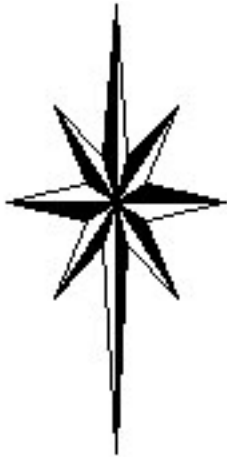
	White Robed Monks of St. Benedict	<i>Volume 15 Issue 1</i>
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Peace I leave with you;
my peace I give you.
(John 14:27)

May the Peace
of the Christmas Season
be with you and yours
now and forevermore!

CHRISTMAS EVE MASS

Please - your family and friends -
join with us to celebrate as Family
Christmas Eve 2011

San Francisco Presidio Main Post Chapel
130 Fisher Loop
San Francisco CA 94129-1194

7:00 PM Christmas Carols and Meditation
7:30 PM Christmas Eve Mass
8:15 PM - 9:30 PM Dessert Pot Luck
for some festive fellowship and good cheer.
(We'll have utensils, plates, napkins, coffee, tea, hot apple cider & coco.
You bring ... <Ah! The surprises in life!>

Please let us know if you are planning on attending via **EVITE.COM**
Easy link to Evite: www.wrmosb.org/xmas
*(We'd like an approximate count
so we have enough coffee, tea, cider, etc. Thank you.)*

May many blessings of Peace and Joy
Be to you and yours
Now and forevermore.

Peace be with you and
Merry Christmas to you and yours!

How attached are you to the holiday of Christmas? How attached are you to your belief in the Christmas story? How attached are you to your belief in Christ? How attached are you to your belief in God? How attached are you to your attachments—whatever they may or may not be?

How we form our attachments and how we attach to this, that, or other person, place or thing we learn early on. It is a given in neuroscience that we feel and behave as we do or not because we have configured our brain circuits or neural network in a way to predicate said behavior.

When we take a step back from our being-in-the-world, we might find that we avoid confrontation leaving situations unresolved, are hyper-vigilant at hints of rejection, are somewhat manipulative, or are compulsively self-reliant. We might also discover we are able to share in mature and rewarding relationships and are comfortable being interdependent and close to others. How we are in the world demonstrates our attachment style. Given brain plasticity, we can re-configure our neural network for the health, benefit, and well-being of our own selves and our community of family, friends, associates, and acquaintances, and strangers.

The first step in resolving any condition is to

Abbot's Notes

recognize that there is a situation inviting resolution. Attachment Theory offers insight. In general, some of us came to sense early on that there was someone, usually our primary care giver, who served us as a dependable source of comfort and safety. Some of us came to sense early on that our primary caregiver was undependable—being sometimes present or not. Some of us came to sense early on that our primary care given was absent or present yet rejecting. In each instance, we configured our neural network in response to the universe's offering.

If our primary care giver was dependable, we built our neural network on protocols of security. We came to realize that the people we make important in our lives are available and supportive when we need them to be such. We remember our childhood and do not defensively block out negative experiences we all have encountered just as a part of life. Whatever life problems arise, we know we can manage them. We demonstrate a high degree of patience and tolerance when we encounter less than ideal behavior or situations. In short, our default position is one of basic affection, gratitude, and trust of our selves and others.

If our primary care giver was undependable we built our neural network on protocols of anxiety. We find that we are unable to relax as we do not sense that we are essentially safe. We try sometimes very hard to be close to others and never succeed. We use passive-aggressive behaviors to get what we want when we are desperate. Our relationships are often times coupled with unrecognized anger and self-righteous disappoint-

ment. In short, we believe that others will be unable to help us if we need them.

If our primary care giver was absent or rejecting—using behaviors that kept us distant from the care giver, we built our neural network on protocols of avoidance. We essentially give up on others psychologically and emotionally. We are quite proficient of not needing other people. Our primary goal is to achieve emotional independence and to be near totally self-reliant. We turn a blind eye to our own failings because to see our faults threatens our need for others upon whom we cannot trust. In short, we form relationships that are at best superficial and cool without any real intimacy and affection.

What is your general life pattern? Secure? Anxious? Avoidant? In practice, we may be a bit anxious and avoidant or a bit avoidant and anxious. We have met some people who seem totally secure only to realize that such is but a mask. Do you honestly trust in your own goodness and the goodness of others? Do you confront issues head on or brush them side, avoiding conflict?

Are you consciously aware that you have turned others away and have created an island onto your own self—even though you are in a committed relationship? Are you consciously aware of just how passive-aggressive your behavior is? Are you aware as to why you are consistently dismissed as irrelevant in the work or relationship arenas?

Conscious awareness is the second step following simple recognition. In resolving our addiction to attachment, we have to “bottom out”. We not only intellectually recognize the situa-

tion, but we also sense our conscious involvement in creating our neural network to defend that which we have come to make sacred: Me, Myself, and I.

Underlying all attachment—be it secure, anxious, or avoidant—is just fear. How is one afraid if one is *totally* secure? Whether or not one is secure is but an ego function, is it not? Security is a built construct, just like anxiety or avoidance.

