

# Feeding Time

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## **Feeding Time Chapter Descriptions**

### **Chapter 1: Pgs. 8 – 13**

Memory, Names: Dusk starts to share. Dusk reminisces about slowing down with a memory of taking a trip in a slow van and then a memory of a native indigenous man relating the value of slowing down to see and hear better. Ranger shares to himself thoughts of nature and feeling safe walking through the park. Wonders about sitting with Dusk and then does. They exchange their names and Dusk looks into the name Ranger.

### **Chapter 2: Pgs. 14 – 20**

The power of the bench to influence their relationship. Psychological labels, Drug use in past, Home and meaning of school, Freedom in park, Nature, Unregulated technology in Western societies and lack of respect for nature, Dusk contemplates the failure to take it slow with Ranger in sharing his insights and knowledge, sharing with the squirrel how Einstein couldn't find a way to communicate in math what he could see, the failure of psychology to introduce intuition into the University. Ranger in walking away contemplates Dusks input in regard to school and psychological labeling. Another day before they hook up Ranger ranges through nature getting soaked by the rain and enjoying it; such freedom. Dusk is wonder more about Ranger and then shares with Ranger his multi-dimensional existence and they bond.

### **Chapter 3: Pgs. 21 – 28**

Memory continued, Tree and Sprite Memories, Bible vs. Nature/Ancient Memories blocked culturally, Power as in cooperation vs. competition.

### **Chapter 4. Pgs. 29 -32**

Memory continued, Organizing memories, closure, Paying attention in a dangerous neighborhood, Taking notes to assist memory, Not hearing and not really seeing.

### **Chapter 5: Pgs. 33 -37**

Responsibility, Focus – relevance, Math and abstraction, Responsibility, Futility of consumer, After school club.

### **Chapter 6: Pgs. 38 – 41**

Multi-dimensional aspects of Dusk, Ranger hoping for a mentor finds Dusk, The illness of earth and the need of healing, Greed through technology destroying the earth, The push to get off of earth, Follow-up to starting after school club, What's meaningful to teenagers, Title of club, "How it Works."

### **Chapter 7: Pgs. 42-47**

Benefit of starting education over in the Children's section of the library, Education a eliminating pyramid, Various styles of learning. Teaching of the Cultural Imperative: Survival

### **Chapter 8: Pgs. 48 -52**

Intuition

### **Chapter 9. Pgs. 53 – 59**

Education: Reverse Sequencing, Effective Listening, Personal Language, Cultural Coding through language

### **Chapter 10. Pgs. 60 – 64**

Dusk describes himself as a Wood Sprite, Sensient life is in everything, We are all one cell of the whole, the need of the cells to work in concert to assure health of the All, The Intuition speaking through Dusk, Language is a code of culturalization, Built in filters that isolate a culture, Culture is alive, Consumer Culture fabricates need, Power corrupted, Movement of labor laws, unions, and then their destruction through taking manufacturing overseas, Interpretation of religion sways from the message of goodness, Crafting our own sentences to focus our intent in the outcome.

### **Chapter 11: pgs. 65 – 70**

Time and the concept of timelessness, multi-dimensional connections and the variance of reality, The influence of thinking in establishing the limitations of time and to expand consciousness may require an element of the element of thinking, fear of death, the integration of consciousness in grasping concepts, The mind as the operating system of our brain, further explorations into who we are, The role of the sub-conscious mind in acquiring new levels of ability, Learning Spanish as an example, Self-defeating influence in negativity in regards to how the sub-conscious mind operates, Downloading language of enfant vs. memorization of teenager, How culture maintains its identity through conditioning.

### **Chapter 12: Pgs. 71 -77**

Friendship: expectations, marriage. Trust. Ranger looking into starting a school club, People are born with gifts, some encouraged others discouraged by culture, Taking responsibility for discovering who we are and how we interact with others and taking responsibility for how we are perceived by others, Acknowledging that we experience others and ourselves through filters as they do us, The role of trauma to kick us out of the ordinary, In recovery we begin to see ourselves, Exploring the traumas of life, including birth, and the lack of insight as to the traumatic effect on us by parents, The role of nurturing by parents in regards to child birth, Awakening from the living sleep of the ordinary, Lack of preparedness for trauma and the birthing of P.T.S.D.

### **Chapter 13: pgs. 78 - 83**

Coincidence vs. co-in-ci-dence, struggle of science and intuition, mental telepathy, being multi-dimensional, What is friendship, Trust, Expectations, Behavior, A sense of equality, Love and an element of friendship, Acceptance of abstraction without application drives judgment and misapplication of intellect, Failure of culture to fit into the equation of justice and behavior, Lack of the navigator.

#### **Chapter 14: Pgs. 84 – 87**

Dusk shares the trauma of his tree being cut down, Ranger sharing his increasing awareness, Ranger introduces the Web as an image of life and the role of its creator, Concept of dimensional reality, The introduction of us to the Creator rather than seeing the Web as the home of a predator, The challenge of sharing insights.

#### **Chapter 15: Pgs. 88 – 90**

Dusk looks back at the loss of his living tree, Further exploration of the imagery of the Web, The shifting of relationship between Dusk and Ranger as Ranger elevates his consciousness as his introduction of the imagery of the Web, The role of the strands of the Web, the Strands are alive and vibrate with sound if we can only hear it, Celestial of births as we are all parts of the Web in this example, The loneliness of consciousness, Learning how to live the consciousness,

#### **Chapter 16: Pgs. 91 – 95**

Dusk relating the emergence of the circle of mushrooms. Ranger shares his opening and beginning to see his role in sharing the insights. Seeing the Webs as a platform from the Intuition. Learning the skills to live the insights and core values. Dusk sharing how consciousness is energizing and leads to a greater connection with the totality of life. Learning how to moderate the influence of culture. The example explored of Global Warming and its effect on the population. Exploring Trauma of the Atom Bomb as a beginning. Culture blocking out awareness of Global Warming. Denial. Effect of change without transitioning. Failure of society to introduce through education the challenges of transitioning and parents need training on how to support themselves and their families. Dusk brings up “How it Works,” the club Ranger started and his growing role in supporting this exploration. Ranger is feeling overwhelmed and is encouraged to take it slow and to remember, that he is no longer alone.

## Feeding Time Prologue

Being different, and not knowing, it begins to reveal the as-toos and the how-fors of being treated as though strange. Not fitting in because one isn't a fit from birth is painful for both the child and the parents. Initially both will do anything they can to make it a fit, even though it imprisons the inherent nature of the child.

What damage is done when parts of one are shaved off or lopped off in order for the fit to be made! A scene: "Ah, at last it fits," she said only to have the shoe burst open from the too large toes and the overwhelming heel. "Well, it fit for a second. Doesn't that count for something?" Sure it does if it's one's foot that one crammed into the too small shoe. Of course don't ask the shoe. It definitely has a different opinion. But who cares about the shoe? Well, the salesman does, who sits there unbelievably. One shoe in the box, and the other shoe having just been stretched into oblivion.

What of the child, treated like a shoe, who is supposed to take in what parents tend to offer as cultural food, only it isn't a fit? The parents innocently are just doing their appropriate cultural job...downloading the cultural training into their children, and the child doing its best to be downloaded, only the wires don't fully match. Oh, the friction!

Metaphor: What defines a culture is what it isn't. It isn't this, it isn't that, and what's left, is what it is. What makes one a Japanese and another French is what is left out and what remains. Imagine a pie cut into many parts, and each slice representing a different culture. Combined together the pie represents humanity. Genetically, on a cultural level, the pie represents the sum total of the genetic potential of humanity, with each culture representing one subgroup of the genetic material that remains to be active when all the other genes have been turned off; the genes that go into all of the other parts of the pie.

Metaphorical Disconnect: Some people are born with genetically active material that is beyond the boundaries of that culture. This genetically active material is usually treated as a direct threat to the integrity of that culture's genetic foundation. Cultures evolve over time. This is the way life is. However, at some point cultures becomes bound and imprisoned to a certain state of development. "This is our culture. Anything else isn't allowed.

The adults that coordinate that culture feel bound to excise that "alien" genetic material so as to sustain the cultural identity. This is the foundation of ethnocentricity. It gives rise to the urge to maintain what is called "racial" purity. It is a drive that exists in the cultural coding; the drive to maintain its ego identity.

It is most easily understood as an analogy. We can see this in operation within our physical body as it defends its integrity through an immune system that seeks to eliminate any foreign entity that penetrates our body system. It has defensive agents called antibodies that seek out these foreign entities and removes them from our bodily system. So too do cultures have antibodies that seek to eliminate outside elements that would alter the integrity of the culture.

It's a paradox that many of these "outside elements" are introduced through its own offspring's who have an expanded gene pool in the culture's intuitive attempt to broaden its base to deal with environmental influences of change. Disastrously the culture is coded to eliminate these very same genes as are introduced into the culture through the newborn babies.

Family first, then schools are the culture's premier antibody producers that seek to identify and to eliminate the ability of these genetically broader beings from manifesting from within the culture. In more advanced societies the school drops these types of children into special classes where they are worked with intensively to settle them into place through chemical and behavioral restraints. These classes are specifically designed to restrict the necessary but unwittingly desirable genetic material from becoming active.

It's ironic how the drive to control and the need for a culture to stay "fresh and vibrant" are at odds with each other. To be born within the group of having the expanded genetic material is a special experience depending upon which culture one is born into. If one was born into an indigenous people before the coming of the European, the tribe's cultural values being elastic expressively appreciated and saw the value in those born with unusual, beyond the culturally normal range of ability, and sought to include these children within their society. In some Asian cultures the people had the opposite response to these special children as the very rigidity of their society condemned these children to isolation and exclusion. The families of such children were often treated in the same way when such a child was identified. The choice the family had was to eliminate that child before people in the general community became aware of the special nature of the child thus resulting in the family living in shame.

The story *Feeding Time* is about what happens to such a child in the American Culture, and the change in the child's life when someone enters their life who has gone through the experience of being special and having survived somewhat intact. The American culture is caught somewhere between the Asian cultural rigidity and the Indigenous People's cultural flexibility. It is an unclear environment, not sure of itself or its real purpose, so in that way it intimately shares the story about to be told.

The story opens up with Ranger a sixteen-year-old and Dusk, a man beyond common concepts of reality. The power of the story is revealed through the empathy the two experience in the mutual sharing of their life stories and the gradual transmission of the philosophy, attitudes, strategies, and skills essential in order to survive intact.

The key to surviving intact is to know what it feels like. Basically, for the reader, it is the sense of empowerment one feels when one maintains one's uniqueness and simultaneously fits into one's culture. In America, the culture is mildly schizophrenic, in that it both wants the expanded cultural material and yet it is fearful of it.

To be both wanted and feared sets up the basic conflict that creates a growing wave of mental instability. It gains momentum through life unless one is saved by the good fortune of coming into a relationship with one who has successfully been there before. This is that story.

Ranger's home was always like that...chaos, cycles of swift coming together and falling apart all under of the tide of high emotions.

Going to school was no better. Ranger being a bright child knew right from the beginning that school wasn't for him, yet would anyone listen? OK, kindergarten was alright. Still connected to the material of the world, playing with clay, blocks, the jungle Jim, etc. But rapidly less so starting with first grade. School was where one stopped being in contact with reality and where reality became more abstracted year by year. Ranger, being the kind of kid that grew in direct relationship to his exploration of the world, stopped growing at the point that his education was sidetracked with the introduction of taking the whole of life and it being broken up into fractions. Never were fractions a part of his physical world, and suddenly someone decided Ranger needed to know what a half of this was, a quarter of that...well OK up to that point, but what with the story of multiplying and dividing these fractions. One quarter times two thirds...where in his world did that exist, except in the imagination of the people who spent their whole life abstracting reality into meaningless symbols in its' endless drive for more technology that supplanted the mind's ability to take care of business. Ranger blanked out when education became irrelevant and lost his ability to spend significant time in the relevance of exploring his real world; so, Ranger basically was stopped dead in his tracks. The track went to nowhere, and Ranger wasn't willing to go to nowhere...it just kind of took him there.

Ranger, being bright communicated quite clearly with the powers to be about his feelings for school, "I hate school. It's boring!" The powers to be responded with absolute predictability, "What a dumb thing to say. Can't make it in life without school, dummy." Ranger being quick, "But you made it. You got money and you never completed your education." The power responded, "Well, things are different today. Can't do it that way anymore in the world we live in. Don't you get it yet?"

Ranger was wondering why the power always complain about how much the plumber makes, and how much the mechanic charges, and they look sloppy, and dirty, and unkempt, but the power says they have a ton of money, and they never went to college. Something is definitely wrong with all of this...and that wrongness is making Ranger feel lost.

So, here we go.

## Chapter 1. or Not

The old man sat there quietly, sat there on the bench, under the tree that now had leaves, before a month or so, before, none.

The squirrels know him. The pigeons they also know that he brings a bit of this and that, not to be missed, they fly above him each day. They know him, his habits and the sound of his soft voice.

Children play on the teeter-totter and the swings, some flying high; screams of excitement from the little girls, the boys with wide grins, teeth bared, hair flying on them all. Then, some are being swung and cry...they don't like it, as they should. Should they like it even if they don't like the sinking feeling in their tummy?

Older children ride by on bikes, scooters, skateboards, and in-line skates...some more careful than others. The squirrels dart to the end of the bench for their quick bite, then scamper back to the branches and the birds, they just shuffle under the bench when the quick ones move by with no notice of the old man.

One boy, a teenager by looks, turns up most days and seems to wander on the very edge of vision, sometimes just the top of his head showing over a bush, sometimes a side view as if he is looking at something else. The old man wonders silently, not to look too directly, but just enough that he can't help but to notice. For a month now the adolescent comes and walks the periphery of the old man and the feeding of his friends, and it does seem that he is somewhat closer now than before.

The squirrels and the pigeons come, and now a boy on his way to becoming more, comes; comes at his own pace...and why not, and besides the old man is here every day whether the teen comes to circle or not. Sometimes the old man wonders if the teen is like the squirrels and the pigeons...coming to watch him eat, wondering if there might be something for them...and with each passing day, week and month, one day coming right up to his open hand to feed...could the teen be hungry too?

Hungry too, for peanuts and pieces of day old bread...no, then hungry for something else? Maybe just fascination of the feeding and the closeness of the animals and birds...or attracted to him for something more? What's more important then feeding and finding food to feed upon? Food isn't the only stuff that brings hunger on. In fact the old man muses that he believes the squirrels and pigeons don't need the food he brings any more than he needs to feed them because of their hunger...rather it is for the experience of being so close and familiar with this wonderful animal family. Maybe the teen would like to also be part of this family.

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Every day, after school, it's time to not go home. Home, the last place on earth to go back to, at least until feeding time. That's what draws me back to the darkness in my life. I go there because

I'm weak and helpless. No matter what they do to me, back I go to be fed and so that I can sleep in my bed...the bed they provide for me; not really my own, not at all.

The park is what draws me...I don't care the weather or season of year; it calls to me and to it I go. It's full of people I don't know and better, who don't know me. But everywhere are not people, just mainly along the paths and in the grassy meadow...not amongst the bushes, the trees, except sometimes when some are doing things that they don't want seen.

Some people I see often enough to recognize, not by name, but by their exercise uniforms, the shorts and logo t-shirts, the tights with baggy sweat shirts, the baggy pants low and hip and grungy shirts...the joggers, the inline-skaters, the bikers, and the skateboarders. Some I see often enough to know that they are family, mothers with babies and toddlers catching the afternoon sun...but none know me for I am unseen. Unseen is best; then I'm free.

There is this old man who sits on the bench with overhanging branches that provide shade on the hot afternoons, and for the birds and squirrels that hang out with him. He's there everyday and the animals never seem to tire of his food...the same everyday. Everyday is the same with him...the overhanging branches, sitting on the bench...I wonder if it is his. How does one get to own a bench in the park? I don't know if I want to get old and just sit on a bench in some park, then again, I'm a teen who sits most of the day at a desk at a school...does that mean that I own that desk? The teacher says, "Go to your desk." Maybe it is my desk. Nah...

The park has paths and these paths lead into and out of the park and yet some paths lead only around the park. Its big, the park and once in a while it changes...like when the sun sets the park begins to change. Things that could be seen from far away dim and then vanish, and colors...they too dim from clear and bright to gray. Then the lampposts light up and cast a yellow film and sometimes on a windy and clear night I can see the stars and even the moon...when the moon is full it would be better if they didn't turn the lampposts on...then the light could be silver. In the wintertime it gets dark enough for me to be there before I have to go home for dinner...its cold but I don't mind, the cold keeps the air sharp and cuts away all the pollution. Maybe the wind helps also.

The leaves come and go and in between they are so many kinds of green...but my favorite is autumn when the colors spread. Even better when they begin to fall and then the colors are above and below as well as all around...then I'm walking within, and as they fall they even fill up the space between. I like to see them when they have leaf races. The leaves seem to all pick up, first a few then many and swirl madly around then dash, flipping and flapping across the field with the wind like a wave that the leaves all ride. Then suddenly they all fall to the ground, the colors shimmering as if the leaves were alive getting ready for the next mad dash...leaf races...I can watch them for ever, except of course they aren't there for ever, only in Autumn. I hope that I am always here each year to watch them...they seem to have so much more fun when someone watches them play.

The old man turns his face to the setting sun...to catch the last rays, but with closed eyes to protect what's left of his vision. All his life he watched the sunsets only to have the sun begin to close his eyes even when they were open. A soft smile spreads across his face as he remembers so many amazing cloud formations like playing a game, the clouds racing to catch the sun's rays,

the last of the day to illuminate the sky, with the multiple blue colors from turquoise to deep marine a back drop to the painting of the heavens. To him the sunset begins after the sun sets, which is when most people turn away to leave, and then ten to twenty minutes later the celestial tendrils of color first catching the lower parts of the clouds spread their magnificence. White, then yellow, then like orange and pink to red and then to purple and by the time purple, the sky behind is already dark and the darkness following the colors can be seen then overhead in the western sky following the blanket of colors as they slip progressively lower until just a hint on the horizon. When younger he also turned to leave when the sun set...then as he aged he could stay longer to see the mystery unfold...the true setting of the colors. Aging is when he began to truly appreciate what he saw yet upon which he could not focus. One day he saw, the day before, no.

When young, the flowers he saw but only in passing. One year he was to go on vacation but his car broke down. His friend loaned him his Volkswagen van, an old one...it ran, but his friend said better stay below 50 mph. Better to stay at 45 mph. How can you get anywhere going 45 mph, but that's what he did and what was burningly frustrating for the first day became less so, as he began to notice things he saw only fleetingly when going 65 mph. At 65 mph he hated stopping even to take a piss, for then the cars he passed would come up and pass him...what was the point of passing cars only to stop and to let them pass him. It was upsetting to pass a slow truck, then to stop for something to eat, and to get back on the road only to come back up on that slow truck...There was something terribly wrong with time and speed, that losing the race because of the need to stop. Seeing something interesting on the road couldn't be stopped for of course, because that slow truck was coming up from behind...never stopping but wondering what was missed...well at 45 mph stopping shockingly was not only possible, and yes, it could be done...Hey, where did all of these wonderful sights come from?

At 45 mph stopping was OK, already being the slowest driver on the road and time wasn't being lost because no one had been passed. In fact driving slow means that everyone in front is pulling away so there is always room in front, never another car close...like almost the road is forever emptying itself in front...so stopping, yes. And to see flowers, one has to stop; so stopping was the very beginning of the new life.

A memory of walking in the Mendocino forest in Northern California and seeing this crazy beautiful flower and getting so excited, and my friend, a Native American who was living under the fall of a redwood said, "Really seeing it and being excited is great, yet how is it that it isn't seen every day?" Yeah. Exactly. But it was many years later that the man was finally moving slow enough to see. Still, it could be even slower, and in time, time will not be just the passing of events.

Thoughts and images so profound, lost now found, holding one's attention, then fading. Wonder where thoughts, images and feelings go when they fade from consciousness.

The man sees the teen, head poking through the bushes, a shadow falling soundlessly, a movement caught against the stillness of the trees. Should the catching of his eye be right? Catch the eye, see the soul...will it scare him off or act to draw him near? He looks so familiar, could it be me, he feels like me years ago...the past visiting the future, meeting in between in the here and now. Too weird, too strange...too dreamed and hope for. What would be said...I do want to

say so much...but is this real or am I slipping into the change of the world beyond? Who cares, I have never cared to step out of the way of the mystery...Come here myself, come here if you will, having come this far, come the rest of the way to me. I have so much to say, so much to share, so desirous of another chance to live it right...a chance I wasn't given, and only learned way too late...but learned and ready to share. Come to me, come to me, come to me. Nah, who am I kidding, with come to me stuff...he probably wouldn't want to sit with an old man, especially an old man of himself.

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Looking at the old man I feel that he is so familiar, but probably it's because I see him every day, but still, I am drawn to see him, maybe he won't be there today I think on the way to the park, yet he always is. So familiar, and I like that...to have something familiar and looked for, someone who won't hurt me, won't make fun of the way I experience the world...the way I dream. But that's true because he's more like a tree than a man. I wish I could just go over to him, sit down, and say, "All right. I'm here. Why am I here, and why am I sitting next to you?" He'd probably say, "Why do the squirrels and pigeons visit me? I'd say, "You don't feed me." He would look at me and laughingly say, "Oh really, are you sure that I don't feed you, feed you me each day?" "Old man, I would say, you're stranger than even me." That's what we would say...I guess. I wonder why I need to guess. Why don't I just go over to him or at least sit on the bench and see what he does...maybe tomorrow...why ruin a good thing?

Still, "Life happens in mysterious ways," so they say...whomever they are, that's what they say...and it's to them we listen. Have you ever fought against an urge, day by day you win, then one day you wake up on top of the world, and then from some unseen source, the urge is re-stimulated and then it's like stepping unexpectedly on ice, ice on a slope, and no matter what you do, the slip turns into an unstoppable slide, and nothing you can do can stop it. Yet, this is not always for the worse. Sometimes we are thrust into places we fear to go, and there is also there. Nothing that can stop the inevitable and when we finally open our eyes we find that, hey, it's not so bad...in fact I like it. Hmmm, I wonder what all the fuss was about?

The next day, that afternoon, after school the teen finds himself actually sitting on the bench, true, the far end of the bench, but on the bench. He doesn't look at the old man, but he is there. The old man's eyes roam and then stop on the silhouette of the teen, the boy, the teen. Time is collapsing and collapses as he says, "You know, you're a lot braver than me. You came, I just sit." The head of the boy turned just enough for his eyes to slant up, face still down, but tilted just enough to see the old man from the side...there, but not quite. The leaves shivered as the breeze picked up, the teen's hair shuffled across his forehead. "Should we share names? My name is Dusk," said the old man.

The sun was beginning to dip in the sky, the shadows just starting to extend. The squirrels and the pigeons were wondering if they should come down, what with the strange human sitting there on the bench, acting as if he wasn't sure that he should be there...nervous, anxious, yet too strongly attracted to get up.

"What kind of name is that? Never heard anyone called that. You make that up or what?"

“You’re right. No name really, just how much of me is here...which part of me isn’t. A description...still, that works, a name that describes where I am and where I am not.”

“That’s too weird. A name is just a name. Like my name is just a name, you know. Like my name is Ranger, just Ranger. It doesn’t mean anything but what my strange parents named me...Ranger. I am no Ranger, just a name.”

“You know I like your name...Ranger. It has the feeling of adventure, of unusual and unexpected moments. Yes, it’s some name, not just John, Peter, Paul, James, Matthew...it has substance, character, and its even a bit dangerous...like what if you really were a Ranger?”

“I’m no Ranger...what are you talking about...its nonsense.”

“Yeah, well, nonsense, but still it has character and I like character...like how you came to this bench, unexpected, but yes, like you came into this experience, bold in the effort, but not fully accepting the act of coming...not knowing why but couldn’t stop the doing. Maybe a ranging of a different nature, but all in all, still you are here, and you came from there. That’s ranging. I wonder what you are here to see?”

“I’m not here to see anything...just saw you sitting here forever and I felt that I knew you somehow and now that I listen to you, I do. You’re weird, and that’s what people say about me, that I’m weird...but that’s OK, being weird brings me to strange places, thinking strange thoughts, and having strange experiences...just like being here with a weird person like you.”

“Why, thank you Ranger for the compliment...that’s a very nice thing to say. It’s very rare that someone recognizes me so completely. You know, dusk is between here and there, neither here nor there, neither here nor not here...just in between and it in the in between that I find my freedom to travel to different worlds, different places, different knowledge, and definitely different experiences...like sitting here with you is definitely different. Don’t you think so?”

“Why did I come?”

“You know, Ranger, we each seemed to have felt a calling. When I saw you every day, just an eye looking out from behind a bush, the top of your head as you peered from under the branches of those trees, it seemed, well it seemed that it was like in my world where everything in it is part of me and I am part of everything...like the pigeons and the squirrels, well, they are squirrels and pigeons, but to me they are just another form of me that I take in the world. They seem to come for the food, but I experience they come to reconnect to me, and the food I feed them is just what is required in our physical reality for that to happen. So you to me, and maybe me to you, we recognize the sameness in each other, and we couldn’t help but come back together...me from your future, you from my past. Does that make any kind of sense?

“No, yes, I don’t know what the hell you are talking about, but yeah, it does make sense, and that’s pretty far out. How did you get to learn how to talk like that?”

“Over a long time, over a long time, Ranger.”

“Well, Mr. Dusk, I got to go...I can’t handle any more of this just now, but how about tomorrow. You want to?”

“Yes, Ranger, I would like that...tomorrow then. Be happy until then Ranger, be happy.”

## Chapter 2. or Not

In all of the spiritual books the concept that is common is the...search for a means of unifying...to diminish the hold of the duality on life...to seek the state of awareness that allows one to become indistinguishable from all that is perceived. So too is this story of Dusk and Ranger. That night both dream, but in the morning the dreams is as mist to the rising sun. Later in the day, for that is the time that Ranger and Dusk come together they meet on the bench...nothing happens until they are both on the bench, so one might suspect that the uniqueness in their relationship emanates from the bench, and not necessarily from either of them. It is the bench that they share and in that sharing so they too are able to share.

Ranger sitting down on the bench speaks, “Dusk, you are one crazy old man, yet that doesn’t bother me...still all that talk about me being your past, and you being my future...because when I think about it, it doesn’t make any sense, but then later when I’m not thinking about what you said, it all seems to make sense...but on my way over to the park, well now that I’m thinking about it again, its too crazy. Do you get what I’m saying?”

