



**White Robed Monks
of St. Benedict**

Network News

Volume 8, Issue 1

April 26, 2004

Inside this issue:

On Humility	2
Humility/Trusteeship	3
Montessori/Children	4
Eckhardt/Humility	6
Perspective/Humility	6
Detaching a Belief	8
Offering Donations	8

Abbot's Notes

Peace be with you.

As you may know, the White Robed Monks service several projects on India. We usually visit India yearly to give support and input. Each year other folks join us, each giving his or her support as each is wont.

In February-March two projects took giant leaps forward, thanks to the expertise of fellow travelers. Sr. Mary in Bodhgaya now has her own web site <www.womens-awakening.org>. Manish's silk business in Vanarasi gleaned some valuable business/marketing insights. (Ten Thousand Three Thank you's Cynthia Countouris and husband Riccardo Fiorentino <www.fiorentinodesigns.com>).

From Varanasi (and the Scindhia Guest House, whose web site Riccardo enhanced <www.scindhiaguesthouse.com>), India, five of us traveled to Kathmandu, Nepal, each on a pilgrimage of sorts. Our destination: Mt. Everest Base Camp — by foot.

Base Camp is only 17,716 feet above sea level (deferring to the top of Mt. Everest at 29 Thousand or so—a must read: *Touching My Father's Soul* by Jamling Tenzing Norgay).

We each made our way up the mountain. "UP" has now a profound sense for me—there is "up", "Up", and "UP"!! I did not realize how UP we had trekked until we came DOWN—in some places, vertically. We did this! We did do this.

The essence of The Rule of St. Benedict that our monks practice is Humility. Chapter 7 of our Rule reads: *Accordingly, brothers and sisters, if we want to reach the highest summit of humility, if we desire to attain speedily the Compassionate Presence of Christ to which we climb by the humility of the present life, then by our ascending actions we must set*

up that ladder on which Jacob in a dream saw angels descending and ascending (Gen 28:12). Without doubt, this descent and ascent can signify only that we descend to exaltation and ascend by humility. Now the ladder erected is our life on earth. If we humble our hearts the Lord will raise them to Christ's compassion being present in our actions for the benefit of all sentient beings. We may call our body and soul the sides of this ladder, into which our divine vocation has fitted the various steps of humility and discipline as we ascend. (www.wrmosb.org/zenruleb.html#CHG).

Humbling—a trek to Base Camp. And what is humility when everything is said and done? The Teachers of Humility coalesce in a similar sentiment: *acceptance*. Acceptance implies surrendering to one's resistance. Humility echoes forth in the moment between accepting what one can in fact do and acknowledging what one in fact cannot do.

Sometimes we kid ourselves thinking/feeling that we cannot do this or that when in fact we can. When we kid ourselves thusly, we are being prideful. Yes, pride.

Sometimes we fool ourselves thinking/feeling that we can do more in fact than we actually can. When we fool ourselves thusly, we are being prideful. Yes, pride.

Due to our propensity to engage in denial (**Don't Even kNow I Am Lying**), we may hide by not allowing ourselves to even be aware that we are thinking thusly.

When we choose consciously or not either forms of thinking/feeling, we are masking our fear. We do not acknowledge our fear—hiding behind our thought/feeling field so we do not have to experience that which we dread the most: *fear*.

It is not acceptable for many of us to acknowledge, much less admit we are afraid, fearful or otherwise not in control.

And Fear? What is fear but what which we grow when we elect to believe that we cannot handle a situation — whatever that situation may be. When we are afraid, again we are being prideful. We are special.

The mountain is never as high, nor the difficulty as severe or traumatic than as we make it to be.

Humility is accepting unconditionally and with full and absolute positive personal regard, the simple truth of who we are. Thus, we surrender Pride, our fear, of who we think/feel we are not.

We each have life experiences that bring our reality into focus. Personally, this trek to Base Camp was one such event. Being with others within the same context, each with his or her own perceptions regarding what each was doing was humbling. I learned that I could do what I had not even the slightest idea beforehand that I either could or could not. Other folks coming to their own realizations early on, and others only after their return to Kathmandu, and probably others, only upon their return to their home country.

