*“What is more important: the front of your face or the sole of your foot?” – Zen proverb*

Authenticity or being naturally the expression of nature, is not something that we can be taught, forced into or persuaded. It is something utterly natural and also constantly present. From birth we have an innate sense of authenticity of expression which as we grow older into adulthood becomes covered-over by the mental-emotional field that is society and its various ideologies which simply represent an armour-plated outer skin and cut us off from our sense of the world around us. Of course this skin is not actually real, it is an illusion, a belief system, but one that is deeply entrenched from which it is very difficult to escape. The difficulty is that once within the trap of the “armour-plating” the world is only ever experienced thus, it is all that is known, nothing else could possibly exist, even though at a deep level one senses something is uncomfortable. Authenticity is not based on any external form or image of what one “should” be like. It is not an act, not a social or parental idea, not a construction or taught perspective, not a tyrannical overlord’s view; it does not relate to economic or social class, nor to racial identity, nor in fact to identity of any kind; it is not about a religious doctrine or spiritual ideology or indeed any format whatsoever.

So the question then becomes how can we regain this authenticity and be free of the bondage of the full-metal strait-jacket which humanity inhabits. There is only one “approach” to this. This we can call “yang” or the “method” associated with “attaining” a “goal”. For this it requires that the whole world be organized around people who “know” and people who “don’t know”. Those who “know” are seen as having “authority” over those who don’t. This is a symptom of the mutation of humans since being within the illusion of the separate “self-consciousness”, armoured from the world. The masculine principle has been warped into a belief that it rules and commands, borne of a fearfulness that it requires this kind of “power” because it feels separate from everything.

The mentality of the yang is to “become” authentic, to push to the limit and then to break into an authenticity. This is fundamentally cathartic, in that you push something hard until it reaches breaking-point. However, the human-world mostly consists of people “striving” and “seeking” which presents them with all sorts of difficulties. As soon as a person believes he/she need to “get somewhere” or “do something” about something that will inevitably cause problems. Rarely does it break open and allow the twoness to dissolve because this is innately frightening, therefore the person is kept from the edge all the time as the “self” believes “it” is in control. This is all based in judgment, and judgment is based in duality. Duality is based in a sense of separation which is at the origin of the human mental-emotional complex which distorts the Eden that he/she is in fact within.

When duality is set up the following beliefs have a domino effect of inevitability:-

1. “self”-orientated view of the world/universe, everything separate from the “I”
2. Heaven and Hell
3. A Creator and a Destroyer
4. Life as good, death as bad
5. Up as good, down as bad
6. White as good, black as bad
7. Sky as important, Earth as not important
8. Power and high energy as good, weakness and low energy as bad
9. People who lead are “better”, people who follow are “worse” or “lesser”
10. The teacher is “above/at the top”, the student is “below/under”
11. The “rationalist” and the “irrational”
12. The “fighter” and the “coward”
13. The male as superior, the female as inferior
14. The instinctual and basic as “primitive”, the complex and abstract as “superior”
15. The known and the unknown
16. The colonial as above, the indigenous as the slave below
17. The disciplining parent as higher, the innocence of the infant as below  
etc...

The difficulty is that there is an almost immediate reversion to dualism in everything that is conceived of by human beings. A famous presenter and broadcaster recently expressed in his “interpretation” of the “Tao Te Ching/ Naturalness and its Innate-perfection” that it was important for people to “do the Tao”...this is a perfect example of what occurs when dualism encounters something it cannot understand from within dualism, even conceptually, i.e. Oneness. Generally what occurs is that they try to “do” it and as such it turns once again into dualism. For Buddha’s message this turned into Buddhism and monasticism, for Christ’s very similar message it turned into Christianity and the Church. For Lao Tzu his expression turned into Confucianism, or Confucianism was the dualistic expression arriving at the same time as Lao Tsu’s message.

In all cases the deep simplicity within the essence of these expressions is lost, once superstructure develops on top and dualism is the add-on. Of course these all create authority and hierarchy, domination, war, conquests, aggression, power, seeking and the rest. The nature of dualism is a madness that makes all things seem at odds when they are actually all a sea of energy. This of course can be known intellectually but unless it is deeply acknowledged it is very difficult to dissolve through the barrier of identification with the mental-emotional realm.

There are numerous practices and ways of “getting” there, many masters who would suggest they have authority to take lead over others when in reality they exhibit leadership which is about themselves or “self”- righteousness, not Righteousness. They in fact have very little interest in those who follow them. This kind of ideology is part of the madness of duality.