“Questions are so easy to ask, but not so easy to answer. Ranger, there are times when I don’t know what the hell I’m saying, and if I do know what I’m saying, I often don’t know what I mean, and if I do happen to know what I mean, I often can’t remember what the hell I’m talking about. Worse, half the things I say I make up, and even if they make sense that doesn’t mean what I’m saying is true. So no wonder when you think about what I say it’s confusing, but then thinking isn’t always the best way to understand yet it’s the way we’re trained to perceive...thinking I mean.”

Ranger’s eyes begin to cross, and he sighs wondering, what...I didn’t smoke on the way over here...no magic mushrooms, no acid...so? “Do you do drugs? It sounds as though you are tripping when you speak. You’re so far out that what I’m hearing is like from another world or something.”

“Hmm, no I don’t do drugs...though in the past I may have tried a thing or two, or three...but now, well at one time I was trying to get into a permanent high, so I did as much as I could, and then a lot more...hoping to put myself into permanent orbit, but no...always gravity grabbed my ass and finally I couldn’t keep awake, and no matter how high I was before...well except for the time I couldn’t come down, though I wanted to...but that wasn’t the kind of high I wanted, not to come down from...those, the one’s I wanted not to come down from, I always did...so no I don’t do drugs anymore, not for a very long time, just sunshine, breezes, water swimming, walking and just breathing in a good way...play a bit of music too, write a bit...dance a bit...besides a few hundred other things I do...just like when I was high, but I’m not...well I am, but not from doing.”

“Why did you stop doing drugs?”

“Because once I woke up to the possibility of life, doing only psychedelics, mind expansion, I found that they were putting me back to sleep...true a different kind of sleep, like being awake but in addition to the basics like breathing air, drinking water, and eating food, I couldn’t get by

with out the drugs...in order to stay awake I was putting my self asleep, asleep into an illusion of wakefulness, a dream that I felt could only happen when I was asleep doing the drugs. No. That is not why I started to do them. I started because I knew I was dead and it was time to be reborn, and that's what they did when I first started...they woke me up. Visually first, auditory next, then physical touch...then intuitively...wakeful, aware, and conscious...scared the shit out of my self for the first longest time with what I was becoming aware of, but not knowing how to assimilate the insights. Overwhelmed and, well, that's enough about me and that stuff. What about you? Do you do?"

"Dusk, just pot, maybe some shrooms, maybe some acid, but nothing heavy, nothing that will erase the few brain cells I have up and running. They calm me down...otherwise I'm too hyped up...can't hold myself together like when I take a bong-rip. You know what I mean?"

"It's great having something in life that can take the edge off. Some people meditate, others, play sports, or do art. What's the difference as long as it works?"

"My mother thinks that I have attention deficit, you know, ADD. She's convinced, but what I don't get is that she meditates, and she does that to keep herself calm. Great. But, that doesn't make her hyperactive...life is stressful for her, so she meditates...I don't get why people are so quick with the labels...You don't run right, so there must be something wrong. That's bullshit. She thinks I need therapy and medication, but she's absolutely against drugs. What the shit? What the hell does she think medication is...just because it's prescribed doesn't make it not a "drug? Can you believe the hypocrisy?"

"Yes, I can believe the hypocrisy...it's everywhere...its part of the duality of life...the right is wrong and because of its power, it can't help but feel it's right. Watch out when hypocrisy has power...it devastates. I wonder at your ability to resist the control that hypocrisy extends in the relationship with your mother?"

His eyebrows frowning, more puzzled than frowning, Ranger closes his eyes, and looks a long way. "Power gives hypocrisy reality, right?"

Dusk smiles and nods his head and then shares some more. "Power is the enforcer...it makes reality out of dust. It coerces the boundaries beyond it's own history...like the indigenous peoples live a certain way for thousands of years, every generation living more or less in the same way...clubs and knives, you know, the personal me against you weapons...the weapons of manhood...then spears and bows and arrows, the distance weapons...still kind of personal, but less so, then just like that, suddenly, from nowhere comes explosive powders and the ability to craft guns and cannons...the impersonal take-you-out weapons. High technology is suddenly dropped into the hands of the "blacksmiths, who the day before were beating crude metals into crude weapons, and "magically" mass destruction is in the hands of the "nobility." Now, does that make sense? I mean the suddenness of it all. Yesterday, common technology to make crude iron works, then in the middle of the night, that culture's blacksmith has a series of "dreams" and in it some mythical being reveals to the smith first the "magic" of copper, then another night bronze, and then again iron, and finally steel. These "dreams" each led to more deadly tools of death and each vanquished the prior...steel eating iron, iron eating bronze, bronze eating copper. Guns, bigger guns called cannons, one day cars then tanks, another moment airplanes then jets,

then bombs that are dropped then missiles, an abacus then a slide rule, then computers...Dreams?" Hardly.

"I can see that. But what are you getting at?"

"Check this out, Ranger. Long before the Europeans, the Japanese had the highest sword craft, the Chinese had the explosive powders and crude cannons, the two technologies could easily have combined to create guns...but no, they didn't. Only in Europe was technology truly explosive. Why? Because in Europe there was no philosophy of balance as there exists in the East. For the people of Asia, their reality was created from the belief that nature is sacred, and it has a natural flow, and that flow is Divine. In Europe there is no such philosophy of life, where a balance between humans and nature must be in place. In Europe, from The Bible comes the philosophy that "mankind" has dominion over the earth and its animals and plants...as a result power, control, and thus greed is the core of their created life experience. To me, Ranger, the defining difference between the West and the East is that the West has no boundaries, and lives in excess, and in the East where people are really innately no better than those in the West, but for the self-imposed boundaries that allows them to live more maturely, more generously with nature, and thus technology was less developed. It is the lack of boundaries on technology that creates the ability for power to destroy beyond the ability to recover."

"What does that all have to do with my mother?"

"Well, Ranger, we were talking about your mother believing that you have ADD, thus she believes in ADD. She believes that you need medication, thus the influence of the pharmaceutical companies, the high tech companies to create the illusion of the ADD kid, and hand-in-hand is the medication to "calm the storm." Your mother acts as an agent of the pharmaceutical company by believing in their propaganda and with her position as your mother, utilizes her power to enforce the illusion of ADD, which is just generally an active child in an artificially restricted environment, the classroom...and thus power creates reality out of an illusion...thus your conflict with your mother...she represents the illusion, and you represent a lack of acceptance of that illusion over your intuitive awareness of the truth, or reality, which is that kids are active and don't belong in school. They belong in the natural reality that existed when they were developing their ability to walk, explore, and engage in unrestricted relationships with their peers, their animals, and their environment. Your mother wants you to fit into the creation of power, and she wants you to be part of that experience by you fully participating in the illusion and the benefits it offers those who are willing to cooperate."

"Gee Dusk, you make my mother sound like she is evil. She really isn't."

You know, it probably does sound like that, yet she is no more aware of what she is doing than any other caring mother in this society who wants their child to succeed. They aren't consciously participating in power's illusion, she just wants you to fit in, and can only solve the problem of your "lack" of cooperation with the thoughts that she has been taught, which is you must have ADD and medication is the solution."

Ranger looks away, sees the squirrel on the limb overhanging the bench, sees the pigeons waddling near by...then turns back to Dusk and says, "I've got a headache. I got to go...see ya."

Dusk watches him, watches him moving away, getting smaller and smaller, then in the distance he follows the path around a bend, and like that, he's gone. Dusk, shaking his head slowly, and sighing mutters, "I'm so damn brilliant...I blinded that wonderful boy...yes I did...laid it all out, clear as sunshine, and blinded him, drove him away. Why can't I turn it on just a little bit, so he'd want more...no I got to dump the whole load on him all at once. Once I get going the going gets gone."

The squirrel running back along the overhanging branch, and down the trunk leaping the last couple of feet and sprints over to Dusk and with expectant eyes hunches up on his back legs. Frowning isn't going to do me any good, mused Dusk, and lifting the bag of crumbs, reached in for a handful. "Now my friend, its time for you isn't it? At least I can't mess up with you; at least as long as I have something you want. Hmm. I don't overfeed you, I wonder why I can't do the same with Ranger...not overfeeding him with all of my wisdom, for that's exactly what I'm doing, overfeeding and wasting. Can't believe that at my age I haven't figured this all out. Discouraged, yet not defeated...too dumb to be defeated. What a relief it would be to finally accept defeat. I fought my best but got beaten. Could have been killed or maimed, but just knocked unconscious and left for dead. Recovered, and back into the fray. Into the fray of knowing the answers but not having the ability to transmit them so that they can be received...what a curse."

Squirrel seems to nod his head and not surprisingly, chatters in agreement. "See my little friend, there was this genius named Einstein. He actually could see how the whole universe was held together, but could never devise a math to transmit his vision of the Unified Field...could see it yet couldn't share it. How lonely and the depth of frustration must have been excruciating. Now, there was this other guy named Freud who had internal visions and in his excitement to share it came to believe that the best place to seat his new field, called psychology was within the University. However when he applied for a seat within that institution the deans demanded that psychology, the true nature of which is entirely intuitive, be rendered intellectual, thus a science, thus having a place within the culture of the University. Thus the end at the beginning, for there is no honest way to rationalize an intuition. Thus was I thrust. The vision that cannot...as yet be communicated due to the limitation of consciousness that houses the human mind. It isn't the vision that is too expansive, rather it is the awareness that is too limited, or something like that.

Squirrel moves around stuffing his cheeks, twitching this tail, moving ever closer. "I know, I know. Take it slow, but once I start, it is like stepping down a slope that is covered with ice. Perhaps I need mental metal cleats to control my progress. Hmm, I wonder how to build into my mind cleats? Wow, this could be the beginning of something. It isn't just what I want to share that is so important as is what the listener can receive. I wonder how to determine the listener's ability before I begin sharing. Gee. Squirrel finishing the crumbs lifts his tail and takes a dump then scampers away.

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Ranger couldn't get Dusk out of his mind as he walked away down the path, going around the bend, and losing himself into the fading sounds that had fallen like hail on his head. Illusions, power, the power of illusions and the insistence of his mother to have him fit into the illusion...so she could feel good about her self or was it her need to have his involvement in it?

The child must prove the parent right or else the parent punishes the child. This is really too much, thinks Ranger. I wonder if this can all be true, that her calling me ADD is just a way to get me to fit into the illusion, that, like school is really relevant and I'm just supposed to sit there, body inert, while my mind does all the work. She really does believe that if I don't do well in school that I will have a bad life. It panics her when I pull down poor grades. But school is just bogus...there is no reality to it, just an abstraction of reality. I hate the abstractions...I want to get into life now, not when I'm old, like after I get my Masters or whatever. It's too much, that Dusk talks and talks and it all sounds right, but is it, and why does it sound so good to me when I can't really know it from myself?

Kicking leaves as he shuffles along. He can't stop his mind and so he drifts further into the dwelling. I wonder if he's any different than he says my mother is? He tells me something because he believes it, but is it any more true and is he doing anything different than mom when he wants to convince me that what he says is the way it is? Isn't he just proving to himself that his perception is correct when he gets me to agree with him? I wonder what he'll do if I don't agree...will he label me also...call me immature, or maybe a flake? Hell, who is he anyway but some guy that never seems to move and just feeds squirrels and pigeons. To hell with it...to hell with it for now anyway. With his hand buried deep in his pants pockets, he moves beyond.

Another day? Maybe tomorrow or maybe even still today. Anyway, the wind blows for real with the leaves shaking and baking on their stems, dancing wild like, twisting and turning, and the pigeons soaring up and suddenly down, then cross ways, and a crow fighting its way up breeze with its head down, shoulders/wings digging deep and being tossed about, and the squirrels hanging on the down wind side of the trunk, and Dusk slouching wondering if something could be calling, "Hello, this is your local branch. Calling Dusk...Dusk you there?" Dusk rearranges his collar, pulling it up, not because its particularly cold, but rather to keep any flying thing from working its way into his shirt. Its actually a warm day with the humidity already too high and it being one of those summer days when the wind brings the afternoon clouds to bang and yell their way across the sky...to drop the greening rain...time to be one with the weather...it usually passes quickly enough, with the sun breaking out in time to dry up and the clean air for another hour or two before sundown.

Coming off the subway, Ranger can feel the rush of the wind coming down the stairs as he ascends. The sky is graying up quickly, and he wonders why not just forget it today. Dusk probably is headed home early what with the rain coming. Still one of the best times to be in the park is when its pouring because everyone splits for shelter, and in the midst of millions I can be alone...walking with just the wind driven waves whipping across the pond, and the wetness cooling me down...and my shoes plowing like a giants splashing up the puddles like they were lakes, and my giantness dominating the landscape of the little people, aha...yes, into the park to catch the first drops and watch them cascading down through the trees and throw my shirt around my waist and run with arms spread, smile gleaming, and laughter bursting forth...Yahoo!

Out of breath, collapsing down onto the sodden grass, lying back to extend the moment, huge drops falling at high speed slamming into his chest, and feeling just great to be wet, to be dripping wet, to be suddenly wet, and enjoying rather than running away, to hide, to shelter oneself beyond the reach of the life giving rain. How weird and confused are city people, umbrellas, raincoats...hiding from the essential, the elemental, the power of the creative, the

nature of existence is feared and fraught with anxiety...to get wet, oh no, I'm melting, melting, melting...into what? Into the essence of our beginning, fearful of our origin, to get wet is to be miserable, to be found out, caught, to be exposed, to be out of control...great, the best feeling of all. To be out of control, to have no control at all, to be held, to be lifted, to be tossed into the air...and to laugh instead of shrieking in terror, because the tossing and the catching is all in fun, as I come down into my father's arms, caught in his hands and brought face to face both laughing and eyes lit up in delight. Great days then...tears now mixing with rain, and the thunder masks the gulping of air as shoulders heave with great abandonment...Dad, lost in the chaos, never to be found except by chance in a summer storm. "Shit, I wonder where Dusk is anyhow?" Getting up Ranger heads to the bench, heading to someone who listens and explores with him in actually a pretty good way.

There Dusk sits wondering if Ranger is really a ranger, or just named Ranger. When he sees him coming out of the dim background of the summer rain, a smile lights his eyes and even his lips and he begins to hum a "diddy do wop" rhyme. "Hi de hi de ho, Ranger," quips Dusk.

"Yo. It figures that you would be here, sitting, nah, not sitting. You're not sitting; you must be growing out of that bench. Damn, can't believe it. Come on Dusk, get up...let me see you separate."

"Can't do Ranger, you see I am a Wood Sprite, got caught when they cut my tree down...caught taking a crap...yeah we crap also though it shouldn't be that way, and when my tree was cut down, I wasn't done, and when you're not done, well you're not about to get up...and that's why I still can't get up...because once the tree is killed, well I'm supposed to be dead too, but if you're crapping at the exact moment, well then, stuck forever, just like that, so here I do sit, but never through if you know what I mean...I'm caught in the in between, just for some reason you can see and talk with me."

Ranger looking at Dusk for a long moment, laughs and jokingly, or maybe not entirely joking says, "Dusk. You shitting me?" Dusk smiling back says, "Well I'm shitting, but not you." They both break out laughing, and probably the bench is laughing along with the trees, oh I can hear the laughing of the wind and the rain too, and the grass is swaying in laughter, laughing so hard that drops of rain-tears are pouring off and the earth is sucking it all up and that's how it is. The earth knows all...its been around a few times you know, nothing like this though in a very long interlude. A sense of release, of relief, a leaf leaning against another captures some drops, to the bird a sip, to a bug a quick bath, a reflection of the sky who looks down and with a final crash of thunder, lights up the day with arrows of warmth cascading through the branches causing the land to dance with an effervescent display of a zillion crystals splitting the light into all the colors of joy and an intense awareness and clarity.

Ranger feeling a bit weak from the earlier exuberance and a lot of laughter collapses onto the bench or the shitter or what ever it really is, and that's how Ranger and Dusk really came to appreciate their reflection seen in each other. An oath, a toast of rain and laughter...nothing need be held back...a truth of recognition and acceptance. Ranger opens his mouth to express his commitment, but nothing comes out...and Dusk leans to hear and nothing comes in...there are things that just can't be expressed, but are spoken and heard only in its own silent way. Bullshit, just kidding. Dusk reaches out and Ranger extends his hand also, and they take each others in a

depth of melding...The old leaving but not yet, and the young coming-on, joining in confidence in trust that can only be shared dripping wet.

### Chapter 3. Or Not

Sitting together on the bench, in communion and with the breeze of the day clearing the way, Ranger and Dusk somehow recognizing their connection, a moment of warmth and peace in the universe. It was just one of those impossible moments when there is a slight pause in the flow of life, between an inhalation and an exhalation...a rare and wonderfully affirming feeling shared as one...and then the flow moves and with it we are also moved.

Ranger couldn't help but to ask, "Dusk, how is this happening?"

Dusk smiling and speaking softly replies, "It's time, it's just time, and ain't it wonderful! Just imagine being a trapped Wood Sprite, caught in an indecent posture for a lifetime, and just waiting for someone, for someone like you Ranger, to see me. When they cut my tree down, and me with it, they dragged us to the mill where we were to be cut up. When the saw was ripping toward me I barely missed being cut in half...then they dried us and milled us to be straight, then put us back together as a bench, to be set in concrete here in this park. At least we're in a park and not on the street."

Ranger couldn't help but shake his head, and then said, "Well, how long has this been going on. I mean the park was created over a hundred years ago, and the bench, well, how long has it been since your tree was cut down? How long have you been stuck here on the bench? How long, Dusk?"

"I don't know time, like how long. I know dawn, day, dusk, night. I know new and full moon. I know spring, summer, autumn, and winter. I know morning star. I know these things, but how long time? No. I don't know the loss of meaning in memory...it's always real, now, meaningful...just is.

"You mean that you never forget anything that happens to you?"

"Ranger, what is real is never forgotten, just exists until I concentrate on it again...but it is always influencing me...it molds me."

"Gee Dusk, you mean that all of your memories are real? I don't feel that way. Lots of my memories, I don't even know if they really happened the way I remember them...I mean my memories of things when I was a kid, well, they are just kid memories, I wouldn't want to be influenced by my child memories...they're so limiting."

"Ranger, I have never been a child."

"Dusk, what are you saying. You're an old man, you must have been young once."

"Not young like you're thinking young. I appear to be an old man, but that's just how I appear. My life began fully when my tree sprouted and at that moment I was fully here, fully me. Like, do you think my tree held me in her sprouting leaves and nursed me? I was tiny compared to my size now for I was always, well in her, not just on her. Kind of like how you say you climbed in

the tree; you don't say you climbed on the tree. Or the bird flew into the tree, not the bird flew onto the tree. Trees aren't the same as other life forms. No not at all. They contain, they nurture, they protect, they give...Like that Ranger."

"So, you look old, but you're not...maybe not even real, at least to anyone but me. That's too weird. Are you saying that I am hallucinating you? What am I, schizophrenic? Having a conversation with an invisible being...I mean what do other people see while I'm hanging out with you?"

"Pretty much what ever they want, or nothing. I'm not sure you exist to them when we're together. You certainly are the first person to see me, so I just guess I don't exist to them and somehow when we're relating you step out of your reality into the one here."

"That's hard to believe. If I were to call out to say that person walking this way, I wouldn't be heard?"

"Don't do that Ranger, it might break our connection, and I like you, and can't we just keep it going the way we've been doing? Why do you need to know if what I am saying is true...truth is so limiting...its boundaries block all the possibilities of life. Once truth asserts itself, all else is prevented from manifesting. All that potential, your people call imagination or fantasy...and it is, as long as one knows the truth. Give up the truth and anything can exist. Just look at your existence, which is governed by truth, you know, science and technology. All of your thinking is restricted by what is announced as real. If this is real, then that can't be, that can't exist. The truth is a trap for your people. They live within its narrow boundaries, and many feel so restricted and frustrated, don't you feel that way...restricted and frustrated."

"Yeah, that's exactly how I feel. That's why I love coming into the park...fewer restrictions. That's what's so cool about nature, so free, so few people, and no real rules."

"Exactly, Ranger, exactly."

"But, without any rules only the strong rule...or because of rules they make, the strong rule. What do you think?"

Dusk seems to ponder for a moment, then says, "Probably both. To get into power one must overthrow those in power. To stay in power one must be able to identify those getting stronger and eliminate them. Rules are good for that. So both. Still, power just is. It's not created. It's alive, and lives through its creation. People in power are in power because power puts them in power. People taking over other people in power are doing so because power gives them power. Power exists by feeding on the conflict. The more conflict the better it feeds. Much of life is like that...conflict over space. All life on the planet is in competition for space, and what that space provides. The whole planet is set up to generate indescribable amounts of conflict in every form possible. Power eats conflict and enjoys it in endless varieties...kind of like people who have money. They like their luxuries and they like them in variety. Still, at moments, one can feel the freedom from the conflict by walking along a mountain trail, or by skinny dipping in a lake under the full moon, or by walking through a meadow in full bloom with the butterflies and dragonflies on the breeze, or by running through the park during a summer thunderstorm. Those are wonderful moments."

“Still, Dusk, knowing all this, well, how come it isn’t this way. How come people don’t understand what we talk about? How can the people in power be so damn blind?”

“It’s tough to seek answers to the mysteries, and believe me, for most, the answers are mysterious. If I was a person, and not a tree being, I would also be mystified. The difference is that my memories are alive and alive means just that. Memories are not just mentally stored information. Memories have a life force and they are important to living a healthy life. For one, by living within the community of one’s memories, one is never alone and isolated. While memories go back to the ‘beginning of time,’ they are being culled by what one’s culture defines as real. In your culture you are blocked from the inherent memories of the ancestors that we are all born with. That’s a tragedy. We have the answers trapped in our minds but can’t get to them...so we have to relearn everything all over again...and it’s usually too late by the time we begin to figure out how things really work. Just look at parenting. By the time parents in your culture figure it out, they’re grandparents. Too late for their children. Woops. But maybe just in time for their grandchildren.”

Dusk, “Wouldn’t we be controlled by our memories then. We wouldn’t be free to explore new ways.”

“Ranger, that sounds like something your culture would say, yet while it has merit, it might not be complete. In your culture everything that an individual learns in life ends in death, well, except maybe what has been taught to the next generation. But a person’s talents end with death. Now, when memories are passed from one generation to the next, then none of the experiences are lost. Every once in a while a person is born in your culture with those ancestral memories intact, thus you get a Mozart, a child being able to compose music. In some cultures these memories of the past are alive at birth. A genius is no more than some one born with the memories intact.”

“I don’t know. That does make a kind of sense in some things, but what about people who came up with the concepts of physics, or developed a new process, or developed something that never had existed before like telephones, cars, computers, you know, stuff like that. Those didn’t come from memories, they never existed before.”

“You know Ranger, from your cultural viewpoint you’re right. Kind of like believing that your culture’s explorers discovered America. Still, the continent wasn’t devoid of humans, so I guess those humans who were already here discovered it first. But, when reading your history books America was discovered in the 1400’s by someone named Columbus. But not really, right? It appears at this time that technology of computers didn’t exist before the middle 20<sup>th</sup> century, and at present it’s best that your culture believes this, but maybe, it does exist before...but all this about memory kind of came from our conversation about power, and the power is alive and uses it to create conflict, on which it feeds. I know that it sounds crazy, still, in my experience power and conflict is not dead but alive. It enslaves life, and when your culture makes an observation it “realizes” the concept of “The Survival of the Fittest.” Or the strong dominate the weak. The lion eats the zebra. The intelligent dominate the uneducated. This is as it is...but the effort to dominate only creates conflict and that is the ultimate reality of competition. It creates energy and energy is food. Matter isn’t the only form of food. There are beings that eat energy, kind of like trees that take the sunlight and uses it to develop food for itself.”

“But isn’t power energy? Why does power need to eat when its very essence is energy?”

“Great question. Power appears to be energy like a light bulb appears to be light. A light bulb creates light from its filament’s resistance to the electricity passing through it, and the generated heat of that resistance gives off light. So, the light bulb isn’t the source of that light. Electricity is. Power is a life force. It isn’t energy, but it captures energy and uses it to feed itself. For a person to seek power is natural, but not safe. The personality of the person who achieves power has changed considerably from the being who initially started the journey to gain power. The closer one gets to power, the greater is its ability to transform the person. It is kind of like trying to harness nuclear energy. One just doesn’t stick their hand on a highly radioactive object. One prepares oneself for that experience by wrapping oneself within insulation sufficient to protect one against the radiation. Because people don’t view power like that, they get burned or transformed, like how radiation can cause mutations in the cellular structure of someone who comes too close without the necessary insulation. Power mutates the personality, and addicts it at the same time, so no matter how much power one achieves, it is never sufficient. The greater one engages with power the more mutated becomes the personality, and in the mind of the powerful their actions are for the good of all, but for the all, the actions of the powerful are all-too-often abusive and destructive.”

“You mean power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Still we all need some power to stay alive. We got to eat, and we got to be able to get what we eat, and if there is a shortage, then we have to fight to get what we eat, right?”

“Ranger, there is always truth to what you say. Cooperation is another way of getting something to eat, but what ever is eaten is eaten equally by all in the group. In competition, it is up to the powerful to choose to share, but they don’t always share equally, do they? Why? Because even though it appears that they have so much more, Power gets the lion’s share of energy that someone accumulates. It’s like a drug. The more the power a person gets the more they need to feel the same high. Meanwhile power continues to get so much more of the energy than the person engaged in this activity. That is the way it is. Power corrupts through competition, yet corrupts a lot less when people share and cooperate. That’s how one develops insulation against the destructive force of power. Sharing and cooperating lessens the corruptive force of power. By taking from power only as little as possible, by taking only what is needed, rather than what one wants, one can minimize the destructive hold power has over us. Power is necessary, as you say, but it must be managed rather than allowing oneself to be lost in its clutches where enough is never enough.”

Dusk nods his head and asks, “How can you get people to learn this? How can you get powerful people to stop their grab for the power, and to back off? It seems impossible.”

“Ranger, by awakening the memories. By helping the memories to be alive. By allowing the ancestors a place in our lives. People are blocked from the memories by the influence of power. Power blocks the memories in order to block the context of life. In context of a cooperative society, the seeking of power becomes secondary to the equitable providing of energy to its members. It takes tremendous discipline to approach Power safely. It is always promising a feast to those who seek it. However, it doesn’t describe the famine that the feast causes for those not attending. It promises a limitless supply. Try and tell that to the Indigenous Peoples in regards to

the slaughter of the buffalo. Memories that are alive, poignant, vibrant, and connected to our feelings; that is what reveals.”

“How do we do that?”

“I don’t know how you can awaken your memories except as you’re doing by diminishing your drive for power. At some point your mind will be clear of its web, with enough distance from it, and in that distance, memories can begin to have room to visit you. Besides that Ranger, I don’t know, though I wonder a lot about this. Still, the fact that you can see me and we can discuss these concepts together is hopeful, isn’t it?”

