

Natural-Conflict: The friction of change

“Survival is about conservation of energy. All too often our modern culture is about wasting it. Conflict with friends and family, with people we care about, can be an enormous tax on our resources. Does that mean we should avoid all conflict? Impossible. Friction is the nature of life and the world we live in. Returning to the status quo after a conflict of community is actually unhealthy. It means we wasted our efforts. Generative ecosystems involve challenges that actually improve relationships. More energy is yielded than lost. It's a matter of sound ecology. Survival and true family is not about avoiding conflict, but instead learning to utilize it.”

Tony Deis , <http://trackersearth.com/>

Tony Deis of Trackers Earth makes a valid and important point about re-evaluating our understanding of conflict. In nature there are constant processes of change occurring, we have all seen the animals in David Attenborough's programmes locking horns and moving into a pattern of charge for change. The nature of this is not a fight, nor are they acts of aggressive-violence, yet there is a lot of energy expended and to humans that looks like what happens when we get angry.

We have to be careful not to anthropomorphize when looking at nature, for wild nature is very different. In nature where one has two alpha males or females head-on with each other, it is about a kind of magnetic field, each having similar polarity and each pushing the other away, and as Tony points out this is friction which inevitably causes change. The grunts, groans, growls and the sizing-up, which of course also occur in human expression, are very much of a process of the energy moving into a frictional expression. In humans too it is often charged with sexual energy and the natural energetic power to reproduce but it is also to do with dis-ease states of ideas of “self” that manifest as insults and intolerances of one person to another. The latter is the source of violence in society, not of actual natural-conflict or natural resonant forces coming to discharge their expression. So how does one differentiate one thing from another within human society?

One need simply only go as far as the kindergarten playground to see what real honest conflict is about: one child hits another because he is feeling energetic that day, and so there is an expression of conflict that immediately occurs, usually with one child in tears and the other not. Soon afterwards all is forgotten, yet there is a clear sense for both of the energetic quality of each other. The situation may never happen again. The same occurs in nature, in spring-time the energy rises and the bucks lock horns because the sexual energy comes to the fore. This is very similar to the actual physical conflicts of girls or boys that go on in teenage years ...and much later! So this too is imbued within the human, although unlike animals additionally there involves a “self” and so societal violence and idea-battles on the surface, which simply irritate the natural-conflict energy that is underneath. Natural-conflict has nothing to do with power or control, or anything to do with words, it is not about prowess or a prize-fighter stance, but much more to do with the natural and spontaneous expression of energy as it is.

This is the quality of Tony's point about conflict, this kind of energy creates natural change and also allows for different growth. It is expressed and engaged with directly, not hidden, avoided or held back, it is natural energy that needs to come to the fore otherwise great damage is done to the insides of the body. Most commonly this quality is associated with the male and female yang quality rather than the yin.

The concept of altruism would suggest an idea of non-conflict based society, an idea where this friction, like clouds in the sky creating thunder, does not exist and moreover should not. Superficially pious priests and teachers of all kinds would have us believe that they live in a non-conflictual expression of nature. The Tao Te Ching is often expressed as a book of non-conflict, yet it does not warn of non-conflict it merely expresses the truth of actually being without pre-intended action, without forethought, acting spontaneously like a child. It is important to notice that the expression of children's energy has quite a lot of conflict and frictional process attached to it as they find their feet and try to engage with the various sights, sounds and expressions of the world, much of the process of growing and expressing is based on a frictional change and a movement of expression, even walking through the air creates friction and change, it's a vital expression of life. So the Tao Te Ching and other books and expressions, including the life of Buddha, do not speak of non-conflict but of a realization of the natural-state, which by nature involves energetic conflict and change naturally.