*To lead and to follow:*

The nature of these positions is deeply misunderstood. Put simply: to lead is yang and to follow is yin. These expressions occur through nature, not by force or attempting to become one or the other. The yang is the direction which leads, the yin follows and supports its expression, the yin also underpins the direction of the yang, being the source from which it came. So the “lead” of the yang is very much how a toddler would draw its mother’s attention to something it wants to play with. This is the nature of the leader and follower. We see this warped process with all the despot industrialists, politicians, teachers and leaders who sit in positions of so-called “understanding” and so-called “power” claiming that they know “better” and that one day, if their followers are “good” and “respectful” they will get to a place in the “stars” and be seen as an “equal” to the “master”- a veritable “Old Boys’ network”. This methodology comes primarily from fear and idealism of separation. It is encouraged and exalted by those who follow and believe, or who are unconsciously spell-casting a net of “black-magic” as this is only illusion and encourages them to forget their natural instincts.

The yang/child is bright and interesting, it tries to draw the mother in to its tantrum. She remains objective, although her other children who are playing may then start to listen to the direction of this leader and a domino-effect begins. Until that moment they were happily playing in innocent bliss, now they are made to do push-ups, become gladiators, go to war, or be a “social player”. This is endemic in the political networks and spiritual guru mentalities throughout the world and has been the case for thousands of years. There are of course bursts of idealism and of truth that come from the hearts of some people, an echo of what once was, a realization that the follower and leader are One, not a pair - a realization that our different expressions as so-called “individuals” are totally irrelevant and “we” are simply fingers of the same hand of the universe. When this is known then a different kind of leadership ensues, leadership that knows it is truly an expression of Nature’s movement. It doesn’t have to say “I am the ambassador of nature” it simply *is* its expression. When this is realised people will not follow as a result of force, but because it is simply the direction of nature, like the flow of a stream or the movement of the wind.

A “problem” is simply the result of resistance to this process, for example, the resistance of one human to another, as in the situation of a “slave” to his/her “master”. This kind of resistance is simply the process of two people caught in a belief system, one believes he/she is “in power”, the other believes or fears that this is true and so is “a victim” and as such the cycle cannot be broken, both are egoic expressions, both a part of the illusion. When there is a dissolving away, a letting go of divisions between “master” and “slave” or “male” and “female” then there is a realization of wholeness. The vigour by which the “master” whips the “slave” into “shape” is directly proportional to the resistance within “self” to the flow of life. This forms a rigidity which, no matter what the attempt to hide or cover it, will shatter to its Centre and so then there will be a breaking down, a return to playing naturally with the mother-yin, ever watchful, behind.

The authoritative teacher/tyrant has a deep belief that it is from them that the “light of peace” emanates and so go about forcing these projections onto others in order that they

be listened to and are “claimed” in allegiance. Those who respond to this are considered “good and worthy” or “yielding”, those who do not are considered “bad and blind” or “unyielding”, but the direction from which this force comes is never looked at. Change which results from “yielding” to another person’s threats or force, or from being told there is “free-will” to decide one way or another, while being told that one doesn’t have the “understanding” to know the difference, is all about trickery, games and illusions, traps and snares aimed at establishing the despot’s final solution of absolutism. The despot’s process is to desperately try and form Oneness, for he/she is under the impression that it is broken, so they try to draw the whole universe into themselves in an attempt to make it whole, which is one of the manifestations of the warped-ness of this process. However the broader view is that even the energy for the idea of dualism itself *is* Oneness.

A person who shames, disciplines and blames another for not being “flexible”, is in him/herself rigid in “self” righteousness and therefore is within the illusion of dualism. This will only break at the last straw when the dualism has reached such an extreme that it explodes in the face of the so-called “authority” figure - be this in dis-ease, revolution, perceived mutiny and desertion or simply dis-interest and a loss of power, an awareness that there is no longer any influence and their believed “kingdom” is realised to exist only within the four walls of the mind.

A person who believes the “authority” to be Righteous, when in fact they are simply “self”-deceived, and who also feels victimized by the actions of this “authority”, is also rigid within a self-belief/image of being “broken” and therefore needing to be fixed. Neither is seeing the bigger picture.