Please hesitate when you find you are not doing something that may benefit you, although you might not find that experience pleasurable or enjoyable. Listen (*first word of St. Benedict's Rule*) to your thoughts. Are these thoughts limiting one way or the other? In the moment of hesitation, re-choose, re-recreate the thought and do as you are wont.

Peace and joy!
+Robert OSB

**Special point of insight:
www.6seconds.org**

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EQ Yummy Byte Problem-solving vs. creation?

Part of the power and importance of emotional intelligence is its power to expand our focus toward our highest aspirations. Conversely, when we're "emotionally unconscious" our feelings drive us toward reaction and the comfort of resistance and rigidity.

At the core, the pursuit of change and growth must be rooted in safety. Otherwise, fear wins out. Peter Senge talks about the same dichotomy in terms of reactivity (which is characterized by problem solving) and creating (which is characterized by true innovation). To go from reaction to creation requires a profound emotional shift.

"The pervasiveness of a reactive stance is evident in the fixation on problem solving. Many managers think that management is problem solving. But problem solving is not creating. The problem solver tries to make something go away. A creator tries to bring something new into being. The impetus for change in problem solving lies outside ourselves—in some undesired external condition we seek to eliminate. The impetus for change in the creating mode comes from within. Only the creating mode leads to a genuine sense of individual and collective power, because only in the creating mode do people orient themselves to their intrinsic desires. It is a testament to how reactive we are that many leaders see the absence of vision as a "problem" to be solved in their company, and set about writing and disseminating vision and mission statements as the solution." - Peter Senge

(http://www.solonline.org/repository/download/transform.html?item_id=505852)

When Senge says, "The impetus for change in the creating mode comes from within," what's the source within? Certainly some people find an inner reserve of emotional energy that fuels creativity: a source that brings both love and excitement.

What are you doing today to tap into the wellspring of positive emotion that will engender true vision -- an emotional engagement with a wondrous possibility?

Foyan: Search back into your own vision—think back to the mind that thinks. Who is it?

On Humility By Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks

From <http://www.chabad.org/therebbe/article.asp?aid=83813>

How virtues change! Moses, the greatest hero of Jewish tradition, is described by the Bible as "a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth." By today's standards he was clearly wrongly advised. He should have hired an agent, sharpened up his image, let slip some calculated indiscretions about his conversations with the Almighty and sold his story to the press for a six-figure sum. With any luck, he might have landed up with his own television chat show, dispensing wisdom to those willing to bare their soul to the watching millions. He would have had his fifteen minutes of fame. Instead he had to settle for the lesser consolation of three thousand years of moral influence.

Humility is the orphaned virtue of our age. Charles Dickens dealt it a mortal blow in his portrayal of the unctuous Uriah Heep, the man who kept saying, "I am the 'umblest person going." Its demise, though, came a century later with the threatening anonymity of mass culture alongside the loss of neighborhoods and congregations. A community is a place of friends. Urban society is a landscape of strangers. Yet there is an irrepressible human urge for recognition. So a culture emerged out of the various ways of "making a statement" to people we do not know, but who, we hope, will somehow notice. Beliefs ceased to be things confessed in prayer and became slogans emblazoned on t-shirts. A comprehensive repertoire developed of signaling individuality, from personalized numberplates, to in-your-face dressing, to designer labels worn on the outside, not within. You can trace an entire cultural transformation in

the shift from renown to fame to celebrity to being famous for being famous. The creed of our age is, "If you've got it, flaunt it." Humility, being humble, did not stand a chance.

This is a shame. Humility — true humility — is one of the most expansive and life-enhancing of all virtues. It does not mean undervaluing yourself. It means valuing other people. It signals a certain openness to life's grandeur and the willingness to be surprised, uplifted, by goodness wherever one finds it. I learned the meaning of humility from my late father. He had come over to this country at the age of five, fleeing persecution in Poland. His family was poor and he had to leave school at the age of fourteen to support them. What education he had was largely self-taught. Yet he loved excellence, in whatever field or form it came. He had a passion for classical music and painting, and his taste in literature was impeccable, far better than mine. He was an enthusiast. He had — and this was what I so cherished in him — the capacity to admire. That, I think, is what the greater part of humility is, the capacity to be open to something greater than oneself. False humility is the pretence that one is small. True humility is the consciousness of standing in the presence of greatness, which is why it is the virtue of prophets, those who feel most vividly the nearness of G-d.