“I suppose. Yeah, I suppose so. But, you keep going back to this about seeing you and can’t we just leave that alone. I like the way you talk, but when you talk about being part of a tree and all, well, what’s the point of telling me that? It makes me feel like challenging you to prove that and what would that do for our hanging out like this? I mean, well, come on Dusk, you understand what I’m saying.”

“Why Ranger, how insightful...yes, why do I mention that...what’s the point...why is that important to me to say it and to have you accept it, especially without proof. Proof is so important, for it let’s us know what is true, and then knowing the truth is so very important even if does limit the possibilities of what can be. Hmm. I need to get a better feeling for why I tell you these things. I actually don’t know, although I do have kind of a feeling about why, but only a feeling. Listen, now really half the things I tell you aren’t really true, and I make up half the things I say, and even I don’t know if what I say is real, but somehow for me it explains a whole lot of stuff that is unexplainable. I guess that’s enough for me...even if it isn’t true, yet it explains how this whole thing works, and even if I can’t prove it but it works, then it works and that’s what I care about.”

The sun begins to fall behind the trees and the wind begins to die down, and people begin to be attracted to food to be found not here in the park, and so they begin to move outward and away. Dinner time, and Ranger feels its call, and as he gets up puts his hand on Dusk’s shoulder, and says, ‘Well I can touch you, and so that’s real enough I guess for me...see you tomorrow, right?’

“Tomorrow is good...it’s always good when there is a tomorrow. See you buddy, see you for sure.”

Ranger heads up the path and the shadows extended across the park, and a deepening of the sky slows the rhythm of life for the day folks and begins to awaken to activity the night ones. People heading home for dinner and relaxation and others starting to feel the flow of energy awakening their senses, bringing them into increasing alertness and movement, movement to carry them to seek, to seek and to hunt for something they crave...night covers the details, vision is restricted, sound increasingly dominates and so does the feel of the unknown.

Dusk sits motionless, the bench in deepening shadows, and for a time just the distant sound of the streets surrounding the park, a horn, a siren, the roar of a jet coming in for a landing...then something closer, something quieter coming...and the small feet, the pungent scent of yesterday’s spray, and the black white striped figure strutting from the woods bordering the path.

Confident, that's what that strut signifies...I'm coming and nothing wants to get into my way...here I come, here I come...stand back and give respect.

Dusk nodding his head, yes, respect, that's all any of us wants...to receive the feeling that we count, that we have a right to be here, and what we are doing is good. Skunk demands respect and there is something in the way it's done...backing it up with a reinforcer that is very difficult to ignore, and woe if one does. Assertive, but not abusive. Skunk doesn't go around looking to spray, just uses it for protection and to let the girls know how powerful he is. "Hey man, your smell knocks me over, makes me see double, causes my heart to pound...you're so strong and well, do you want to?" Straight forward, no doubt about what's the story. So damn simple and decided right here, right now. Now, humans, got to complicate everything, and never quite completely satisfied.

Remembering a conversation I overheard, a young woman was telling a male friend how lazy male lions are, just sleeping away the day, just waiting for the females to do all the work, hunting and all, and awakening only when the kill is made, then bullying his way in to feast on their kill, then rolling back over to sleep...except when he wants some pussy. There was definitely a demeaning tone of voice. Hearing this, the friend inquired that perhaps there was more to their arrangement than the daytime appearance of an overweight, slovenly puss. He was saying that he could imagine something more was going on. He shared that with the coming on of night that the male rolled onto his feet and would begin to patrol their territory; the territory that allowed the females to hunt unchallenged. Upon hearing this I remember her reply, "What, you think pissing on all the trees is hard work...that wasn't equal to the work of the females, you know, carrying and birthing the litter, caring for the kittens, you know, the real and hard work of life." Her friend then replied, "Sounds good but is it true...I mean is that all there is to his nighttime activity of marking their pride's territory. Perhaps, other male lions would want to take over the pride...perhaps the males fought to injury and at times to the death. Perhaps that warranted the right to sleep during the day and to eat when the females killed a zebra, or some other non-fanged food. Certainly, a group of females taking down a grass eater wasn't nearly as dangerous as fighting another enraged male lion." She replied, "Why should the females care, if their males are beaten, the stronger outsiders won't hurt them, just take over the pride and everything would be back to normal." Her friend then shared, "Except for the sadness that the new males would kill all the pride's young. That might be a bit upsetting." She didn't really have more to say at that time, but I couldn't help to wonder about the attitude.

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The next day Ranger brought some doughnuts and the kind that made your mouth water, and Dusk liked to have his mouth water as it reminded him of when his tree's sap began to run in the spring.

"Doughnuts are so crazy, they are just about the perfect food, don't you think so Dusk?"

"Pretty close I would say, thanks for bringing them, definitely good."

“Been thinking about what you were saying yesterday.”

“Really? Help me to remember. A lot of times I don’t even know what I am saying...you know, just kind of get into the flow and a lot of times I am amazed by what I’m saying...it surprises me and it sure doesn’t just come from me. Maybe it’s the memories of my tree that speaks through me.”

“That’s what I was thinking about. You know, memory, and all the things you said about reaching into them, and well, I want my memories.”

“Ranger, that’s what impresses me about you. I mean you listen and actually hear what is being said. It affects you and you respond with curiosity. I like that. It’s so encouraging for me.

Well, memories are retained somewhere. I wonder where?”

“ What do you mean Dusk, they’re in your head, I don’t know, stored in the brain, right?”

“How would I know? Can I see into my head? But, yes, it seems as though the memories are in the head, stored in the brain, but I have often wondered how the brain organizes the memories. I mean, are they just dropped anywhere, like walking into a bedroom where the clothes are just dropped here and there, or are they like walking into a bedroom where all the clothes are either in the drawers of a bureau or hanging from a hangers in the closet? Are the clothes in the closet hanging from hangers with pants in one section and shirts in another section or just mixed together. Are clothes in the drawers just dumped anywhere, or are the drawers organized for different items, you know, socks here, t-shirts there, etc.?”

“I don’t know, never thought about it in that way. I think that my memories are like the bedroom where the clothes are just dropped anywhere. I guess that would make it tough to find anything.”

“Ranger, maybe you’re right. Still I wonder if we can arrange our memories, like maybe a filing cabinet, with them organized by topic, cross referenced, and so on. I mean we can do it in the physical sense, but I wonder if we wanted to, could we do it in a mental sense? If we could, it would be incredible, probably, right? I mean we organize in the physical sense because our brain tells us to, so why wouldn’t we be able to choose to do it in a mental sense. Just open up the brain to a set group of memories and pull up the file that was relevant. Or maybe like a computer, I mean the Internet...put in a subject and immediately have access to all memories in websites/files that pertain to that subject of inquiry. I mean if we can do it on the physical plane we probably could do it on the mental plane. It might even be possible to search through the past, in the sense of time before we were born, or even to access other people’s memories if they were willing to participate, again like the internet, but an internet of a culture’s memories, or even the memories of the people of the world, or even the memory of the earth, the sun, the universe. Wow!”

“Dusk, you are always tripping out, you know that? I mean you keep going and going. How in the hell am I ever going to be able to stay up with you? But, yes, I guess, anything is possible for humans once they set their mind to it. So, probably one could if one knew how to do it. Do you know how to do it?”

“In part, in part. Knowing how to organize the mind is part of the memory that has been suppressed in your modern human culture, or so I believe. Being I’m not really human except in appearance, and because I’m connected to my tree, in the fibers that make up this bench are the molecules of life that are only diminished, but not without life. Of course, to humans in this cultural environment, once a tree is cut down they believe it dies, and in a way that’s correct, but not entirely. I mean actually, in some trees, cutting it down doesn’t kill it at all but instead stimulates new growth such as in certain willow trees. Cut it down and in a month or so new branches start to develop and grow. Sadly, this isn’t true for other trees like pines. They do die once cut down. In any case, in the case of my tree from within which I emanate, my very continued existence is proof that my tree, in this very shape of a bench, still lives. In this life are all the memories of the past that has been passed through the seed from which its tree form grew. There is no confusion as to what it is and all of our memories are organized and available. That’s why it knows how to grow and to remain both an individual and a member of the forest. Humans that have been raised in technologically advanced civilizations where nature is only a park, a small island surrounded by concrete and steel, with each generation, those inner memories are increasingly detached and elusive. Yes, sometimes, they surface as an inspiration, especially for artists, but for the rest, these moments of inspiration have no place to connect in their daily life and so act as dreams that one is affected by, but can’t remember upon awakening.”

Ranger, eyebrows raised, forehead furrowed, lips drawn tight, breathing shallow, heartbeat quickened let out a huge sigh while whispering, “Damn.” Shaking his head slowly, rolling his shoulders, he stood up and started to pace back and forth. Stopping suddenly he asked, “Can this be changed?”

Dusk smiled slowly and then shrugged. “Perhaps for you my young buddy. Perhaps for you. It depends upon what you are open to believing. Belief in something not yet realized is the first step to acknowledgment of one’s willingness to have its presence in one’s life.”

“Hmm. That kind of makes sense. I guess to access my ancient memories I have to believe that they are within me. So, I also guess that even if they are within me I have to figure out a way to organize them so that I can easily access them. How’s that sound?”

Dusk laughing, “It feels like you got it and now let’s see what we have to do to keep on holding on to it. Why don’t we take a break and this will allow your mind to rest and in resting it will begin to grow more brain connections to encourage this development.”

“Huh? What did you just say?”

“Oh yeah. Well, let’s take this up when we get back together, OK?”

“OK. See you tomorrow.”

## Chapter 4. Or Not

Dusk, feeling energized with anticipation of visiting with Ranger again was wondering about how the physical world has such a way of influencing life. Like, how the sun rises in the East and sets in the West, or so we experience. But it doesn't really rise or set. It just appears that way. Maybe this will be a good way to explore perception and how it affects memory. Yes, now, when Ranger comes to visit again this will be something to explore. As far as memory and him learning how to organize his memories and access those of our previous lives, well, I wonder if this will be too much at this time. I was created with this in place, but for Ranger, this will require a great deal of stress for him as his brain isn't so organized.

With this to ponder, Ranger came down the path with a smile on his face. "Hi, Dusk. Been thinking about our discussion on memory and see, I remembered how to get back here. Ha, ha."

Dusk, feeling exuberant, laughed along with him. "You are one funny guy. Yet, you have the essence of it. It's just a manner of possibilities. We remember everything from both a genetic source and from our lived experiences. The key to all of it is something that is energized by the power of our level of consciousness. And of course, this is influenced by our culture, as we explored before. Sometimes we have a memory triggered by a smell, or by a sight, or by a sound. For a moment, or longer we are no longer conscious of what we were doing as we have found ourselves reliving the memory. Our bodies continue on automatic, or hopefully so, as we can be deep into a memory while still walking. I mean we don't suddenly lose our ability to walk. However, sometimes like when we suddenly drop out of our memory, we may have a momentary feeling of not knowing how we got to where we are, but we are."

"Yeah, I've had that experience sometimes."

"Of course, for me, I don't have that exact thing happen as I'm part of this bench. Yet, sometimes when I'm remembering events that I experienced before I came into being within this bench, when I snap out of it, I'm confused for a moment as to how much of the day has already passed by. Then, it all becomes clear again. Still, whatever happened in what is call reality is missing. Like I have no memory of who was walking or riding by or what they may have been talking about. No, I missed all of that. So, I guess there would be a break in my awareness, but I wonder if that is important or not."

Ranger frowns, then shares, "You know. At school, I daydream a lot in class and when I snap out of it, I have missed what the teacher was sharing; things that are important to know. The good thing for me is that my friends in class have taken notes of what was talked about, and I can get it from them after class. Then there are times when they were daydreaming while I wasn't and so we can exchange the missing stuff."

Dusk excited reaches out his hand and places it on Ranger's arm and says, "That's exactly to the point of understanding memory. Are we aware, I mean fully conscious of this occurring in our lives? So much is happening all the time all around us that we are engaging with on automatic, and yet because we are on automatic, we aren't conscious of so much that is

happening. Especially in activities that are repetitive; activities that we know so well. Just take walking again. You are on a sidewalk going somewhere. Suddenly you trip. What happened? You weren't paying attention to every detail, who would? You look back and you see that a tree's root had pushed up a section of the sidewalk creating a break and your foot hit the raised portion and you tripped. So much of life is being lived on automatic. Now, Ranger, having tripped how long does it take for you to continue walking on automatic?"

"Probably within a few steps most likely."

"Right. You start to ignore the details on the sidewalk, and so this event of tripping most likely wasn't even recorded in your memory as you hadn't even been paying attention to the "geography" of where it happened. The next time you take that walk, you may trip again on that exact spot and admonish yourself for having tripped again on the same spot. So, this time you look around at exactly where you are and try to record this in memory so that you won't trip the next time. Maybe it takes a few more events of tripping before you really pay attention and so after that you can prevent yourself from tripping."

Ranger nods his head and doesn't say anything for a time. Dusk sits quietly while Ranger contemplates. Then Ranger says, "But how can one be paying attention all the time?"

"That's a good question. I'll tell you this. If you were walking down the sidewalk in a very dangerous neighborhood, don't you believe that you would be much more alert. And being more alert you would not be daydreaming as you walked. You would be recording every little detail and the next time into that neighborhood, you would be able to remember all the nuances of the environment and be able to anticipate where the trouble could develop."

"So, in living in a safe neighborhood, I wouldn't be alert and really not recording much. Kind of just like at school. I guess it's kind of like being interested in a subject or not. If I'm interested I am paying attention and very likely taking good notes. Taking the notes are an assist to me remembering and more so when I know there will be a test."

"Yes, Ranger. By taking notes you are assisting your memory. Let's take a look at our conversation. It seems that you are very interested in what we explore, and you share that you are contemplating some of it later. Yet, you aren't taking notes. So, wouldn't you say that what you remember may be somewhat incomplete?"

"Gee dusk, I can't be taking notes everywhere I go."

"Culturally, no you can't. Yet, you could. There is no rule against that is there?"

"Well, it would be very odd."

"Yes it would be odd. But what you know what is really kind of odd, is that without the notes, you are bypassing the method that you were trained in at school to assist your memory. You were trained to assist your memory, culturally, by taking notes. However, in more indigenous cultures, there was no books or paper and pens, or iPads, etc. What they did have was a very active memory, such that what they experienced as a lesson of life, or even a conversation, or a given a message to share with someone, it was recorded in their memory verbatim; exactly

as was spoken. Baby's do that until they learn how to read and write. With these literary skills, the ability of the mind to remember is weakened and progressively so through the years of formal education. Now with increased technology, the need to remember is further undermined by access to our mind's external hard drive, such as the computer and recording devices of various types. Culturally, memory has been outsourced."

"Then what is the point of exploring being able to organize our memories such that one day we would be able to consciously access our ancestral memories that you have shared are so important."

Dusk smiling, "You know, hanging out with you for me is so rewarding. You really know how to explore verbally. What a keen intellect you have."

"Well thanks Dusk. I'm not sure I'm this way with others. Mainly we just hang out and kick back. I mean we do wonder about what's it's all about, but we don't ever have any deep insights, like we're having when we are together."

Nodding his head, Dusk shares, "Yes. It all so much depends upon with whom we are spending time with. I mean most people in this culture have been behaviorally trained to know nothing but their own opinions. This reinforces the duality such that people with varying opinions are not motivated to wonder about the relevance of those other ways of seeing something. This is very limiting as it undermines awareness and lessens the ability of consciousness to grow in a healthy way. One of the difficulties is that when we are living in a powerful culture, we feel safe and in feeling safe we have little need to pay attention to what's happening around us. Like I shared about walking into a strange neighborhood that is dangerous. Feeling safe actually deadens our senses and inhibits the rise of our intuition."

So, danger is beneficial in certain ways and safety is detrimental in certain ways. I guess, nothing is really as we believe it to be. Just looking at it then, because memory is made up of everything that we have experienced consciously or unconsciously, and because this culture promotes a certain blindness to other perspectives, we can assume that our memories are actually very limited in regard to all that is happening around them."

Ranger sits very still for a while then asks, "OK Dusk. This is a lot, but I can guess there is still more to memory that I need to know about."

Dusk also sits quietly for a while, then shares, "You're right Ranger. There is more. For instance, as we have seen, because you have been trained to assist your memory through taking notes and the fact that you aren't doing it now, you can assume you are missing some of what I'm saying, not just because you aren't taking notes, rather because every once in a while you start to think about something I have shared while I have kept on talking. This means that you have missed part of what I'm saying, at least until you tune back into what I'm sharing. This means that this lapse of attention, while unintended, strips you have the full context of what is being shared. It would be beneficial to explore how the mind deals with this."

"Well, in class I take notes, but stop doing it momentarily when I start to daydream. This isn't so serious because as I have shared, my friends and I get together and share with each other what we have written down and when something is missed the others probably got it. However,

if in our conversation I am not daydreaming but thinking about what was said, then I guess somehow my mind is doing something so that when I pay attention again I can pick up on what we are looking at. Or does it?"

Dusk smiles. "Ranger, what this means is that we aren't really ever hearing exactly what someone else is saying. Somehow we have these spaces of broken concentration, but we aren't aware of this. What I feel is happening is that the mind fills in the empty spaces with assumed context. This of course leads to misunderstanding to the point of us believing what we have substituted into the empty spaces is actually what the other person has said. We are very caught up in this when we hear people say, 'I never said that' while the other person saying, 'Yes you did.' I call this "Incorrect Closure."

Ranger immediately replies, "What? What did you say it's called?"

"Incorrect Closure. This is how it works. Have you ever misread a word?"

"Yeah. I usually know this because it doesn't make sense. So. I reread the word, then I see what it really was. Doesn't happen often, but it does once in a while. Dusk, how does this happen?"

"Through a great deal of reading experience, we have read most words over and over again. The brain is very smart, or so it feels. Like very often we know what a person is going to say next. We do this through a process that I call Closure. Closure is a shortcut that the brain takes. This means that when we read a word we see it in our mind, but we actually are reading just the first few letters of the word, and with our experience with the word our mind sees the whole word with all its letter. What the mind is seeing is a form of closure. So, when we read a word incorrectly it always has about the same length of the written word and always starts with the same letters. 'Extend' and 'External' are two words that are similar in length and start with the same letters. Misreading these words can happen because of the similarity. This mistake I call "Incorrect Closure." The same thing can happen visually. We can often misidentify visually when we are tired, or thinking about something, or even just listening to music. I know that people who really are into listening to music while driving can miss their turnoff and only discover this sometime after passing it when they finally come back into awareness. All that was happening is missing while they were lost in the music. Many circumstances of conflict are caused by Incorrect Closure which gives us the feeling that is not appropriate. Can you imagine how this influences memory?"

"Ok Dusk. This is too much. It's time for another break. I want you to know how interested I am in everything you and I are "exploring." However, as you know by now, it's a bit much for my mind. I need to give my brain a break before it gets too overheated. But know this. I really dig what we are able to do when together. I'm looking forward to getting in deeper with, what do you call it...Incorrect Closure. Right?"

Dusk nods. "Good going Ranger. You set the tempo. I deeply respect you and being able to share with you is very rewarding and important to me. I look forward to seeing you come walking down the path again."

Ranger laughs and says, "Don't be so sure that I will be walking down the path. I might just drop down onto the bench from above. Just like the squirrels. Ha! See you when I see you."

## Chapter 5. Or Not

At school Ranger is sitting next to a window and looks out. Why? Just because. He is looking yet not really seeing. He's thinking and not even paying attention to the lecture that is going on. So of course, he isn't taking notes and then suddenly, like a flash of lightening he snaps out of it. What happened? He suddenly became conscious that he wasn't taking notes, just like he explored with Dusk. "Wow! Damn. Just like Dusk was explaining. Hmm. So much is being missed and yet somehow it all still fits together. But does it really? Probably not," he says to himself. Smiling, he thinks, "I wonder what Dusk will open up to me next. And, I have to not just get turned on by what he is sharing, but apply it, like right now." Just like that, pen in hand, Ranger started to take notes. "I've got to make a game out of this. Take notes keeps me focused. Put the pen down and lose focus. Let's see how long I can keep focused. I know, I'll time myself."

After 4 and a half minutes his mind begins to wander, and his pen somehow is back on his desk. About 2 minutes later he suddenly is aware that the time is still running but he is no longer taking notes. "I wonder at what point I lost it and what I can do to do better. I guess I'll bring this up with Ranger after school."

After school, Ranger is headed for the park. Coming down the lane he remembers that he had kidded Dusk about dropping in from a tree like one of his squirrels. So, he drops off the lane, cuts around the small hill at the bottom of which sits Dusk...like always. He ducks down as he tries to sneak up and when he gets really close, with Dusk not seeming to be aware of him, he jumps over the back of the bench and plops down next to Dusk. "Surprised, huh?" Dusk's eyes open wide and is momentarily bewildered. Then he says, a bit loudly, "You crazy squirrel. What means you scaring me like that. I'm not sure I'm going to give you anything to eat unless you apologize to me right away." Ranger looks at him like he's crazy...then both of them begin to laugh like there will be no ending.

"OK, Ranger. Turning into a squirrel and then back into a boy...that's really something. I knew you were special, but I had no idea how."

Ranger looked back and now chuckling, "Well, Dusk. If you can be a Wood Sprite, I guess I can be a squirrel when I want to."

"That be true Ranger. That be true. Well, would you like a peanut?"

"Yeah, sure. I deserve a reward, don't I?"

"Yes, you sure do, so here."

After a few bites Ranger chews up his peanut, swallows, and then relates what happened in class what with the daydreaming, the idea to time himself to keep focus, and how this challenge seemed to be too much."

“It’s kind of learning how to ride a bike. It takes effort over some amount of time to get the hang of the key to balance, yet once mastered, it opens up a whole new vista and an increase of responsibility that goes along with the freedom.”

“What responsibility? Get on the bike and go. No more walking for me.”

Dusk pauses, then shares, “Something about going faster means less being seen. True you get to go further and faster, but I wonder how much is being missed as you speed by. And I wonder how important it is to see what is being missed. And if there are important things being missed, I wonder then how this will end up affecting you?”

“What? How does this fit in with responsibility?”

“This is something that would be important to explore. I must have had the impression that introducing responsibility was relevant. Can you help me?”

“I don’t know. Let me think about it for a minute.”

The sun was slowly dropping down and the breeze was blowing itself here and there ruffling Ranger’s hair. In fact, the breeze was kind of enveloping Ranger with its gentle warmth. Slowly, Ranger began to nod his head, kind of like in thinking he was falling asleep, or maybe he was getting something in his head that he agreed with. “I wonder which,” thought Dusk.

Picking his head up Ranger said, “If I’m missing important things, then I may be missing what I need to see and if I don’t I might have a problem. This happening would mean in some way that I’m not taking care of my self and then I wouldn’t be being responsible to my welfare. How is that?”

“Amazing is what that is. Just amazing. That is exactly on the button. The faster we go the less we can sense and we’re totally unaware of this and so should things not work out we are mystified. Like we think, ‘How could this have happened?’ Losing focus on our surrounding is the outcome of greater speed and there are important inputs from the environment that we are missing so things don’t work out like they might have. In school, the idea of taking notes is so that we don’t miss important input. Life is just like that. However, as we have explored earlier, our culture doesn’t support staying focused and aware and as it gets us to speed up we begin to expect others to also speed up and so now it has all come down to texting, which is so quick. However, what is being set aside is the personal contact that is even better if we called someone and each of the people could at least connect through their voices if not through personally visiting.”

Ranger was looking intent. “Well, school is supposed to be important, yet I don’t feel connected all the time, so I drift off. I’m concerned about this now that you’ve helped me explore the situation and consequences of not being focused.”

“Good analysis, Ranger. Truly this idea of staying focused and its tie into responsibility is new and like anything new, it takes time for the brain to integrate this moment of awareness into the ability to actually be tuned-in more frequently. I’m wondering if we can use the analogy of playing an online game.”

“OK Dusk. When I go online to play a game I can see that I don’t have any trouble with concentrating. I can stay focused for hours. I’m not missing any details in the challenges which I’m engaged. Of course, the better the game is challenging, and I have success playing it, it occupies my attention, and when I’m in class there is very little of it that captures my attention. Most of the stuff that I’m presented in class is difficult to feel any excitement about. Maybe that’s the issue. To stay engaged I have to be responsive to some form of challenge. I know that in math there is nothing too engaging in the subject. But I do have a friend that loves to solve puzzles and he has framed math like one giant puzzle. So, he’s really turned on by going to math. To me I can’t make that connection. It’s so abstract that I can’t even connect it to anything I’m doing. Yeah, I learned how to count, add, subtract, multiply and divide, but that’s about all. Sometimes the word problems were catchy, but the rest of math was of no use in my life. Like what does algebra have to do with anything that affect me? Nothing.

I’m interested in what you are saying, so I have no problem with staying tuned into you and what you are sharing. However, if you were speaking of what online games you are playing, since I don’t have any way of connecting to that here on the bench, well, it would all sound like Greek to me. I’m sure my eyes would cross at a certain point, and I’d probably start to wonder where the squirrels have gotten off to. Yeah, my attention span would be very limited.”

Dusk nodded and shared, “Why don’t they teach how math can be applied to everyday challenges of life.”

“How would you see that happening?”

“How about math as it pertains to finance or running a business, or even in the running of my future household?”

“Yes, I can see how that would be more relevant and engaging. I wonder why math isn’t presented in that way?”

Dusk says, “Well, they say if you want to know what is happening, follow the money. However, once said, they don’t teach how to do that. So, I guess there is some reason why they don’t want us to find out about what is happening.

Hmm. Yes, there must be a reason why this is so. Like, from my perspective, being that I’ve been around for a very long time, there used to be buffalo wandering around, and now there aren’t any. From, what I saw, when an indigenous person came across a herd of buffalo a few were killed for food and clothing even though they could have killed a lot more. When settlers came by they killed just for food also, but then there were others that killed as many of them as they could. In doing so they took the hides, the hump, the tongue and left the rest to rot. They killed so many that I rarely saw any more buffalo. But what I did see was some cattle, and then a lot more cattle. Soon all there were was cattle. So, if I want to know what was happening and I applied the maxim of ‘If you want to know what is happening, follow the money’ then it would be obvious that buffalo as a source of food and clothing was free. Get rid of the buffalo and replace them with cattle. Well cattle were privately owned and if someone wanted to eat beef, they had to then pay for it.”

Ranger face got all screwed up and he vehemently cried out, “That is so messed up. So, what happened to the indigenous people? How did they deal with it?”

