

Continuing the Journey

Balancing on a small log guided by the river
Working with the flow to move life
Through the rapids

The long journey is taken with the lion's courage
The turtle's patience, the snake's instincts
And man's wisdom

The ship without one captain has many captains
Going in many directions yet nowhere
Chaos in the storm

Accept the rejection of the vision from others
It's always been a part of the journey
And it always will be

Walk the Middle Way of balance and harmony
Be the loneliness and the infinite
Be One in the now

A step in the snow could bring an avalanche
Or it could be simply the next step
Marking the path.

Ignorance is rooted in blindness without experience.
One must experience wisdom to know truth.
This cannot be taught

Follow the Tao - forget the shiny billboards
Let your connectedness guide you
Let it light your way

The nature of Oneness came before all existence
It has no form, no name, nothing
Yet it is everything

Happiness

After years of study, the traveler left the libraries knowing more about how to communicate, but deciding that he had not learned more about how to help people with suffering. Reflecting on the journey, the traveler remembered the time spent with others. He lived with the families and helped with their harvest. He lived with the swamp dwellers. He helped people at the trauma center and at other human service agencies. He lived by the rich castle on the hill and he lived with the cave people. At all these places he met people who were suffering and he offered help. In each of these meetings the traveler genuinely shared himself, his beliefs, and his gifts.

The traveler told the swamp dwellers of the rich land available to them if they were to take the journey. He told the cave people of the sunlight. He showed the families how to harvest. He demonstrated the healing way to the human service agencies. He also went into academic solitude and studied the middle way for many years. Now there was a deep and penetrating wisdom in his teaching, but the traveler was unhappy. He had learned much along his journey. But, he continued to carry an emptiness he did not understand. Why wasn't he happy? Wasn't he doing everything he wanted?

The traveler went out to ask the wise ones about happiness. One wise man said that happiness is linked to material success, like having a successful business. The traveler had done this and left it to seek the mountaintop. Another wise man said that happiness is found in becoming a powerful and important person. The traveler had become this with people flocking to visit him to learn the 7 rules, but he left this to seek wisdom. A third wise man said that happiness is found in

spiritual retreat and in having disciples. The traveler had studied for many years and had many disciples. And a fourth said that happiness was in the relief of suffering. The traveler thought that there was pleasure in the relief of suffering but since there is so much suffering total relief seemed impossible and not the root of happiness. During his journey the traveler had the opportunity to experience each of these proposed sources of happiness. He found some happiness in each but it was always fleeting. He never found fulfillment. The emptiness within him remained.

On one of his meditative walks he saw Marion apparently dancing in a field by a park. It was so good to see her again. He quietly walked closer, not wanting to disturb her. It looked like she was chasing a butterfly across a field while her lover sat and watched. She danced among the flowers following the rhythms of the winged fairy. Her lover was so engrossed that his body seemed to dance with her as he sat with his eyes fixed upon her.

So engrossed in their experiences were they that they did not see nor hear the traveler approaching. The traveler stopped, sat and watched Marion from a distance. Marion smiles as the butterfly fades from sight and walks gracefully back to her lover's side. She sits near him but maintains some distance. The lover then says, "Do you see that man over there? He has been staring at you continually."

"*Yes I see him. I know him. He is called The Traveler*", Marion said in a soft voice.

"I have heard of him. Isn't he the one who says that we should help others?" the lover said with a tone of jealousy.

Without hesitation Marion responds, "*The Traveler does help others, but as I understand that is not what he teaches. Helping refers to doing something for another and he teaches a way of compassionately knowing each other. It is a compassionate way of being that is beyond self and beyond doing.*"

"I enjoy helping my friends when they ask me for help. I see that I am doing something for them that they need. It is a choice that I make to give of myself to help."

“When you sit here with me what is it like for you?”

“I enjoy it and I think about you when you are not around.”

“Do you know why?”