Continuing the above play-ground metaphor: the potential “victim” child is naturally more yielding-yin and thereby may be trampled by being drawn into and influenced by the illusion of the yang “leader” child who’s warped belief is that he needs to control everything in order to be satisfied. This behaviour will likely go on to the bullying of people in the socio-political playground, forcing his/her way through life with controlling manipulations and threats, hidden or overt, in the misguided belief that he/she is absolutely in the “righteous” position and has “god-given” gifts of leadership. Unfortunately these have been deeply mis-placed and misunderstood. The victim by nature is more easily able to let go of the yang-illusion once the despot is not in view. The yang is constantly tormented and deeply “invested”, for it is always a transactional ideology that occurs in this type of dis-ease. Ego will only end at death or when all rigidity crumbles. Importantly, the yin is death, the yang is life - life is born out of death and death is therefore the mother of life.

There is no peace - never a point of unity, always a separation, always an idea that someone “knows better” and the student/follower is thereby always held in suspense. There is never the understanding of oneness, love and reverence because it is natural to feel this way rather than an imposed law, an expected pattern of behaviour. So life becomes about expectation, not about spontaneity, ownership rather than sharing. Only one aspect is seen to have “worth”, the other “an overflowing vessel that got it wrong”, a

problem, a difficulty, an issue that needs to be solved. Traditional or untraditional, there is nothing natural about this way, the seeker is implied throughout and the seeking does not allow for finding when it comes to the depth of unconditional-love.

Purporting to be the executioner/disciplinarian of “the hand of Nature” is an age-old myth, similarly the wizened “master” who can show you “the path” if he beats it into you. Unfortunately the whole ideology of this is false. Change occurs with natural ripeness and as such all interactions between yin-yang qualities in people are nothing to do with individuals, hence no-one is in control, there is just “process” and nothing else; no-one is commanding the discipline and nature does not discipline, this is simply an idea devised by humans to keep people in social structuralism which is fundamentally about fear and separation. It is the way of the yang, as are all methods of enforcement of power and authority. It is either naturally sensed or it isn't present. Respect is certainly not earned, it has nothing to do with the monetary system. Respect is the norm of relationship, it is unconditional and as such requiring something from someone is nothing to do with authentic leadership but relates to psychological anxiety at not being recognized or seen to have “worth”.

So what can be “done”? Well actually nothing. We have looked at the way of that yang which is the only “way to do something” because the yin is not a “way” it is still and in the background. The yin is not in contention. So the resolution of the yang is the yin. The nature of the yang to move into seeming duality is resolved by the Oneness that is the yin. This is a key factor. If we consider the nature of the child who plays at being the “master in command”, the “king who rules” the “teacher who dominates”, the “parent who judges”, the “lover who scolds”, in all these cases there is a child who wants to play the game of separateness, which is a game that always ends in tears. The Mother-yin is always in acceptance, the child goes out “on his own”, he believes, and as a result falls and stubs his toe, or is scared of the dark, or burns his hand in the fire - then bursts into tears and runs back to the mother-yin. This is the nature of the yang. The nature of it is to go out to its limit, to play the game and then return. The yin backs the whole process, she simply is in acceptance of all things.

There are those in society, male or female, who we can say have a yang-spirited nature and who will go out and try to “do well” at banking, or get a “good” relationship, be “superior” at Tai chi, or be a “spiritual master”, be at a “level” of any kind. Whatever the activity, even those involving teaching/training within the so-called spiritual arts and medicine, modern or ancient, if it has an ounce of hierarchical power involved in its expression it is deeply ignorant of natural understanding and as such engenders the same arrogance and disconnection within those who follow in its wake. In fact these kinds of expressions are the very same as those represented by the high-street banker, the arms trader, and the financial system which are about a pure and clear dualism without the pretence of anything else, such as being a “Sensei/ Sifu/ teacher” that claim a so-called “natural understanding”. All forms of dualism have the same root. These yang-spirited approaches will always end in a requirement to use force or the need to gain praise and recognition of “rightness” or “goodness” from the Mother, even though the quality of the

mother is always in acceptance - there is neither praise nor scolding that emanates from the nature of Nature, just a stillness.

Anthropomorphisation is the long word for saying how humans look at nature and try to humanize or idealize it to be a representation of the dream of dualism. However this methodology again leads us away from the true-north of reality. Nature's wholeness cannot be manipulated by its child, it is one with the child whether it believes that or not. Often in nature programmes there is an explanation of how the chameleon is "hiding" its true colours, or an animal is "camouflaged" in order to kill its prey. From our limited perspective this kind of ideology appears genuine but in reality is untrue. Actually there is no thought involved for the chameleon or other animals, who are truly the colour that they are in that moment, truly an expression of nature as it is, without any add-ons. Pure authenticity. There is no pretence in their changing nature, they are changeable moving expressions rather than ones that are fixed. However, for human madness that attempts to fix everything down, wants everything clearly demarcated, this is purely another expression of fear of the mysterious unknown which seems to be pulling all the "strings".