Sadly, Dusk replied, “Well, to follow the money further, it was also about getting rid of the indigenous people who lived here so that all of their land, which was the whole country, could be privatized and that would allow some to make a great deal of profit from the sale of the land, and of all future sales. How this was accomplished was in a way through the power of mathematics. People then and especially now didn’t all have enough money to buy the land outright, so people with a lot of money formed banks from which people could get loans with the payback at a certain interest rate, and this really was all about the application of math. So, if a person bought a property for \$100,000 and paid 20% down, or \$20,000 and took a loan for 80% at 5% or \$80,000, the monthly payment would be \$429. At the end of thirty years, or 360 monthly payments, they had paid the bank \$154,604 of which \$74,000 was in interest. Of course, there were bank fees and with the interest, this made a lot of money over time for the lenders.”

“Did people realize this?”

“Some did, many didn’t. If people understood this, I mean understood this application of math, they might have sought rules to prevent it.”

“So, by pushing me to take endless math classes that have no immediate relevance they kind of also push me to close my mind to it so when I become an adult I am blocked mentally from actually understanding all of this and thereby easily taken advantage of.”

“You could say that. If they wanted you to know how they can take advantage of you, how would this work for them?”

“It wouldn’t.”

“Taking this one step further, or should I say backward, it seems that there is a need to have a plan in order to know how to handle this kind of manipulation. The fact is, that the application of math isn’t taught until going to college and specifically to business school in which students are taught how to manipulate the public through various financial devices. Courses in finance are not taught to teenagers who desperately need to learn all of this. With this perspective, while it is very discouraging at your age, now you can have a challenge, that might help you better focus on the subject of math.”

“What if I do pay attention, how am I going to figure out what you have just shared?”

“I wonder how much time you spend playing video games each day.”

“Probably at least two or three hours.”

“OK. Let’s say instead of spending all that time in play, cut it in half and use the other half to read up on finance and business by either going to the library, or by going online and Google the books that graduate students in finance study. Go, outside the box that school has placed you and expand the information that you are taking in. This all ties back to taking responsibility. When

your focus wanders it's a way of your mind telling you that you are being "dullified." You have to be able to take responsibility to limit this effect."

"How am I doing to do this?"

"I'm sure that there are after-school clubs. Why not start one that address this issue of learning what you need to learn as an adult to be successful in navigating the cultural diversions that leave you ignorant? Maybe you can get a faculty sponsor to provide guidance. Any way it's something to explore wouldn't you say?"

"Yeah, I suppose so. OK Dusk, what I can say is that I'm going to have to take a break. I'm very interested in how we explore together. Still, as you know, I need time to take it all in and get on-top of it. See you soon, right?"

"I'll be here looking forward to how you are going to drop-in next time. Take care Ranger."

## Chapter 6. or Not

Looking around, Dusk by being stationary feels as though he has become just part of the background to life as it abounds in all directions around him, be they worms in the earth, birds in flight, squirrels in the trees, people walking, riding biking, or skateboarding. Dusk ponders, "It's very interesting, that being so, it reminds me of an earlier incarnation in a parallel dimension where I was more ambulatory and having chosen to be born into a highly abusively dysfunctional relationship with my parents and older siblings, to be driven so deeply within that I viewed all of life as background, completely two dimensionally. It wasn't until I smoked marijuana when I was nineteen that it all suddenly life came into focus...three dimensionally, that is.

Of course, now, I have chosen to be invisible to humanity, except in the case of Ranger, who whether he knows it or not, has the anomaly of being born three dimensionally, with a touch of the fourth dimension. This is amazing in a culture such as this, which is limited to the two dimensionality with the associated consequences of seasonal extremes as the pendulum swings from one pole to the other and back and forward and back and forward and back, ad-infinity. Oh, here comes Ranger."

"Greetings Dusk. How's the sitting going?"

Dusk smiles, "You'd think that my butt would be completely flat by now, wouldn't you?"

"For me, it sure would be, but for you, nah, not possible given that you're not really sitting here, are you."

Dusk laughs, "Not by the hair of your chinny chin chin. You've finally figured out that I'm an illusion of your wishfulness"

"What? You believe that I created you?"

"No, not created me. Rather it was that you called me forth. And, frankly, I was hoping."

"This makes so little sense to me Dusk. But, then again, you have shared with me that no one but I can see you. I always thought you were kidding. After all the pigeons and the squirrel see you. Yeah, sure I was always hoping that one day someone like you would come into my life to help me better understand what's going on."

"Just like you said, Ranger, you were hoping someone like me would come into your life. Well, here I am. You were hoping and actually from where I am derived, I was hoping to be a person of meaning. I was hoping that somehow I would also be able to help this world, which of course is also connected to all other worlds, could get the help it needs to be healthy."

"What do you mean by healthy?" inquired Ranger."

Why healthy? Because it is ill and its illness, just like any cell in our body that gets ill, affects all the other cells as our world does also affect all the other worlds. The order that allows life to generate depends on health and up to this time, no one in this world has had any success in developing the consciousness, not of the illness, but the manner in which it can be successfully treated.”

“Dusk, are you referring to the spirituality of existence depends upon the healing of earth?

“Yep. I am. You see, until now the illness that has spawned on earth has been limited to earth. Basically, The All has quarantined earth. Every previous civilization that prospered before collapsed in order to keep humanity from breaking the quarantine. There has always been talk of aliens coming to the earth sometime in the past and this has been debunked repeatedly by scientists. However, for these same scientists, it seems quite reasonable to seek to get off the planet as is now being actively pursued. In following the money, this drive to get off the planet really only has one benefit. The powerful and super-rich realize that their drive for wealth and control is exhausting the resources of earth and in this process the earth is being poisoned by increasing pollution. These people have focused their private and public monies to developing space travel, as is being worked on by Elon Musk and others. They want to get off the planet permanently and set up their pent-houses up in space, while the rest of us are discarded and forced to work as slaves providing their luxury lifestyle with what is left to exploit.

Aliens no, but aren’t the ones working so hard to get off the planet going to be the real aliens for the rest of the universe?

Regardless, of this paradox, the threat is real because of the technological progress that has been made. So far, only satellites have been sent forth into outer space, but the effort is accelerating at every level. Think of global warming for a moment as if the earth is suffering a fever. Think of the pandemic as a first step in stopping the tech. cultures from progressing beyond the quarantine. It is a warning that the earth’s illness is also accelerating.”

Ranger getting a bit overwhelmed responded with, “This is bordering on science fiction or fantasy. Where is all this coming from. Are you trying to undermine all that we’ve been exploring?”

“I know, this is how it seems. However, here’s the thing. The situation is urgent. What will it take for humanity get to the point of taking the threat of even global warming seriously enough to take immediate action? Apparently nothing. Isn’t this the way it looks. Just a bunch of talk. Talk about going electric 100 % by say 2050. Where exactly are all the lithium batteries going to dumped as they burn out? These batteries are filled with toxic ingredients. There’s nothing that is going to neutralize their poisonous effect from polluting the water and air as their cases disintegrate.

The situation is spiraling in on itself. The wealthy countries are willing to sacrifice billions of people from all the other nations in the effort to continue to expand their capturing of the worlds resources to support their own economies. This culture is cycling self-destructive behavior world-wide to support the power of greed and its insatiable appetite. Unless this culture curbs its appetite and concentrates on learning how to provide for all of its citizens a healthy level of

existence, there will be nothing to halt the gradually increasing disintegration of the integrity of the earth systems that are essential to maintain life. The world governments need a powerful role-model of the type of change that would be instructive on how we all need to work together to achieve this goal. That starts with you and me, my friend.”

Ranger getting into it asked, “How can I contribute, besides just listening and tossing some feedback into the conversation?”

“Well, Ranger, during our last session it was brought up that the key was to learn how to integrate the increasing awareness into behavior that supports that consciousness. That’s where this begins to influence the cultural imperatives that limits its future potential to survive where all that came previously has collapsed. Let’s start with a fertile environment for exploring far out ideas and concepts.”

“Where would that be Dusk?”

“Why, my good friend Ranger, where you spend numerous hours most days of the week

“Hmm. You mean at my school? Yes, I can see that.”

“Very good Ranger. That is the place to start with you and your closest peers.

Remember we previously felt that one possibility was for you to start an after-school club titled ‘How it Works,’ initially focusing on how finance works. Getting this into place would be like your foco-point; a place where this investigation has a home. Starting with your school and then eventually expanding it onto other campuses. Then, when and if you decide to go to college, starting it there and expanding to all the neighboring colleges and as you and your peers get hired somewhere initiate the club within these environments as well. As you get married and have families of course all of this insight and knowledge will be shared at home.”

“Really deep Dusk. Really deep. I guess the key to all of our concerns that we have been exploring is just dialogue until it gets rooted in such a way that I can practice integrating the insights into my life. The chance of me being able to do this in my home life is nil to none. But, before I run off and get an after-school club application it seems that we need me to have some kind of plan, I mean, like a kind of curriculum. Oh, yeah, and before that I need to develop the skills to put the knowledge and insights of each subject into practice.”

“You’re right Ranger. It all starts with one subject that would be meaningful to other teenagers. For you, it would be important as well, right?”

“Just off the top of my head, the most important topic for me is live a meaningful life. Right now, I feel meaningless. I mean, what do I have to contribute to anyone? The more we discuss things, the less I feel that I know.”

Dusk pauses for a few minutes, just staring off into space. Then a smile begins to form and then he nods his head and says, “Well, from what you have shared with me there is something that you have that is meaningful to everyone’s welfare and that is the ability,

willingness, and skill to fight for your place, like you shared about getting it on with the guy who is now your best friend.”

Ranger smiles and responded with a good deal of enthusiasm, “That’s right, Dusk. To me as I have been looking back about that, it was our way of telling each other that fighting for the right to say, ‘I am here. I belong. I exist.’ To me, not everyone has that in them, though intuitively, they wish they did. Learning how to stand up is the first step in having Free Will and Choice. What I have learned is that it takes a certain amount of courage to acknowledge how badly we are being educated and how most of the skills needed for adulthood have been eliminated from school. We are being taught nothing about how to be pro-active even should we realize how deficient are our lives in obtaining the essential skills for being able to understand how the whole system works; an essential awareness in order to have a modicum of Free Will and Choice.”

“That about says it all, Ranger. Very good. It certainly would be helpful if you and your peers could be informed how your minds are different in how they function in regard to school, so that each person can be provided the education in the manner that allows their minds to best process the educational experience. More, would it not be important to have the students have input and the choice in how the curriculum is developed? Would this be a good starting point for the club titled, ‘How it Works’?”

“Yes, Dusk, that would be a good name. I like it. I’ll get on it. There is so much to explore and having other teens in on this will be great. I’m excited.

“Good. Then perhaps this is enough for today. How about taking a break and getting back when you have something to report.”

“OK. See you around.”

## Chapter 7. or Not

“There is no rhyme or reason for this being so. It just is.” Dusk was wondering why this came into his awareness. “Does everything have to have a reason for its being,” he wondered. “Certainly, my being attached to this bench is beyond this dimension’s reasoning. I mean, it’s hard for any cultural rationale, or so it seems, yet, I must say that Ranger’s presence would challenge this perspective.

My tree’s root went deep into the earth and these roots are connected to all that is within the earth. Everything that goes up must come down and in coming down it all lands somewhere on the earth, and in time is absorbed by the earth. This is the source of my awareness, while humans are not bound by this experience for within humanity is this drive to get off the earth and so with them everything that goes up doesn’t necessarily fall back down to the earth. Just the reality of rockets has changed this. While many satellites are circling the earth and most of them will fall back into the earth’s atmosphere, others are headed out to deep space and will never fall back to earth. But then is this really true, for aren’t they sending signals that travel through space back to earth and in that light, they kind of do fall back to earth with all that data that is being transmitted. Furthermore, there are large number of humans sitting at computers who are attached to those space traveling satellites and the data that they are sending back. So, I guess everything depends upon one’s perspective.

Ah. Here comes Ranger now. Good. It feels great to have someone who is interested in what one has to share.” “Hi Ranger.”

“Yo, Dusk. How be it?”

“It be good now that you are here. Come on. Have a seat. I’ll share a peanut with you even if you didn’t drop down out of a tree.”

“Very funny Dusk. Very funny.”

“I like funny and having fun while I do anything. It’s just a gift I have.”

“Wish I had it that way.”

“Just imagine being a kid who is having fun playing with a toy rocket. Then as a teenager getting one of those kid rockets that you can put together and having fun shooting it into the air. Then as an adult working for the space agency having fun shooting rockets into outer space. What a progression of fun!”

“You know, I never thought of it like that. I mean, about the progression through life having fun. Of course, life isn’t what I created, and there are so many parts of life that aren’t so much as anything like fun. I guess you would have to be lucky to have that experience.”

Dusk smiling replied, “Having the skills of life to manage yourself such that it is fun would be a worthy goal. I really feel it’s all about how we frame what we are doing. It’s in how

we choose to frame our experiences is how we can feel more in control at least in how we feel if not in what we have to do. To me, it's another form of being responsible in that I am determined to understand how this whole thing works so that I can make it better for myself and everyone else."

"Is this possible?"

"Well, last time we were exploring the challenge of staying focused and specifically with the subject of math. As the conversation developed we were discovering that if one could find the application of math to one's life and maybe improving the likelihood of some form of reward, then there could be an element of fun in the challenge of picking up the pieces that have been left out by the way math is taught so abstractly in school."

"Yeah, that's true. I have been stopping off at the library and as suggested, began to look into books that I could understand in how math can be applied to improve my motivation to be open to it. I took out a very basic book on finance, but it still seemed too complicated."

Dusk nodding his head, "I feel your concern. I remember a time when I finally realized that I actually knew nothing. I mean, in my human form I knew how to get dressed, ride a bike, play a few sports, but I didn't know how anything worked. I could barely use a screwdriver or a saw. So, it was like an epiphany. I saw that I was so basic in my knowledge that I was no better off than a child. This awareness gave me the insight to go the library and spend time in the children's section where there were books on many subjects that were not presented only with a bunch of words, but with large pages full of drawings that showed how the words all fit together. I was wondering how a T.V. worked and there was a large picture book about how T.V.s worked. It was easy to understand. Then I took out a book on computers and repeated the experience. With this basic knowledge, properly presented for my level of ignorance, rather than for my age, I was able to educate myself pretty well. I kept this up until I covered most subjects, and this broadened my foundation. However, this wasn't sufficient. So, I not only read about subjects, I started to play around with them like there is a way to hold a hammer, a screwdriver, etc. and I applied what I saw by watching guys working construction and how they handled these tools, and soon I was upgrading these skills from close to zero to maybe a six out of ten."

Ranger responded, "How could you have done any of this. You told me that you were attached to this bench."

"True, I did tell you that. I believe I also shared that I could move through various dimensions and in some of those dimensions I was free to do as I've just shared. Anyway, this is an interesting response to what I just shared. I wondered where it came from?"

"Gee Dusk, I don't know. It just kind of popped out. You're right though as my response had nothing to do with the story you shared with me about how you simplified learning. Damn, I don't know what's wrong with me. It's so messed up."

Dusk smiled and shared, "Life is so much a mystery Ranger. Somehow, what I shared was disturbing. The mind felt threatened to some degree. From what I understand of how this all works, the subconscious mind became triggered reactively. I just want you to know that I didn't take it personally, because I have confidence in our relationship. Should we check it out?"

“I don’t know Dusk. Should we? I mean, can we? I’d like to know if you do.”

“Basically, I was sharing how I discovered an easier way to learn. Education messes with most people in that it has its own goals, and it messes with people because people are not informed as to the connected function of education that is supported by any one specific culture. To understand this one has to come to grips in regard to the quality of one’s culture and how it values its citizens. It seems that all cultures want its subjects to adhere to its dictates on every level of social interaction. Of course, its survival is its primary goal. Every culture has been traumatized with the experience of other culture’s attempting to pre-empt their resources. Education then must be engineered to assure that the culture is strong enough to prevent this outcome. Culturally based educational models were experimented with to assure this.”

Ranger then responded, “So, my response to your going back to the very basics, in the most basic manner, was somehow a threat to the cultural educational model and being raised in it, I was subconsciously triggered into attacking you for presenting it to me.”

“It seems so. Very astute Ranger.”

“Is there any more to this than just the culture’s effort to maintain its hold on me?”

“A great question Ranger. There are, but they relate to the how of this in regard to education. From what I am able to share, while our culture presents the vision of everyone who studies hard, and this includes working hard at any task, will progress skill wise and attached to this is the incentive of the reward of being able to make a good living. The maxim, ‘Hard work is rewarded with advancement,’ is one of the parental dialogues that are continuous, and if one doesn’t progress it’s because the individual didn’t work hard enough. With this, the whole of the responsibility of progress in life is laid on children from infancy. We carry this through all of life and when we look back, either we did this or didn’t, and if we didn’t it was our fault. Well, this with closer inspection, is false.”

Ranger lips began to tighten as this was shared, and then he said, “Tell me more Dusk.”

“OK, Ranger. Let’s start with the image of a pyramid. A pyramid is broad in its foundation and as it rises up it narrows down on all sides until it reaches its apex, the top, where it is very small. So, let’s generalize and say all children start school at some age. With each phase of school, like between elementary school and middle school there are fewer children attending school. Between middle school and high school, there are even fewer. The number of children attending undergraduate school who obtain a B.A or B.S. also have a drop off as graduate school is attended. Finally, the last drop off continues as those seek a Masters Degree and move on for a Ph.D., which is the apex of education. Out of all the children that started school, only a tiny minority are still in place. Those at the highest level typically earn more than those below and this has a tremendous effect on their lifestyle and being able to obtain the benefits of our culture.”

Range nods and says, “Well, isn’t this because they must have worked harder than others?”

“It would seem so, as the culture intended, but let’s look even closer. Let’s look at how people learn. Academic education is not intuitive. It is presented by teachers as prescribed by Departments of Education. There are three ways in which academia presents education: Visual through reading. Auditory through lectures. Experientially through labs. and field work.

Now let’s look at how individuals learn. While the information is presented as described, most of the education is visual through reading and auditory through lectures. Yes, there are some labs, like in chemistry, but very few in any other subject. From the studies in how people learn, it is clear that people have dominance in one of these three delivery systems. Of course, there are people whose minds are comfortable in two or three of the delivery systems. However, most have an imbalance. This being so, people who are able in visual absorption do very well with reading material. If they take good notes they are taking auditory input from lectures and moving them into their visual dominance and as they write the notes they are reading them. So, in academic courses that mostly are delivered through reading and lectures, they do very well.

In regard to auditory learners, they do very well in lectures but can struggle with the reading portions and they get by with average grades. However, if they have managed to get the books on tape like the blind have available, they will do as well as the words of the book are rendered auditorily.

Now, let’s look at experiential learners. They poorly process visual and auditory presentations of education. They do thrive in experiential presentations like one has in labs such as chemistry. These learners need the application of education presented such as we previously discussed in the application of math, which is wholly visual, with just a smattering of auditory. Should application of learning be the foundation of the educational presentation, then once the experiential learner experience it, they can then more easily process the visual and the auditory supplements.

Ranger feeling very upset said, “This is completely unfair. Why do they do it this way? I mean why don’t educators know this?”

“How many high paying jobs are there compared to lesser pay jobs?”

“There seems to be fewer higher paying jobs and more lower paying jobs.”

“Apply this then Ranger.”

“What do you mean Dusk?”

“Let’s think about what would happen if everyone was delivered the education in the manner in which they can best process. What happens to the pyramid?”

“Hmm. Hypothetically most people would all advance. Oh! Then there wouldn’t be work available for all of them and after all that effort there would be incredible chaos in the job market. Probably people would be upset as they were promised by society that if they worked hard there would be a significant financial reward.”

“Exactly, Ranger. Exactly.”

“So, Dusk. Is this really done with intent. The pyramid I mean and how it is designed to eliminate people on the way?

“Society is the application of cultural intentions. At one time there was no academics. I mean, originally people were just coming out of living in the trees where food was what the trees produced in the way of fruit and nuts. Education was completely experiential all learned from role-modeling by the caretakers. Climbing and swinging through the trees was built into the form of our ancestors. Yes, there were a few tools made like taking a rock as a hammer and cracking a nut. It wasn't as complicated as using a saw that would have had to be made through advanced technology. This being so, education was fair as it was equal for all of us if we were going to eat. Sharing of natural foods was somewhat less equal, as the more agile were able to access the food more easily higher up the canopy. Being strong was also very important for access to the females, but in some of our ancestor groups this wasn't so true as in those societies sharing was very important to their survival.

As time went on and we moved out into the savannahs, then tools became very critical to our survival and so spears and stone axes came into being, these requiring new skills and the brain of a few were able to develop to allow such creations. This progression through the eons eventually became more complex and to keep up with the competition for resources from a growing number of ancestral tribes, life became more challenging. The strong and most competent with the martial tools led to a better life for the tribe and with every advancement in weaponry further brain development was required and those with that ability began to dominate the learning curve. So, I would say it was not with conscious intent, but an intent that came from the very need to survive. Today, the dominant cultures are dominant because of the design of their educational system and its evolution to fulfill this imperative. In this, sacrifices had to be made, or so the evolutionary influences so demanded.”

“Gee, Dusk. This is somewhat contradictory to the vision of peace, love, and harmony that I so seek as I grow into adulthood. But I guess, if we are not dominant as a culture, we will be subordinate to other cultures and then our higher level of survival will be degraded. Yes, this is all very disturbing. It looks like our whole system is all about the survival of the fittest. And, in competition the winners are most likely the fittest. So, our culture is designed for this in the way education is designed. I mean, the culture with the highest level of martial technology now requires an ever enlarged cognitive ability with the fittest bodies to carry that technology into combat.”

“Yes, and don't forget to take in an economy that can provide the resources for that advancement. This is where math and the ability to manipulate the abstract comes into play as well. Economy is really all about various forms of finance to support advantageous trade relationships between people, business, and other governments. Ultimately, it is the strongest government directing the movement of finance to support survival that allows the individual to feel safe and it is that feeling of safety that is essential to the success of all of this.

You know Ranger, having the ability to process the complexities of life can lead to the Overview that explains a great deal of how this all works and why it works this way. If everyone could have this ability it would require a different educational model. However, people as a group do not have everyone with a mind that can encompass all of these variables and the

endless stream of information or data that comes into play. Thus, the creation of computers and now with this advancement in cognition fosters consciously or unconsciously the greater externalization of the mind into Artificial Intelligence. Unfortunately, these newest forms are also created by human minds with our built-in self-defeating tendencies of extremism. Without the mind's ability to regulate these advancements it always leads to an imbalance all too often resulting in war. This is where the awareness of the concept that absolute power absolutely corrupts must be ever present, but just isn't."

"Is there anything we can do?"

"Yes. Potentially there is something we can do. Associated with the three ways our minds process education is another level of brain function. Specifically, this our intuition, which is an additional level of perception and thus of processing which enhances our mind's ability to conceptualize and implement a balancing influence on human interaction. Unfortunately, culture rejects a regulated balance, and seems to intentionally act in such a way to minimize if not to eliminate the influence of our intuition.

Ranger started to smile. "I guess we are going to get into this the next time we get together, huh?"

Dusk joined in smiling, "You can be sure of this Ranger. Already, it's happening in the very fact that we are spending time together. It's a great feeling for both of us."

"Got it. See you soon Dusk."

"See you Ranger."

## Chapter 8. or Not

Two days later the weather was pleasant with a gentle breeze and a mild humidity. The day before was so stormy that Ranger didn't come, even though he likes the rain. But, not to sit in it while hanging out with Dusk. It was a few hours after noon and it was about time that school lets out, so Dusk was looking forward to seeing Ranger come loping up the path. Dusk was musing that yes, Ranger walks like a ranger and how strong he carries himself like he knows his value. He sure is open to exploring different perspectives and the meaning behind the effort to learn how to apply them in living life. How unusual, or is it wondered Dusk.

Sure enough, a few minutes later there came Ranger, loping up the path and looking pleased with himself.

"Hey Dusk, what up?"

"That which isn't down"

"What you say?"

"I don't know Ranger. I thought I heard you ask, 'What up,' or did I not hear you right?"

"You're being funny now are you?"

"Well, that's the way I like it. Remember?"

"OK, you got me. So, what kind of day are you having?"

Dusk, paused a moment in thought the said, "It's been a long time since I have wanted to keep visiting this dimension, even though it's kind of hard on my butt, being tied to this bench and all. If it wasn't for your visits I'm not sure that my answer would be narrow enough as to what kind of day I've had. First of all, I don't even know what day of the week it is as when I put my consciousness into this dimension, well it's not all like I have a calendar to tell me."

Ranger laughs and says, "Are tripping Dusk? I thought you told me you don't do any of that stuff anymore. At least if you were doing then you could have waited so we could have done it together."

Dusk is laughing now and replies, "Hold on now Ranger, my boy, I didn't do anything like you are suggesting. I guess it's hard to accept that I am multi-dimensional. I do live in many different dimensions, this being only one of them. So, since I dropped back into this dimension and am as I am what with all of having to appear to be sitting on this bench, my day is quite varied, that is if I am to limit myself to your concept of what a day is and how time moves."

"I didn't know that asking about your day could be so unusual. Nothing boring about hanging out with you."

“Remember that at the end of our last visit you had become inquisitive about intuition as I presented it being another level of influence that affects how we learn. Inquisition, I mean intuition is also multi-dimensional. See, even speaking we can have incorrect closure. Remember incorrect closure, like misreading a word. Well, we can misspeak a word as well.

Back to intuition. It is not just an abstraction of unusual occurrences like coincidences. It is in itself as real as we are. However, in this dimension, intuition has been marginalized, as it seems to put the lights on the influence of culture, and thus culture treats it as a negative influence. Intuition is completely excluded as a subject in the culture’s academic educational system. It also treats people with active intuition as ill, needing psychiatric treatment. Western Religion treats its activity as witchcraft and there is a long history of an effort to eliminate its presence in such people by eliminating them. Culture feels that Intuition has no place in an advancing technological society because Intuition seeks to warn people about the consequences of an excess of technology.”

“Dusk, you mean like the warning in regard to global warming. Does this come from what you are calling intuition?”

“Yes, Ranger, in some manner it does manifest like that. Intuition is native to all beings as all beings are connected in many ways. Like all humans breathe air so all our exhalations mix in the atmosphere that we breathe. This is just one way that we are all connected and with every other living element that breathes regardless of its form. Furthermore, as we are all physical, ultimately all forms are made up of parts of the celestial gases and dusts and so we are in some way also connected in this way.”

“But what is Intuition?, Ranger asks.”

“It has been called our Super Consciousness. It is a part of our mind that has access to the means of connecting with the broadest of perspectives and shuttles these perspectives into what we call consciousness or awareness. They often are much broader than what culture promotes, yet they are essentially a part of culture, but culture resists it as it feels its identity is threatened.”

“Seems complicated. How does Intuition interact with me, let’s say?”

