

realities again

If you have read any of the things I write you know that I am obsessed with the idea that we, human beings, homo sapiens sapiens, are going the wrong way. I understand that that idea comes from a reality very few people share. But my hands want to write, so now I shall write about other things that keep me thinking.

I think about death; normal for someone my age. After all, my mortality is all too obvious. I am undecided about whether there is something in me, of me, called a soul. I find it unacceptable to think that I, as a human, have something that other beings do not have. I cannot think that I am of a superior species. I really, truly, see myself equal to a tree, to a dog. More complex, probably, but that does not make me superior. Dogs have a much better (more complex) ability to smell. Birds can fly, which I cannot. Mammals that live in the ocean can hold their breath much longer than I can. Elephants and a lot of other species are infinitely more powerful than I am. What power I have is from my brain, my ability to imagine and make machines that make me see tiny through microscopes and the stars with the help of observatories.

Actually I do not think about being dead much at all. If there is something of me that continues I will know it, and if there isn't there is no I to know that. My thinking is more about dying, the how and the pain of it.

All through my life I have had experiences, usually unsought, that do not fit into the typical western idea of what is real. At times I have known things I could not possibly know. I've done things that are hard to explain in the framework of normality. I've had very vivid "memories" of being another person in another time. I knew who I am now, and at the same time had a feeling of total realness experiencing something through someone else's mind and eyes, ears, and nose. I spent hours combing the university library for every book written about Eastern as well as Western ideas about "reincarnation," the idea that there is a sort of core in us that inhabits bodies sequentially. How to explain how the Dalai Lama and other lamas in Tibet are "found" in three year olds? But I have "remembered" (?) snatches, episodes, of other lives. And I've had experiences of knowing what other people near me thought and felt — not unusual at all, I think.

All of it felt totally "real" to me at the time, but none of it fits into our present scientific idea of what is real. In western culture real is what you can touch, feel, see, measure. The brain works with chemical reactions, and we

are very clever at inventing machines that measure and plot where certain ideas, feelings, actions, are located in the brain, in our heads. And mind is often equated with brain. We can think of thinking, of mind, only as something material, located in the brain.

What if what we call *mind* is not located in the brain but somewhere else? I can think of a sort of planetary mind, an energy field around the planet. Our brains, complicated as they are, serve to make all the many processes that are "life" possible. But perhaps they also are something like radios that tune in to that planetary Mind. When a child is born, s/he is assigned a number (in America a Social Security Number that is that person, from birth to death), but what if that number is a unique "address" in the planetary mind. Radio stations have an assigned wave length in a certain location. A planetary Mind may be a magnitude more extensive than our atmosphere. The first thing a child learns is to be a unique I. A name. Parents and others connect the baby's brain with her/his planetary mind address. The brain as receiver and sender, tuned to a very specific address in the planetary Mind. A unique address, as every file in my computer has a unique address. It is not unusual for young children to misconnect, to connect with another than their own address, and sometimes "know" to be another person.

And I have learned that the farther away you go from our western ideas, people think more in We than in Me. There are languages, cultures, without a word for I, or where it is considered crude, or uncouth to say I. Try it some time. It is quite possible to write or talk without ever using the word I.

Most people, certainly in the west, are trained so well that they cannot access any address other than their own. But there also have always been people who know to "surf" the planetary Mind and so can pick up information from other addresses. I have learned that communication is a lot more than speech and words. We communicate with animals. Even plants communicate. All we have to do is get over the idea that only we can communicate. And let go the idea that we think that only humans think. Why do we think that how we differ from other creatures makes us apart; I think it is a matter of degree.]

Do dogs think? Certainly, they remember, they identify differences, they choose, decide, they learn to speak for so far as their mouth and throat allow. Dogs have a wide range of intelligence, as people do. Birds learn, Cockroaches learn, mosquitoes learn. Plants learn. It is all a matter of degree.

It is people who have forgotten what is important in growing up to be a human. We have talked each other into believing that children must be

taught. We have created elaborate and expensive institutions with a hierarchy of adult teachers, to teach children how to behave, how to be. We consider children to be a tabula rasa: the human mind, esp. at birth, viewed as having no innate ideas. a clean slate. It is the job of teachers to “teach” meaning fill in the clean slate, introduce the ideas that the contemporaneous culture considers important, essential. Among many others this theory results in students (people) being the same. We further this sameness by designing tests, barriers with narrow slits through which all children must pass. The sameness of the resulting adolescents is supposed to make them easier to control. All the various governments we have created, another hierarchy of lower and higher governments, are based on the concept that “all” young adults know and understand the same ideas that the governments rely on to control people. Every generation again discovers that children are NOT born with a blank slate, and that inducing a sameness on children almost always creates great tensions in young adults who rebel against what they experience as an insult an invasion, of their individuality.

It is a constant amazement to me that despite almost constant frustrations on the part of educationists at all levels apparently there are almost none who begin to look at the system as being based on exactly the wrong base ideas. A young child is NOT a tabula rasa, a blank slate. There are individual differences. And most important — and always ignored — children as well as adults learn from their own experiences, not from being given ideas and thoughts, ideas, from a teacher or a book. What is important, and perhaps the only importance, is learning. And the acceptance of the strange idea that humans learn from experience. We learn from doing, trying, making mistakes, trying again. We learn the magic of numbers when we experiment with our own way of adding, subtracting, multiplying, not when we are told this is the way to do it and the only way. Nothing is always the only way. It must be obvious that what we remember is what we experience ourselves. Once burned we know that a hot stove hurts. For some people that is enough. They have no need to learn. You can teach them until the teachers are out of breath, but nothing will stick, the vessel is full. Others have more flexible vessels and they can learn more.

The consequence of people learning is that what they become as they learn is not often predictable. They may well grow up to not fit into the standard “taught” pattern. If the system does not accept such a person, criminalizes him or her, that is a great loss for society.

Let’s learn from animals. All “higher” animals are born having to learn to stand up on legs from two to four, have to learn how to maneuver through

their unique environment. Learn to eat, and find food. Bird babies are fed in the nest until their wings have developed sufficiently to fly. Birds living mostly on the ground must learn to walk, find food, and eat.

Brain scientists have not located where memories are "stored" in our brains. Maybe a planetary mind is where we store our memories. Important memories are stored in bold, flagged "important." Daily memories I have are so much fluff, and not even recorded. Strong, memorable memories are recorded on the planetary Mind. People who have an open enough set of intentions that they can accept the idea of receiving flashes from other addresses than their own, might well "remember" important memories from other people, other times. That does not mean that I am reborn into another body — fetus? —, that there is a something in me that continues to exist and dresses itself in different persons. It means only that all of us have the potential of accessing all kinds of information from that planetary Mind. Our western training (brainwashing) prevents us from even considering that. We are conditioned to believe nothing other than what "everybody knows."

In fact, the idea that Mind may be something external to us can explain a great number of para-normal effects that humans have known forever.

The one thing I am very certain about is that there is no such thing as *reality*. There are *realities*, plural. Not only that my reality is very different from yours, but the cultural reality we call western culture, or civilization, is very different from the reality of people in third and fourth world countries, people of other religions, other cultures. We in the west are particularly handicapped by our idea that only Matter can be real. Beyond the reality that we consider real —namely what can be touched, felt, counted — I am certain there are realities that see the space between the atoms and molecules that make what we call matter. There must be realities etherial, abstract, four-, five- multi-dimensional realities that we cannot encompass in our limited imaginations.

To be continued, perhaps...

robert wolff, late may 2009