To some it is more than less obvious how anxiety and avoidance are constructs and how security might be taken as the ideal or norm by which the other two are measured. Yet, the undeniable realization remains: security also is a built construct. Being secure is just as limiting as being anxious or avoidant.

All defenses to this realization are in themselves deflections the ego uses to defend itself, to survive, resting secure in the illusion of its own reality having succumbed to the delusion of its own rectitude, based upon the allusions or stories it has created about itself being right. Or as summarized: all defenses are but dreamlike products of illusion.

The third step following conscious awareness of the so-called Human Condition is to stop resisting, stop trying to change the situation. The more we resist the reality of the moment, the more it remains the same. Enter paradoxical intention. The moment we surrender to the givens of the moment—pain and suffering under any guise — we let the electrical charge go and diffuse the situation in the moment.

If you read Tarthang's meditation on page 4, you'll find the same information only said

Abbot's Notes (con't)

differently.

If you'll notice in your own train of thought, often times you'll be generating two contradictory thoughts, one positive and another negative. For example: You might generate the thought: *Gee, I'm happy*. Then immediately pops the thought: *No, you're not*. Which is true? Neither! The more we then try to get rid of the thought *No, you're not* it, the thought becomes bigger and bigger. This could be very frustrating. What to do? Surrender to the thought *No, you're not*. Actually feel or sense not so much the content of the thought, but more so the box the thought is in. Every thought is its own unit as an electrical charge. Then metaphorically move the box to Trash, inhale, exhale and consciously just let it go ... much like you let your self go to sleep at night. Just let it be gone. *Fiat!*

Practice makes perfect. By the way, eventually you'll let the thought that you are happy also vanish and you are then free to enter the proverbial Kingdom of Heaven. You have re-awakened your natural mind of a child, selfless, having let go of your unnecessary conditioning and memory, without being pressured by time and, hence, not needing to distract yourself with anger, impatience or any other ego neuroticisms. Yes, you can be angry and you just let it go. Yes, you can be happy and you just let it go.

You live, enjoying Life, without self. Your self-identity becomes one of absolute contradiction, where all opposites enfold in unicity (L unicus: single) (The unicity we strive not to express, for that is impossible, but to designate by the nearest analogy. Notes on English Divines, S. T. Coleridge p. 169). With such a

perspective, you are no longer bound in the intellectually bifurcated state of consciousness that knows only dualism. Attachment.

Without self, there is no attachment. Without attachment, there is no unnecessary pain & suffering. Without unnecessary pain & suffering, we can enjoy the moment—whether or not we are happy, mad, glad, or sad—as it is just what it is as it is. There is no contradiction, no consistency, no inconsistency.

David Bohm's summation of Quantum Mechanics and Particle Physics makes more than perfect sense:

Reality is

what we take to be true.

What we take to be true is what we believe.

What we believe is based upon our perceptions.

What we perceive depends upon what we look for.

What we look for depends on what we think.

What we think depends on what we perceive.

What we perceive determines what we believe.

What we believe determines what we take to be true.

What we take to be true is our reality.

From *The Quantum and the Lotus* by Matthieu Ricard & Trinh Xuan Thuan (ISBN 1-4000-8079-7) (p. 121.)

May this Christmas Season re-awaken within each of us our inherent unicity. May we but just witness a child living in such a marvelous world, taking it in and letting it go. May we remember that we each chose to stop letting it go as we matured our neural networks. And with our brain's plasticity, we can now re-orient our perspectives. Many blessings to you and yours. Peace and Joy!

+Robert OSB

Abbot-Bishop

Your Reality

Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.

– Albert Einstein

Everything you see or hear or experience in any way at all is specific to you. You create a universe by perceiving it, so everything in the universe you perceive is specific to you.

– Douglas Adams

Is your world wherein good and bad, in battle? Is your world wherein you are constantly being tested? Is your world a messy place from which you want to escape into an idealized place of bliss? Is your world made up of scientifically predictable events? Is your world an erotic dance of love?

How about you in your world? Are you a “Horrorist Humanist” thinking the planet needs a world order to save it from its chaos, or a “Languishing Liberal” thinking we are in troubled times thus needing more social programs? Are you a “Middling Moderate” caught in the cross pressures of society thus offering platitudes, or a “Counteracting Conservative” thinking the world around you is crumbling thus in need for law and order? Are you a “Rabid Rightest” thinking we need to wave flags and build arms stockpiles, or a “Primitive Populist” thinking society is dominated by pseudo-intellectuals? Are you a “Passionate Pacifist” designing your personal environment as a garrison state, or a “Radical Romantic” thinking the only way out are small experimental communes? Are you a “Rumbling Revolutionary” thinking “The Establishment” runs the repressive, capitalistic system thus aiming for its destruction and taking care of the details later, or an “Apocalyptic Apostle” offering only salvation as the world as it is known is ending?

Whatever the case, tension and resistance underlie each. As Richard Rohn, OFM remarks in *The Naked Now*: Whenever we can appreciate the goodness or value of something, while still knowing its limitations and failures, this also marks the beginnings of wisdom and nondual awareness.

The Key: Forgive and let it go.

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www.whiterobedmonks.org

Moving or recently moved?

Please visit

<http://www.wrmosb.org/update>

Thank you.

(New e-mail address, too.)




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.

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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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