Dusk shares, “Intuition influences humans through receptors in the mind if they are not blocked by cultural influences. Regardless of culture, we all have receptors that are sensitive to the input of intuition and amongst all humans there are people who still have the active ability to communicate with Intuition. Because Intuition is not corporeal, those who are cognitively dominant are not free to receive the input from Intuition. With the power that culture has, it promotes cognitively dominant people into positions of influence in decision making and the role of allocators of resources. The consequence is that while cognition is dominant and suppress other elements of the mind, it leads to increasing imbalances that negatively affect society.”

“This is very disturbing. Are you saying that culture is actually working against its own interest in survival, which of course is critically important for all of us.”

“Yes, Ranger. This is how it seems. Associated with the presence of intuition is how it initiates insight in those that are receptive. While culture actively works to abstract reality, like through

what is called modern art that actively distorts reality, and rewards the artists who create those images, the very effort of the artist through this abstraction is yet attracting the presence of intuition. The very creative process activates aspects of the mind that connects to intuition. I believe artists have insights such as creating something new and different. Of course, the artists being acculturated, will be hoping to be rewarded by culture. But this very creativity, as is so strongly encouraged by culture, provides the opportunity for investors to get in the door early with the intention of increasing the value of such creations as the investors make them more valuable by selling and buying with each other, each time jacking up the price. Thus, the meaning of the artists initially engaging in this form of progress, perhaps believing they are making a comment upon society, is distorted by its very commercialism. The bottom line turns into, 'You want to make a living through your art, then produce more of this new stuff, and don't you dare revert to creating scenes that reflect what culture is actually doing.' So, while intuition is subverted, so is culture as it twists the insights into undermining its sense of honesty and integrity, thus providing role-models for this at every level of life."

"This is very interesting, Dusk, yet I still don't really grasp what intuition does."

"Yes, Ranger, what I just shared is itself still too abstract and likely confusing with how culture has been influencing your education and knowledge. I apologize. Let me give it another way of looking at this subject. Hmm.

Let's back up to the word, 'insight.' I wonder how this is experienced, like where does it come from and what is it that we feel is an insight. I guess I could use some help with this. I'd appreciate any input."

Ranger sat quietly for a few minutes, then shares, "Well. Why don't we start more experientially like let's see if we can share any insights that we've had that we remember. When I first started meeting with you I came out of curiosity, or so I felt. I mean, why did I become so curious? Could that have been because I was being encouraged by my intuition? The insight that I came to, was that being with you was important to me even if I couldn't yet define how. So, my doubt about coming back, which I initially felt was moved from doubt to the willingness to engage because I felt it was going to be important. That's the way it's turning out. So why did I have doubt? From what we have been exploring, it's likely that was the underlying current of the influence of culture which seeks to curtail the type of curiosity that illuminates its effect. The intuition then is an expansive aspect of life. I mean it doesn't directly confront culture, rather it seems to accept the boundaries of culture, yet it also provides a vision of how culture can be more capable, or something like that."

"Wow, Ranger, that was a wonderful example of intuition as it works through insight. I can say that intuition that came to me through an insight was the importance of me choosing to spend time in this dimension. Really, I had no awareness at the time of why it was going to be important, but I have learned to listen to it, and that's why I'm here. Somehow, intuition is interactive in such a way that it empowers us to engage in life by seeing the connection of all of life and all that makes life work. It's like an amazing guide and has the ability to encourage learning how to live one's values, through insights and some form of visualization. Then it's up to us to explore how to live more closely to our core values through the word 'Love' that encapsulates all that is best in humanity."

“Yeah, Dusk, I can really dig how turning me on to intuition opens up a sense of I’m not here alone and that there is a consciousness that is working to support my efforts to be a good and caring person.”

“To me Ranger, it feels as though intuition, or the force of its existence, seems to have been here before and knows what is happening and what is missing in order for it to all to work out to the benefit of all of life. It seems to really care about us and would also like it if we could be ever more open to working consciously with it. I first got a hint of its existence, when I would say, ‘I wish I had listened to myself.’ What I mean was that I had an insight that I couldn’t rationally grasp so I was turned off to it. Intuition, and accepting it requires us to acknowledge that it is beyond the boundaries of cognition. Accepting this, we then have some degree of choice in regard to listening to it even when our rational mind tends to demean it. I can give you an example from let’s say a parallel dimension.

Say I was driving a car on a freeway and at some point it split into two and either one would eventually take me to my destination. So, as I come to the point of having to make a choice, I had the intuition to take the one to the left, which was more scenic, however, I couldn’t accept the insight at that time because I rationally knew that the one to the right would get me there quicker and I wanted to get there sooner. So, I took the quicker route and within a mile I came to the backup of a major accident further down the road. That’s when I said to myself, ‘I wish I had listened to myself.’”

Ranger said, “I’ve said that to myself many times. I now can see that I’ve been ignoring my intuition regardless of how many times things didn’t turn out right because I couldn’t rationally accept the intuition that seemed to come from nowhere. Yes, I know. The cultural emphasis on the cognitive...the rational.”

Dusk is now smiling and relates another example. “Take a musical composition. Sure, it takes technique and an amazing mind that can conceive of all the parts that the numerous instruments have to play to make the composition work. But what is not taught is the very melody of the composition. That comes from within the composer, not as a thought, but rather as an act of inspiration. Inspiration, like insight, is a means through which intuition communicates. Poets, choreographers, writers of various forms of fiction, all create from the invisible energy of inspiration, and it transcends through the process of making it material so that we can perceive it in its form of presence. It seems that what triggers inspiration is a need in the recipient to express something that they haven’t yet been able to live, or allowed to.”

“Gee Dusk, this is insightful isn’t it. This very conversation that we are having. It actually is inspiring me to explore further in the hope that I can have an active relationship with my intuition. Just like we have been saying, if everything is connected, then everything is connected. I just have to focus on that so even though like the sun is so much greater in energy than I am, still it is a part of me in that it gives me energy to grow and have a physical life. It comes to us in moderation so that life can be here on earth. It fosters existence and growth and I too have the urge to be the kind of person that fosters a healthy existence for all of life. That’s why I spend so much time in nature because it was here before we humans began to mess it all up. And now, in my lifetime, there are more people seeking to remember this even while technological progress is undermining this goal. We as teenagers are talking about how messed up things are but also

about what we can start to do to mend this path. We are awakening and being vocal about the sanctity of nature as it is what allows us to live.”

“This is so meaningful for me to just listening to you. I feel that I have been kind of put here to assist in this effort to not only awaken, but to provide some input into the how to of achieving this goal. Intuition, to me, has the knowledge and is seeking to connect with those of us who can be willing to work along with it as team members, regardless of what dimension within which we were born. It is somehow opening up pathways to connect the dimensions in a good way. You and I are good examples of how this is.”

Ranger excitedly said, “I am so turned on and I didn’t even smoke anything. Incredible. Dusk, you are such a turn on. I guess we need to start to explore how to do it, so it works before it’s too late to correct the speed in which our world culture is traveling at, which makes the future so frightful what with just global warming ever increasing.”

“Yes, Ranger that’s where we are at. Still, I know that we probably need time to contemplate what we have come to see more clearly. My sense of it is that we need to take a look at education and how it is designed and what modifications need to be made so that children can be allowed to develop more fully and with an active partnership with Intuition.”

“You’re right Dusk. I’m in need of this break and would like to take a walk over into those trees over there. See you soon.”

“Yes, Ranger, see you soon.”

## Chapter 9. or Not

“Time flies when I’m having fun, but when I want to be somewhere I want to be, it seems to take forever,” or so Ranger was thinking on his way back to hang out with Dusk. “I’m so turned on what with getting into Intuition as a living being; a source of guidance and now with the promise of teaching the how to put this into action. Ahh, there is Dusk looking this way. No need to pretend I’m dropping in like a squirrel or a pigeon. Ha, that was funny.”

“Hi Dusk. How be you?”

“Hi, back at you Ranger. I be feeling good.”

“You know Dusk, I was thinking about intuition and while it is a part of my mind, it is also beyond my mind and that it cares for my welfare and feels strong enough about me to seek being introduced to me through you.”

“Well, it seems that together we are beginning to develop some sort of team, wouldn’t you say?”

“Yes I would, and I do. We are making a great team. You drop some amazing shit on me, and I get turned on. Today, you said that we’d check out what’s hanging us up in regard to the effect of education that we are being subjected to.”

“Right, Ranger. The last time we checked out education we explored the various ways we learn, that being visual, auditory, and experientially. Because teachers are not trained to take this into account in the manner through which they teach, largely because they are required to follow the teaching manual for their grade provided by their Board of Education. It’s one-approach-serves-all that doesn’t allow the teacher to tailor the lessons to the individual student’s learning strength. It’s also because education needs to support culture and the boundaries that it has set on the awareness of how things work.

This is the way, say history, is taught. It is taught with an emphasis on a series of events without exploring in depth the complex causes and historical circumstances leading up to those events. It also rarely allows the student to read about the same events in history from the way other people may have seen these events. Like slavery. History talks about slavery, but rarely are teachers allowed to discuss how slavery affects the minds of the slaves and the slaveholders and its influence into future generations, which we are now experiencing.

Furthermore, in discussing various wars, in our culture, since we are usually the winner, as we write history to be taught to our children we tend to provide only our, the winner’s perspective, while completely ignoring the view of the vanquished. As a result, our children fail to be able to understand how this conflict manifested into death and destruction. This failure allows the consequences of warfare to be stripped of any emotional sensitivity and makes the generation of students more easily swayed toward warfare and its value. We see this when after 9’11, we attacked Iraq justified completely by false information that they had a huge stockpile of weapons of mass destruction. When we were informed that the participants in 9’11 were Saudi

Arabians, this was completely ignored as we aggressively continued our attack on Iraq and its innocent citizens. Soon after our attack, no such weapons were found, and yet this information did not have the result of ending our attack. It too was completely ignored.”

“What you are sharing, Dusk, is that because of the manner in which we are taught; facts of the existence of events without any insight as to its complexity, our minds are being trained to see the world in the same manner”

“Yes, Ranger, that would be an accurate summary. Yet, this is still the surface of what we are becoming aware of. It is very complex and complicated. Check this out. What about the language of culture?”

“I’ve never heard that culture has a language.”

“Right, Ranger. Who has? Check this out my young friend. Every culture has a language through which it communicates. In Japan its Japanese. In France its French. The uniqueness of each culture manifests through its language. Yet, each language is also unique in its intent and its affect, beyond everyone in that culture speaking the same language. Each culture has a personality as well, just as people in the same family do. In the case of culture, its language supports this personality and I’m suggesting that it’s language actually creates its own personality.”

“Dusk, are you saying that language people speak influences their perception of their reality?”

“Yeah, Ranger I am. What I am sharing is that just like a computer program, that is a form of coding, so is every language. I mean, it didn’t just come from nowhere. One day, no Japanese. Then pop, here it is. Of course, it changed in many ways over time, just like English. When language is traced back in time, we can see that they have roots in the past. However, when those roots are defined, the exploration kind of stops, as there is no further effort to trace those roots back to their own roots, so forth and so on into the past.

Also, what is not shared is who made up the sentences that we use. Sentences are certainly groups of common words that we all understand. Have you ever wondered who put those words into sentences that deal with social interchange. We may say ‘Good morning’ when we are walking past someone we don’t even know. Or we may ignore them. If we are in our neighborhood taking a walk, we would be likely to say a greeting even if it’s a neighbor we don’t know. However, in a busy street we would never say anything while passing a stranger going the other way. This being so, in another culture no one would ever say a greeting even to someone in the same neighborhood if they didn’t know them. It’s a difference of cultural curtesy. Still, what is the difference between the two cultures as it dictates curtesy. It is through language and the set sentences we are taught to use and how and when to use them.”

“Yeah, so?”

“To me the critical aspect is that I’m using sentences that I didn’t make up. No, I’ve downloaded these cultural sentences as an infant. It would never occur to me to question the downloading of language. So, language in itself is a teacher isn’t it? And in being so, it is an

aspect of education that we know almost nothing about it at all. We all use these sentences that influence our relationships and when we have difficulty in those relationships, do we ever question that the very downloaded socially appropriate sentences brought us to these difficulties.”

“OK Dusk, I get the theory of what is being shared. Language is more than what it seems. Still, this is all kind of abstract, and so please share some sentences that get us into trouble.”

How is this? Say, I’m a parent and my child comes home from school. As soon as the child comes home what do most parents ask?”

“Well, most likely they would say, ‘How was your day?’”

“And what would the child most likely reply”

Ranger says, “Good.”

Then Dusk says the parent would probably ask, “What did you learn?”

Ranger, getting into his part, “Nothing.”

Dusk plays his part also, “What do you mean you learned nothing?”

Ranger coming up with, “Some math.”

Dusk, “Did you get it?”

Ranger, “Most of it. Can I go out and play now?”

Dusk, “No. You have to do your homework. You can go out afterwards.”

Ranger, “Come on. I’ve been in school all day. I need to get out.”

Dusk, “When it comes to grades, your homework always needs to come first.”

Ranger playing frustrated, “Ahh, you’re mean.”

Dusk fully into it, “Get into your room right now and not another word out of you.”

Dusk asks, “So that was well played out. Kind of normal wouldn’t you say. You really knew your part well. Still, how would you say it worked out?”

“Not good for the kid.”

“How about for the parent?”

Ranger paused then said, “Not too well. So, that was a culturally designed interchange caused by the acceptable sentences that are used in these circumstances?”

“Yep. That would be correct Ranger.”

Ranger stared off into space for a moment or two. “What else could they have said to each other?”

Dusk replied. “Well, the child really blew it when using the statement that they had learned nothing at school. This is what triggered the parent. The child would never say, ‘Nothing’ in the future. They would instead say something like, ‘history, science, and social studies.’ Hearing this the parent would have nodded their head. Then when the child asked to go out to play, it’s likely the parent would have given permission.”

Ranger then asked, “What about the parent? What could they have said?”

Dusk paused a moment, then replied, “It sounds as though there is a lot going on at school. Maybe we could take a look at it later, perhaps after you’ve had a chance to unwind and go play with your friends for a while.”

This would be a new set of sentences that showed concern for the child’s experience at school and yet recognized that kids need to unwind just like adults do after work. This interchange would have supported the core values of trust and sharing. However, they had never been taught this different style of communicating.”

Ranger thought about it for a while, then said, “You seem to be saying that they couldn’t because they weren’t aware that their conflict was an outcome created by the set available sentences that parents and kids are provided by culture. They are upset with each other, and I suppose we might see that this somehow supports the cultural imperative for its own survival.”

Dusk went into to further, “Who or what ever controls the format of the language controls the minds of all of its users, just like the operating system in a computer controls all programs that are downloaded. In that way the program manages the user as much as the user manages their use of the program that they are running on the computer. So, the developer of the program is actually managing the user without the user being aware of it. Such is the power of coding a program as does a culture manage its users when its language is the program through which they communicate. In this manner the language controls the individual’s thinking and the way they process information and experiences.”

“I get it Dusk. Education operates through the culture’s language and so influences what and the manner in which people of that culture learn.”

Dusk shared more, “Before we take another break, let me introduce what another aspect that intuition shared with me in regard to how we are taught. I’d like to take a look at the sequence of how information or concepts are presented. To make this concrete as possible let me first ask you to consider what is the purpose of a final test at the end of the semester.”

Ranger thought about it then said, “It’s to evaluate how well or poorly you mastered the subject being presented.”

“That’s a good analysis. Let’s say this is so, and because we have been taught of the importance of the final, we can say that the teacher must have a good idea in regard to how the final is designed even before teaching the material. I mean they probably use the same format of the final year after year, perhaps with some minor revisions.”

“Yeah, that’s probably right.”

“OK, then. Teaching is a relationship in which the teacher has the final prepared at the beginning of the semester and the students only see the final on the last day of the semester. The teacher knows the material and the students don’t on the first day of the semester. So, somehow through the teacher’s instruction and the study by the students, the outcome, that being the grade, shows how well the student grasped the material presented. Now, I would like to look at a non-academic class, say a class in automobile mechanics.

Now check this out. On the first day of class in auto-mechanics would it make sense to present the students with a large box with all the components of the engine fully disassembled?”

Ranger pondered for a moment or two and replied, “No, that wouldn’t make any sense. It would be like being presented with a jigsaw puzzle all in white. Yeah, here’s all the parts, but it’s up to you to figure out how they all go together without seeing a specific image as one normally would be shown.”

“Right. What would be more likely, there would be a fully assembled engine on the worktable. The teacher would say, ‘Here is an engine. I am going to help you learn how to identify any problems. In order to be able to do that we are going to disassemble the engine and learn to identify every part and then how to reassemble them. We will then hook up the engine so that we can turn it on and evaluate how well we have done. We will do this because it’s critical that you learn how each part works and its design. Your grade will be dependent upon how well you learn how to do this.’ In this way the student will be seeing the final on the first day of class and learn what is needed to get a passing grade.

Now, contrary to this experiential approach, the academic subject starts out completely abstractly, with a book full of disassembled parts, which are the words and sentences they make up, and from this jumble of words that the student must study without ever knowing what the teacher’s goal is, except for the title of the course. They must somehow ‘intuit’ what the teacher will pull from this abstraction in order to prepare for the final. So, it’s not until the last day of the semester when they take the final that they learn what the teacher decided was important to learn. This being so, wouldn’t the study of the material be more effectively learned if they knew at the beginning of the semester the very questions on the final, and with that in place, as they read and hear lectures they would have some idea as to how this all has meaning and fits together to make up the final?”

Ranger replied, “But wouldn’t that be cheating?”

“Yes, Ranger, given the nature of our culture that would be called cheating. However, using the example of the auto-mechanic course, which approach would be more effective?

“Showing the final on the first day of school. But, well, I’m not really understanding how this would work.”

Listen Ranger. In auto-mechanics the final test would be presenting the students a box full of parts and their challenge would be to assemble all the parts and then assemble all the parts to complete the assembly of the engine. So, too, in academics. The final would be the fully assembled parts of relevancy and knowing in what form that would be on the first day of class, and then the students would better know how to study. Why make the essence of the academic course a mystery that only becomes clear in the presence of the final? The whole purpose of the course is that it is important in one’s education. Or is it? Currently while the course is important, the system of education can’t afford its students all to get an A. There isn’t room for every student at the next level. Many students have to be eliminated on the way as we’ve recently discussed as the design of education is a pyramid with only room for a few at the top.

“Yes, Dusk, I get it now. Is there anything else that we should explore?”

“There is, I call it learning through reverse sequencing. Again, using the auto-engine as a concrete example. The way of teaching in our culture is sequential, starting from the beginning, chapter one, then taking the next chapter and the next all the way to the last chapter and the final step taking the final. In reverse sequencing, we start at the end, the fully assembled engine and take one step back, the disconnection of the proper part and then step forward to reattach it. Then it would be to take two steps back, detaching the first part and then the second part. Then the second part is reattached and then the first part is reattached. Then the first and second part is again detached bringing us to the third part, which is then disassembled. Once this is done, it is reattached as are the second and first part. In this way we are always working and reinforcing the previous steps and most importantly we are always going forward into what we have already learned.

In this process the student is also developing the skills necessary in the use of the various tools to be used. In reverse-sequencing the process support our minds as the student’s mind is mapping the position of all the parts and come to understand how they make up the engine. Following this step, reverse-sequencing is then is used in the effort to disassemble and reassemble each of the parts. In this way the student has a successful and direct experience with all the parts in their placement and their design. Throughout the process of teaching, starting at the end and working backward and forward progressively to the beginning we are always moving forward into what we have already learned.

In academic courses, the material is always presented with us going into the unknown. Each chapter is new, and we never reinforce what we have read or studied, because we won’t have any idea of what we were supposed to learn until the final is presented on the last day of class. So, if I was teaching history, I would start with the study of the present and then next, I would help the students explore what happened in the recent past, then the days and weeks before that, and then the months and the year, and then the years back into time, and like in auto-mechanics with the reverse sequencing model, the students would always be going forward into what they already knew and thus be able to grasp the sequence of events and their circumstances that led us into the present. Isn’t the relevance of history to be able to understand how we ended

up in the present? More practically, so we don't make the same mistakes in the present and near future as we did in the past. Obviously, we aren't learning the lessons.

"Yes, I can understand this. But it just isn't the way it's done is it."

"What we're checking out is the design of education and perhaps a more meaningful way of teaching. However, the more effective way of teaching doesn't fit in with the cultural identity of survival of the fittest at the sacrifice of the individual. This presents us with a challenge, rather than just a feeling of condemnation to a life of what is unfair. It is up to us to study how this all works and to seek the means of expanding the individuals' opportunity, meaning you in this case. We have to discover a way for you to find relevance and the skills that will allow you to navigate the tide of culture with a sense of awareness that come from both an expanded overview and the skill-sets to maximize this perspective. This is the importance of the role of intuition; to open the door to the pathway and the means to achieve this outcome.

As before, Ranger, culture has its function in self-preservation, and it's up to us to further our survival while culture does its thing. It's our responsibility to improve the likelihood of the survival of the earth which is essential to the survival of culture and ultimately of ourselves. This gives us hope and having hope is a form of energy to support our effort."

"As usual Dusk, it's all mind-blowing and such a turn on. Still, it's my brain that has to work this through, and taking a break now is what I need. I'm looking at what is being shared and I feel confident that as my mind expands I need to be sure that the transition is being accomplished in a safe and compassionate way. That's my responsibility."

"Bravo Ranger. Bravo. See you soon and Happy Trails to you until we meet again."

## Chapter 10. or Not

Ah, here comes Ranger. “Hey Ranger, what a wonderful day. I feel that I want to share something about life that I’m living. Being a Wood Sprite, well, I feel so connected with all that is happening here in this dimension. Trees are the ancients that dwell on the surface of this world. Being an extension of the ancients, I am an ambassador of the knowledge that creates this world. At the core of every aspect of this dimension is the heartbeat of awareness that emanates from the Source, and the source is us. All of us. Each aspect is one cell of the whole, and it is only though each cell working in concert with all the other aspects that a healthy life is possible.”

“Wow Dusk, I’ve just got here and wham. You are hitting me like with such a heavy opening to our time together. I don’t know where we are headed, but I’m listening.”

“Listening is so important. The challenge is to lower our filters through which we interpret what is being shared. Lowering our filters of course is hardly possible until we are taught, or we have an insight about the existence of filters and their role in relationships. Without this happening we won’t be able to hear what is being said rather than what we interpret it to mean.”

Ranger seemed to be a bit confused and told that to Dusk. “You say the deepest shit ever. I’m not sure what I’m hearing and why this is something you want to share. I’ve been listening to you and as I have told you that it really turns me on. We have been exploring together your insights to how all of this is working. It means a lot to me to have you take the time with me to do this. Now, you are saying that all of this time I may not have actually been hearing what you had to say. This doesn’t make any sense to me.”

“You’re right Ranger. It doesn’t make any sense to me either. I wonder why I have said this too.”

“This is getting really strange Dusk. How can you not know what you are saying?”

“I don’t know Ranger, but I wonder if it’s coming from my intuition and not from my thinking mind. Maybe, we should take a look at what I’ve said so that we can get a feeling for what is important about it.”

“Gee, Dusk. I thought that you know what it is that we’ve been talking about.”

“Yeah, that how it seemed and seemed the same to me. However, am I the source of what I’m sharing? I don’t feel that I really am. True, I’m the one speaking, but how do I know what to say. As a Wood Sprite, I’m not really an individual. I mean, I appear to be an individual, yet from what I’ve shared, as a Wood Sprite I’m connected to my tree. Well, at this time, with my bench that’s made from my tree. So, it could be that what is coming out of me is my tree’s consciousness, that regardless of its form, is still connected in some ways to the roots from which we have been cut and these roots are deep into the earth and even though the tree form is gone, the roots are reintegrating with the source of the earth within which it resides. This being the way it works, in a way intuition is connected to everything and as my roots reintegrate with the earth itself as it decays, it’s really being reborn. It is this connection that inspires me to speak as I do,

or that's an explanation. My conscious self, in this dimension, isn't so 'all-knowing', however the Source is and pretty much that's how I'm able to speak in the manner that I do."

Ranger's mouth is hanging open a bit. Shaking his head, Ranger replies, "OK. Dusk. This somehow connects to what listening is all about, doesn't it?"

"Hmm. Yeah. I guess it does. OK. Let's take a moment for me to collect my selves: me as Dusk, me as my tree, me as my roots, and maybe me as the earth within which is my source."

"I'm here for you Dusk. Let's just see where we are supposed to go in this conversation."

"OK. As we have explored language that we are born into is a cultural code that has readily available sentences that we speak given most situations. It is the manner in which a culture is downloaded into an infant. So, in most situations we aren't really aware of the intent of language nor its actual effect on the listener, be it us or the other. In addition to these set sentences that are culturally designed, the language also has built in filters that extract input that isn't supportive of the cultural viewpoint."

Ranger replies, "I accept that everything I hear is somehow coming through some kind of filter. Let's start there. Let's take a look at my filter. I know that a filter is designed to stop something from getting through. I can see it in its largest form as a net that catches something like a fisherman catching fish in a net."

"That's a good image Ranger, however a net catches something for a use, like fish for food. From what I may know, I feel that a filter is something that prevents something from getting through, like a water filter that removes contaminants so that water can be drunk."

"Then Dusk, a mind filter would be something that prevents something from contaminating me, like something said that may be upsetting to me, or something like that."

"OK. Ranger. That interpretation feels right."

"I wonder what you mean by 'interpretation?'"

Dusk replies, "I don't know why I just said that, but it felt like what I should say."

"Do you think this is kind of the same as what we explored with our cultural language that we speak without thinking about the sentences we use in certain situations"

"Maybe so. Yeah, that sounds right. So, from that point of view, our language has a built-in filter that guides the meaning of what is being communicated between ourselves and others."

Ranger is now nodding and says, "Then, if we aren't aware of this and actually how our language's filter is designed and how it works, we might say that we really don't have any free will and choice in regard to how the conversation will go."

"That's a bit disturbing isn't it!"

Ranger frowns, his lips pressed tight, and then says, “Disturbing is a bit of an understatement. This goes back to what we are hearing isn’t necessarily what was said, and what we say may not being heard. In short, our intent in communicating may be subverted by the parties filtration systems that operates independently of our awareness. This sounds then that we are being manipulated.”

Dusk agrees as he says, “Remember, I am suggesting that our culture is both alive and has a personality that is made up of its cultural enforcers. Of course, it has an influence on how we all function, otherwise we’d drift off into other culture’s territory and be thereby influenced by that culture’s intent on survival, and then should we try to return to our native culture, we can be viewed as a danger to its integrity of purity.

