



White Robed Monks
of St. Benedict

Network News

Volume 6, Issue 2

September 18, 2002

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Special point of insight: www.6seconds.org

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Happiness II
Life's greatest happiness is to be convinced we are loved.
Victor Hugo, Les Miserables, 1862

Without relationships, no matter how much wealth, fame, power, prestige and seeming success, . . . has, happiness will constantly elude him.
Sidney Madwed

Happiness is a difficult emotion to define. It is part joy, part contentment, and part state of mind. For many of us, happiness is a goal- we want to be happy. But what really does bring happiness?

Research Says. . .
Ed Diener and Martin Seligman recently published a study comparing the upper 10% of happy people to people of average and low happiness.
*

They found
- The very happy people rated highest in measures of good relationships.
- They also spent the least time alone and the most time socializing.
- No one variable was sufficient for high happiness- but all members of very happy group reported good quality social relationships.

Try this. . .
Dedicate time this week to work on a relationship that has been challenging you.

What can you do to strengthen that relationship?

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Abbot's Notes

Peace be with you and yours now and forevermore.

Patience/patient derives from the Latin word "patiens" and is defined as "Bearing or enduring pains, trials, or the like without complaint or with equanimity." "The Trials and Tribulations" of life we hear often remarked. Life events cover a gamut of experiences. Joys and pleasures may be part of a trial and tribulation, just as sorrow and discomfort. Life remains just what it is — life.

How do we handle life events? We can react or we can respond. Reacting, we behave really without taking into consideration of results of our actions — how what we do or do not do affects and effects the whole. When we respond, we are present to our dispositions and behave respecting how what we do or do not do effects or affects the whole.

Of course, there are the questions: Is there pain? Is there suffering? Is there joy? Is there sorrow? As with beauty, are these not in the "eye of the beholder"? What is painful for one might be pleasurable for another. If we accept as a "truth" that human beings are pleasure seeking creatures, then many of us certainly gain much pleasure out of what others would know as suffering. How many illness do we bring upon ourselves for the benefit of being ill and obtain, thereby, attention, appreciation, understanding, or even acknowledgement? We know no other way possible. Illness, wars, money problems/suffering, relationship problems/suffering are for the most part the product of our own creation.

And we seem not to learn given "a century that begins and ends with killing in Sara-

jevo? Somewhere around 180 million people have been killed in one Twentieth Century atrocity or another — a far larger total than for any other century in human history:

- 1) 50,000,000 Second World War 1937-45;
- 2) 48,-250,000 China: Mao Zedong's regime. including famine 1949-76;
- 3) 20,000,000 USSR: Stalin's regime including WW2-era atrocities 1924-53;
- 4) 15,000,000 First World War including the Armenian massacres 1914-18;
- 5) 8,-800,000 Russian Civil War 1918-21;
- 6) 4,000,000 China: Warlord & Nationalist Era 1917-37;
- 7) 3,000,000 Congo Free State 1900-08;
- 8) 2,-800,000 Korean War 1950-53;
- 9) 2,700,000 2nd Indochina War including Laos & Cambodia 1960-75;
- 10) 2,-500,000 Chinese Civil War 1945-49;
- 11) 2,100,000 German Expulsions after WW2 1945-47;
- 12) 1,900,000 Second Sudanese Civil War 1983-;
- 13) 1,700,000 Congolese Civil War 1998-;
- 14) 1,650,000 Cambodia: Khmer Rouge Regime 1975-79;
- 15) 1,400,000 Afghanistan: Civil War 1980-;
- 16) 1,400,000 Ethiopian Civil Wars 1962-92;
- 17) 1,250,000 Mexican Revolution 1910-20;
- 18) 1,250,000 East Pakistan: Massacres 1971;
- 19) 1,000,000 Iran-Iraq War 1980-88;
- 20) 1,000,000 Nigeria: Biafran revolt 1967-70;
- 21) 800,000 Mozambique: Civil War 1976-92;
- 22) 800,000 Rwandan Massacres 1994;
- 23) 650,000 French-Algerian War 1954-62;
- 24) 600,000 First Indochina War 1945-54;
- 25) 500,000 India-Pakistan Partition 1947;
- 26) 500,000 Indonesia: Massacre of Communists 1965-67;
- 27) 500,000 Angolan Civil War 1975-94;
- 28) 500,000 First Sudanese Civil War 1955-72;
- 29) 500,000 Decline of the Amazonian Indians 1900-99;
- 30) 365,000 Spanish Civil

War 1936-39; 31 350,000 Somalia: Civil War 1991** and so it goes.

