

Ausculata

Network News

White Robed Monks
of St. Benedict

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Abbot's Notes

Peace be with you and yours.

Ever notice that some people are always having trouble with their employer — a boss, supervisor, or any one who might be in charge? These folk might leave one situation because they did not get from the boss what they think they wanted. Or they remain in a state of limbo, never really committing to their work situation, waiting for the right boss come along so they can switch. They do not believe that boss is giving them what they need or want. Obviously it is the boss' failing or fault.

That the problem is "out there" is itself the problem. These folk have never really matured emotionally. They want from their boss what they often times did not get from their father (or mother). They do not feel listened to, heard, or understood. They go from one situation to another. No one situation is better than another. After the initial glow of newness wears off, these folk begin to find fault and again start — albeit often times unconscious — search for a new substitute parent.

The Zen Benedictine Rule

offers some insight in to this situation. From Chapter 15 of our Rule we read:

"The abbot and monk acknowledge and accept as a simple statement of fact Christ's statement: Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to suffering, and those who go through it are many. But the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to true life, and those who find it are few (Matt 7:13-14). The aim of this relationship is to realize one mind in Christ so that all may realize the kingdom of God, not necessarily as Christ said, but as it is. As the Lord said, The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, which is smaller than any other seed; but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes the largest of shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky are able to make their nests in its shade (Mark 4:30-32). Where is the monk to find this kingdom? The kingdom of God is within you (Lk 17:21). The purpose of this relationship is attain a mature mind that can grasp this simple truth in all its nakedness.

Both the abbot and monk

realize that all teachers have different teaching styles. Some may be like a high wall with no way of assent. Others may be open and friendly. Two extremes that include all the subtle variations of style that may be evident in between. All teachers, regardless of style, stimulate the student to discover what s/he is to do. The best instruction is often the most subtle. Thus, does the monk grow in awareness with the subtly of instruction, literal or figurative. In listening to the subtle instruction, both abbot and monk listen through the idiosyncrasies, personality, style and even intellect of each other. Both acknowledge and accept that sin is simply the capacity to make mistakes. Thus, the nature of the relationship is founded in forgiveness."

Forgiveness. What would occur for the wandering individual if he or she would just forgive — forgive one's parents and forgive oneself for living a life of pain and suffering, a life of ignorance? What would occur? Yes, what would occur?

Peace and Joy!
+Robert OSB

Controlling Parents

Some of us are parents and do not want to do to our kids what our parents seemingly did to us. Others of us do not want to be parents out of fear of repeating dysfunctional family systems we believe we embody.

Part of forgiving is know what behaviors to

forgive. The following information comes from <http://www.controllingparents.com/stylesof.htm>. Please refer to this site for more information.

"Nearly all controlling parents embody one or more of the eight "styles" of controlling parenting. These styles provide a "You Are

Here" point on the map of unhealthy control. Identifying your parents' styles can help you make sense of what didn't jibe in your family. Remember the series of lenses an eye doctor alternates before your eyes until you find ones that enable you to see most

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Special points of

— possible — interest:

- If our life is intentional,
- If our intention is forgiveness,
- Then our life is about forgiveness.
- Then, if forgiveness means surrendering control,
- And if surrendering control involves repentance,
- Then forgiveness involves repentance.
- And if repentance means surrendering fear,
- Then life is about surrendering fear.
- And if surrendering fear invites happiness,
- Does not life then invite happiness?
- Do you intend to be happy?

Spiritual Reading:

Benedict's Dharma: Buddhists reflect on the Rule of St. Benedict. Ed. Patrick Henry (Riverhead Books, 2002)

Controlling Parent-Con't.

(Continued from page 1)

clearly? Recognizing your parents' styles offers the right lens that brings into focus the underlying values and themes with which you were raised. The more clearly you view your family's themes, the more readily you can become your own person. You may find elements of one or more of these styles present in either or both of your parents:

Smothering Terrified of feeling alone, Smothering parents emotionally engulf their children. Their overbearing presence discourages independence and cultivates a tyranny of repetition in their children's identities, thoughts and feelings.

Depriving. Convinced they will never get enough of what they need, Depriving parents withhold attention and encouragement from their children. They love conditionally, giving affection when a child pleases them, withdrawing it when displeased.