Overall, there are those cultures that will allow the migration of others and other cultures that reject all effort of the immigrants seeking entry. In our culture we have a dichotomy of intention. The framers of our culture viewed this country as a land that welcomes all who suffer in their native homes. However, once established here, the culture’s support of ownership over the sharing of resources, moves those people in such a position of ownership to seek to limit the competition from those who immigrate. So, in one sense we say we are welcoming and in another sense we make it difficult. The power of a country is in its people, and new immigrants come with a tremendous incentive to do well and those who were already established have felt that the new immigrants were a threat. Those who have been here a generation or two seemed to start to view their advantage as a right, and those of new immigrants as a privilege that has been granted but can be withdrawn.”

Ranger asked, “How does this work?”

“Well, Ranger, before there was a middle-class these people were called workers and these workers were paid barely enough to survive and had no protection from abuse by the owners. The owners were focused on profit to such a degree that they kept most of the monetary outcome of labors hard work for themselves. To achieve this, labor was forced to work long hours for low pay and if they were injured on the job they were fired without any compensation. Even children were caught up in this as they could be paid even less and be subjected to even more abuse than the adults. However, when the workers in another culture overthrew this system of employment, the powerful here in our culture felt threatened and decided to create a buffer between themselves and the workers. So, they allowed unions to form, and they provided the workers who joined the unions increased pay, medical coverage, and pensions. This group became the middle-class. This middle-class, largely white, understood that if they wanted to keep their privileges they were to keep any unrest from the underprivileged under control.

With their increased benefits they were granted certain privileges such that they were encouraged to own a home and to be able to take advantage of possible increases of value. They prospered for a period of time as prices did increase and so they rode the wave of inflation to greater wealth. However, when that other culture who overthrew the government and established an economy of sharing, failed, there was no longer a need to have the buffer. They systematically stripped the privileges from the unionized workers through advancement in technology that enabled them to move the means of production to other cultures that were weak and whose workers could be hired for far less than the unionized workers here at home.

With the means of production moved out of our culture, the unions lost their negotiating leverage of the strike. With the further threat of moving even more means of production away, the remaining unions were forced to make concessions to the owners in order to keep what was left here. At a certain point, those who were here first and were well established started increasingly viewed the middle-class as people who could be harvested. Put them to work, pay them as little as possible and what they earned could be stripped from them by pushing the cost of living higher and higher. As prices increased the middle-class's earning became stressed as those on top continued to reap the cream of their earnings."

Ranger then asked, "Why did the people put up with this?"

Dusk continued, "People blamed themselves as not being competitive enough, as being highly competitive is one of our cultures most powerful imperatives and any failure to continue to "win" is a sign that there is something lacking in the participant. With this being internalized, it takes the focus away from culturally systemic traps and turns the focus into the individual's failings."

Ranger feeling upset then said, "So, all of this is happening without people being aware of it. I'm in high school, and none of this was ever taught when we studied history. None of us kids know this. Do our parents and if they do, why haven't they told us about it so as to prepare us for our future?"

Dusk thought about this for a moment or two, then replied, "Most parents also were not taught any of this when they were going through school. The culture wouldn't be able to function if people were conscious of how these dynamics affect them when they become adults. People are brought up into the culture from the very moment they are conceived. They have life and they have to function wherever they are born. There is no incentive to question the system. There is no one to share any inkling of such an effect, and if there are, they are marginalized through cultural propaganda.

One of the influences that culture has is to develop parents who are telling their children, that ideals are childish, and they had better keep their mouths shut if they want to get ahead. 'Learn the system and make it work for you,' they are told. Remember, as people are born and begin to speak, they are speaking the language of a culture. The culture is a coded language program that locks people into a certain way of living."

Ranger feels somehow sad as he shares, "So, culture really is its own program that is alive and functions as a personality upon the people who live within it."

"Right Ranger. Still, everything living can be influenced when the subject is its survival. There are numerous cultures that were once subordinate to stronger cultures and in time those roles were reversed and maybe reversed repeatedly. Some cultures that emerged far in the past, and people today continue living under that title, are not the same as the people of the ancient time. Such a culture as the Greeks have endless monuments and literature to which we still attempt to inculcate within later cultures, but for the people living there, none of the ancient culture is current in their behavior. The greatness of Greece is all in the past. Rome as an entity also still exists as what we call Italy, but its greatest creations and its military power are also in the past.

The same for India and one could say most of Europeans cultures fall into the same category as being cultures of the past. There were amazing kingdoms in Africa that today are only subjects of history. Other cultures of North Africa like all of the cultures of the Middle East are still a geographical entities but none of their glory is current. The same can be even said of all the major religions, as none of them were initiated in the present, for all are manifestations of ancient history. Mostly all of them today are just a series of other people's interpretations regardless of the religious mantle that they wear. The originators of these religions are long gone and what people believe, is being taught by people who have no direct experience with the very source of the revelations that were originally written down."

Ranger considers this and then shares from his perspective, "That being said, to me, this means that culture can still be influenced as we have seen by the advances in communication devices that people are obsessed with in our culture. Of course, all of these innovations still operate off of the cultural operating system, that being its language. These innovations support the personality of our culture, yet at the same time they open a world of information that was previously buried. Now, people can obtain multiple perspectives, yet the challenge is in how to integrate them into life without triggering the cultural protectors, such as the internal filter. I feel that becoming aware of such as the filter is a good step that will allow me to consider the depth of communication and its twists and turns. If I can innovate sentences that support my intent, and modify my speech thereby, perhaps it can in some way moderate the extreme effect of speaking English. This gives me the feeling that what we are exploring is an advancement in this possibility, not in the technological realm but in the realm of understanding, insight and in the way it promotes hope that we personally can be helpful in re-balancing our culture's personality so that a more equitable sharing can take place."

"Yes, Ranger, this is a good perspective to nurture. Our ability to thrive, certainly could depend upon how we mature in our effort to grasp the design of what creates our lifestyle."

Ranger replied, "I can see we have more to get into and I look to you for your continued guidance and interest in sharing with me. Still, here we are with my brain sizzling and screaming for a break."

"Let's be clear Ranger. Without you having the interest to come sit on our bench, none of this would be happening. We are a team, and we are equal in regard to any outcome that develops from our relationship."

"Like I always say, 'You're a trip Dusk. See ya when I see ya.'"

## Chapter 11. or Not

Ranger was taking his time. Or to be more accurate he was thinking about time and if time was timeless in its absolute none existence then how in the world could he even be thinking about it. Talk about mind-blowing. In his wondering it came to him that it had to do with being born into a family in which time mattered: It's time to get up. It's time to have breakfast. It's time to go to school. It's time to go from one class to another. It's time to go to appointments. It's time to have dinner. It's time to do homework. It's time to just kick back. It's time to go to sleep.

"Man", he exclaimed in a state of bewilderment, "Then how can time be timeless? Surely, time exists in my life at every point. But, hmm. Dusk. What with him living in multi-dimensions, the very fact that he is alive is in itself timeful. He exists, what, suspended in all aspects of before, here, and then after. No. He said that these concepts of the various aspects of time are a fabrication of the culture within which we are now experiencing. Doesn't this mean that this existence is also a fabrication? This is because I was raised in it as all people who are living here were. Or were they?

Oh, I remember now. Dusk shared that there are indigenous cultures in which time isn't linear, but all encompassing. Still, even for them, there is time. Yet, let's see. When people of linear time took over this country they superimposed linear time and for the indigenous people who were overcome they became inundated with people who redefined the sum total of how life exists. So, for the indigenous people many of them became bi-time, living within two aspects of life. For the invading linear time people, they continued to live in a uni-time frame of linearity. Then for the linear people, the group in which I was raised, were living a restricted definition of existence, while the indigenous people suffered from this oppression, at their core, yet there still lives the indigenous lifestyle in remote areas of their reservations.

Still, just being made aware that different cultures live in more or less restrictive societal structures, there are even less restrictive structures and even though we haven't really touched upon these, I get a feeling for what is required for greater freedom. Just the opening of my mind expands my possibilities as it does by choosing to slow down and allow more space between all that is happening. This gives me the ability to see more, and to hear more as the slower I move through my existence. This is valuable. Of course, I can still accelerate, but I'm no longer limited to an automation of how I move through life. I have taken manual control of living at varying speeds; like choosing to expand or to restrict my frame of being.

Well, I guess I am making progress in the no-time thing. I just can't get it yet. Oh. Isn't the feeling that I'm making progress assume the very existence of time. I wonder how else I could have put it. Evolving. No, that also denotes the passage of time. Damn. This is challenging. The very implication of change, growth or decay all denotes the passage of time. Can this really just be because of the culture within which I was born? How else could I even think further about this? Maybe, just maybe Dusk has something to share about this."

Ranger had been walking without paying any attention to the environment through which he was passing and so when he suddenly came out of it, there he was standing in front of Dusk, who, duh, was sitting on his bench.

“Hey, Ranger, who there? Or should I say, are you here?”

“What. You know Dusk, I don’t even know how I got here. I was thinking about time and how it doesn’t really exist and then I kinda got lost in it as every thought I had still was soaking in time and I couldn’t see any way out.”

Dusk in considering this started to shake his head slowly from side to side and then laughed.”

“It’s not that funny Dusk. It’s all so confusing. No matter how I think about it, I just can’t get to the no-time thing.”

Dusk struggled to stop laughing, and cried out, “Dear Ranger, thinking is thinking. It’s so cultural.” Finally, pulling himself back together, but with tears running from his eyes, he shared, “One can’t think about time as timeless as thinking is the core mind function of time itself. To get a sense of timelessness one has to choose to stop thinking about it and allow a different aspect of our mind to open up this vista.”

“What are you suggesting?” Ranger asked.

“Well, kind of like just what you experienced. While you were tripping in your mind in regard to time you lost all consciousness of where you were walking. You were not conscious so everything but what you were thinking was suspended, you know, not being perceived. So, for your conscious mind, the environment in which everyone else exists, ceased to exist for you until you snapped out of it. Well, what happened to time during this interlude. I mean for you?”

“I don’t know. I guess I wasn’t experiencing it. But didn’t it still exist?”

“Isn’t that question coming from your cognitive mind that is trying to make sense of this discussion?”

“Yeah, I suppose so. But what else could it be doing?”

“Oh, how to put this? OK, Ranger. Let’s remember our conversation in regard to intuition and how it interfaces with what we are experiencing. Intuition is not thinking. It is a greater source of awareness than is typically encouraged by our culture. Certainly, it is not a subject taught, nor how to access it. It sits dormant in so many of our minds, just waiting for an opportunity to join in with our intellect and our emotions, the two culturally emphasized aspects of our mind. We naturally gravitate between these two aspects throughout our lives, rarely listening to ourselves: the voice of intuition.

In regard to timelessness, here’s a concrete example. People who are religious are exposed to timelessness in the sense of the existence of their soul. It isn’t affected by death. It is immortal. In this way it is timeless.

However, this belief isn't lived. People fear death, which is so time influenced, that it is a non sequitur of the very core essence of religious teaching. People grieve the loss of the dead. Yet, they believe that they are going to a far better place...that being heaven. Why aren't they happy for them when due to their belief, the loss is actually imaginary, for they are always here as they are there. Isn't this a cultural dilemma? The teaching of linear time infuses every aspect of perception, so while the person believes in the existence of the soul and that the soul is immortal, then they are trapped within the cultural passage of time: birth, life, death. This is being experienced without any sense of awareness and so there are consequences that are seriously disturbing to the mind."

Ranger jumped in, "It sounds as though I need to be able to consciously choose which aspect of my mind needs to be activated depending upon the nature of my inquiries. Some things I need to recognize as the role of my emotions and feelings like a survival challenge. Other things I need to access my intellect like working out mathematical challenges. And now, with your input, I need to be able to access my intuitive mind to explore other challenges like grasping the essence of timelessness. I guess this is really where Free Will and Choice is essential in living life more fully and with a greater sense of consciousness."

"You are right on again, Ranger. Right on. Dead center. What we would benefit from exploring is our very own mind and how to encourage its further assistance in providing us with guidance. First of all, what we call Me, is strictly limited by cultural influences. Each culture defines what aspects of our mind are to be available to us. This restriction provides the culture with its own personality. We kind of touched on this before. To step into this issue of being limited also opens up the potential for discovering what else our mind can do. The most important step to make at this point is to decide whether we can believe that our minds are much more capable than we have been experiencing. This belief is essential as it send a message to those blocked aspects that we are seeking to open the closed door that isolates them and us from them. It is belief that unlocks the potential of their being presence in our life."

"A strong and committed belief in our untapped potential must be sustainable, I would guess."

"You're correct again, Ranger. The mind is the operating program for our brain. As we have discussed, our native language, the one that we were born into, is both powerful in maintaining the status quo of the culture, and at the same time is terribly weakened by its lack of awareness as to how much more it could be. It is kept in a state of homeostasis, which is a sort of suspended animation. With the right encouragement, the mind can sense this and if it feels safe, can convince itself to look around to see what else it is made up of."

"You know, Dusk, that the more times I meet with you, I do feel safer than with anyone I spent time with before, to explore and to delve into the construct of our existence. I mean other people were kind of interested in the question of 'Who am I?' However, they soon felt the constraint of culture, and all so often changed the subject to more mundane things, which left me hanging out there with nowhere to go."

"Yes, the inquiry into one's self is not supported and is blocked by the external pressures of just making it and trying to fit in. Intuition is an aspect of our consciousness and has a voice, but it is rarely listened to. There is a another very important aspect of our mind that is also blocked, and

we call it the Subconscious Mind. By its name alone, it denotes something that is beyond our reach. However, what's so important about it is that it is in control over so many aspects of our lives. To live without a conscious relationship with it makes for a dichotomy of operating programs that ends up resulting in conflict between our intent and our ability to foster a support role that assures it that it can operate in concert with the conscious mind, that we call Me."

Gee Dusk, it sounds a bit confusing. Can you give me an example of the conflict between my two aspects of consciousness?"

"Good idea. In my experience with my subconscious mind, it seems to me that one of its jobs is to create sub-routine programs, like a computer program, to operationalize an intent of the conscious mind. Say, I want to learn a different language, maybe Spanish. So, I sign up for a course for that. I'm kind of excited about this and I look forward to starting the class. I go to the bookstore and purchase a Spanish grammar book that is a requirement for the course. The first day at class the teacher outlines the course and starts with some simple vocabulary and grammar rules. She assigns homework and when I get to it I feel, yeah, this is pretty simple and as a result I feel that I've made the right choice. This positive experience feeds 'down' to my subconscious mind as a directive for it to begin developing the Spanish language program into which the lessons will feed into. The program is designed to absorb all aspect of Spanish; however, this process doesn't happen instantaneously. It takes time.

The subconscious mind is highly responsive to directives of the conscious mind. "We're going to learn Spanish." Because the course is taught by a teacher who is unaware that the subconscious mind has just started to develop the downloading program for Spanish, the teacher jumps ahead of the gun by starting to teach the vocabulary and grammar on the first day of the semester. It quickly uses up the limited active memory aspects of the brain, and without the fully developed program the added language lessons have nowhere to be retained. The following is the result.

In fact, for most people, except for the exceptions who we call natural linguists, the process of developing the Spanish OS can be slower than the rate of information being fed down to it, as a result of the way the class is being taught. For the first number of classes I am getting it pretty well. But, after a few weeks it is getting harder. So, I begin to feel a bit down. Now, by the change of attitude, from excitement to an increasing degree of anxiety and frustration I have begun to inadvertently send messages to the subconscious, that, well, maybe this isn't going to be easy, and it may be more than I can do. This message causes the subconscious mind to lose confidence in my intent to learn Spanish and starts to detract from the effort it takes to fully develop the program for downloading Spanish. As the semester continues it feels like it's getting ever more difficult with all the verbs and grammar rules and so I am getting increasingly discouraged. This further negativity sends a directive down to the subconscious mind to further slowdown the work or to stop it all together.

This self-defeating command that is a result of negativity is unintentional. It is a result of my not knowing that in order for the subconscious to do the work I have to maintain a very positive attitude to the challenge of learning Spanish. If the teacher knew this too, the course in Spanish would have to be redesigned so as to be strongly motivating the student to stick with it and to enjoy the experience."

Ranger then asked, “How would the course have to be in order for this to occur?”

“Instead of commencing with vocabulary and grammar, which has to be memorized, the course would start off more environmentally. This would be like what a baby experiences upon birth coming into a home in which Spanish is being spoken, the music is in Spanish, and the food is culturally Spanish. It would be a Spanish environment and of course as the child began to speak it would be in Spanish and without having to study and memorize Spanish words and sentences. It would be just downloading the language and it would be very exciting for the family and thus very reinforcing.

This being the format, then the teaching of Spanish would be designed so that in the first semester of Spanish the student would be exposed to Spanish culture by watching and listening to Spanish language media programs. They would be exposed to Spanish speaking cultures including the music, dance, and art. During an enjoyable and stress-free semester of this, the subconscious mind will have progressed in the development of the Operating System. During the first semester the student would be picking up certain words and simple sentences. In the following semester the teacher would increasingly provide lessons in essential vocabulary and sentences for daily living. With the successful formation of the Spanish Language operating system in place, the student wouldn't be solely upon the onerous task of memorization. Now, the student will organically begin to understand and to speak in Spanish.”

“Why isn't this being done?” asked Ranger.

Dusk replied, “I like to believe that it is really just a case of ignorance.”

Ranger, rather disgustingly said, “Again, I am faced with the cultural patterning, because organic Spanish just isn't happening in school. At every point, the limitations are in place. No wonder, most of us students struggle because we are not being taught how our minds work and for the fact that we have no input in how we are being taught so that the information comes to us in the manner in which we learn best.”

“Yes, Ranger, that is the dilemma. There is another aspect of this also. Let's take the example again of how an infant acquires the native language. It is by downloading rather than through memorization. All healthy children have this ability, and it goes far beyond just the spoken language. But we will stick with this. There is a point in which all of us hit what is called puberty. In most young children, they continue to be able to download experientially rather than through the process of memorization. However, the way the culture works, with the advent of puberty, this natural downloading ability quickly fades. Some form of hormone is released and this in effect cuts off the natural acquisition ability. It locks down essential learning which in effect, protects the integrity of the culture. By the time of puberty, the cultural influence is firmly in place, and to prevent any incursion of other cultures, it shuts off learning through downloading. Ever afterwards, learning is obtained through the struggle of memorization, which tends to be very limiting and time consuming. It defeats the function of the subconscious's function of developing new sub-routine programs, that expand the youth's ability to grasp concepts and styles of living that are outside the cultural boundaries.”

“I get it, Dusk. I have to anticipate this cultural influence that restricts my ability to more fully develop as a human being. Being in the educational system then is sort of a trap. I am being force fed into pathways that may not be in my interest. It is a form of brainwashing, conditioning, and well, I am being programmed without my consent to perform in a certain way.”

Just a point of importance. This is true of all cultures. This is again, how cultures maintain their identity. The getting to know yourself while surviving the cultural conditioning is an exciting challenge that is beneficial to your personal development and as you succeed, it actually strengthens the survivability of the culture, although it doesn't know it.”

“Dusk, I will be who I am only when I become more familiar with how I can more fully establish a relationship with the aspects of myself that have been culturally blocked. I look forward to this exploration. Right now, I have a lot of introspection to do with getting to know more fully Intuition and Sub-conscious Mind.”

“Ranger, it takes a willingness to be open to them by allowing them to speak to you. Listening and letting them be your guide is the best approach. They have been blocked and as any living being, for that is what they are, it has been frustrating and somewhat damaging to their ability to function at this time. Stay patient and encouraging as much as you need it yourself. I'll be here for you as I have been.”

“Right. I get it. Or I should say, I get it as much as I can for now. As always, I need a break at this point of our time together. Very far out, that's for sure. See you around.

“See you around, Ranger. See you around.”

## Chapter 12. or Not

The sun was shining through the leaves that were dancing with the breeze. Every vein of the leaves was lit up in a clarity of definition turning them into brilliant neon tendrils. The plants have been having afternoon thunderstorms throughout the summer and were prolific in their size. The rocky outcrops in parts of the park had deep crevices and small caves in which many of the night animals such as racoons, possums, and skunks made their dens. Dusk was feeling very warm in his thoughts of his night friends that kept him company, what with him being benched. They, like the squirrels and the day birds who came by to visit would wander across or even down the path where he sat. "I never feel lonely," he said to himself. "There is so much life unseen by people during the late night and early morning hours. They sleep the night away and anyway if they are up they steer away out of fear of the darkness.

Dusk is looking into his memories. The memories became animated. "For centuries humans rarely came into the forest where I was living. Then with the air becoming polluted with smoke from where people live, faintly at first, he hears the death cry of trees echoing through the hills. It took a while, then one day I had the answer to the screams. Yeah, the woodcutters came. Oh boy did they come. Slaughtering their way with those sharp axes and saws. People! Brutes! Hauling our homes away, dragging them to the river never to be seen again, except by me and a few others who were so deeply connected to our tree that we stayed through the whole journey to the mill where they cut us up to pieces to satisfy their endless drive to expand. Never did they seem to feel that they had enough.

Clear cutting the forest and then the rains and all of this wonderful soil washed down the hills leaving just the bare rock bed exposed. They never had second thoughts about their behavior. No. They didn't. They didn't care that all that topsoil washing down clogged up the streams and creeks where the fish spawned, and they would later wonder why fishing was so poor. Gosh. It was so obvious, but not to them. No way. The thing about humans is there amazing ability to block out reality. OK. Enough. I shouldn't pollute this wonderful day with such painful memories. Not kind at all, to do so."

Oh. Here's Ranger. This will clear up my mind.

"Yo, Ranger. How's it?

"Good to see you Dusk. Been looking into starting a school club on what is missing from what we are allowed to learn. I have to decide on which teacher to ask to be our sponsor. The biology teacher, Ms. Brighteyes, who shared that she was part native American, might be just the person. She's very into nature, not just from a scientific point of view, but also deeply aware of the challenges to the ecology from the very people who push for scientific advancement. Then there is Mr. Grounding, who is our history teacher. He might be one open to a more diverse view of the past and interested in how we got to where we are."

Dusk nodding his head with a soft smile, acknowledged Ranger's efforts, "That's great. Getting the right sponsor who is open minded to an extra-curricular perspective would allow you and the other interested students to explore phases of European immigration that led to the

denigration of the beliefs of indigenous people who honor the environment. Especially important is to be interested in the psychological effect of such smothering of their core values. This will lead to the opening of the veiled reality within which is affecting all of us such that the issue of Global Warming is being largely, if not completely denied. Then, also to an investigation into what inhibits people who care from acting politically to change the decision makers in office.”

“Yes, Dusk, that is our intent. I’m not sure that the teachers will have anywhere near the depth of insight as you have, but hopefully they will turn out to be as interested in digging through the levels of the marginalization of such a catastrophe that is impending our lives. Of course, the history of the personal struggle to just survive, needs to be looked at, within us and with each other. I’m not sure how far we will be encouraged to go, still, I’m looking forward to the experience.”

“Good for you Ranger. You know from our discussions that we have been looking at our culture and how it influences the dismissal of our innate gifts such as really caring about how things are going along and the drive to discover the issues and possible means of moderating the effects.”

“I’m not sure how these are gifts”

“People who care, have the gift that is the foundation of healers. Being caring is the gift of healers who seek to understand injuries, diseases and psychological dysfunctions so that they can explore means of moderating the effects on the people who are experiencing them as well as the effect on, by association, their family and community. It’s the psychology, the way the mind works, that promotes the behaviors that are self-injurious and ultimately self-defeating. So, yes, one of the gifts of a human is the gift of caring. Of course, they have to learn the art of healing from self-discovery and from those who have progressed before them and who are willing to be a healing mentor.

“How do I find such people?”

“Ah. Gee Ranger. You have found me. You were able to not only see me, but you were able to be curious as to what it is that I am doing by always sitting on this bench. In doing this, you let yourself find the portal to what gives meaning to you in this lifetime. Once this happens, others will come into your life as you have initiated an open invitation through our contacting each other. Ms. Brighteyes and Mr. Grounding are likely such people. Say, why not invite both of them to co-sponsor your student club?”

“Yeah, that a good idea. I can believe that we’ve opened my door to what’s missing and I’m relieved to hear that and that I might expect others to come through. You realized that I’m wondering about myself and what kind of person I am. But, with our growing relationship I’m not just wondering, but with you I am now able to do exactly this.”

Ranger smiles and so is Dusk now smiling. “You know this, Ranger, that being with you allows me to open up further and in doing so I have more to share. Especially important in learning who one is, is the willingness to also take responsibility as to how we are perceived by others. In part, we are as we are perceived. Our relationships provide us with insight as to what kind of person we are. It is a skill to be learned in order to experience life in this manner. We are

the context of our lives, not as single points of vision, but a more global perception that promotes understanding and a kind of premonition of what is coming into view.”

“What promotes this most of all, Dusk?”

**“It seems that we don’t really see other people at their core, but rather see them through our filters. In this, they see us the same way.** There seems to be a general agreement that is promoted by our culture, to experience others that somehow satisfies the cultural imperatives. We’ve looked at this before. **So, how we are perceived is an insight as to how we see others. We may think that others don’t really know us, which alerts us, if we are honest, that we don’t really know them. If we did, our experiences would be quite different with each other. Probably there would be a mutual feeling of acceptance and trust.”**

Ranger replies, **“I not sure how we can be willing to see others more honestly.”**

Dusk pauses for a moment and said, “Well, I’m not sure that we can just intend to see more clearly. **There usually is an experience that shocks us out of the ordinary. I would like to suggest that trauma is such a kicker for it is when we are completely overwhelmed and experience a complete loss of control that we are most fully exposed.** We are extremely vulnerable. Initially we explode into a fail/safe mode of survival that strips us of all comfort. The shock is terribly disabling. The nervous system collapses under the heavy load of stress. We collapse. What we know, suddenly no longer works. **Who we are is open to question. It is in the effort to recover that we have the opportunity to see ourselves most clearly. This insight can further injure us as well as provide us with a growing sense of self-esteem.**

There is no denying that we are not as capable as we thought, which is humbling. **It is in this humbling effect that we have the greatest need for others. It brings into light that we have been taking a great deal for granted.** We are suddenly super-sensitive to feelings of fear and feel a sense of despair. We are suddenly like a fetus being born totally dependent. **All we have worked for, this drive for independence, is like mist being blown around on a windy day.”**

Ranger’s mind is totally focused on what Dusk is sharing. “This is one of those moments when Intuition has descended upon us. Isn’t it Dusk?”

