

POETIC LIVING

Sunnie D. Kidd

and

Jim Kidd

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Patterns in the Fog

To be a human being is a very complicated affair. It means that we see, feel, hear, taste and sense that we are alive. We are creatures of experience. We know that we know. But this leads directly to the problems of knowing. How do we know? What do we know? Why do we know? More intimately, who is it that knows? What a dilemma. We wonder about the sense of our wonderings. We have the unique capacity to wonder about our own existence, about the simple existence of existence. The ultimate question is what does it all mean and how does one fit?

The interpretation of the world and its contents or of our existence is, first and foremost, a very human affair. Meaning is created by the intimate relationship of awareness to existence.

The whole idea of relationship calls into play the notion of form, the organization of patterns. A pattern of living is a coherent organization of existence, a continuity of meaning, of each in relation to the all.

In an age of the individual and the idea of identity crises, this is a truly amazing feeling. One only becomes an individual in relationship to the whole, to others. *The meaning of any one person is in relation to some other person.* Existence is a shared understanding and interpretation of meaning. We create the patterns by which we live. We are blessed as no other. The re-generation of life means the continuation of the universe, the world and of course, the spirit of a living essence. This is the responsibility bestowed upon us by the gift of awareness. This is not to imply that the human being is to be considered far superior to any other creature of nature. We are only one in the many and a part of the whole pattern of the universe. But it is our responsibility to continue to re-create that place. Each day is a creation insofar as it becomes mine. Being mine can be a deceptive and tricky position. To claim ownership at once bestows a paradox. The one who claims ownership is infused with the responsibility for the use, re-generation and coming to fruit of the meaning of that existence.

Ideas are a good example. They are a re-generation, a re-creation of the essence of existence in a new form, a new pattern. They are a creation of the relationship of the human capacities, the meaning of being human and the idea's existence. The relationship is new and one becomes responsible for its growth through one's own existence. It is an embodied imagination insofar as it brings change. We are or we become, that which we create. We live in the condensation of history and the not-yet created space of the future. For there is no assurance that tomorrow exists unless we see ourselves as participating in it.

Can you conceive of the possibility that there will be no tomorrow, that you have no future, that the sun will not rise again and the stars will no longer shine? Can you *feel* the image of no longer existing? Can your consciousness allow the idea that you are going to die? If you can, how do you utilize this understanding in the continuation of your present patterns of living? How can patterns be re-created?

In the re-creation of a pattern one embodies the essence of existence. The meaning of one's life is given an historical perspective that transcends the boundaries of intellectual knowing. One becomes eternal, one becomes symbolic. The human bestows meaning upon the world, not only in one's individual time but in an extended mode through a symbol. *A symbol is a magnet of experience which draws a culture or the entirety of humankind to the single meaning of a moment.* It is a link *Inbetween* the ancient and the eternal. We are embedded in humanity through our symbols, our patterns and forms.

The forms in the fog by which one lives are the collective imaginations of the past which have given rise to the meanings of this moment. The person you have become represents the epitome of humankind gathered through the historical ages. You are the promise held within the magnet of the future. The fog is the essence of the unknowing which stealthily creeps into the pores of understanding, confusing the knower and the known. The patterns become blurred and indiscernible in the fog. The shapes become fuzzy and the boundaries disappear, re-appear and finally, fade away, in and out. In an instant, one can be rescued from the rush of living by making a headlong dive into the future. Silently perched upon a massive rock in a sandy alcove at the beach, one is lolling in the sun and participating fully in the wonder of the moment, caught only by the mist in the air as it swirls around the open places on the skin, listening to the sounds of the ocean world as it dances and sways to the tune of its own meaning, carrying one in its blue-green silk beyond the boundaries of the very ordinary ways of knowing, into the magical rhythm of its beat upon the sandy shore, singing mysteriously enchanting tones of an undiscovered depth within, caught in this moment patterns disappear and re-appear as distant ships on the sea move in and out of the luminous bank of fog on the distant horizon. They are haunting with their filmy and seemingly spontaneous appearances. They become shadows of the mind, ghosts on the edge of the world changing patterns of a used to be, a solid image of the past. The fog envelops the sharp and distinct lines of the pattern's structure and blurs them into new meanings and shapes as the imagination plays with the not-yet-structure of the future.