Perfectionistic. Paranoid about flaws, Perfectionistic parents drive their children to be the best and the brightest. These parents fixate on order, prestige, power and/or perfect appearances.

Cultlike. Distressed by uncertainty, Cult-like parents have to be "in the know," and often gravitate

to military, religious, social or corporate institutions or philosophies where they can feel special and certain. They raise their children according to rigid rules and roles.

Chaotic. Caught up in an internal cyclone of instability and confusion, Chaotic parents tend toward mercurial moods, radically inconsistent discipline, and bewildering communication.

Using. Determined never to lose or feel one-down, Using parents emotionally feed off their children. Hypersensitive and self-centered, Using parents see others' gains as their loss, and consequently belittle their children.

Abusing. Perched atop a volcano of resentment, Abusing parents verbally or emotionally bully — or physically or sexually abuse — their children. When they're enraged, Abusing parents view their children as threats and treat them accordingly.

Childlike. Feeling incapable or needy, Childlike parents offer their children little protection. Childlike parents, woefully uncomfortable with themselves, encourage their children to take care of them, thereby controlling through role-reversal.

(From If You Had Controlling Parents: How to Make

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Happiness On Hold

We convince ourselves that life will be better after we get married, have a baby, then another. Then we are frustrated that the kids aren't old enough and we'll be more content when they are.

After that, we're frustrated that we have teenagers to deal with. We will certainly be happy when they are out of that stage.

We tell ourselves that our life will be complete when our spouse gets his or her act together, when we get a nicer car, are we able to go on a nice vacation, or when we retire.

The truth is, there's no better time to be happy than right now. If not now, when? Your life will always be filled with challenges. It's best to admit this to yourself! and decide to be happy anyway. Happiness is the way.

So, treasure every moment that you have and treasure it more because you shared it with someone special, special enough to spend your time with..

and remember that time waits for no one.

So, stop waiting....

--until your car or home is paid off

--until you get a new car or home

--until your kids leave the house

--until you go back to school

--until you finish school

--until you lose 10 lbs.

--until you gain 10 lbs.
 --until you get married
 --until you get a divorce
 --until you have kids
 --until you retire
 --until summer
 --until spring
 --until winter
 --until fall
 --until you die

There is no better time than right now to be happy.

Happiness is a journey, not a destination.

So -- work like you don't need money,
 Love like you've never been hurt,
 And dance like no one's watching.

If you want to brighten someone's day, pass this on to someone special!

--I just did
 (Anonymous)

"Forgiveness is the key to action and freedom." -Hanhan Arendt

Try this:
 It is hard to forgive because some part of us feels wounded by some one else's action. Sadly, carrying the hurt keeps the wound from healing. Try helping someone forgive by discussing what can be done to heal the wound.

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PROJECT FOR A VILLAGE SHOP (India Project I)

Background

The women's group in Bakrour village across the river plan to run a small groceries shop to meet the needs of several small villages in the area. They request a one-time grant and are willing to refund 20% of the capital to a revolving fund. This group was originally linked to our women's organisation but 2 years ago they decided to function autonomously.

They realise that with the

development of Bodhgaya and the concentration of the market in the town, the rural areas are facing further impoverishment.

Traditional modes of income-generation cultivation are being destroyed. There is an urgent need to set up small businesses to revive the rural economy and at the same time to cater to the community.

The Project

A small groceries shop in a

central location in the village. It could meet the immediate requirements of the densely populated villages around. The stuff sold will be food grain, lentils, oil, sugar, masalas, tea ,etc.

Supplementary businesses will be started to support the project e.g. household manufacture of mixture" (made of fried vermicelli, peanuts etc).

An educated youth will help in keeping the accounts and a percentage of the profits

will be re-invested in the capital.

The group's account will be jointly operated by Parvati Devi and Pathunva Devi.

Budget Requirements

For the infrastructure (containers, stalls, scales etc)

- Rs 10000

For initial wholesale purchases of grain etc .

-Rs 30000

TOTAL Rs 40000

(Around US\$1,000.00)

PROJECT FOR 6 NON-FORMAL EDUCATION CENTRES IN WAZIRGANJ BLOCK OF GAYA DISTRICT. (India Project II)

Background

Interior villages in this area are densely populated by the musahar group of Harijans. These are the lowest and the poorest in the caste system. They live on the margins of the villages and form the landless labour force during the agricultural seasons - i.e. 3 months in the year. At other times they go in search of work in brick kilns or in road construction.