Dusk responds with, “I wouldn’t use the phrase ‘descends upon us.’ It would be better said that Intuition, now being a conscious part of who we are, has joined the conversation as it can through our voicing its impressions of **how the influence of trauma elucidates some of the mysteries of life that we are exploring.**”

**“Can we ask for a concrete example of the trauma’s effect on us and how it can help us to grasp its significance in dealing with life?”**

Dusk frowns for a moment, then relaxes as he shares, “Ranger, let’s take a look at being born. I do mean the actual experience of leaving the womb and becoming a newborn. If this isn’t a traumatic experience, then I don’t know what is. How about you sharing at least in your imagination, what it must be like to be born and how this can be traumatic.”

“OK, Dusk. Hmm. Let’s see. Alright! First, being in the womb. Well, all my needs are being met for me to grow from a single cell into my infant form. So, that’s kind of nice. To me feeling so secure. I assume that as I develop, I am becoming conscious on some level as to what my mother is experiencing. **If everything is going well with her, then the feeling is comforting. If she has unsettling experiences, I also assume that I am picking up on them on some level. If she has a traumatic experience, would I also be experiencing her trauma?** I mean if she is being traumatized, I would be picking up her distress through the exchange of blood that provides me with nourishment. I wouldn’t be able to do anything about the emotional wave that would be inundating me. I would just also be a victim of the event without any orientation to its cause. **This would be traumatizing to me and on some level leave scars in my psyche that would be influencing me after birth. This influence would be a mystery to me and to my parents who wouldn’t be able to detect the connection of my behavior to any cause.**

Anyway, getting born is got to be pretty traumatic for me as it would be for anyone else.

Why is it traumatic for me? First there would be a flood of birthing hormones that I would also be experiencing on some level. Then there is all of this sudden compression happening as my mother starts to have contractions. This pressure increases in frequency and intensity. I’m sure that was shocking to me and frightening. It wouldn’t be like me saying, ‘Great. At last, I’m getting out of here. It was getting too cramped anyway.’ My mother’s effort to push me out were likely uncomfortable and increasingly so. This means that her emotional state was altering and the struggle to expel me was likely quite painful. This likely caused a further increase in hormonal changes that would have been infused into me through the umbilical cord, as well as the sounds of her struggle would like be terribly unsettling. When, and if I was in the correct position with my head down, going through the birth canal would have been like being squeezed to death, or just short of that. If I wasn’t in the correct position then the birthing would have been much more complex and depending upon how it was resolved, I would have been suffering physically as the attempt to alter my position proceeded.

Let’s say I was finally born with my head coming out first as it should be, the sounds that were so muffled before would be like sticking my head in a giant amplifier, to say nothing of the intensity of the lights. Then, once completely free of my mother, I may be spanked to initiate breathing. The spanking would be painful, and so my first experience may be just that. Then my umbilical cord would be cut. I am assuming I may have experienced that as further pain. If I’m a male, circumcision immediately after birth. Got to have been plenty painful. All in all, not too welcoming.

Now, depending upon where I was being born, like at home or in a hospital, or into which culture I was being born, a lot would depend upon the immediate care I received. So, at least the birthing experience would fit my definition of a trauma event.

So, here I am a newborn, and my parents aren’t aware of my traumas. So, now, together let’s explore trauma’s effect on us and as adults, how it can help us to grasp its significance in dealing with life.”

Dusk leads on, “First of all, your exploration of being born and how it is a traumatic event was amazingly insightful. Everyone born experiences the shocking shift in environment and how

difficult the physical and emotional aspect is for the infant and the mother. Just the fact that the depth of the birthing experience impacts both of them, on so many levels, without any insight as to its significance on how life is lived is troubling. **Should a trauma event happen later in life, it can be acknowledged as life changing. But for the infant, not so. 'It's just what everyone experiences, so no big deal.'** However, it is a big deal. Where is the support system to help the infant deal with it? **Non-existent. It is totally internalized and in time, no conscious memory of the birthing trauma exists to explore, as one would do with an older child or adult.** All that is said to the infant at birth is, 'Don't cry. It will be alright.' Well, alright, maybe if the parents are nurturing and not living under a great deal of stress."

Ranger jumps in, "So, a lot would depend upon how nurturing the parents can be. Not that they realize that the infant has been through a traumatic experience, but the comforting aspect of a nurturing environment can moderate the intensity of what just happened. However, then it would be the opposite should the parents be unable to be nurturing, leaving the infant in a state of emotional abandonment."

Dusk added to this, "This lack of soothing comfort would likely lead to the only release the infant could have and that would be a great deal of crying. The crying, without a nurturing response would just intensify the behavior, except in the moments of nursing or being bottle fed. Again, if the engagement with the mother who is nursing isn't happy, then nursing might not be as comforting as it would be should the mother be feeling warm and enjoying the connection. Without this feeling being emoted, the infant would not be feeling wanted and without the feeling of being wanted the ability of the mother and infant to bond would be weakened if not broken. **Should this be the case, the consequences would be severe in the way that it undermines the ability of the infant to develop physically, emotionally, and in curiosity that requires the feeling of being safe and protected.**"

"Gee, Dusk, then in regard to the birthing trauma, the inability of the parents to be nurturing would also fit into the category of trauma for the infant. The developmental delays that would task the child would have serious effects on their self-esteem and their ability to feel safe enough to bond with others."

"You are right, Ranger. The child at some point in their life would have to become aware that something isn't working right and have the innate personality to seek out or be receptive to someone else suggesting a way to engage with their difficulty. **In our exploration, there is the suggestion that trauma can be instructive as to the nature of human life, if not life itself, but that requires a developed sense of consciousness. It is for us to explore with the open-minded attitude that trauma isn't necessarily an enemy for with the right approach to it, trauma can awaken us from our living sleep of the ordinary.**"

Ranger lifts his eyebrows and responds, "Dusk what? **Trauma can awaken us from our living sleep of the ordinary?**"

"Yeah Ranger, it is a phrase that just came to me from you know where. It's like we humans have been treading a rug of awareness that is woven with endless threads. We are born on the rug, and because we are born on it, in some exact point, it and the neighboring threads, our family, is what we experience and thus feel that this is life. As we get older, we may be able to

perceive other bordering threads, like community and so with this expanded sight we then feel that this is our life. Most people live within a small area of a much greater existence without realizing it. They feel that this is all there is. They live life as it is within the circumference of this portion of the rug of life. **This limited experience of life is an illusion much like that which is a dream. There is so much more that is influencing their life that they can't perceive.**

**The trauma shatters that illusion.** They have no knowledge of other events that are occurring simultaneously beyond their limited perspective that led up to the trauma occurring. Abruptly they have been pushed over the edge of a great cliff. How far they fall and whether they survive will depend upon whether there is a shelf to catch them on the way down and if there are hand holds on the cliff to allow them to climb up and out. **Since trauma is an event, whether just emotional or physical and emotional, it is the intensity of the aftershock that will determine the challenge of awareness, the effort to recover, and the goal to get back to where they were before or to improve their position through the effort of recovery.** That is, if they are even open to exploring the experience or do they retreat into a shell, that builds pressure and is released explosively through environmental triggers or by reliving the events in their dreams."

Ranger asks, "So, this is the meaning of 'Awakening from the living sleep of the ordinary?'"

"Yes Ranger. To me, this feels like what it means. **People experience trauma because they have been placed into the unexpected event. It seems to come from nowhere. That is because we are all experiencing a living sleep of the ordinary. The issue is, are we destined to fall back to sleep should we be successful in recovering, or can recovery enlighten us to the benefit of balancing the sleeping life with a wakeful awareness.**"

Ranger wonders, "The benefit of trauma to child or an adult is that it highlights how unprepared they were to deal with such an event. Of course, it can only be a benefit should they have the resources that assist them to be insightful in exploring the vistas that trauma presents."

"Yes, that correct. For instance, there is an event termed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD. These manifests after the trauma with flashbacks to the event that was overwhelming. The crucible of memory is fired up and the flashback is them actually reliving the event. **One benefit of the PTSD, though not welcomed, is that it alerts us that we haven't learned the lesson that was presented with the trauma.** Say a soldier has enlisted because his country was attacked. In a battle he and his buddies are under fire and in the attack a mortar shell lands next to him killing and or maiming his buddies while he is wounded but survives. The loss of his buddies is devastating!

The soldier is fighting an enemy that has been vilified by the media before the person enlisted, thinking that it was their duty to defend their country. It later turns out that the enemy that is being faced was not responsible for the events that preceded the enlistment. Instead, the responsible party was another group that for political reasons was being sheltered from the event. In discovering this, but with no ability to change the fact that in the response there was a great deal of killing that was achieved against the 'enemy' who were in fact innocent, the soldier is overwhelmed. **This terrible insight and a feeling of deep guilt re-initiated the trauma that then resulted in a series of flashback to the participation of the soldier that resulted in**

**multiple deaths of the thought of enemy.** The killing was unwarranted as was the death of his buddies who lives were taken by the mortar shell that exploded next to them. The soldier couldn't get the images out of his mind, and they intensified over time into the flashbacks that began to terrorize the soldier.

In the recovery process, the soldier might be led to explore the impulse to enlist. The greatest influence they explored was how social media influenced this decision. In the discovery process it became clear that the soldier thought that the social media outlets were a trusted source. At some point the soldier became aware that the social media outlets that were being listened to were funded by the self-interests of promoters who provided false information meant to push recipients into extreme states of concern. It was these impressions of a threat to our country that pushed the individual into a highly emotional state that became the impulse to enlist. They further explored the indoctrination of the bootcamp and the normal drive in young people to be accepted into the comradery of their unit. Being raised in an emotionally dysfunctional family, this sense of belonging had never been experienced.

**With this exploration the soldier's ability to accept that there were many factors that led to the terrible realization of the killing that were beyond the soldier's control. In this awareness the soldier was relieved of the guilt and shame of having been unwittingly betrayed by those who were actually responsible for the deathly atrocities participated in."**

Ranger replied to this, "I can see how the trauma, with the proper support to explore the events, were enlightening to the soldier and could strengthen his awareness and maturity. So, without the trauma of betrayal and guilt the soldier, in this case, would never have been awakened from the living sleep of the ordinary."

"Yes, Ranger. **Such is life that what we are experiencing and how we experience it psychologically is so dependent upon how we perceive ourselves and others.** Culturally, we are misled as to how to interpret the causes and outcomes of events in order to satisfy the preservation of our society. If we are the initiators of conflict, the 'truth' will be twisted to make us look like the innocent victim, thus providing the justification for engaging with what we will call defensive aggression. It will be presented that we were attacked without provocation, while for years in fact we had been undermining the welfare of the intended entity that we wanted to take over."

Wow. This is deeper than I imagined. Again, I feel like it's time to take a break so that I can process what we've been exploring. It's always so much, but not too much. I feel like I'm getting stronger in my ability to grasp the significance of what we are exploring.

"Ranger, you have the right of it. It is so very deep. And, yes, it is breaktime. I'm looking forward to your further impressions of what we've been exploring and I'm very interested how your effort to start a school club develops."

"See you soon, Dusk."

"Right, buddy, See you soon."

## Chapter 13. or Not

There was a time when there was no time, of course before humans climbed out of the tree. Yes, there was sunrise and sunset, day and night, but there was no categorization of these events into bits and pieces, like humans eventually did with clocks and calendars. In the early time of humans it was all about the weather and the migratory habits of their supply of food. They lived in winter, spring, summer, and fall if they habituated the northern and southern latitudes of the planet. If they lived in the middle it was all about the monsoons and the spreading of floods.

The people observed the animals closely as they came to understand why squirrels were all so busy when the trees started to gain color and nuts came into season and there were the squirrels, what with their cheeks full and storing them away. The cold of winter was approaching. I guess we could say that nature was enough to indicate what needed to be done.

It wasn't about setting an alarm clock to get up. It wasn't about getting into the activity of the day at a certain time. The sun came up and the people got up. The sun went down, and the people went to sleep. It wasn't until they figured out how to light a fire that they would stay up after dark. Definitely, their lives were influenced by the various aspects of nature and that was sufficient. If there was a natural biorhythm, that was it. It was a good rhythm by which to live life.

Dusk, was drifting with these thoughts and their images, smiling when a squirrel came up and rested on its hindlegs with its paws out. He thought to himself, "What a coincidence or more likely a co-in-ci-dence." Smiling he bent down and said, "Yes, my little friend. Looking for some company? Well, let's see what I have. Oh. Here's a peanut. How about this for a snack?" The squirrel reached out and took the peanut then scampered under the bench back into the trees.

"I love it, how thoughts and reality can act like partners in a dance," thought Dusk.

Just then, Ranger came up the path looking very pleased with himself. "Feeding the squirrels still, huh. Life is pretty easy for them with you being the local market. Seems like a good life. Get hungry, come hang out with Dusk."

"You're so funny, Ranger. Of course, life is easier when we have friends. The squirrel really appreciates our relationship."

"Why, because you feed it?"

"Well, in part. Very likely in part."

"Why do you say, in part?"

Dusk paused for a moment, then related, "You see, I was just wondering about time and how before humanity dropped out of the trees, it wasn't really thought about by anything. I mean, I

wonder if time even existed until people started to do that categorization thing where they felt they needed to give names to everything and then cut it up to see what was inside.

“Yeah. So?”

“When into this, I was imaging the seasons and before clocks, people were guided by nature and the seasons. Then I was filling out the details in my mind by imaging how when the trees started to get colors squirrels knew, just by that, it was about gathering up nuts and ‘squirreling’ them away. Just then my little buddy popped up to ask for a snack. Then I couldn’t help but wonder whether this was a coincidence or a co-in-ci-dence. If it was a co-in-ci-dence, then it had a completely different meaning to me than if it was just a coincidence.”

Ranger sat down and gave some thought to this. He then said, “Yes, I guess I can see that. Coincidence is by chance in other words a form of denial. Whereas co-in-ci-dence is meant to be with a touch of otherworldly intent.”

Dusk then replied, “Dead center Ranger. So, you can get how it means a lot to me.”

Yes, it all fits with who you are and your connected relationship with everything that makes up this dimension. People get nervous when it is a co-in-ci-dence.”

“You see it, Ranger. In a certain way with all the scientific approach dominating our culture and such, we would tend to see the squirrel’s regular appearance being the squirrel having been ‘trained’ by the handout to come at a regular time. I sit on the bench and at a certain moment what with the sun at a certain angle, the squirrel has the urge to see what’s for lunch. Somehow in my subconscious mind, knowing that this is about the time the squirrel usually appears, the image of the squirrel integrated into my thoughts and there, behold, the squirrel was at my feet. This would be a rational explanation alright. In addition, though, it’s also possible that the squirrel was picking up my thoughts and especially the imaging that goes along with thoughts of a squirrel darting around gathering nuts and responded by coming forth as it did.”

“Then,” Ranger said, “That would mean that there is a certain mental telepathy going down between you and the squirrel. But of course, squirrels don’t have a mind...or do they? Besides, would that mean there it was no coincidence that the squirrel appeared as it did, but rather it was then some kind of co-in-ci-dence?”

Dusk replied, “It is what it is. Do you believe that only humans have a mind?”

Range shook his head and said, “No, I don’t believe that. I know that everything for animals isn’t just about instinct. The relationships between pets and their keepers is more than instinct. There is a real bonding. A lot of people have written about their experiences with say their dog or cat and how the pet behaves as though they can read our thoughts. Horses too, I think.”

“Well, as I have shared, between me and my tree it was much deeper than that, but similar in some ways. For me, being multi-dimensional, I have experienced sometimes, that how humans care so much for their pets, that it has occurred to me that the pet often sees their human as we see them. That being, the human is their pet. I’m not sure that who feeds who is the only

consideration in defining this type of relationship. I mean, because humans feed their children, does this make their children their pets too?”

Ranger raises his eyebrows and retorts, “Now, you are getting silly. Of course, children aren’t their parents’ pets.”

“OK. What are they? Are they friends?”

“No, Dusk. Children and their parents aren’t friends, though they may hope that as the children become adults, that they could be friends.”

“So, Ranger, what defines friendship, such that parents and children can’t yet be friends.”

“Gee, Dusk, I never thought about this. I guess you already know the answer.”

“No, Ranger, I don’t actually. I never thought about it either.”

“Then, how did it come up. I mean, it was you that brought up this direction we’re going with this conversation.”

“True, too. Hmm. If it is up to me alone, but we’re not alone right now, I would propose the possibility that it is an infusion initiated by our joint intuitions.”

“OK. Let’s go with it. If Intuition is sending us this impulse to talk about friendship, then let’s do just that.”

Dusk agreed. “Perhaps we would benefit from exploring why children and their parents can or cannot be friends. To do this, it would be helpful to pull into our consciousness what we feel allows people to be friends.”

Ranger paused and then offered, “My best friend didn’t start that way. When we were younger we grated against each other. This went on for a semester or two and then we both just lost it and went at each other. Neither of us could beat the other. There wasn’t just one fight but a number of them. One time we were both laid out, exhausted and hurting. We were glaring at each other and suddenly we both burst into laughter, and it hurt so much to laugh that we couldn’t help but laugh longer. Finally, we pulled ourselves together, I mean literally, for we needed each other’s support to get up. That was it. We became best friends.”

“Amazing,” Dusk said. “So, I wonder what it was that finally pulled you two together.”

“I don’t know. Maybe it was some kind of test that we both put on to each other. Have, you ever heard of, ‘If you can’t beat them...join them,’ and that just what we did. Together we were much stronger than when apart. We live in a tough neighborhood, and guys and groups of guys are always testing others. So, mess with me and you mess with him. The same for me if someone was messing with my bro. I can trust him 100%. I can share anything with him. I can go to him if I feel down. He feels the same way with me and there just aren’t but a few people that can have that kind of trust.”

“It seems that the key to friendship has everything to do with that word, ‘trust.’ Dusk continued, “But I guess we need to back up a bit and come to some understanding of what it means. Trust has to be earned. Proved, you know. It is something that seems to me to be entirely experiential. When it’s time to be demonstrated, either the person is there or they’re not. I’m wondering what other qualities are associated with trust.”

Ranger thought this over and then suggested, “I can see what you’re saying. Here’s something I’ve never fully gotten a hold of. That’s expectations. I can’t help but to believe that trust is associated with expectations and what level of expectations are in place and whether if both people have agreed on any of this consciously.”

“Gee Ranger, you are really bringing into focus the complex nature of trust. Looking at expectations and its various levels seems to set the level of performance that is required for trust to be acted upon. As far as people agreeing to the level of expectations and the level of trust that is demanded would be a rare occurrence. It usually just kind of evolves through the formation of the relationship. As such, I doubt whether there is any kind of conscious agreement, like there would be in a business contract where all of the details of the exchange are put into writing and where signatures are required.”

“Yeah, Dusk, it seems a bit tricky, however, in my experience, it’s still sets the level of friendship one can have. When I see people having trouble, it seems that each person has a different understanding of the expectations and what kind of behavior exhibits them being in place.”

“Maybe, Dusk said, People may have construed their relationship as a friendship when they get it on with a person that makes being together easy. Still, it may be easy in one environment and somewhat less easy in another environment. Like, I’m your friend in a fight, but if we’re arrested and threatened with jail time, it might be that one or even both of us will not stand up to this threat. Or, one maybe and the other couldn’t. So, in this situation their friendship may collapse. Should they have had the expectations that they would stand together no matter what, without really taking the time to work what this means, well...the glue holding the relationship of friendship together may actually be fragile.”

“I can see that. It never occurred to me to get into this thing of friendship, and the importance of expectations and the behaviors expected to hold onto trust. Somehow, it just isn’t the way it works. Of course, there was nobody before us having this conversation to ever bring up these complexities. I can see the value in breaking it down at some point.”

“These are all associated with our culture,” Dusk related. It’s interesting how in business, what with all the lawyers looking over everyone’s shoulders in an attempt to check out the issues of liabilities in any agreement, that so much thought and expense is expended in a business relationship.”

Ranger jumped in, “Isn’t it because it’s all about the integrity of someone’s effort to build a successful business, what with all the risk, sweat and tears associated with the effort. Of course, there is the underlying goal holding one to the line, that being the need for profit to make the

effort worthwhile. However, in personal relationships, nothing is being done on this level. I suppose this is also a result of the influence of our culture.”

Dusk shared, “It’s kind of like living life spontaneously without the ability to consider the consequences. People get married because, let’s say, they fell in love. They enjoyed being together. They may feel that they’ve met their soulmate. They may feel that they have been waiting for this meeting all of their lives and that that’s all that matters. They have agreed that all the details will fall into place to make this marriage work. They really didn’t know each other from any long-term experience together, and yet they committed themselves to a lifetime together. The whole relationship was based on living their dream. It was all so beautiful.

Maybe it did work out just like that. However, life is very powerful in its manner in which it can stress people. There are so many opportunities for stress to step in as a wedge into one’s own confidence and in the confidence of the other person. Issues of earlier years of life that have never been addressed have a way of manifesting when stress passes a certain point. Coping skills may be weakened by the underlying currents that culture imposes. The dream to be lived without a strong foundation of friendship and all that it requires as we just begun to discuss, can lead to shall I say a weathering of the dream. These challenges can increase in intensity when children come into the picture.

Ranger states, “It’s so cultural to approach marriage in this manner. It’s so cultural in the manner in which we form relationships on all levels. It’s so cultural to not have any awareness of much of what we discuss. It just seems that the underlying influence that our culture has on us is to keep us ignorant as to how all of this works. The way education is presented as an abstraction without the experiential components offered to test it all out is just so dysfunctional. In fact, it seems that our culture holds us all in place by overwhelming us in ignorance and then laying it all on us as individuals because we’ve been educated.”

“ Yes, Ranger. When we look at the big picture it is a bit frightening how these mysterious influences affect us without us even knowing it. This brings us full circle to the question of why it’s unlikely for children and parents to be friends during the rearing phase of their lives. In looking at parents and children, the parents seem to have all the control. Parents control the family’s resources. Parents set the lifestyle of the family. Parents are supposed to be able to keep the family safe. Parents are the judge and jury in regard to children’s behavior. There is no sense of equality between them. However, the very key stone of a friendship is a sense of equality. This doesn’t exist in most families. Children have none of the powers or the freedoms of their parents. And in regard to the child’s behavior, the child takes all the heat like blaming the children’s negative behavior only on the kids. The parents aren’t figured into the equation. The children are only in the defensive posture with the parents as the prosecutors. No elements of friendship are there?”

Ranger readily agreed.

Dusk then related, “Of course, this is when the behavior is strictly within the home with no outsiders as witnesses. However, when the behavior is observed by authorities outside the home, it often happens when the authorities visit the home that the parents are included in determining the cause of the poor behavior. It quickly comes to a head with the authorities also blaming the

parents for poor parenting. That's what society does. The responsibility for the behavior rarely gets around to holding the culture responsible for some of the problem. This means that there is no friendship when blame is brought into focus.

Really, the push for getting more and more, with the variable of all of life going faster and faster until it all logjams up when there is an accident or should we say a mistake in judgment of some variable. Everything gets slammed to a stop with everyone seeking to blame someone else for the situation. With all the unreasonable expectations being laid on everyone, it easy to see that there is little or no time to anticipate and to plan. Culture demands too much, and this is undermining the ability to function in a good way. Technology is the all-and-everything, which is the goad for greater speed. We are charging ahead with great energy. It drives the economy. It appears to be great except for one factor. Check this out. While we might say there is a captain of our ship, those being the captains of finance, there is however no presence of a navigator who can guide us through the challenges of getting all of us passengers to the goal of a healthy, sharing lifestyle that is so highly thought of by the originators of so many religions."

"Is this where we step into the picture, Dusk," Ranger asks.

Let's just keep exploring and as we do this, let's keep track of how much of what we explore is being brought into the way our lives are lived. What we are doing is developing a foundation upon which to determine pathways that will support our intent to grasp how this all works and by doing so, see if it can be broaden our perspective so that it brings us a sense of well-being that improves how we interact with people who are struggling as well."

"Right on, Dusk, right on. OK, Dusk. Time for a break. I've come to see that it's also critical to not just discover how all of this works, but to also learn how to integrate this awareness into our lives. Knowing what needs to be done is not the same thing as knowing how to do it."

Dusk relates, "It's all about developing the skills, just like everything else. We want to build a house, say, so we have to be where a house is being built so that we can at least know what it will take. Then it's about developing the skills of reading blueprints, obtaining the materials, acquiring tools and the skills to use them, getting the building permits, etc. Life is no different and now we are together on this journey. Get some rest. See you soon my young friend."

"See you soon, Dusk."

## Chapter 14. or Not

The moon is so full tonight. Too bad that I'm no longer able to climb up to the top of my tree so that as before I could at first watch its glow pushing up from the mountain top. Then, in wonder, experience the coming of the moon as it seemed as if it was being birthed just as a baby's head emerging from the womb, so too the fullness of the moon in its golden glory. Still, from where I sit, I can see it through the leaves and watch the night moths fluttering through its white beams of light. Every once in a while, it seems as though the owls that are nesting close by join them just for the joy of flight in the night.

Off in the bushes I hear a scraping sound. "Oh, hi there skunk. Digging for earth worms are you." And off in another direction I see a raccoon and her young ones walking in a file seemingly going off to some kind of raccoon gathering. I wonder what they talk about. Wow, will you look at that. A hint of red as a fox darts away as a coyote and a couple of its buddies slip through the shadows with a look of intent in their eyes. Watch out rabbits, they are on the prowl.

I do miss my tree and the conversations we used to have. Well, it was a lot more than just conversations that we had. Much more. It was the connection of our joined beings. We could feel each other. It was so intimate. We came into being simultaneously. My first memories are emerging on the thin twig of her first leaves. Me so tiny and all. It was like I was a ladybug awakening from my egg. Yes, so tiny. And as my tree grew so did I in proportion. Springtime was just the right time to come into consciousness. Her with her first limbs and me with taking shape, or any shape as I was to realize. 'Yes, fond memories,' I would say.

Then, our trauma, and so much change. What an awakening to humanity. Such destruction resulting for us and in their dimension, such creation. What they could do with the forest of trees that they, well in their mind, harvested. They seemed to be obsessed with taking one form of natural beauty and carving it into the beauty that they experienced in their minds. It was a lot better for all of us when they were just happy to live in caves. In them, what they saw in their minds was rendered into murals, a much better form of beauty that didn't require the taking of the lives of my family and all of our ancestors. To be totally ancestral, it was much better for all of us living when they were content to live in the trees swinging from limb to limb in play. I can't quite grasp why they gave up their tails and long arms for just walking on two legs. Yes, it was much better for everyone when they lived among us within the trees, eating from the seasonal bounty that we provided.