From the perspective of clarity, the answer to "why?" is "because.". This is not dogmatism shutting out the so-called "brilliance" of the human intellect, but a realization of the end of the ability to use such a tool, a realization that one cannot crack a diamond by simply biting down. This is of course de-bunked by so-called "rationalists" whose entire worlds are built around dualistic hierarchy, who in deeply irrational ways worship the god of modern science instead of the god of religion - again it's the same tool but with a different label. The religious dogmatism and the modern-scientific dogmatism battling it out within dualism. In the meantime nature goes on regardless, those things that are important to the "masters" and "teachers" and "heroes" and "villains" are all part of a larger picture, unseen and unnoticed, that is background and also deeply within all seeming "parts". This is what mystics were pointing out, that what looks like a "haystack" is made of needles rather than actually trying to find a needle in the "haystack"!

Fundamentally the problem lies in the way we see. We are constantly trying to identify one thing from another: diffracting, splitting off from or boxing/labelling. The other way is to take a broad perspective, as we get wider or broader we see the one thing within something else, a concentric quality. When we are able to see the nature of the human-mind within and contextualized by the nature of Nature, we see it for the firework display that it is, no more and no less.

The difference between Confucianism and Taoism is really an expression of this same scenario. The Confucian "acts natural", the Taoist "is nature". Hence we can't really call the Taoist a Taoist as there is no "way" to follow - Tao might be best translated as Naturalness so Taoist simply means a natural-expression/person. One might say that the Tao is the bodyspirit and Confucianism is the dis-ease of dualism to which the bodyspirit is background.

*“There appears a flight of dragons without heads, how profound!” - I Ching – “Classic of Change”*

The Dragons here represent the yang however the dragons are headless, they therefore have no direction of their own, yet are still flying. This is a metaphor to explain that when leadership is truly understood it means that the leader is not making decisions from an individualistic perspective, but headless-ly, they in fact are a vessel for an action, they are being “lived through” by life, rather than having “self”-choice or “self”-will.

Hence when that yang acknowledges the yin that backs it, it plays freely, the child is never lost in the woods of the nightmare of separation, but always is rooted in the yin. When the yang goes off “on its own”, tries to be “self-sufficient”, to take the lead and move ahead of the game, strives, takes advantage of, makes a move to control, to dominate, to achieve, to gain, all these situations will always result in seeming “problems”. The nature of the yin is to dissolve, to be impersonal yet deeply intimate. To be at One with, to notice the back, not focus in the front, to know the feet not the head, to let go, to realize there is no personal lead one can take, there is no message without the listener, and the speaker and listener are one: as Tony Parsons explains: “...like nothingness having a conversation with itself”. There is no imposed humility here or any attempt to become something, just a realization that the foreground is only possible when the canvas is involved.

We constantly think of the food on the table, rather than the table itself. We look towards the daylight, rather than the night. We are more focused on the top than the base. We look to life and longevity and despise decay and death. These are where duality holds on. There is in fact only this moment. There is no duality, this is just a game, a dream, no more. This is all there is.

This logic has nothing to do with “Eastern ways” or “Western ways”, what is hierarchical bullshit in one culture will be found in all cultural situations where the warped masculine mind takes over. Traditions that merely keep the idolatry of an empirical power will always fall at some time. These are not the essence: the essence is free and without imposed order. It is so easy to be fooled into thinking that the “difference” of culture is the problem, which is perhaps like suggesting that the colour of wrapping paper of a gift can tell you what’s inside it. Those who exhibit prejudice of one culture/race over another, however this manifests, wield this kind of mentality. Here is a clear example off Oneness which is what it’s all about, from the Tao Te Ching:-

Chapter 28:

