

Trophy-life: gold digging at the end of the rainbow and its causality.

Trophies are on display in every corner of our lives. The best set of golf clubs, the ultimate super car, the most wanted partner, the list is endless, even belonging to a specific organization, society or being amongst the lineage of a certain hierarchy are all part of this. But why are these things important, what lies behind the idea of the trophy-life, the situation of trying to claim/obtain a symbol or idol that will supposedly enhance our lives?

The nature of finding a trophy is fundamentally the same as every other process in life. The more religious/spiritual types will make out that the sheer sense of *not* looking for a trophy is the ultimate, but in fact that is a trophy in itself, as with the old adage that the pretence of having no style *is* a style. Ultimately everything that goes on for the “self” is about constantly seeking, for its other half or for something to support itself or “armour” itself in order that the world can be kept out and the “individual” can be kept safe. However the nature of life is that, however beautiful, the rainbow cannot remain, and as such all trophies eventually tarnish, become aged or worn and no longer retain their original appeal although they may still be clung onto, even if the original purpose of claiming them has been forgotten.

There are various expressions of trophy fetishism, one is of material things and items, another is of the perfect relationship or relationships, the third is the situation of enlightenment. All three can be increasingly seen as “virtuous” pursuits, but in fact they are all the same thing. The trophy-wife is the same as the trophy-life or perfect ideal of enlightened being, to be claimed and sought-after. The ultimate bank account is the same as the ultimate master of healing who will tell you how to “be yourself”. The point is that we place a hierarchy on everything when we construct ideals of “what’s important” and “what isn’t” but all these represent judgments and it might be useful to see what we are really trying to get to with all these forms of seeking.

If we expand all these notions to the nth degree, let’s take the trophy of power: The business man owns his own company, then he takes over the next-door company, then the whole office block, then the city, then the nation, then the world, then the solar system then the universe. When he has completed his task he has become everything and so from the dictate of an ideal of perverse megalomaniacy we can see that this is simply moves ideally towards a sense of Oneness or completeness with everything.

Now let’s take the “ultimate relationship” trophy. The ultimate lover is one who will be a perfect match, beautiful beyond comparison, sexually energetic, wants me when I feel down, heals me when I’m sick, is a mother, father, lover, companion and all things in-between. Interestingly the quest is to find “the One” is ultimately to find total Oneness. Rumi used the term “the Beloved” to explain the nature of Oneness in that it is as if a person is seeking an ultimate lover that never left them, and that *is* them also. Hence seeking for the ultimate lover is again the seeking for Oneness, disguised in the ideal of a person who looks, acts and expresses in the “ultimate way”.

Then there is the exact same expression, but this time associated with an ideal called “enlightenment”, either of being associated or connected to people who are supposedly “enlightened” or of being such a thing yourself. In actuality, beyond the seeker’s dream this makes no sense, as an enlightened person is an impossibility for as the “self” falls away and this is done by no-one, it simply occurs or is seen to always have been the case. The nature of seeking encourages a master-student, or patient-practitioner, or internal-external dualism that essentially is also a seeking for Oneness. The person who “knows” is supposed to instruct a person so that some day in the future they will “get to know” and it is believed that after long periods of tireless “work done” ultimately salvation will be achieved. However the nature of natural movement and instinctual sense requires no learning, but rather an uncovering of what is already present. This uncovering also comes away by-nature, not through intended action. The whole approach of becoming the “Knower” or the one who is seen as “Master” or “Guru” is the ideal of becoming the “knower of all things” or even “the one who no longer needs to know all things”, or “that which is unknowable”. Hence whether it be ultimate “intellectual prowess” or “heights of spiritual growth”, the place where the seeker is looking toward is the ultimate goal of a total dissolving of the one who is seeking and the end of hierarchy and sensed separation between people, or non-duality or Oneness.

This is why the seeker and the process of seeking can never be considered to be bad or unworthy, or important and worthy. It is not wrong or right, it is just the nature of everything that we are all the time. As we awaken from deepest sleep through levels of consciousness to when the “self” fully turns-on and engages, we are seeking that which we just left in deepest sleep and also that which is the background Oneness which is in fact constantly present. Although this seeking process is warped and its ideals are impossible, nevertheless it churns on, using up all the power it can until reaching a natural point of collapse where it falls away to reveal the natural essence that was always present beneath it. In the end it isn’t the goal or the trophy, which is like a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow that we can never reach, it isn’t even “the journey” or “process” of getting to the point of collapse, it is the relief that there’s nothing missing, the realization that the whole nature of everything as it is, is absolutely enough. When the requirement for the trophy dies away all ambition or desire for achievement also dies away and we can be what we are without pretence, name or power-base.

One trophy is the same as the next, none is better than another. The seeker is the same, no matter what cultural background, ethnicity, qualitative nature or “path”. The seeker finds trophies and then stops. The reason for the seeking is nature itself, the dis-ease of separation. The end of this process and its unraveling as the seeker takes that seeking to the point of ripeness or ultimate breakdown is nature’s expression too and so it is very impersonal and yet deeply intimate. For the “I”, Oneness is the booby prize, or the booby trap - “I found nothing, which was the answer”.

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25/10/2011