These numbers reflect an opportunity for patience, to practice patience. Monastic patience, a unified patience, one-patience-in-God (*Father may they be one as you and I are one, that they may be one in us*), we create when we engender a sense of equanimity: realizing, knowing, that this is that, that all is one in the same without difference or distinction, including our likes and dislikes, our joys and sorrows, our laughter and tears, our "this-es" and "that-s."

We are the human condition and we condition our humanity. We are human nature and human is what we portray. A refrain from a long silent song: "Oh when will we ever learn, oh when will we ever learn. — The answer my friend I blowing in the wind, the answer is blowing in the wind." The Spirit, "Holy" if you wish, is always present if we are but present to our own conditioning each and every moment. We learn patience. We learn to listen. In order to listen, we first must be still. In being still, we learn patience.

Being still does not necessarily mean being without physical movement. Being still does carry the sense of being without thought and/or feeling movement—not being moved by either this or that, although both might be present. We are present to not only *what* we are in the moment, but also *how* we are in the moment. With ourselves and others, we learn to be patience.

By the way, September 11 is the Feast of St. Patiens, Bishop of Lyon (456-498).

Peace and joy!
+Robert OSB

*from <http://origin.org/ucs.cfm>

On September 11 by The Dalai Lama

The September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were deeply shocking and very sad. I regard such terrible destructive actions as acts of hatred, for violence is the result of destructive emotions. Events of this kind make clear that if we allow our human intelligence to be guided and controlled by negative emotions like hatred, the consequences are disastrous.

How to respond to such an attack is a very difficult question to answer. Of course, those who are dealing with the problem may know better, but I feel that careful consideration is necessary and that it is appropriate to respond to an act of violence by employing the principles of non-violence. This is of great importance. The attacks on the United States were shocking, but retaliation that involves the use of further violence may not be the best solution in the long run.

We must continue to develop a wider perspective, to think rationally and work to avert future disasters in a non-violent way. These issues concern the whole of humanity, not just one country. We should explore the use of non-violence as a long-term measure to control terrorism of every kind. We need a well-thought-out, coordinated long-term strategy. I believe there will always be conflicts and clash of ideas as long as human beings exist. This is natural. Therefore, we need an active method or approach to overcome such contradictions.

In today's reality the only way of resolving differences is through dialogue and compromise, through human understanding and humility. We need to appreciate that genuine peace comes about through mutual understanding, respect and trust. Problems within human society should be solved in a humanitarian way, for which non-violence provides the proper approach.

Terrorism cannot be overcome by the use of force because it does not address the complex underlying problems. In fact the use of force may not only fail to solve the problems, it may

exacerbate them and frequently leaves destruction and suffering in its wake. Likewise, acts of terrorism, especially involving violence, only make matters worse. We must condemn terrorism not only because it involves violence but also because innocent people fall victims to senseless acts of terrorism such as what the world witnessed on September 11th.

Human conflicts do not arise out of the blue. They occur as a result of causes and conditions, many of which are within the protagonists' control. This is where leadership is important. It is the responsibility of leaders to decide when to act and when to practice restraint. In the case of a conflict it is important to take necessary preventative measures before the situation gets out of hand. Once the causes and conditions that lead to violent clashes have fully ripened and erupted, it is very difficult to control them and restore peace. Violence undoubtedly breeds more violence.

If we instinctively retaliate when violence is done to us, what can we expect other than that our opponent will also feel justified retaliating. This is how violence escalates. Preventative measures and restraint must be observed at an earlier stage. Clearly leaders need to be alert, far-sighted and decisive.