One returns to the original in free form by going with and participating in the meanings which arise out of a blurred form, feeling in an extended dimension of the imagination the true powers of transformation

and re-creation. One is re-directed and re-created via the transparent medium of the fog. Patterns in the fog become alternative views of the world. It is the world *Inbetween*, a dwelling place of the imagination, a world of sensing, feeling and understanding the harmonies, of recognizing and filtering out new patterns as they appear, fade and re-appear, simply waiting in naiveté and beholding that which appears. Why is it that the simplest seems the most complex, the open often the most concealed and the gentlest often the strongest? These paradoxes can be seen in the attitudes of those who seem to hold a special conversation with the universe. This seems so amazing. They converse *with* their experience and the meanings in and of their lives, not try to explain them. They move with the flow and not against it and seem to possess the equanimity of the eternal. How frustrating to those who insist on definite pictures or images with the insistence that there be no fog, with everything in direct militaristic order and demarcation. No holes in which to participate with their meanings, imposing a structure on a shifting essence which moves from its center. People without imaginations, patterns without the fog. Like a picture of a ship on the horizon, forever stuck in one spot, unable to glide with the flow into the fog and onto new and distant horizons. What would we do without patterns in the fog?

A Light on the Path

A path is an intimate little space which allows us to wander or meander as we wish. It makes no demands upon us or on our time and simply provides a casual footing with the earth. It holds within it an unexplainable kind of magic, one which allows us to come into contact with the moment of the present and offers a gentle repose from the killing rat race pace of the highways of the world. It winds and crawls along without seeming to care in the least just what the rest of the world is up to. It certainly has not heard of the statement that the shortest distance between any two points is a straight line, what an utterly ludicrous conception for a path.

For paths develop with the feel of their surroundings, they move with their environments and not against them, taking notice of the tiniest of stones and the most fragrant of flowers. Birds hop upon them and worms scurry across them. Tiny creatures make their own paths but the human being of today is sorely lacking the magic of a path. A path is a personal pace, a personal place and shows a personal face. It invites one to enter into its journey to the beyond, to wherever it happens to be on the way to. It develops purely by happenstance passings of occasional travelers who pick their way through the surroundings according to the feel of its contents, going around instead of over and passing by instead of through.

It tells of a certain respect for that which dwells there by those who use it. It is an ecological walkway and it probably was not even planned, it just happened on its own and asks for nothing in return. It has a quality that a sidewalk will never see or be. It has what one would call character. No geometric squares and no straight right angles, crazy curbs or even venthole covers. It is of the earth and feels of that spirit. It seems to sigh as one strolls contentedly through, inviting full participation in its earthy universe, a path on which to dwell, down which to wander and through which to become revitalized, to once again come into contact with that which one is.

For that matter, life can be seen as treading on a path. For us this is a new discovery in the past few years. We have found a new path only this year, one that wanders through an enchanted garden and thicket, winding through magnificent oaks and creeping ivy, tiny scurrying creatures and filtered shafts of golden sunlight. It leads to its end, revealing a beautiful and antiquated structure of a tea house, stripped of its original ornaments but still fulfilling its promise by its structure. It resonates to the simplicity of the path leading there, unhurried, removed from the feel of modernity as the birds chatter and the squirrels scamper from tree to tree. This is not a place in

which to think but one in which to dwell, a place of restoration. There simply is no reason to rush through it.

Life can be lived as though on a path. The idea of human beings as travelers has been around for centuries. Life is a journey. But the *way* in which one travels is as important as that fact that one does travel. One gives meaning to their own journey by the way it is traveled. It seems that an attitude accompanies each way of traveling and with each can be seen a reflection of the way in which one relates not only to oneself, others, society and the world but to the fact that human beings are the only creatures capable of transforming the meaning of their world.

The human spirit has been bound up, explained away via reinforcement technologists, running on invisible threads and controlled by that which humans cannot conceivably understand, a kind of auto-behavioristic-nihilism which relegates free will, self-chosen direction and creative transformation through insight to the junk heap of romanticism. But still there wiggles a crooked line that should be straight and a way of knowing which should not exist still cries out to be heard. There is a light that shines on the path.