As a young man, full of questions about faith, I travelled to the United States where, I had heard, there were outstanding rabbis. I met many, but I also had the privilege of meeting the greatest Jewish leader of my generation, the late Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson. Heir to the dynastic leadership of

a relatively small group of Jewish mystics, he had escaped from Europe to New York during the Second World War and had turned the tattered remnants of his flock into a worldwide movement. Wherever I traveled, I heard tales of his extraordinary leadership, many verging on the miraculous. He was, I was told, one of the outstanding charismatic leaders of our time. I resolved to meet him if I could.

I did, and was utterly surprised. He was certainly not charismatic in any conventional sense. Quiet, self-effacing, understated, one might hardly have noticed him had it not been for the reverence in which he was held by his disciples. That meeting, though, changed my life. He was a world-famous figure. I was an anonymous student from three thousand miles away. Yet in his presence I seemed to be the most important person in the world. He asked me about myself; he listened carefully; he challenged me to become a leader, something I had never contemplated before. Quickly it became clear to me that he believed in me more than I believed in myself. As I left the room, it occurred to me that it had been full of my presence and his absence. Perhaps that is what listening is, considered as a religious act. I then knew that greatness is measured by what we efface ourselves towards. There was no grandeur in his manner; neither was there any false modesty. He was serene, dignified, majestic; a man of transcending humility who gathered you into his embrace and taught you to look up.

True virtue never needs to advertise itself. That is why I find the aggressive packaging of personality so sad. It speaks of loneliness,

(Continued on page 4)

Humility: Trusteeship

From <http://www.bkwsu.com/lh/humility.html>

A person who embodies humility will make the effort to listen to and accept others. The greater the acceptance of others, the more that person will be held in high esteem, and the more that person will be listened to. One word spoken in humility has the significance of a thousand words.

Humility is found in a vast ocean of still waters which run very deep. At the bottom lies self-esteem. At first, going within the ocean is like journeying into an unknown area of immense darkness. But, just as exploration can lead to buried treasures, one searching his or her inner world can find jewels buried in the depths. And the jewel buried deepest — which shines the brightest and gives the most light — is humility. At the darkest moments, its rays penetrate. It removes fear and insecurity and opens up the self to universal truths.

Humility is to accept natural principles which cannot be controlled. Everything we have — from the bodies we were born into to our most prized possessions — is inherited. It therefore becomes a moral imperative to use those assets in a worthwhile and benevolent way. The consciousness of being a trustee of such unlimited and timeless resources touches the core of the human soul and awakens it to the realization that, just as at the time of birth such resources were inherited, at the time of death they will be left behind. In death, all that will accompany the individual will be the impressions of how those resources were used, combined with the wisdom of being and living as a trustee.

The consciousness of trusteeship heightens one's self-esteem and enhances the many different relationships encountered throughout life. It draws one into a mode of silent reflection, inviting one to take time out and look at life from a different perspective. It is as if the recognition of trusteeship causes the individual to seek renewal of the relationships to the self and to the world.

Humility is to let go and let be. The stone of conflict lies in the consciousness of "I" and "mine" and in possessiveness — over a role, an activity, an object, a person, even the physical body. Paradoxically, such a consciousness makes one lose that which he or she wants to hold onto — most significantly, the universal values which give worth and meaning to life. Humility eliminates possessiveness and narrow vision which create physical, intellectual, and emotional boundaries. Such limitations destroy self-esteem and build walls of arrogance and pride, which distance others. Humility gently works on the crevices to allow for breakthroughs.

When one has the virtue of humility, everyone "bows down," since everyone bows to those who themselves bow first. Thus, the sign of greatness is humility. Humility enables the individual to become dependable, flexible, and adaptable. To the extent one becomes humble is the degree to which one becomes great in everyone's heart. A person who embodies humility will make the effort to listen to and accept others. The greater the acceptance of others, the more that person will be held in high esteem, and the more that person will be listened to. Humility automatically makes one worthy of praise.