Centuries of oppression and negative discrimination have left their imprint on these people. They have a poor self-image and are literally voiceless and powerless.

There are numerous children

in this community around 7-8 per couple. Because they are poor, dirty and slow in studies they are harassed by the teachers if at all they venture to go to the Government schools. So the children prefer to remain in the villages grazing goats and pigs, playing, caring for siblings for they are child labourers in their own homes.

It is a story of a lost childhood.

Outline of the Project

The project will be under the legal ownership of "Gram Nirman Kendra"- a registered Trust. (The papers in Hindi can be sent to you). The work will be supervised by Ram Raj - who belongs to the

musahar community and has some experience of such service.

The project will reach out to musahar children in 6 non-formal education centers. Each center will have 25-30 children between the ages of 6-14. They will learn for 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the evening.

The villages chose are Bhindas, Bhindas Bangla, Itmaun Parpain, Bairiya, Ayodhyapur, Shekabigha.

The people provide the space for the center and some food for the teacher. The curriculum will include basic literacy, art work, songs and games.

The NFE center is the focal point of each village community. The teachers will organize the people and make them aware of their rights and find solutions to the problems connected with poverty (just wages, land rights, superstitions, corruption in the government offices).

They will negotiate with the existing Government schools for further education of the children.

Evaluation

Gram Nirman Kendra and the village community is responsible for the running of the Project and they will evaluate the progress, the

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The Fear of Change

"Standing in the way of the changes we need to make in order to have a more satisfying relationship is our fear of change. A fear of change is also basic to human nature. We can feel anxious even when we're undergoing a positive change, such as getting promoted, moving to a new home, or going on a vacation. Anything that breaks us out of our comfortable or not-so-comfortable routines sets off an alarm in our old brain. The old brain is alerting us to the fact that we are entering territory that has not been mapped or surveyed, and that danger may lurk around every corner.

"I saw a ... dramatic demonstration of paralysis in the face of change the other evening while watching the news. I local

TV station carried a story about a little boy who was born in 1982 with severe immune deficiency, and from the moment of birth had to spend his life encased in a plastic bubble, sealed off from life-threatening germs. His devoted mother and father were by his side every day of his life, but they were separated from him by the plastic, and the only way they could touch him was by putting on long sterile gloves that were permanently inserted into the bubble.

"Shortly after the boy's fifth birthday, he was given a successful bone-marrow transplant, and after elaborate testing, the doctors decided that his immune system was sufficiently developed to allow him to leave his sterile world. On the day he was scheduled to come out, the bubble was slit open,

and his overjoyed mother and father held out their arms to him. This was the first time in their lives that they would be able to kiss and hug their son. But, to everyone's surprise, the boy cowered in the back of the bubble. His parents called to him, but he wouldn't budge. Finally his father had to crawl inside and carry him out. As the little boy looked around the room, he started to cry. Since he had lived all his life in a ten-by-eight foot enclosure, the room must have looked enormous to him. His parents hugged him and kissed him to reassure him, but he wasn't used to any physical contact, and he arched backward to escape their embraces.

"The closing segment of the story, filmed a few days later, showed that

the child was growing more comfortable with life outside the bubble. But on the day of his emancipation it was clear that his fear of confronting the unfamiliar was stronger than his desire to explore the world.

"That little boy lived for five years inside his bubble. ..."

With so many years invested in habituated behaviors, it's only natural that (people) should experience a great reluctance to change. (Chance) involves not to risk the anxiety of learning a new style of relating, but also to confront the pain and fear that have been bottled up inside them for decades — the reason for their dysfunctional behavior in the first place."

Getting the Love you Want: A Guide for Couples, Harville Hendrix, pp 96f.

A Way to Remove Fear

.... a description of a Tibetan meditation technique taught by Tarthang Tulku. Tulku is a Tibetan lama who left the country after the Chinese invasion, and founded the Nyingama Institute in Berkeley, California in 1969. His method for eliminating unwanted thought forms and their effects, as described in the book *Hidden Mind of Freedom*.

"Working with thoughts by opening them as they arise can bring many pleasant feelings, which--

without attachment--also become our meditation. . . . We can even go into the thoughts that judge other thoughts, and, embracing this judging mind, become united with it."