*Know the male quality*

*Is rooted in the female quality*

*Is thus an open valley of the universe*

*Without swerving from innate Nature*

*There is Return to the state of a new-born babe.*

*Know the bright*

*Is rooted in the dark*

*Nature's example is expressed in following the innate Nature  
Through the constancy of Nature's expression  
Natural-virtue is limitless  
There is Return to the infinite.  
Understanding the madness of the idea of "glory"  
There is a Natural draw towards peace.  
This is the open valley of the universe  
From this open valley of the universe, which is ever true and full of nourishment  
There is return to the state of the Uncarved block.  
When the Uncarved block is broken into pieces  
The Natural-person sees and uses them as instruments of the One-Source  
Hence the greatest cutting  
Does not sever.*

Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, had this to say:-

*"With only a click on a mouse people from different countries can talk to each other. An e-mail message can get from me to you in seconds, whether you live in the United States, Japan, Africa or South America..Computers and modems help us to talk and listen to each other across the world. But it wouldn't do us much good if we didn't already have a lot in common. And we do. We may have a different religion, different languages, different colored skins, but we all belong to the human race. We all share the same basic values."*

Words used by dualistic expression simply are used within this framework rather than understanding their true nature:-

Humility is very often not humility but rather an attempt to "have" humility. Very often compromise occurs when there is a situation that cannot be "won over" by direct force, so either manipulation ensues or one person pretends to be what they are not in order that they may get their way. Compromise doesn't exist in nature, nature is utterly, uncompromisingly honest.

"Compassion" is very often also understood to be something that one can "have" whereas in fact it is the uncompromising understanding of unconditional love. "Love" stands for many things but rarely its true and completely unconditional quality (see my article Real love).

"Sacrifice" generally ends up being similar to compromise at an exaggerated level, where a person is flattened by another's dominating quality and so ends up abused. True sacrifice is the death of the illusion of separation, replaced by the truth of Oneness or unconditional love.

"Practical", "reasonable" and "pragmatic" are commonly associated with financial or social conditions, having nothing to do with what's really practical and pragmatic, which

is often to tell the truth: separation is surreal. They often mask various forms of manipulation and control strategies based on an economic model.

These are just some of the traps of language, all these words seem to mean so much and yet actually have ethical connotations which are not felt at all but are simply a “standard” by which a controlling hierarchical enforced power believes one should live. I don't say tear it all down, but I do question what is real about any of this? What is not real needs to dissolve away.

In the non-dualism of the Tao Te Ching's clarity, Lao Tzu, or the “Old-man” (a term used here to hide authorship and specifically end hierarchical expression) speaks of the nature of relationship and what authenticity is about in these three chapters:-

#### Chapter 17

*The Natural human tends to matters without contention, they “exist” only.*

*The leader is he who tries to be like a parent-teacher whom the people look up to and praise*

*The dictator is he whom the people fear*

*The manipulator is he whom the people treat with contempt.*

*If there is no fundamental trust the people's authentic Nature, any so-called “leader” will be met with mis-trust*

*The Natural person allows the time to pass, his words emanate from truth*

*When bounty is had or task is accomplished the people all say “We just live Naturally”.*

#### Chapter 18

*When a manufactured ideal of “Natural way” is not “obeyed”*

*Naturally arises benevolence and Righteousness*

*When mental intelligence emerges*

*The great pretence begins*

*When roles of relation to one another are not adhered to*

*Natural genuine connection arises between people*

*When a nation is led into confusion and chaos*

*Patriotic ministers arise.*

#### Chapter 19

*Let go the idea of the “sage”, and the “wise”*

*And the people will benefit a hundredfold;*

*Let go the practise of “benevolence” and rules of “rightness”*

*And the people will return to Natural relationships*

*Let go of intellectual ingenuity, discard profit*

*And there will be no more thieves and bandits*

*All of these processes of “letting go” are simply the surface, they are not the Truth*

*People seem to need to attach themselves to something*

*So express what is Natural, unadorned and naked, feel the Original Nature*

*Here is little thought of “self” and “desire.”*

This gives us a brilliant understanding of the problem. Authenticity is really about natural expression. It is about being natural, which is not about obeying laws or rules, it isn't about bowing one's head lower than another's, nor about tyrannical spells or ideas of victim-hood, in the end it is about just being what there is, which is that behind the madness is total Oneness with each other. Authenticity therefore is not something an individual "has", or can "achieve", it is something which is innately present and then becomes covered up by a cloud of beliefs during growth into an adult. But innate Truth will always be Underpinning everything.