Success in service comes from

humility. The greater the humility, the greater the achievement. There cannot be world benefit without humility. Service is best done when 1) one considers the self a trustee or an instrument, and 2) one takes the first step toward accepting another who is different.

A humble person is able to function in all environments, no matter how unfamiliar or negative. There would be humility in attitude, outlook, words, and in connections and relationships. The humble person would not say, "It wasn't in my attitude, but the words just emerged." No, whatever the attitude, the outlook would be accordingly; whatever the outlook, the words would reflect that; and the three combined would assure quality interactions. The mere presence of a humble person creates an inviting, cordial, and comfortable environment. His or her words are "essenceful" and powerful and spoken with good manners. A humble person can defuse someone's anger with just a few words. One word spoken in humility has the significance of a thousand words.

On the high tides of human interactions, humility is the lighthouse which provides signals of what to expect in the distance. To adhere to these signals, the screen of the mind and intellect must be clean. Humility gives the power to perceive situations, to discern causes of obstacles and difficulties, and to remain silent. When one does express an opinion, it is with an open mind and with recognition of specialties, strengths, and sensitivities of the self and others.

Humility as well as the concept of trusteeship embrace our rela-

(Continued on page 4)

Humility (Con't)

(Continued from page 3)

tionship with nature and oblige us not to tamper with natural laws. Nature is as life-giving as an umbilical cord. To arrogantly exploit and damage the natural habitat is to put the entire human family at peril. Humility is to inculcate natural principles in personal behavior, relationships, and other areas of human development. Without humility, we can neither build civil societies nor serve the world benevolently.

"In a dark hour of our century, during the final convulsions of the bloodiest tragedy in the history of mankind, we saw a light shining over San Francisco. When we became Members of the United Nations, we all undertook, before our consciences, to feed that flame, to maintain it and to spread the ideals it inspires."

Mr. Amintore Fanfani,
President of the Twentieth Session
of the UN General Assembly, Sep-
tember, 1965

On Humility (Con't)

(Continued from page 2)

the profound, endemic loneliness of a world without relationships of fidelity and trust. It testifies ultimately to a loss of faith — a loss of that knowledge, so precious to previous generations, that beyond the visible surfaces of this world is a Presence who knows us, loves us, and takes notice of our deeds. What else, secure in that knowledge, could we need? Time and again, when conducting a funeral or visiting mourners, I discover that the deceased had led a life of generosity and kindness unknown to even close relatives. I came to the conclusion — one I never dreamed of before I was given this window into private worlds - that the vast majority of saintly or generous acts are done quietly with no desire for public recognition. That is humility, and what a glorious revelation it is of the human spirit.

Humility, then, is more than just a virtue: it is a form of perception, a language in which the "I" is silent so that I can hear the "Thou", the unspoken call beneath human speech, the Divine whis-

per within all that moves, the voice of otherness that calls me to redeem its loneliness with the touch of love. Humility is what opens us to the world.

And does it matter that it no longer fits the confines of our age? The truth is that moral beauty, like music, always moves those who can hear beneath the noise. Virtues may be out of fashion, but they are never out of date. The things that call attention to themselves are never interesting for long, which is why our attention span grows shorter by the year. Humility — the polar opposite of "advertisements for myself" — never fails to leave its afterglow. We know when we have been in the presence of someone in whom the Divine presence breathes. We feel affirmed, enlarged, and with good reason. For we have met someone who, not taking himself or herself seriously at all, has shown us what it is to take with utmost seriousness that which is not I.

Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks is Chief Rabbi of Great Britain.

Maria Montessori Provides Wisdom for Raising Children by Elizabeth Foss

From <http://transporter.com/mcc/essay06.htm>

Perusing the child development shelves in most bookstores, one is likely to happen upon many Christian parenting advisors. Their books and tapes claim to be biblically-based. There is some wisdom here, but I think it is likely that if we so limit ourselves, we miss the Catholic perspective.

On the shelves at The Catholic Shop in Centreville, parents will find many volumes of the writing of Dr. Maria Montessori - some of the same volumes that are in the

Vatican library. While Montessori doesn't have all the answers, she was a devout Catholic whose theories are steeped in her faith and whose findings have had a profound impact on the field of child development. I think she'd be appalled at some of the Christian thinkers who have come after her.

