

## Needing “my” space, and why “you” never get it.

There is a pre-occupation in modern life with having “space”, owning space, when really it is the one thing which cannot be “got”, owned or given. This is illustrated by commonly used phrases such as “I really need my space”, “my personal space is important in order for me to be okay around others”, “I’ll give you your space.”

In the Tao Te Ching we read:-

### Chapter 11

*Thirty spokes share one axle hub.*

*It is the hollow space of the axle-shaft that allows the use of the cart.*

*Knead clay in order to make a vessel*

*It is the empty-space within the clay that makes the vessel useful.*

*Cut out doors and windows in order to make a room*

*It is the empty-space therein that allows one use of the room.*

*Yet what we gain is some-thing, yet it is by the Innate-perfection of no-thing that this can be put to use.*

We know that space is intrinsically useful although at a deeper level it is realized that everything occurs from within spaces. But claim it we cannot, even though we try to do this when we consider space as our “territory”, for example in rooms of a house, in shape/size of our car, but this is all packaging of what in reality is simply emptiness. The most brilliant marketing strategies are actually promoting space as a commodity - Apple Air-book, Nike-air, Emmental cheese! All these sell space as part of the bargain yet it cannot really be owned or sold.

If we look closely at the human body, it is more like a tube than an actual solid object, every atom is in fact comprised more of space than anything else and interestingly even the substance itself is not as it seems. Even a musical instrument uses space in order to create its sound. Everything is based around space, yet for some reason we humans believe we have rights over it.

In many ways this is a perfect representation of the human condition. Space is the final frontier, it’s what the colonial “selfhood” wants to obtain but can’t because it is invisible and ineffable, it cannot be named, pinned down, shelved, bought or sold. “Self” finds it irritating and frustrating that Nature will always overcome our attempts to control space, to box it in or to tie it down and eventually the bubble will burst. In many ways that is what all formations of life are - bubbles. A bubble is not a boundary, it is permeable and that's why it eventually breaks, only to reveal what has always been there. No bubble that forms is separate from the universe but it *seems* separate in that inside and outside can be identified, but in fact no such thing exists, there is simply energy changing from one state to another as an expression of One thing, or Oneness.

Interestingly if we just look out at whatever we are seeing now, these words or this screen, where you are looking *from* always remains an empty space, you have always been looking out of emptiness. There is no “my face” in the way of your view, in reality you’ve never had a face at all and all you are looking out of is space. As Douglas Harding continually repeats, the space without a face is space for all the world to happen in. (please see <http://www.headless.org>) As such it isn’t really that “I” own a section of space but that I *am* all of space or the whole world is happening in “Me”. This is an utterly different way of saying the word I or me, it is beyond the limits of the history of “myself”. Again Douglas points us to recognize that we are never face-to-face with anyone, this never happens. We are always face to No-face or face-to-space, no-face on your side and the face you’re interacting with on the other side. Douglas describes this situation as our being “busted wide open for each other” and herein we gain a great sense of the nature of unconditional love, which is the way it is, rather than how we think it ought to be, or how we want to claim it.

Space and love are totally the same thing. They are the very nature of existence in all its forms. Everything is space in one form or another so to attempt to own it is to fall short of what is occurring in reality. Like trying to grasp smoke, to capture the wind, or force the sea to go back, the nature of the “Self” will always struggle with the powerlessness of the seeming “individual” until the moment this breaks down allowing the realisation of the all-powerful expression of love that is both intimate and impersonal at the same moment.

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