

## NOTABLE JOURNAL ENTRIES

### Journal Entry 8/89: Tides of Meaning

#### A VIEW OF THE SIGNIFICANCE(S) OF LEARNING (provisional play)

Nothing alive is still. Stillness is a quality of death and inanimation. Digitality is a still observation.

From the moment we are alive, we are moving. We are moving physically and we are moving mentally. (brain cells swim to their locations) At a sufficiently subtle level, both (physical and mental) are emergent qualities of the same “whole” moving. This moving, like a confluencing infinity of differing tides, propagates the relations between our inner most material processes and every aspect of the universe which affects them. In my own experience the word closest to covering these infinite ranges of movement is “attention”. Attention is the bio-psycho-energetic-movement.

From the heart thumping startle of a near miss on the freeway, to the more finely focused and dissipated calculations of balancing a bank account, attention is co-implicate.

Like a boat traveling across water leaves a wake, attention leaves memory. The bodies we are and our remembrances of events past are both co-resonating wakes of attention. And just as the boat both leaves a wake and is affected by wakes, attention passing through memory is modulated by and modulates the form of memory.

Meaning is the active resonating together of attention and memory. Meaning may be mediated by cognitive operations at higher levels of abstraction but its nature is an energetic quality of attention not an abstract construction.

Learning is the non-inherently predetermined interactivity between meaning and memory.

All living grows out of learning.

Evolution is nature (life) learning.

Being human is learning - learning to realize and fully extend and embody living.

The significant obstacles to our capacities for learning are brought in by our learning. **We learn to fear learning about ourselves.**

### Journal Entry 9/89: Meaning Being

As Thomas Kuhn pointed out, change seems to occur by the incremental additions of new facts into the framework of an existing “paradigm” or because some higher level of generalization subsumes older paradigms and relates them in a new one. Any attempt to see established facts from a new perspective is a formidable undertaking. The difference between the Ptolemaic and Copernican solar system was but a different organizing generalization that seems simple today, but for Copernicus to make his argument was at the time quite complex. The paper you are about to read is concerned with how we see what we know and as such can't avoid some complexity on route to a high level of generalization.

.....

The past twenty years have seen an enormous increase in the sophistication of our understandings of: quantum mechanics, molecular biology, information processing, brain functioning, artificial intelligence, cognitive science, systems theory, chaos theory and human potential. Yet, more striking than the strides made in each discipline is the emerging paradigm they all share about the universe, nature, life and more specifically human beings. They all agree, reductionists and wholists alike, *we are meaning being*. We are the cutting edge of “being” *learning*.

At the level of physics it is said that a “signal”, an “event” or a fundamental “particle” has meaning only in relation to some observational context (itself a meaningful frame of reference). Similarly, from the chemical messages of DNA to the complex telecommunications of modern society or the relationship between parent and child, anything that is meaningful is so only in a context. The basic attribute of context is meaning, therefore, meaning is *irreducible*. According to all we know, probably according to all we can know, meaning is the basic “stuff” of existence. Change of any kind is first and foremost a change in meaning.

Biological entities, such as ourselves, are meaning *being*. Our bodies process food according to laws and habits which create a context for the complex chemical interactions occurring. At a higher level of generalization, the music of Mozart has beauty because there is meaning in the way it resonates with our nervous system. Similarly, when learning mathematics, a given formula is a method from which meaning can be assimilated and transformed.

We are a near infinite confluencing of co-implicating contexts, which are incorporating meaning in relation to an infinite environment, and doing so throughout every measurable interval of our existence. The way we process meaning, how we do it, why we do it, and how different meaning is to *being* than to *awareness*, we are studying. But that we are meaning being, that life is meaning being, that meaning beings are life, is as close to certainty as we can get.

## Journal Entry 5/89

Any real experience has in its nature the need to go deeper than a human being can control. Yet, we learn early that devastating things happen when we don't control our experience.

### DAARON

One evening Daaron, my four year old son, came into my room while I was working on my computer. He said “daddy, can we go for a walk?”. I said that we could, but we would have to wait a minute until I finished saving my work and shutting off the computer. As I proceeded to do this, he wandered over to a side table covered with magazines and glancing upon them noticed the cover of a recent “Science News”. On the cover was a picture of an aborigine with a bow and arrow.