There is a philosophy that the child, born with the stain of original sin, is inherently evil and that it is the parent's solemn responsibility to train that child so that he can overcome his sinful nature. These experts often advocate that

parents use such means as stern voice commands and corporal punishment to teach a child as young as a year old to obey the first time they are asked. What they are asking is that the child conform to the will of the adult, without taking into account the developmental abilities of the child. While at first glance this may seem to be a worthy and proper goal, there are some basic fallacies to the premise of the argument.

Within almost all Christian parenting manuals, the Book of

(Continued on page 5)

Maria Montessori (Con't)

(Continued from page 4)

Proverbs is quoted. It is important to look at Solomon's words in the context of the time. This was a time when an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth was the law of the land. People offered living sacrifices. Solomon himself had hundreds of wives and concubines. We don't do any of those things anymore. Yet we can be led to believe that we should beat a child with a rod. Christ came to establish a new law.

What about the "sinful nature of the child?" When we think of young children as sinners we are in danger of setting up a self-fulfilling prophecy. Before the age of reason, they are not sinful; they are childish. They will grow. Catholics baptize their infants. Baptism cleanses the child of original sin. A baptized child, before the age of reason, is closer to God than any sinful adult can hope to be. He is living in a state of grace. If he were to die, he would certainly go to heaven. The disobedience or naughtiness of such a child is not sinfulness; it's childishness.

God did not choose to have a new soul come into the world as a miniature adult. Children are born to act as children and, as they develop, to become adults. Montessori writes that a "lack of respect for the child's rights of development often brings the educator to treat the child in the manner which is most pleasing to him."

What is our goal in discipline?

Is it to have perfectly behaved children who reflect well on their parents? Is it to have controlled children who do not intrude too much upon their parents' time and energy? Or is it to have disciples - followers who obey out of love? We must be very, very careful not to crush the child in order to get him to comply with our wishes. Ultimately, it is God's will, not the parents', which must be done. God has a plan for every child and He has created each one with unique personality traits. Adults must take care not to extinguish the very spirit God may have instilled for His purposes. Montessori has observed that "true respect for the child recognizes an ideal which God wishes to make actual in him."

In *The Child in the Church*, Montessori explains that, "we shall learn to resist that vanity which urges us to boast, only too willingly, about our children's accomplishments...We shall be on guard against that impatience which forces children into doing things of which they are not really capable, lest their failure result in a complex of fear and timidity. We would urge such parents to emulate the patience of Mary, the mother of the Divine Child, who knew how to wait, with all humility, for His miracles."

In Montessori's words, one can hear the echo of Our Lady's exhortation in a vision to St. John Bosco, who worked with wild street children, "Softly, softly...if you wish to win them. Take your shepherd's staff and lead them to

pasture."

Any parent who has held his child in his arms for the first time cannot deny that children are indeed miraculous. The miracle does not end at birth. It is constantly unfolding as the child grows. Montessori was concerned that as a child grows, parents lose sight of the miracle, the presence and the call of God in the child. They "pay less attention to what the child needs for his spiritual development than what will make him good and keep him still."

When God gave us children, He had a plan. I believe that He wanted to lead parents to holiness in the course of their duties as guardians of their children's souls. When we respect the child, we don't diminish ourselves. Instead we require more of ourselves - more sacrifice, more prudence, more humility, more faith.

"Along with the acquisition of a truer and deeper respect for the rights and needs of the child, we shall find that our own attitude toward him will also change considerably. Harshness, stern commands, and arbitrary prohibitions, which are often given more because we are in a bad humor than with any educational purpose, will disappear."

None of us want wild, unruly, disrespectful children. St. John Bosco has written, "I do not remember ever to have used corporal punishment. By God's grace I have been able to get not only observance of rules but even of my own bare wishes."

"It is necessary to be noble,
and yet take humility as a basis.
It is necessary to be exalted,
and yet take modesty as a foundation."
Tao Te Ching by Lau Tsu

Eckhardt/Humility

http://www.elca.org/assembly/03/schultzakerson_text.html. Sermon by The Rev. Margaret Schultz-Akerson, Pastor, Messiah Lutheran Church, Pasadena.