In today's world expectations of war have changed. It is no longer realistic to expect that our enemy will be completely destroyed, or that victory will be total for us. Or, for that matter, can an enemy be considered absolute. We have seen many times that today's enemies are often tomorrow's allies, a clear indication that things are relative and very inter-related and interdependent. Our survival, our success, our progress, are very much related to others' well being. Therefore, we as well as our enemies are still very much interdependent. Whether we regard them as economic, ideological, or political enemies makes no difference to this.

Their destruction has a destructive effect upon us. Thus, the very concept of war, which is not only a painful experience, but also contains the seeds

of self-destruction, is no longer relevant.

Similarly, as the global economy evolves, every nation becomes to a greater or lesser extent dependent on every other nation. The modern economy, like the environment, knows no boundaries. Even those countries openly hostile to one another must cooperate in their use of the world's resources. Often, for example, they will be dependent on the same rivers or other natural resources. And the more interdependent our economic relationships, the more interdependent must our political relationships become.

What we need today is education among individuals and nations, from small children up to political leaders to inculcate the idea that violence is counterproductive, that it is not a realistic way to solve problems, and that dialogue and understanding are the only realistic ways to resolve our difficulties.

The anniversary of the tragic events of September 11, 2001 provides us with a very good opportunity. There is a worldwide will to oppose terrorism. We can use this consensus to implement long-term preventative measures. This will ultimately be much more effective than taking dramatic and violent steps based on anger and other destructive emotions. The temptation to respond with violence is understandable but a more cautious approach will be more fruitful.

*Dharamsala, India
The Office of Tibet is the official representative office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government-in-Exile to the Americas*

India Note

Sr. Mary of Bodhgaya sends her heartfelt thanks for supporting the empowerment of Indian Women. The current "sewing machines" project is a grand success. Soon we will have pictures on the web.

A long time student sends his thanks for our purchasing/ mailing USA writing and journalism texts for his younger brother's career.

What I Would Say to Osama bin Laden? by Thich Nhat Hanh

Zen monk Thich Nhat Hanh talks about how listening is the first step towards peace. Interview by Anne A. Simpson

Conclusion

Is it realistic to think people can feel true compassion now?

- Without understanding, compassion is impossible. When you understand the suffering of others, you do not have to force yourself to feel compassion, the door of your heart will just naturally open. All of the hijackers were so young and yet they sacrificed their lives for what? Why did they do that? What kind of deep suffering is there? It will require deep listening and deep looking to understand that. To have compassion in this situation is to perform a great act of forgiveness. We can first embrace the suffering, both outside of America and within America. We need to look after the victims here within our country and also to have compassion for the hijackers and their families because they are also victims of igno-

rance and hatred. In this way we can truly practice non-discrimination. We do not need to wait many years or decades to realize reconciliation and forgiveness. We need a wake up call now in order not to allow hatred to overwhelm our hearts. Do you believe things happen for a reason? If so, what was the reason for the attacks on the U.S.A.?

- The deep reason for our current situation is our patterns of consumption. U.S.A. citizens consume 60% of the world's energy resources yet they account for only 6% of the total world's population. Children in America have witnessed 100,000 acts of violence on television by the time they finish elementary school. Another reason for our current situation is our foreign policy and the lack of deep listening within our relationships. We do not use deep listening to understand the suffering and the real needs of people in other nations. What do you think would be the most effective spiritual response to this tragedy?

- We can begin right now to practice calming our anger, looking deeply at the roots of the hatred and violence in our society and in our world, and listening with compassion in order to hear and understand what we have not yet had the capacity to hear and to understand. When the drop of compassion begins to form in our hearts and minds, we begin to develop concrete responses to our situation. When we have listened and looked deeply, we may begin to develop the energy of brotherhood and sisterhood between all nations, which is the deepest spiritual heritage of all religious and cultural traditions. In this way the peace and understanding within the whole world is increased day by day. To develop the drop of compassion in our own heart is the only effective spiritual response to hatred and violence. That drop of compassion will be the result of calming our anger, looking deeply at the roots of our violence, deep listening, and understanding the suffering of everyone involved in the acts of hatred and violence.