Of course, then, I wouldn't have met Ranger, would I? It seems that everything that happened on the way to the here and now has been meant to happen, just to arrive at this moment of connecting with him. I suppose I could say that all of the trauma of the transformation of my tree becoming a bench and me plastered, being quite a trauma, certainly awakened me. How did I put it to Ranger, 'Trauma can awaken us from our living sleep of the ordinary?' Nothing like knowing how to reframe a terrible experiencing of life into the positive. Of course, if without seeking the balancing factor then one is just kind of stuck in the negative. This all too often turns into quicksand that sucks one down into a life of fractured dimensions into which one can become lost.

“Hey Dusk, you in there?”

“Oh, Ranger...didn’t see you coming. I wasn’t all here, was I.”

“Yeah. That’s how it seems. Just tripping, huh.”

“I was looking at my experience of trauma when my tree was cut down and me with it. I hated the feeling of being helpless to prevent it and was shocked that I was still alive. To be within the destruction of love as one can only love being one with one’s tree. It could not have been worse. Especially terrifying was the complete lack of awareness that the logger had that a tree is far more than an item to be harvested. There is life that provides the oxygen that the logger breathes, and a tree exhales. The breath of the logger provides life for the tree as the logger exhales. Without the animals of this world exhaling, the plants would not thrive. Without the oxygen that the plants exhale in exchange, no life for the animals. Humans, well they don’t view themselves as part of this recycling, believing that they are superior to plants and animals, but biologically not so. Anyway, that’s where I was. Now that you’ve called me back, I am so pleased to be able to hang out with you again.”

“You know Dusk, that I feel so much more awake than before I first met you. Now, I feel that there is so much more to life than I was experiencing. It was really the limited manner in which I was previously doing the experiencing, if that makes sense.”

Dusk was being thoughtful while Ranger was sharing this. Just kind of nodding.

Ranger continued, “It’s amazing and truly invigorating to be able to explore the dimensions that I have experienced with having stepped into your presence. I am beginning to see the complexity of the formation of what I experience as reality. If I was doing a drawing, it would look something like a multi-dimensional web, that in being seen, would be all encompassing in all directions. It would have the feeling of inclusiveness.”

“Gee Ranger, I wonder about the power of the imagery that is being shared to encompass such a vast complexity. I’m trying to grasp what each silken thread represents that makes up the web. It must be a challenge to acquire the skill to be able to consciously navigate it.”

“I’m not there by any stretch of the imagination, except for the fact that it is exactly by stretching the imagination that allows the connection with intuition and its reference back to my mind of the suggested imagery. Should the web be a viable image of life, then within it must be the consciousness that can navigate it by what we call The Creator.”

“Hmm,” hums Dusk. The concept of the web certainly draws one’s focus to the concept of dimensional reality. It is the outcome of ignorance to experience life as one dimensional as dictated by one’s culture.”

“Why ignorance?”

“Because, culturally one has to be ignorant, as it is when one is being born, and in order to live within the influence of one’s culture, especially when one lives isolated as an outcome of being restricted from contact with other cultural influences.”

“That is exactly the way I was living before I came into contact with you and now, I have been awakened.”

“Ranger, this is an exciting development. This imagery, the multi-dimensional web, may be a representation of that into which we are born. This might suggest that each of all life forms being one of the silken threads. We can conjecture that The Creator is the Web. But one has to ask, doesn’t the imagery of a web imply a predator that seeks its nourishment from what it catches?”

“Yeah. It kind of does, Dusk. Or does it? While the web in our limited awareness dictates that web is created by a spider for that very purpose, and that is how we perceive the web, however it’s likely in a broader sense of dimensional consciousness, this kind of web serves another purpose. What if it the purpose of this type of web is to catch each of us so that the Creator can engage with all of its creations including us? And, if It actually consumes us, is that then what death might be, except we don’t really die, but transform?”

Dusk is smiling widely. He reaches out and pats Ranger on the shoulder. “You are definitely getting the hang of exploring the complexities of grasping ways of engaging with the forces that influence life. Imagery is crucial as it is a symbol and in exploring the imagery that one comes to opens the way to the contextual elements of existence. This being said, one also has to be aware that the ability to explore in this manner may lead to a sense of insight that cannot be easily shared.”

“I can see this. Still, I would have to suggest that sharing is also a skill that can be developed should one use the base of contextuality as the structure upon which one accesses this ability. In meeting with us, it seems that imagery can be fluid and deeply complex. With someone who has not had my experience with you over time, likely the imagery would have to be such that it is far less complex. It would have to be approached perhaps with analogous story telling at first. Or may, in total. How does that sound?”

Dusk ponders where this is going and replies, “Yes, that was very empathetic in nature. Being aware of with whom you intend to share and assessing their ability to explore would seem to dictate the structure of how something might be shared. I often feel that I need to work more fully on this approach to sharing. I mean, I am aware of this, and I do work on it, yet it requires for me endless adjustments in my awareness, and this requires me to improve my relationship with myself so that I can do better.”

“Really Dusk?”

“Yes, Ranger. Really! Life is more fully experienced as we improve our ability to evolve. It’s true I’m restricted to this bench in this dimension; the dimension that caused this outcome. And this dimension’s existence is as critical to the Whole as are all other dimensions. While I may have a rather peculiar perspective, what I must say is that from what I have experienced here, this dimension has an incredible amount of potential. It has such a propensity for change. It is definitely not static. Of course, previous habits dominate global behavior. However, when our existence is permeated with intuition, the pathways broaden. There are so many people who are

increasingly valuing the sanctity of life and this emerging consciousness will and can moderate the influence of these precariously entrenched influences.”

“So, Dusk, are we good at this time with the imagery of the Web?”

“Definitely. It is very stimulating and opens a wider vista for us to travel. Why don’t we pick up with this next time?”

“Right. It’s been a lot. See you.”

“See you soon Ranger. See you soon.”

## Chapter 15. or Not

There was a time when I understood more than I do now. Then, was a time when life was simpler. Waking in my tree and being greeted by the tweaking of our family of birds. The heads of the family of squirrels poking out of their nest high up in the leaves also signaled the beginning of the day. The owl asleep on its branch; it's time of activity over for now. I would venture down to the downy ground and make my way to the creek, to my favorite rock from which I would slip into the water for a quick bath and of course begin to laugh as the little fish played around with my toes thinking that they might be worms. Small fish, so their nibbling felt like tickling. The fawn on the other side would scamper about seemingly smiling in greeting. After bathing I would wander around the forest picking mushrooms and berries for my breakfast. Yes, life was simpler and easy to say I understood all there was to know. My tree grew from a sapling into a great wonder with limbs spreading like wings and upon its upper branches I could see down into the valley that bordered our home and view the mountain that rose on the other side. All so beautiful, with the high clouds that would frame the tallest peaks. So serene. Yes, this was before axes and saws and the ones who wielded them in the belief that they have been given sovereignty over all. Not at all like the ones who have lived amongst us for eons in deep appreciation for our shared lives.

Now, life is so much more complex and becoming ever more so. Since my tree was felled and a part of it became a bench with me attached, I have been so completely fixed to it that when I regained consciousness it took me a good while to grasp how my existence had been altered. I mean, of course I was in shock and to say I was traumatized, that would be an understatement. The loss of our free will and choice was devastating. "What is this existence?" I screamed, but ever so silently. "I don't understand, I cried." Also, so silently. "Well, here we are my dearest," I moaned. "From beauty and bountiful to strips of your body hammered together upon which people are supposed to sit. And, yet they never do as if we weren't even here. But I sit and for mysterious reasons, I can't even get up.

Through it all, I could still feel our connection through the wood slates that were my seat. Yes, it was faint, but still the energy of existence still vibrated. Through our pain it nonetheless was able to start a long process of soothing me. "Accept, Adjust and Accommodate," it intuited to me like a mantra that I eventually came to understand to mean, "We Exist, Regardless of Name and Form." I focused on this insight and began to relax a bit. In looking into our previous incarnation as Tree and Wood Sprite, I came to accept that eventually we would have aged out of that existence. My tree would start to breakdown and reintegrate with the earth, enriching it for what would grow next. And I? With the loss of my tree, I would be homeless, or would I? Well, I'm still me and now sitting on my tree, if not on a branch, then on a bench; a form of her. With the call of "Timber," she crashed down, the death of her form, my home, yet it seems as though not entirely into death for into this we have reincarnated.

Yes, with our reincarnation, she is this bench, and I am this person that I am when I regained consciousness. Here. Sitting in human form. As an aged human. And now I am a person in a relationship with Ranger. It seems that I have morphed into a guide who is now mentoring a teenager who he, himself is developing into a guide who is learning the trade of exploring existence in the belief that it will be meaningful to one's development and may be helpful when sharing it with others as he is with those who attend his school club.

Hmm. Enough moping. I am moping, aren't I? I feel that it is about time to pay attention to what is happening outside of me and low and behold, isn't that Ranger coming this way out from the trees over there.

"Hey Dusk, Another day, another voyage into consciousness with my friend."

"Right, you are my young friend. I like saying that, you know, "My friend."

"I like hearing it also."

Dusk then says, "I'd like to revisit the imagery of the multidimensionality of the Web that you shared the last time we were together. I felt that it was profound, and it has captured my interest and likely also my imagination."

Ranger smiles and concurs with Dusk sharing, "Opening up to the Web would be great because even though I was the one sharing it, I believe that the imagery came from the intuition and would be relevant to both of us to explore further."

Dusk replies, "The last part of our discussion was rather interesting to me as I looked back at our conversation. I had posited that the imagery of the web implied that there was a predator, and you came back saying that such an imagery initially relates to our common experience with spiders, however on a spiritual level it implies that instead of 'predator' it suggests the presence of the Creator of the web and that Being is the Creator of our life. This is how you presented it, if my memory serves me well

*"What if the purpose of this type of web is to catch each of us so that the Creator can engage with all of its creations including us? And, if It actually consumes us, is that then what death might be, except we don't really die, but transform?"*

That totally blew my mind as you had kind of switched roles with me and had become my mentor, equal in depth to my role with you."

"I was surprised also, recognizing that I had received the imagery from the Intuition and then being able to communicate it to you."

"Yes, Ranger. For me it was wonderous that you not only shared the imagery, but you also grasped the spiritual aspect of the imagery broadening our conversation to the significance of each silken thread being a life form in relationship with the Creator. It's such an elevating perspective."

In replying to this Ranger suggests, "Being that we are creations of the web, perhaps additionally it implies that movement of consciousness is possible in exploring the substance of the web. In this view, not only are the silken threads the parts that make up the web, but also that while the threads initially appear to be static, they do vibrate as consciousness roams about. It is in them being vibrated that they awaken and not only awaken but their vibrations can emanate as sound. These sounds of vibration translate within our dimension with personality and can be viewed as forming within the female womb and are souls that have come into a living being, thus coming into life and within a celestial moment are born into various forms that make up our world. So, as

we come into contact with other life forms, we are meeting aspects of our own connection within the Web.”

Dusk responds with enthusiasm, “So, we are a part of the web as is all of life, and in getting to know ourselves as such, we are acknowledging that we are innately part of all other parts of life, and this awareness spreads our mind throughout all of the infinite dimensions. I guess it is then up to us to evolve sufficiently so that we can live within this state of awareness in our daily lives.”

“At least, Ranger shares, “Within our growing relationship. I’m aware that we are exploring more and more as our relationship with Intuition matures and so the veils are being lifted. As you related, learning how to live within this awareness is necessary. But, Dusk, with all that you have shared in regards, to how our Duality works and through the influences of our various cultures and their drive for ego identity that is so limiting, we have put ourselves far out on the fringe of reality and its restraints.”

“You are right Ranger. Still, in just looking at our relationship, it’s pretty far out; your accepting that I’m a Wood Sprite in a human form.”

“That be true Dusk. Why not? You are you as you perceive yourself, and because I can perceive your presence, I respect you for being as you say. This of course, opens up so many possibilities as to identity. You are and I am. However, I, at this moment, no longer know who I am as a result of being a recipient from Intuition, I am changed.”

“Yes, Ranger you are changed. Still, I might say that more specifically, you are expanding in awareness and are sensing a greater intimacy within Consciousness; that which we call Intuition. The experience, for that is what it is, an experience, leads to entering into relationships that support, or should I say promote the living of this consciousness as a way of life; a lifestyle of awareness.”

A smile begins to spread across Ranger’s face that is also being mirrored by Dusk. They look into each other’s eyes and see a kaleidoscope of light dancing between each other.

“So, Dusk, it’s a challenge how to jump right into living this awareness. I mean, how do I share it in a good way?”

“Having a spiritual awakening is very much like a vision of what could be if only we knew how to live it in the environment within which we live. The how to is already in place. We just have to begin by reviewing the steps in our relationship that led us to this point. As it has been pretty amazing, that which we have experienced, it will help to take a break now in order for our subconscious to ‘chew it over’ and allow our conscious mind the opportunity to take a breather. I look forward to the next time we meet.”

“OK, Dusk. I get it. I too am looking forward in exploring how to live the Consciousness in my relationships. See you later, my friend.”

## Chapter 16. or Not

Watching for Ranger I couldn't help but to have the following image from last night tickling my consciousness. The moon wasn't full, but still pretty bright. Across from where I sit is a mound, with patches of bare earth. I guess I was just kind of moon gazing. Maybe it was the shape of the almost full moon, so as I dropped my eyes to where I felt, rather than really heard the faintest noise. It was though it was the sound of the tension of something pushing up from the patch of ground. I looked and couldn't see anything, but I sort of did. It was hard to discern, but it seemed as though a bit of ground was lifting up. What? Is it a gopher or a mole? But no, it didn't have the energy of a digger. It was just a bit of a lump ever so slowly rising up. I was fascinated. As I continued to watch, a bit of earth slid to the side as an ever so faint pointy dome of something whitish broke free. It ever so slowly raised up until it was looking like a small cap, and it finally broke free. Gradually, and I mean gradually the cap opened up much like an umbrella and there it was...a mushroom. But it wasn't alone. Breaking free of my intense focus, I saw that there were other pointy caps rising up and by early morning there was a bunch of them, seemingly arranged in a large circle. Ah, I thought. A meeting of the mushrooms. I wonder what they had to discuss. Seeing this occurrence brought me to wonder if I was witnessing some kind of earth messaging. Could there be a relationship between this and the image of the Web, as shared by Ranger, and how everything is connected?

As the morning progressed to noon and then afternoon, I couldn't get this out of my mind and then seemingly out of nowhere here is Ranger with a big grin on his face.

"You know, Dusk, seeing you tripping from the seat of your bench brings to mind the image of a saint sitting in his cave. No, your bench doesn't look anything like a cave, obviously, but what is happening on it does. I mean seeing the saint sitting in his cave and you sitting on your bench, well. Kind of the same, you know."

Smiling, Dusk replies, "Ahh. My young disciple. You have traveled far to come onto me. Seeking knowledge, I assume. Seeking the secrets of life, isn't it? Or perhaps a boon; a gift of power of some sort to do who knows what. Sorry, my son. Just appearing before me is not sufficient to encourage me to provide the nuggets of wisdom. But, let me tell you what is sufficient. Donuts. Bringing me a small bag of chocolate donuts is the Key to my knowledge. Do you happen have such a bag, such a treasure that would entice me to provide all that you seek?"

"As a matter of fact," says Ranger as he drops his backpack off his shoulder and opening it up, he puts his hand inside seemingly searching around and then, with a soulful "Ahh" he draws out exactly such a small bag."

"Whoopie," yells Dusk. "Eureka! Donuts."

"So right my wise one. Donuts. Want one?"

"Oh, this is a grand old day, Ranger. If you would be so kind."

At this, they both broke out laughing and with each with a chocolate donut in their hand munched down.

“This certainly portends a very good time. A bit of wisdom and donuts. What could be better?”

It didn’t take long before the party expanded into a larger gathering as a flock of pigeons flapped down from the surrounding trees, and also, as did a couple of squirrels that hurried over and a few spritely sparrows who also didn’t want to miss out. There were plenty of crumbs as Ranger pulled out two more donuts; these to share all around.

Eventually, all was consumed, and the party gatherers flew and scampered away leaving Ranger and Dusk in bliss. “Sugar high is the best kind of high,” relates Ranger.

“Agreed,” says Dusk who then burps sounding like a trumpet, which sends them back into hysterics. Finally calming down, yet with smiles on their faces, Ranger sits down. They remain silent with those smiles smiling and their breath slowing down, just enjoying the mirth.

Eventually, Ranger turns toward Dusk and says, “You spoke of a review at the end of our last get-together.”

Dusk shares, “Right, I did. The progress in our exploration has, for me, been exhilarating. Rejuvenating, really. You see and you hear, and you are excited in regard to what we are exploring.”

“It’s been good for me, Dusk. Really good. Before I may have had a sense of life’s challenges, being that they are teachers if I could only be open to them. But becoming open to them was a good first step, and with our time together, I am beginning to acquire the skills necessary to consider them consciously. The formation of the imagery of the Web, for me is a kind of platform for grasping the complexity of the overview that we have touched on. As, we have spoken about, the next challenge is to discover how to integrate the abstraction of our conversation and shared imagery into our lives.”

Dusk shares, “That is the essence of the value of opening ourselves to a broader state of awareness. Yes, it is all relevant in being able to comprehend the “totality” of what influences our lives. Being able to encompass such breadth and depth is unusual. It is a gift. It is a motivator. It is an energizer for further exploration. And, yes, we need to be able to practice integrating it into our lives in the face of restrictive cultural forces that so strongly influence not just us but all the others with whom we live.”

“As we have repeatedly done, let’s start by taking a hard look at a concrete example that exemplifies our condition.”

“Ranger, do you have such an example that might be helpful?”

“Well, Dusk, how about global warming?”

“OK. You start.”

“Well, when they were still alive and visiting us, I would ask them what it was like when they were young children. My grandparents shared that when they were kids, the threat of an atomic attack was the Boogieman of their childhood experience. The threat of total annihilation as presented to young children, must have been traumatic for them. I remember my grandparents telling me how they would practice dropping to the floor and crawling underneath their desks. Occasionally, the teacher would suddenly call out, “DROP and COVER!” and all the kids would throw themselves down and scoot under their desks. My grandfather would remember how he thought, ‘How is going under my desk going to save me?’ He had these thoughts because in the news reels of their time they were shown the explosion of atom bombs and how it cooked everything within a large area of the blast. If not burned, then blasted into oblivion by the air pressure that was generated. They were shown the outcome of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. So graphic. So terrifying seeing film of those that survived; the terrible burns and then the sickness of those who experienced only the flow of radiation as it drifted in the air. This must have deeply affected his generation soaking them deep in anxiety that they couldn’t share with their parents, because their parents didn’t even have any desks to duck under. For us, Global Warming is this generations Boogieman and if we can take a look at it, we may have something of value to share.”

Dusk encouragingly pointed to a direction to investigate, “From what we have discussed over the past months, I wonder where we might start. I mean, would it be helpful to understand how people are coping with the threat of undiminished global warming?”

OK, Dusk. Even though let’s say many people are aware of the threat, there are cultural influences that have blocked out the threat as seen from their daily lives. One of the influences is that the very subject has become politicized. If one is to be a good Republican, it is a requirement that the people deny the threat and view it as a fabrication created by the “demonic” Democrats. As a consequence, they continue to support the Republican politicians as they run for office even though they, like the rest of the nation are experiencing larger and stronger hurricanes, more devastating fires, and intense periods of drought. They even deny that the world’s glaciers are melting and that the oceans are showing signs of rising.”

“Well put, Ranger. Given what we have discussed can you explain some of the psychological challenges that the Republican constituents are facing that has resulted in what you have just described?”

“Perhaps, the psychological influence of denial is in play. When people are faced with an overwhelming experience, one of the mind’s defenses is to block out the memory. The more they block it out the more limited is their ability to look openly at the causes in which they are supporting, such as opposing the creation and the building of alternative clean energy sources that are free of oil and gas production.”

“Very good. Now, Ranger, can you share real concerns that they people have that would push the mind into a state of denial?”

“Hmm. Well, their livelihood may be under threat by reducing the use of coal, gas and oil. I mean they may well be working in those industries and to cut back on their use could mean the

loss of their jobs. They may also own a good deal of stocks in those industries. ”

“OK. What about the effect on their families?”

“Right, Dusk. Terrible. The effect would be devastating. The loss of employment would be overwhelming as they would no longer be able to make the mortgage payments, or the payments that are connected to any purchase done on credit, like the purchase of their car. Their whole style of life would be cast into chaos. With the loss of employment, it would likely also be experienced by many others in their communities. Just think of all the business that also would suffer from the loss of employment in their towns. Those losses would create cutbacks in their employee base as it cascades further and further. It isn’t just a threat. It happened throughout industrial America as a result of large businesses going overseas with their production. Millions of people were swept into that tsunami and never recovered.”

Dusk replied, “Just so, Ranger. Just so. The need to at least reduce the speed of global warming, if not to reverse it, is not just a simple case of political loyalty and the psychological response of denial that is the problem. The failure to gain the full public support for putting the brakes on global warming is due to a complete lack of planning in regard to the financial needs and the resulting crushing effect on the families involved with the industries that influence global warming.”

“Dusk, why has there been no transition plan in place and why aren’t the proponents of reversing global warming seemingly completely blind to this essential requirement? I mean, we as a society have already experienced the trauma of a failure to plan for the effect on families when our businesses supported their manufacturing contracts being walked into nations all over the world.

“Let’s look deeper into what we have explored for some possible insight.”

“Look, Dusk, this is getting to be overwhelming. I mean, I don’t remember us covering this in our previous discussions. I mean, how could dropping the level of employment and the obvious reduction of spendable income possibly benefit the businesses who laid off the very people who were buying their products. And why would the people who were let go and subsequently who couldn’t find replacement employment continue to vote for the very politicians who supported the movement of manufacturing outside of our country? Is it, because they just don’t get it?”

“Let me share what little I know, from this bench. The people who support the oil, coal, and gas industries are not into manufacturing and they personally have not experienced such an overwhelming threat to their livelihood before global warming became an issue. They are just trying to hold on to what they have. As you suggested, anyone would. It isn’t for them about what is going to happen sometime in the future, but how to pay the bills of today. You correctly outlined what needs to take place as you shared that before making changes there needs to be a plan covered by budgetary concerns to support people who are most going to be affected by the change. It’s also within this need that there are factors like how does this support or lack of support affect the self-esteem of those people who are losing their jobs? Where are their future jobs coming from and how long does it take for the industries to locate into their locale that would employ them? To complicate things, those who support reversing global warming also have never done this type of planning before, and are short-sighted on the immediate threats to

people's existence. It's no one's fault. It's all a consequence of cultural values that are short sighted that dominate how children are raised. This, we have discussed in detail."

"Yes, we have, Dusk. I can begin to see how all of this ties in. How we are going to live our increased sense of awareness certainly is being thrown into a new light by this exploration. Just like everything else, so many parts are missing. Children are not being educated with concrete skills to ride the tide of change. Current and future parents need to be offered training that would help them navigate the challenges. Specifically, they need to be able to learn how to listen to each other and come to understand the complexity that requires advanced listening skills. They would benefit from such training as it would allow them to openly discuss the situation that is developing."

Ranger wonders, "Exactly how will this introduction of the concepts of adjusting to Global Warming and the need for financial and economic transitioning including employment and loss of employment be brought into the light of society?"

Dusk ponders this inquiry and relates, "While many people feel that science will come up with the answer once the situation becomes intolerable, the introduction of intuition needs to be advanced so that people can acquire the trust to lower their defensive shields sufficiently to begin to elect politicians that will champion this shift from short term survival so that long term survival is on an equal basis. A lot will depend upon the young people acting on their concerns and having peers to encourage them. This kind of goes back to the club at school, "How it Works" that you initiated."

"Why are you putting all of this on me? I mean, is this a reasonable expectation?"

"You're right Ranger. Alone in the effort definitely would be over whelming. Still, it would be in the manner in which the club is organized. Bringing into the organization of the club a sense of cooperative determination would be a ground establishing platform for growth as you and your peers as you /matured over the years. So, it isn't about telling people what is needed alone. It is so much more effective to design your interaction with your peers so that it is a group challenge. The key is our continued relationship so that we are able to delve into the complexities overtime such that the club members are picking up on the insights and the development of the skills to bring them into being."

"Yeah, I can kind of get that. So, I guess it's time for another break so that I can more fully digest this as it affects me and my life."

"Good." You are a special person and acknowledging this in a good way determines the eventual progress and outcomes. Accepting the mantel of consciousness as a way of life will lead you to acknowledging that you are not alone, but part of the very meaning of life. It's part of becoming who you are, not in your potential, rather it is in realizing your potential. It's not about leadership, rather it is about opening yourself to the integration of yourself in the journey of humankind and the effect of our presence on Mother Earth. So, see you soon, my friend."

## About the Author

Why write Feeding Time? Over the years I have written numerous essays that seek to provide me a means of grasping the challenging situations that we all experience. Originally, I wrote in an essay format. I shared them with family and friends, and the feedback was that they were too complex and largely unreadable. In asking them why, they often just said they couldn't get past the first few pages. Then it was suggested to make it more readable that I might personalize the material being investigated as well as the presentations of possible solutions. When I personalized the format the feedback that I have regularly been provided is that what I write is too deep. By too deep, I eventually came to feel that what they were saying is that it is too personal and thus too upsetting in ways that it resonates within them. Also, this may have been a polite way of saying that I didn't really have permission to draw them into looking into the unresolvable dysfunction in the relationship with our selves, with each other and with our home Earth.

OK, I said. Too personal. Well, personalizing the various themes benefited me in being as the insights shared assisted me to be more able to manage my life experiences. That was good. Then eventually I began to really wonder about the cause of personal, interpersonal, and global dysfunction. Of course, as a human, psychological dynamics are at work, however, what initiated the psychological dysfunction. Was I born that way? Was it genetic? Was it the way I was raised. Was it stuff that came from outside myself and family? Eventually I just sat down with culture and took an interesting journey into what effect culture has that influences the dysfunction.

It came to me that there is this illusion that we actually have "Free Will and Choice." I have made a concerted effort to evaluate this premise, and in light of the influences of cultures it doesn't hold up. I came to feel that people are programmed by their cultures to live in patterns that support the survival of their culture. People don't really innovate behavior. We seem to make choices, but we are only choosing what our culture is offering to us. When our choices work out, we feel empowered. When things don't work out, we are brought up to believe that we are responsible. But are we? Are we really the creators of our condition?

I came to realize that to comprehend the endless complexities of cultures are overwhelming when I explored events linearly. Given the linear upbringing of our highly technological societies, we are unprepared to explore the contextual presence as is so obvious in the presentation of history. This and that happened at this and that time. Events are presented soulless; without context of the psychological and choreographed rhetoric that pushed the events into being. The uncovering of these influences and the exploration of their effect is the nature of this book.

To make what I write more friendly I designed Feeding Time to share my perceptions and perspectives as to various causes of dysfunction and their possible remedial interventions in story form with very short chapters.