Fourteenth-century mystic Meister Eckhardt preaches that the essence of true humility isn't how little one has; ... Nor is true humility about putting one's self down, or putting others down. Eckhardt teaches that true humility despises being despised.

True humility wants more than anything to be like an instrument— like a flute, a reed — like an artist, a musician, a dancer, a lover, a father, a mother — some way of being a means of grace. True humility knows that it's not about us, but about what or whom we are called to birth into the world through the particular means of our lives. True humility is about breathing in God so that we can breathe out not ourselves but God for the healing of the world — claimed, gathered and sent. True humility knows this process, this dance of receiving our identity in Christ and contributing out of it. True humility is the yearning to do this, and it's not all selfless. It's for the sake of the world, as Bishop Hanson keeps reminding us, but the mystery is that the more we dance our part in this turning — however major or minor the part — the more we dance our part, the more healed we become. True humility despises being despised, despises being dismissed, because those acts violate our baptismal calling.

Abba Anthony said, "I saw the snares that the enemy spreads out over the world and I said groaning, "What can get through from such snares?" Then I heard a voice saying to me, "Humility."

(Desert Father Abba Anthony the Great)

Perspective of Humility By Mrs. Anne Robinson

<http://www.arpana.org/research/perspective-humility.htm>

Who wants to be humble? We think humble people get trampled upon, cannot achieve their ambitions & are at the mercy of the arrogant and the selfish. We ask, 'Is this any life for a human being?'

But what if we are wrong? What if our concept of humility is actually cowardice and the truly humble man is the only one who has a true perspective on reality? Perhaps it is to our advantage to discover what humility really is.

If you have ever been exposed to astrology, seen the universe through a telescope, heard that there are a hundred thousand million stars in our Milky Way galaxy and our sun is only a medium sized star on the edge of the galaxy, that the nearest star is 4 light years away (23 million miles), that there are a hundred thousand million galaxies that have been discovered (each with a hundred thousand million stars), that the borders of the universe are receding from us at astonishing speed, that there are black holes where not even light can escape the pull of gravity.... then one begins to be shaken out of the complacency of one's own importance.

And if one looks through a microscope and sees the universe of tiny creatures, of cells and atoms, where electrons and quarks are manifestations of unknown forces and where light is both a particle and a wave, where subatomic particles do not act as preordained, but on a percentage basis and the more we know, the more we know we do not know, then one begins to glimpse the extent of one's ignorance.

Again if we study history, we

begin to catch a glimpse of the billions of people before us and the billions alive today. We read of those with so much more intelligence, more wealth, more ability and talent and energy. If we can gauge ourselves correctly, we can see that there are millions with qualities superior to us.

Then, we also read of psychology, sociology, genetic research and begin to catch a glimpse of what makes each person what she is, a blend of traits one is born with and the circumstances and experiences one passes through. We react according to our traits in situations which arise - and so do others. So wherein lies our superiority or inferiority? The more we study, the more we find ourselves the same as others, the only difference being in our inherent traits and the circumstances of our lives.

So when we see the night skies, the stars and galaxies of the universe; when we see the equally intricate and fascinating world of the microscopic universe; when we begin to explore history and the inner spaces of psychology; then we begin to glimpse our true place in the universe - then we begin to see the truth in humility.

We see that humility is merely seeing the truth, merely seeing our place in the universe in correct perspective!

And if we see our place in the universe, we can only be amazed - and grateful. All there is, all we have, has been given to us, the universe, life itself, qualities, family, position, education etc. Each person, each situation we face, can contribute to our knowledge and to honing our characteristics into beautiful qualities. The truth

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

is that someone produces our food, makes our clothes, contributes to the millions of details which make up our daily lives. When we see that we have received so much from everyone, we can only bow in humility that we have been allowed to see this truth.

As long as we cannot see the truth of our place in the universe, as long as we cannot see our place in this world, in society, in our families, as long as we cannot see that we are ignorant, we can never be open to the truth. It is our ego, the psychic entity created from the mergence of one's mind and body, that has created maya, the world of illusion in which we dwell. This world is coloured by our likes and dislikes, perceived through the filter of 'I' along with all our prejudices, preconcepts, ideas and opinions, and borne through habits and past momentum.