Daaron immediately asked “daddy can I have a bow and arrow?” He had asked about one once before and had been gently deflected from pursuing it. I was just finishing up and shutting down and as I got up to walk over to him I replied that maybe when he was a little older we could get him one. As this was happening and just before I could say “lets go for a walk” (which would have deflected him again) I recalled my own early fascination for the bow (action at a distance). As I did, I proceeded to tell him that when I was a little boy, though a little older than he, I had had a bow and... As I paused in speech, his face stopped me awake.

On Daaron's face was intensity, sincerity, innocence and sorrow, he looked at me full on and somehow full deep and said “oh.., you lost it?” I can't really describe what happened his voice - its tone - was so incredibly innocent and so fully present. I just melted into the moment. While describing it will take some time and paper, it all happened within an instant.

Thinking did not cloud my mind, it was one of those moments of communion when we were in full resonance. One moment he experienced the bow in his hands, the next it was suddenly gone, he was pained and so too must I be - his reaction was immediate. A sorrowful “oh.....” followed by a sorrowful but consoling “you lost it?” For him the bow was incredibly meaningful. For me to have once had one and today not, I must have suffered the loss of it as he would. His experience brought him to feel sorrow for me and my (he supposed equally present) pain at its loss.

Timelessly, I experienced the essence of love, compassion and intelligence.

His love and compassion and sorrow were not products of ideas, images or some desire to get anything from me - it was naked and alive - incredibly present, innocent and sincere. And yet while there was this incredible warmth there was also this awesome intelligence.

The aspect of that intelligence which was most striking was its timelessness - his feelings were totally in the now - it was inconceivable that he could outgrow the desire for the bow, hence I hadn't - I must feel as he did. From that perspective, his response was beautifully intelligent and compassionate. It was at this point that I saw that: **“the only reason I don't see the incredible human intelligence in the behavior and actions of every human being is the rigidity of our own frame of reference”** - that, each human being's behavior is perfectly intelligent given that individual's nature, and more importantly here, their frame of reference. Further, and this had been something I have been exploring for years, the difference in our perspective was for me best described as a difference in *timescape*.

I had thought about this point from many angles previously, but here was an experience that was deeper and showed their reality. I had often observed that children especially, but adults also, behaved incredibly intelligently given the way they see their world. That the issue was not how to learn about behavior, rather to learn about how people learn to experience the world - how they learn to see it - how I learn to see it. Now it was clear that this was so, that adults may have more convolutions and may live in a psychological space-time extending into vast fields of memories, but that their behavior was fundamentally an intelligent reaction to their perception of the world. With a pressing vitality it was clear that the only reason this is not always obvious to me is that my own way of perceiving the world will not let me experience the world from theirs.

After a whirlwind tour of reliving important moments in my relationships with people, a review illuminated by this view of human behavior, I hugged Daaron and we went out for our walk which though too long a story to tell here turned out to be magical from one end to the other. Super shoes, what a concept.

Ever since that day when I encounter some aspect of a person's behavior which seems unintelligent, I ask myself why is my point of view so rigid?

#### FRIENDS - JOHN

My life, owing in large part to my somewhat unique vocation, enables me to be in dialogue with people about the essence of learning (for me the process of the content of consciousness) 20 to 30 hours a week. It has been so for nearly 3 years and I can't express enough the gratitude I feel for having had such a wonderful environment of challenging and encouraging friends and family.

Shortly after the event with Daaron, I spent a day with my friend John. John is a very unique human being. Not only does he enjoy and become animate in dialogue about our shared human condition, he has had some remarkable and insightful personal experiences which illuminate and inform his gentle and encouraging but challenging nature. John has a somewhat different view of the significance of learning than I and exploring that view has indeed been enriching. **John has had personally validating experiences about the relationship between psychological rigidity and patterns of bodily, physical, organizations. His process of being more open and alive, of overcoming what he learned before he was aware of learning - of becoming more open, is what he calls body-work.**