"By relying on the light of awareness you can see that the difficulties you face are manifestations of your own concepts. Going deeply into your thoughts, you will see how you create your experience, how

you alone are the judge who determines heaven and hell, good and bad. "

"Whatever experience arises, stay with it, expand it, and heat it up. If you remain within the intense core of the experience, the meditator unites with thoughts and emotions, and everything dissolves. Then awareness grows powerful and one-pointed. As thoughts and emotions are increasingly included within this field of

awareness, they become more useful. Instead of being a cause of frustration or confusion, they become agents of well-being. . . . "

Standing on the bare ground ... a mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God
Emerson



Some sayings of Meister Eckhart:

Meister Eckhart (c. 1260 - 1327/8) is one of the great Christian mystics. He was born near Erfurt in Thuringia and in his distinguished career became a Parisian Professor of Theology and took a leading pastoral and organizational role in the Dominican Order.

"Whoever possesses God in their being, has him in a divine manner, and he shines out to them in all things; for them all things taste of God and in

all things it is God's image that they see."

"People should not worry as much about what they do but rather about what they are. If they and their ways are good, then their deeds are radiant. If you are righteous, then what you do will also be righteous. We should not think that holiness is based on what we do but rather on what we are, for it is not our works which sanctify us but we who sanctify our

works."

"It is a fair trade and an equal exchange: to the extent that you depart from things, thus far, no more and no less, God enters into you with all that is his, as far as you have stripped yourself of yourself in all things. It is here that you should begin, whatever the cost, for it is here that you will find true peace, and nowhere else."

Talks of Instruction
<http://www.op.org/eckhart/meister.htm>

Kind Donations

Our costs (time and financial) for publishing this Newsletter have risen. We do not actively seek out donations to support our activities. We rely on the generosity of our benefactors in our quest to help others. As an experiment, we have made arrangements for donations to be made on line via:

<http://www.acteva.com/go/kindness>

Please help those we serve here and abroad.

Repentance

"The troubles in the human world are very complicated, but you should not ignore them. However, neither can you stay with them. You have to take care of them. But we also must take care not to attach to something good or pretty or sweet. It's not easy, particularly if we do something good; we want

to be proud of ourselves, we want to attach to our lives.

"Repentance is to realize exactly the oneness of merging all sentient beings and (Christ), delusion and enlightenment. All sentient beings are allowed to live and are, from the beginning, forgiven for living their

lives in this world. Everything, whatever it is, has some reason why it exists: evil, good, even something neither evil nor good. You cannot destroy devils just because you don't like them. Even though you don't like monsters, still there is some reason why they exist. Everything is entitled to live in this world in

peace and harmony beyond our judgment and evaluation (*Judge not, lest you be judged.* Mat 7:1). This is the first condition we have to realize — everything is (God) (...so that God may be in all I Cor 15:28).

Returning to Silence, Zen Practice in Daily Life. Dainin Katagiri, p. 73.

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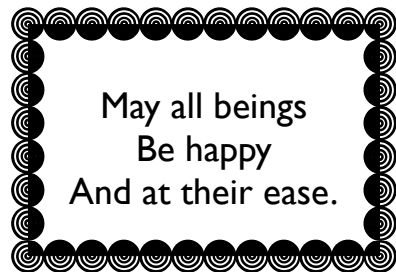
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Proj. II (Con't.)

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attendance of the children and their growth in learning skills. An onsite visitation team from Bodhgaya will be made at least once a year - 30 kms from Bodhgaya .

BUDGET REQUIREMENTS FOR 1 YEAR

Honorarium for 6 teachers at Rs. 500 p.m. for 12 months = Rs.36,000. Honorarium for 1 supervisor Rs 1,000 - for 12 months = Rs. 1,200. Expenses for travel and = Rs 50,000.

(About US\$1,250)

Buddhism for Beginners

Class #343 in San Francisco
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19 Sep, 24 Oct, 28 Nov 01
415-788-5500

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Parents (Con't)

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(Peace. Forgiveness of what we are and what we perceive the other to be perhaps is all we need. Dial "that" phone number. Say hello. Let it flow. Ed.)

Teachers open the door,
but you must enter by yourself.
Chinese proverb