

Process: The Perfection of Imperfection

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The only sin is ignorance-Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Tao is principle. Creation, on the other hand, is a process. That is all there is: principle and process, how and what. All creation unfolds according to Tao. There is no other way. Tao cannot be defined, but Tao can be known. The method is meditation, or being aware of what is happening. By being aware of what is happening, I begin to sense how it is happening. I begin to sense Tao. - The Tao of Leadership, John Heider.

Consistent with my notion of Process Science of Mind is the thought that imperfection (its variability-desirable or not) is the perfect medium for Creation, just the way it is. The word perfection generally evokes a sense of a steady-state, unchanging condition; while imperfection, in my usage, refers to an ever changing evolving process where simultaneously order and chaos co-exist. Because Creation is a variable order and not a steady-state one, the characteristics of imperfection fit most perfectly the way things are in daily life. Thus, I am arguing that in general, the imperfection of daily life is perfect, just the way it is.

While perfection more fittingly describes our idealism toward Spirit, imperfection is the very blessing that is Creation-the fruitfulness of Spirit. In Creation, all creatures, from microbial life forms to the titanic dinosaurs, and certainly including humans, fully participate, or have participated in, the process of creation-by becoming active, local, creative centers of the Universal Creative Power of Spirit.

As far back as the fourth century BCE, the notion of imperfection as blessing is recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, when a priestly writer wrote that God declared Creation, all that He had made as "good"-not perfect.

Metaphors of Imperfection

Using the computer as a metaphor, imperfection functions as Life's Operating System, or as "Microsoft Windows"-Version 15 Billion (the age of the universe). This operating system facilitates functionality of all the parts and pieces, from thought to thing, making up the manifold world and making it work as one. It further strikes a harmonious chord with the Bible statement, All things work together for good for those who love God, where "God" is the Intelligence and Energy of Wholeness.

If we were to symbolize God's Intelligence and Power as "light," as does the Book of Genesis with God's command, Let there be light . . . then the important phenomenon of imperfection can be seen as a prism through which pure light passes and is refracted into the colors of the rainbow. Similarly, the Pure Perfection of God's Energy and Intelligence passes through the prism of imperfection, and into the field of pairs of opposites as the physical reality of a multiform world.

Tradition speaks of this act as "the Fall" thus, completely misconstruing what the Fall means. It erroneously emphasizes "mistakes" or "sin," admittedly an essential part of Creation, by painting "sin" as the antithesis of God's Perfection. In such an irreconcilable comparison, Tradition devaluates Creation: branding it largely as a curse rather than the blessing that it is. Is it any wonder so many pastors and priests euphemistically eulogize those who have made their transition as "going to a better place," or as "going home"! Why "place," when "place" is a function of time and space and the Eternal is not? Beyond pairs of opposites is Pure, Undifferentiated Awareness-the Oneness of Spirit.

Imperfection is the perfect state for the field of time and space-the realm of experience. In the Perfect Reality of Spirit, nothing can be experienced but God's Self-Awareness. In the field of time where there are pairs of opposites, God can experience God's Self everlastingly, though not eternally, as Creation itself. The great mystic William Blake said, Eternity is in love with the productions of time. And so, not surprisingly, Process philosophers speak of God as evolving, growing in experience, and being enriched in new ways as cosmic evolution unfolds, as creation continues. God delights in these new experiences.

Without the perfection of imperfection (the Operating System of Creation), Creation could not be. Life is characterized by change, and few will disagree that the change that made it possible for him or her to be, is good. Imperfection has change as a main component of its function in the same way that oxygen has the potential that makes combustion possible. Pairs of opposites are the language of Creation as "on" and "off," or "yes" and "no" switches are part of the digital language of computers facilitating its Operating System.

One fundamental pair of opposites is the constancy of Principle when teamed up with its adulterous and sometimes even outrageous counterpart, the inconstancy of Nature that is relentlessly changing. Everything must and will change; even stars are born, mature and die over eons of time. It is as if Spirit will not invest Its essence or energy permanently in anything or in anyone because it needs to move on to the next exciting thing through the process of change. Nor are we speaking of a meaningless existence because each entity is serving the greater whole and is, therefore, intrinsically rewarded for its

purposiveness in time and space by coming into fulfillment before finally shuffling off this mortal coil and on to the immortal state of Undifferentiated Oneness from whence it came. At that point the Cosmos simply says, "Next!"

Constancy and Inconstancy

Clearly seeing this principle at work, the ever insightful Shakespeare writes:

*Sigh no more ladies,
Ladies sigh no more,
Men are deceivers ever,
Men are deceivers ever.
One foot in sea,
And one on shore,
To one thing constant never,
To one thing constant never.*

Though it may seem extravagant to say that Shakespeare's writing of men's unfaithfulness to women reflects, on a micro level, a process principle in cosmic life, metaphysical insights can certainly make a strong case for this principle. In Shakespeare's poem men symbolize the masculine energy of inconstancy of form while ladies, the constancy of spiritual laws: the feminine principle or permanence. In Creation, form is never constant but is forever changing. We are hard-pressed not to see Process as flirtatious with form, an action that seems only to come into question because humans have intentions separate from Nature.

The nature of form is impermanence. In speaking of the changeless Reality of Spirit vs. the changing state of form, the Bhagavad Gita states: As a man abandons worn-out clothes and acquires new ones, so when the body is worn out a new one is acquired by the Self, who lives within. In this world of change or imperfection, only Principle remains constant.

Far from this being an argument implying that we should throw our hands up in the air and do nothing about something that matters, Process Science of Mind rather reminds us that this ever-flowing river of change is affected by our thoughts and feelings, and that we can use Principle to redirect the energy of change for bringing our desires into physical reality.

Long before Shakespeare, Moses' perception of how mind participated in desirable outcomes for everyone was evident. In the Book of Deuteronomy, considered his last will and testament to the Israelites, Moses said, I put before you this day a blessing and a curse . . ." The great prophet realized that each event or condition that Life puts before us comes with two valences: good and bad, or blessing and curse, or life and death. That is the correct wisdom understanding for one who grasps the nature of things. What possibilities we

choose to see evokes what we can in fact be, or, as an ancient Yiddish saying expresses it, As thou seest, that thou beest.

Beware and Be Aware

The strength of our choice, in each event, is a function of the extent that our thought and feeling act in accord with each other, and the converse is, of course, also true. When these are guided by spiritual principles of Wholeness, or God, our experience will inevitably evoke the good. Nonetheless, pairs of opposites are present at every turn, every junction, and every fork in the road of Creation. Seeing the good concerned Jesus also, who said, Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing, to which I have added, Be aware of sheep in wolves' clothing. In other words, when we see the potential for bad in something that is being offered as good, be aware; and conversely, when you have bad experiences, look for the wisdom principle they teach and draw that good unto yourself.

Once Moses' meaning of our power to choose hits us, it is like cold water thrown in the face of a drowsy man. We awaken with a start. "Got it!" we say; "Eureka!" we shout; but hopefully, we don't run down the streets naked like Archimedes. Whatever our metaphysical beliefs, no plea to Oneness, no affirmations of non-duality, no saying that there is no duality, will alter the reality of how Creation works through process, through pairs of opposites, through the Perfection of Imperfection. The nature of Life is that it potentiates joy and sorrow, hunger and satisfaction, and up and down, and yes and no. Creativity as process would be lost without change, and so would this life as we know it.