“Patience in Relationships” by Barbara & Allan Pease

From Why Men Don't Listen and Women Can't read Maps by Barbara and Allan Pease ISBN 0-7679-0763-9

Relationships between men and women work despite overwhelming sex differences. Much of the credit here goes to women, because they have the necessary skills to manage relationships and family. They're equipped with the ability to sense the motives and meanings behind speech and behavior, and can therefore predict outcomes or take action early to avert problems. This factor alone would make the world a safer place if every nation's leader was a woman. Men are equipped to hunt and chase lunch, find their way home, fire gaze, and procreate — that's it. They need to learn new ways for modern survival just as men do.

Relationships become rocky when men and women fail to acknowledge that they are biologically different and when each expects the other to live up to his or her expectations. Much of the stress we experience in relation-

ships comes from the false belief that men and women are now the same and have the same priorities, drives, and desires.

For the first time in human history we are raising and educating boys and girls in identical ways, teaching them that they are the same and that each is as capable as the other. Thus, as adults, they get married and wake up one morning to find they are different from each other in every way, shape, and form. It's little wonder that young people's relationships and marriages are in such disastrous shape. Any concept that insists on sexual uniformity is fraught with danger because it demands the same behavior from both men and women, who have quite different brain circuitry. Sometimes it's hard to understand why nature would plan such apparent incompatibility between the sexes, but it looks that way only because our biology is so at odds with our current environment.

The good news is that when you

understand the origins of these differences, you not only find it easier to live with them, you can manage, appreciate, and end up cherishing them too.

Men want power, achievement, and sex. Women want relationships, stability, and love. To feel upset about this is as useful as abusing the sky for raining. Accepting that it rains allows you to cope with the weather by carrying an umbrella or raincoat, so it is no longer a problem. In the same way, anticipating the difficulties or conflicts that might arise in relationships as a result of our differences enables you to anticipate and defuse them as they occur.

... Consistent and solid evidence is coming from scientists everywhere showing that biochemicals in the womb direct the structure of our brains, in turn dictating our preferences. But most of us don't need millions of dollars worth of brain-scanning equipment to know that men don't listen and women can't

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Peace and Joy!

Relationships (con't)

(Continued from page 3)
read maps; the equipment just explains what is often self-evident.

In writing this book, we have presented information that you probably already knew on a subconscious level but never stopped consciously to understand.

It's amazing there here at the beginning of the twenty-first century, we still don't teach an understanding of male and female relationships in our schools. ... So it's therefore up to you, the reader, to educate yourself. For only then can you hope to have relationships as happy and as fulfilling as both men and women deserve.

Please read this book, share it with your children. Equanimity and patience with ourselves and each other as we are is key. -Ed.

A Request.....

We are able to publish **Network News** when schedules provide open blocks of time. We need open time blocks for composing the newsletter, preparing the mailing list for bulk mailing certification, printing the newsletter, affixing mailing labels, bundling and sorting more than 2000 newsletters properly according to zip code and number of pieces per zip code for bulk mailing rates, and taking the completed project to the bulk mailing depository.

Besides the time involved in preparation, there is now the ever increasing cost of postage. Any financial assistance you might offer "the cause" will benefit all who receive **Network News** around the world. Eventually we know we will have to take the publication to a mailing house for USA mailing. We will continue to mail internationally in house.

Donations also assist our endowment fund for projects in India and in the USA as well as allowing us to continue serving those coming to us seeking spiritual assistance.

We are in the process of setting the

stage for making our services more readily available around the USA. We will be actively seeking deacons and priests who wish to serve under the aegis of the White Robed Monks of St. Benedict, unencumbered by dogmatic and doctrinal concerns that are often part and parcel of a church, *per se*, and often times invite divisiveness and discord.

Fr. Jim Baliya has an active ministry in the Chicago area and he also coordinates our services on the East Coast. Fr. Milton Raybould coordinates our services in the South/Southwest region of the USA. The San Francisco center serves internationally and the western regions of the USA. Both Fr. Jim and Fr. Milton serve as Deans.

Network News is the medium that avails for ready transfer of information in this age of transition from the printed to electronic communication. Not all of us are wired — yet.

In short, please assist us financially. See Donation Link on front page or mail to us directly. Thank you. Many Blessings.

White Robed Monks of St. Benedict