The underlying philosophy about John's body-work arises from the fact that human beings are more than what is behind the brow. That human experience is a full being phenomena, extending throughout our whole physicality. This of course is not a new idea, the fact that our whole nervous system is one with the brain and with the body is most certainly true, we only separate them in classifying - they are all integral in a larger whole. But what John is saying is that those of us who are aware that we are “blocked”, obstructed from being open enough to truly be ourselves and experience the world, shouldn't confine our inquiry to the space between the ears. That, emotions and thoughts are process of the whole body, and thus so are the blocks. **That these learned blocks can best be seen as patterns of physical organization which we have acquired to brace ourselves from unpleasant experiences. Trying to stop from crying, stiffening our shoulders in fear, tightening our whole body to avoid trauma, these things we did as children left patterns of organized**

**knots in our physicality which persist into adult hood and tether our capacity for whole experience. From such a perspective these blocks combine to act like a psycho-physical straightjacket, which by its nature excludes our conscious awareness of its existence.**

Having somehow experienced this wholly, not just the idea, John has been doing his body work for some 14 years. A great deal of that time he worked with a somatic therapist (Stanley Keleman <http://www.centerpress.com>) who taught him that the first step in untying the knots or blocks was becoming sensitive to their existence. The therapist uses a descriptive example roughly like this:

**Imagine that you have clinched your fist very tightly and for so long that you are no longer aware of doing it. To unclench it, you must first become aware that it is clinched and then proceed to clench it even tighter. In the act of clinching it tighter you reestablish awareness and proprioception and can then relax it.**

John has come to feel this must happen to a vast network of subtle knots distributed throughout the body.

I had, before that day we spent together, understood the logic of all this, what John did was make me experience its reality. By talking me into a deep breathing state of relaxation he asked me to focus my awareness on every little muscle in my neck and shoulders. Then, as my awareness was tuning in, to slowly move my shoulders searching for little pockets of resistance. As I encountered them he said, breathe deeply with the pocket focused in awareness - deepen your perception of it. Finally, as the awareness of the block was deepest, he said to move my body in ways that I felt would relax it. I did this and had the definite experience of a vivifying bubble burst - an expansion to the dimension and richness of awareness.

That experience, others from that day and since, have co-implicated the relationship between learning and being, and the fact the human being's first learning is bodily organizations. In addition to having a process revealed, this experience served to deepen my sense of conviction that human learning is initially time-blind, indeed constructs time, for here again was evidence that as small children we learn in ways which constrain our capacities for learning.

## **MOTHERS DAY**

If you pay great attention to anything alive if you really establish an inner sync with something living, in that quiet attentiveness you can subtly feel the other's living impulses.

When I really attend a bird standing on the ground watching attentively for its lunch, when the bird jerks its head, very subtly, I feel an impulse to jerk mine. When I really commune with a baby, if I rhythmically pulse a muscle group, the baby will also. I have seen this.

**Little children, infants, are constantly “being-learning”. They do not experience the world in words or images or in relation to a self - but in cascading waves of energy and feeling. They resonate with reality at a level which is not abstract. While we adults can attempt to theorize and describe their orienting process of experience, that orientation is, in us, so deeply learned over that we no longer experience it.**

The human infant's experience of the world, its learning, is grounded in that kind of experience. Their sensitivities are not just sensual they are also pre-sensual. They are empathic, their being learning is grounded in an empathic resonance with their living environment. Long before their senses are reporting reliably on their physical relation to the world this resonance is shaping their relationship with their senses. They can and are easily traumatized by resonances unnoticed by the caregivers.

On Mother's day, the day after my day with John, I spent almost the entire day with a dozen little children. (mostly infants). I was amazed at how present this empathy was. I could feel anger in the being of some, hurt in others and a buoyancy and freedom in still others. It was plainly obvious in seeing the parents which ones were hurt and angered and how they have unaware, provided an ambient context for their child to “being-learn” to relate to life in similar ways.

We don't seem to see this and as such our unawareness of this subtle and delicate level of being causes us, through ignorance, to bruise and mar these most beautiful expressions of life and love and humanity's potential.

Why don't we treat each child with the reverence and facilitative carefulness we would afford a Christ, Einstein, Curie or Michaelangelo? Why don't we cherish them, each one, as if he or she were the key to the whole future of mankind? Which of course they are, these beautiful beings are all this and more! Where is LOVE, COMPASSION and INTELLIGENCE on this planet if not here?