“You are a beautiful woman and being close to you somehow makes me feel better.”

“Do you remember the first time we met?”

“Of course! It was at that small restaurant. It was very busy that day. You were carrying a tray with lunch and looking for a place to sit. I offered to share my table with you and you accepted.”

“Why did you do that?”

“I would do that anytime if it gave me the chance to meet an attractive woman.”

“How many times have we met so far?”

“Perhaps ten, I think.”

“Why are we meeting?”

“Because I am attracted to you and you say yes to meeting with me when I ask to meet with you. I am making the effort to try to spend time with you.”

“I guess then that our first meeting, and the other nine meetings, were all initiated by the choices you made. Do you think that there was any luck involved or perhaps some outside forces?”

“I believe we make our own luck through the choices we make. There may have been some outside influences, if you choose to call them that, but none that change the freedom I have to choose and to be responsible for my actions. The culture I live in perhaps shapes how I would interact with a beautiful woman, but I still choose what actions to take. I also suppose that my personal history of relationship experiences can affect what transpires. Yet, I do not think that history should be used as an excuse for avoiding the responsibility for my own actions. Genetics is sort of related to history, I mean that we have a human heritage that can affect how we act. Like the drive to mate with another to continue the survival of the species. But again, I see that I have not only the freedom, but the responsibility, to choose how these drives affect my actions. The choices I make regarding my actions affect what happens in my life.”

“When we are together are you thinking about the choices that you are making?”

“Yes, I am. I think that this is the most responsible way to live.”

“What governs the choices you make when we are together?”

“I try to make choices that will yield the best results without costing too much.”

“This best result from our meetings was to be what?”

“I had hoped to get to know you more intimately. You had said several times that all you wanted from me was for me to be able to sit with you and know you.”

“And you think that sitting and knowing meant being intimate?”

“Yes, that seemed right to me.”

“When we meet what is it that you feel inside?”

“As I said before something about being with you makes me feel better. But I also have noticed that there were times you seemed to know what I was thinking even before I said anything. You would speak to what I was about to say before I would say it.”

“Why did I say those things to you?”

“I guess you have very good people skills and for some reason it helped you meet your goals in this relationship.”

“What goals were those?”

“The ones you stated about being able to sit together and know each other, but I don’t know how saying things about me helps that to happen.”

“Why is the Traveler here?”

“Oh that is just a coincidence.”

“I have enjoyed this conversation, but it is clear that you and I have very different views on the concept of relationship. During our meetings, instead of speaking them to you, I attempted to show you a different way of sitting in relationship. I asked you to join me in this different way. Today there was so much for you to gain regarding this different way. Perhaps sometime in the future you will see this all more clearly. I wish the deepest peace for you in your life.” As Marion speaks these words she leans over and provides a gentle hug.

Marion slowly stands and walks away, walking toward the Traveler. She approaches him and nothing is said. She sits by him, their bodies gently touching, and their hands meet in a soft embrace. As they sit a butterfly approaches. The Traveler extends his open hand, palm up, and the butterfly lands there. With his other hand he slowly raised Marion's hand along side his other hand with the butterfly in it. The butterfly, with its colorful wings fanning in the sun, walked over to Marion's open hand. Marion's eyes beam with a child like brilliance as the three of them sat in stillness together.

An intense glow of inner peace and deep compassion came over The Traveler. No choices were being made. There was no doing and no self. He now understood the source of fulfillment and happiness.

The rose has great beauty but it can't be grasped quickly
The busy mind receives it own reward
The quiet mind seeks none

The beauty and wisdom of God is revealed in loving relationships
Compassion directs the way to happiness
This is The Way

There are many ways to seek but only one way to walk
There is no task without honor
It's about the walk

Breathe life with compassion, tolerance, wisdom and joy
Let go and become this breath
So it is to be

There is a still wind within that gives us strength.
A divine light that gives guidance.
Seek oneness with both.