When people get irritated and angry very often it is about the "self" and the "self" somehow being rebuffed, misinterpreted or mis-identified by someone. Usually it is about irritation of the mental-faculty that does it, it's a situation of mental-irritation of "self"-irritation. Similarly, when two things resonate at the same frequency the contracted "self" of "me" resonates with the contracted "self" of "you" and so hardness meets hardness and there is a fight. However this fight is based on the illusion that the "self" is real, that it actually exists and that "I" am actual truly separate thing. This is untrue, in this case this is fight within a hallucination, it is in many ways fighting with "self" which underpins the majority of the processes of human conflict. Other situations such as children being under threat and a mother's instinct to protect them, or a male's attempt to fight off other men, or issues that relate to sexual expression are all in a sense natural. We suggest the nature of a stream can have "raging rapids" but the rapids are not full of rage, but full of energy...this is the nature of natural-conflict it is purely energetic, it has no "rage" rage is an emotional explosion of the human and emotions as there name suggest are "disturbances" in the natural flow of life. No-self or Nature, has no emotion, it is simply life as it is, within Unconditional Love. Emotion can sometimes be wrongly considered as sensitivity or responsiveness, it has nothing to do with this. Emotions all involve "self" at there root they are all time-based and within the idea of "me" and are literal expressions of the dis-ease state.

The complex societal situations in which the human being finds itself when "self" and social-mentality are united with the human-animal's energetics are a complex combination of reasons for conflict. They are often a partially natural expression of energy and partly "self"-based.

Some will say “don't let it bother you, just be at peace” or try to hide away from a conflictual situation. Others will see themselves as above all this or will claim “I” have “got there” and am therefore “clear” about this, as if the “I” has any personal control over the state it is in. But there is nowhere and nothing to “get”, herein there is both the energy of conflict and the energy of calmness. Both are expressions of the yin and yang of natural expression. As the “self” moves from contraction to expansion there is no choice about this motion and no reason for it, neither is it wrong or stupid to be in conflict or right or good *not* to be, these are all misconceptions. Basically all actually occurs as it needs to. It is not under “personal” control, and the more a person believes that it is, the more they are promoting the illusion of the dizzying heights of their own “self”-importance and exaggeration of “self” known as “guru” or “higher-self” from which to look down at people, which eventually forms a discharge or pent-up explosion of irritation and anger, which hitherto they didn't know existed. This may then enable a fundamental let-go to an acceptance of what they are.

Change in humans occurs when reality is truly accepted as it is, not through intention but when this is ripe and when the energy of “self” has burned off enough for there to be change, it is completely out of the individual's hands. Lack of recognition of this by society perpetuates the violence of dis-ease rather than the nature of natural-conflict. Natural conflict is simply that which is in-love with all of life, it is at one, just as animals engaged in conflict do not feel separation merely the coursing energy of conflict expressing through them as an assertive charge. However human conflictual-violence is in conflict with itself and altruism and spiritual one-upmanship simply represent another form of this same violence.

People who pioneer so-called anarchic ways of thinking are often seen to be conflictual, the expression of Christ for example simply expressed what there was, Oneness, yet this brought people's deeply-held beliefs about personal choice and personal idealism crashing down and therefore brought a great deal of human violence into Christ's life. His potent expression of differentiating the truth and steadfast refusal to veer from this path because it simply was who he was, brought both his death and his eternal message forth. The message was not about being non-conflictual but being in acceptance of what's real, illustrating the way of nature. Many felt that this was mad and/or that his expression was the voice of violence, they mistook violence for natural-conflict, they mistook a caged animal breaking free of its cage for a person believing themselves to be a “god”. Because humans only speak the language of “self” they cannot understand another way of expression, so they anthropomorphize the human-animal as well as the wild animal.

People who speak the truth are often ostracized because it undermines the status quo, i.e. one should “just be peaceful and ignore it”, but if by nature expression comes through “you”, then it will be that conflict will come your way. The nature of the Tao Te Ching therefore is deeply conflictual for human society, yet herein lies the differentiation between natural-conflict and violence.

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