How can we overcome this maya when our mind and emotions do not want us to see the truth and our intellect is only a slave to this mind? The many incarnations of the Lord have shown us how to overcome this. They tell us to see ourselves first. We must purify ourselves enough so that humility inundates our mind.

The ego creates a world where we feel superior; we thus live in a world of lies. The Scriptures tell us that all is the Lord (Brahma, Allah, God). Each person is the Lord's creation. Therefore, how can we say someone is better than the other?

The ego does not let us live in the truth. It tells us that we are superior and more deserving and greater than the other. Therefore, we start living only for 'me and mine.' What could be more egois-

tic? What could be further from living in the truth? Even when we learn from the Scriptures that we are a part of the Lord, our ego takes pride in that knowledge! This egoity denies Scriptural truths, makes us selfish and creates a world of lies which we then inhabit.

So what do we do? We need to pray for the opposite of egoity, which is humility. We need the perspective of humility so that we can see the truth. Humility sees that all are the Lord's, so all are one. Thus any problems of another become my problems. We need to pray that we can serve the Creator and all His creation. The one who becomes everyone's, carries everyone's burden. See how many lives such a one lives in one life!

The Lord tells us to serve all, but we do not obey. When we do not obey, in effect we say, "I am right and the Lord is wrong." We assert ourselves. Instead of wanting to see the truth, we want to establish ourselves as right. With this attitude, it is impossible for us to discriminate between the truth and falsehood.

We need to shatter the trance of egoity. This means being humble enough to be open to the truth, open to the possibility that we are wrong; humble enough to let go of the 'I' when we finally see that it is the biggest obstacle.

Humility comes when we focus on the Lord, on His creation, on His commands. Then only will the stumbling block of the ego obliterate.

Without humility, we can learn all knowledge, we can dazzle audiences with our wit, but we cannot go forward towards our goal of Truth. Humility opens us to the Truth. It bypasses the ego which keeps us from seeing the Truth.

Humility allows us to love. Without humility we think we are better than others. Only with humility can we accept that all are the Lord's children and so we are all equal. There is no question of superiority.

Only when we accept that we are all one, can the truth penetrate that the other could be me, but born with different characteristics, in different circumstances and with different experiences. These factors mould each of us into what we are today. We need to understand this, otherwise, we only love those we call our 'own'. But if all are one, then the love we have expands until we can love all. Love, then, becomes our attitude, not dependent on the other or on the situation.

When our hearts are saturated with love, our attachment to our body-mind-intellect unit is cleansed and we cease making egoistic mistakes. Mistakes are made because we do not see the truth, due to our attachment to this body. Humility is an attitude that transcends our attachment to the body. Thus, humility teaches us to accept all as the Lord's Will, and lets us live in the Lord's Presence.

When we live in humility and gratitude, we are like the courtier who lays down the cloak of humility on the mud of the ego, making a path for the Supreme Truth to pass unsplattered onto firm ground.

Humility prepares the field within, ploughing up weeds of vanity, roots of greed and removing stones of opinions. Then the seeds of Divine Qualities can be sown through selfless deeds, watered by acceptance and endurance and fertilized by the Lord's Name. Vigilance weeds out stubborn desires and old habits and attitude. The sickle of discrimination eventually reaps the harvest of love, peace and bliss.

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Peace and Joy!

How to Detach from a Belief—Why?

How to detach from a belief and experience freedom and peace of mind? Use a centering meditation taught by Tarthang Tulku in his *Hidden Mind of Freedom*:

"Working with thoughts (beliefs) 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. . . . "

And why?

A Native American grandfather was talking to his grandson about how he felt. He said, "I feel as if I have two wolves fighting in my heart. One wolf is the vengeful, angry, violent one. The other wolf is the loving, compassionate one." The grandson asked him, "Which wolf will win the fight in your heart?" The grandfather answered, "The one I feed. (Thank you Michael Butler)

May all beings be happy.
Amen.

Peace. **Please, Please!** offer support for our activities and/or help us cover costs for this Newsletter by making at least a \$5.00 donation:



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And thank you. May many blessings be to you and yours now and forevermore. Peace and joy!
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