What then is there to "do" or to "learn" or to "think" in order to be "better"? What does the notion of "improvement" really mean? Is there validity to be found in any of that? The message of Lao Tsu is clear, which is that this cannot be taught by another person, because that which speaks the Truth has no further belief in the notion of "individual". Those who would claim to be part of a lineage, having "trained for years" to "achieve", who assert they are an "experienced elder" or "better", may give lip-service to this. However, none of these ideas has anything to do with nature or depth, but everything to do with the surface - and a shiny, interesting surface it is:-

### Chapter 53

*With only a little sense of the Natural-way*

*Its direction can be walked,*

*Only being side-tracked by anxiety.*

*The Natural direction is so easy, yet it seems, so is being side-tracked!*

*When the courts are arrayed in splendour*

*The fields will be barren*

*The granaries will be empty.*

*Yet there are those who dress in finery*

*Carrying sharp swords*

*Filled with food and drink*

*With more possessions than they can use*

*This is called: the contracted-madness of what is termed "greed"*

*This cannot perceive the Natural-way.*

Again the dis-ease is part of the societal structure, it is part of the whole scene. So what now? Without the leaders and rulers exerting their will through power, without the dictatorial advances, what then - is there another way? The other way is to walk away, this is what we learn. If we attempt to engage, it is as if we are engaging with a sick person, who is convinced that their sickness is all of "reality" and who is exhorting everyone else to join: a necromancer who has unwittingly cursed himself! When we see the spell, it is unbound, then we get a broader picture, when we look from the "headlessness" of our current state of being (see [www.headless.org](http://www.headless.org) for an illustration of this), we cannot be drawn into the illusion.

## Chapter 70

*The words here are very Natural to understand, and very Naturally lived*

*Yet there is no method to “understand” or “way” to “practise”*

*These words have an Origin*

*These ways have a Natural-order*

*Yet to attempt to “work this out” intellectually always fails*

*There are only few who sense the Natural-way*

*As such there will be imitation and deification of seeming “individuals”, but no truth*

*Therefore the Natural-person wears simple unassuming clothes*

*Yet underneath is the beauty of all of Nature.*

The deification of individuals is the basis of our society, such is the fashion over the last five to ten thousand years or so. Humans have a way to death and a way to life. The way to death lies through the path of the “master”, the “ruler”, the “overlord” and the “superstitious”; the path to life originates from the indigenous people of the world, in the nature of the infant to teach us, not for us to teach the infant. It also lies in the true nature of the female, not tied to warped masculine ideals of the reign of the “powerful” female, but rather to the actual nature of the deeply feminine, which has no words or points of reference. This is the way of nature, that which underpins *the* background, not the person speaking. The empty space where “he/she” stands is key to freedom.

To put it simply, the ideals of dominance, threat, aggression, anxiety and ideologies of tyranny are now outdated, we’ve done them all and got the T-shirt, we’re tired of the “aspirations” of others and “pretences” of those who would be “king”—as in the age-old tragi-comedy of the emperor with new clothes. Constantly the yang within its madness tries to outwit the yin, playing hide and seek with that from which it cannot hide. The process of the mind’s identity with a “self”, constantly trying to draw other fingers of the same hand into the illusion that they too are utterly separate, because this then confirms the “self”, clearly demonstrating where it stands as the “one who has gone before” the one who “knows the way” and those else should be subservient to it. The tactics of command being the idiocy of shaming, blaming: the aggression of a child unable to take home the toy-shop because it “needs it”, a pure addiction to the idea that all is not-well and it needs something to pacify, something very large, to fix it. It’s time to let go, to return from whence life springs, back home, to the home which has always been there. There is nothing to seek, no-one to find, nothing to “do better”, nothing to fight against, or to “do” or “try” to get “better” at, because what you are is enough. We are not adults of the world and to think as such is a deep arrogance, we are not adolescents of the world and to think as such is also a deep lack of understanding. We are One with the world and therefore always infants of the universe, always open. Our true nature lies here – how much more authentic if we can look in the face of the one who wishes to make us small or the other who would raise us up and say: “not today thank you, I’m whittling”.

*“Two Catholic priests were praying at the alter when suddenly one of them stood up and passionately exclaimed, ‘Oh Lord, I am nothing compared to your glory! See I am nothing!’ The other priest was also inspired to rise to his feet, saying ‘I am nothing! I am nothing!’*

*A cleaner sweeping the floor at the back of the church was so moved by the scene that he too began crying out, ‘I am nothing, Lord! I am nothing!’*

*Whereupon one priest turned to the other and said, ‘Who does he think he is, claiming to be nothing?!’”*

*– from “All there is” by Tony Parsons, 2003*

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18/ 02/ 2011