The past, as a way of life, opens up new horizons. We come closer into contact with the meaning of being alive and the direction in which we want to go. We become aware to feel and to dwell and wonder at the awesome magnificence of the human spirit. We follow the light as life unfolds and the path comes into being on its own. We re-discover the meaning of a quality of living which has been blacktopped over by the freewheeling mechanism of modernity. A paradise lost re-affirms its existence. The dreams of the soul are re-awakened without warning and surface to the top to be re-incarnated. The light on the path will illumine the way.

Spirit on the Move

How often do you listen to what you have to say, not only what you have to say to others but to yourself? What are you telling yourself as you trudge along in the world wondering just why things have to be the way they are? You do talk to yourself you know and yet you keep the most important questions secretly locked away, like putting the mirror behind the door because you do not like the image that you see. It is funny how we think we hide from ourselves and yet we already know what we are hiding, where we put it and why we do not want to see it. It is precisely those hidden things that haunt us the most. They are ghosts which hide in the closets of our minds, leaping out unexpectedly, thrusting themselves into awareness.

This image is not only valid on the level of the individual but holds true on the shared level of life known as the social. Whole societies hide the mirror behind the door because they do not like the image that they see. The notion of the private and the social aspect of existence solves none of the perplexity of the collectively private or the silent majority as it rampantly runs through the culture, letting itself be known only by inference, never speaking and creating its name, yet letting the tail of the monster hang noticeably under the door.

Each era has its monster and each monster its knight. The knight and the monster both give way to the spirit and today, as in other times and places, the spirit is on the move. A new hole has been seen in the web of Reality and a new glow is beginning. The monster of the age has been identified as a non-human cybernetic machine. We are becoming obsolete, another cog in the wheel.

The idea of an organic base to living should not come as any great shock to anyone who remembers how our humanness rushes to awareness as one stubs their toe on the door. A short jolt into the physical dimension of the abstract notion of pain makes one realize how closely we are tied to organismic existence. We seem to have elevated head knowledge to a superior position these days. The rest of the body has been relegated to the modern day medicine person, clad in white coat, stethoscope and the unidentifiable language of an esoteric shaman. Human consciousness has become dis-embodied and our ways of living with the world indicate all too clearly the feeling that the rest of the body has become a drag.

This should not be surprising to today's liberated beings graced by the wonders heaped upon them by technology. We watch instead of do, think instead of act. We are a mechanical-thinking-machine living in disguise as humans. The shapes of our worlds show us the shapes of our lives. We leave

nothing to faith and trust and only feel secure when we are in control. Have you ever seen a square cloud, a rectilinear tree or a triangular mountain? All things have a place and everything in its place, our minds have become like the sterilized instrumentation on a hospital tray. What happened to the zest, the gusto, the unsymmetrical, wiggly-piggly uncertainty of things? It seems that life has lost the balance so essential to vital human living. Why is it that we cannot *let* things happen instead of always trying to control them? Does just analyzing something bring about understanding? Does one perspective show the whole? Understanding requires the balance of thinking and feeling.

How can you tune in to anything in the world and in particular to others if you cannot tune in to yourself? Do you know what you have to say? Do you know how you feel? Machines are unable to do this, they continue to run until they tear themselves apart. Their feedback system is provided only by humans. They do not know what they are doing. They lack a reflective consciousness.

What we are opting for is a feeling kind of thinking which utilizes our capacities to dwell. This is a reflective way of being. Perhaps if we let our reflective possibilities come forth we may see in a new light. With our present condition of human existence, we run until we drop. We hide the mirror behind the door, we do not know what we are doing. The modern person seems to be panting for breath, for room, for freedom and does not seem to know how to stop.

The person-machine complex is a fallacious image and must be disassembled. The identity of the human soul is on the cross. What are we to become? New ways of thinking and feeling about ourselves, the world and our place in it, transforms us all. We stand in new relation to each other and the worlds of which we dreamed. The spirit of the dreamer should be enriched, nurtured and encouraged to bud and blossom into full flower. In the creation of our futures we are required to look beyond what we are and what we do, to that which we dream ourselves to be. A Garden of Eden resides in the human vision of paradise. A new spirit is stirring deep within and warming us anew. A flickering yellow glow emerging out to touch the dark night has been born.

By steeping ourselves in a feeling kind of thinking we soak up the flavors and feels of other ways of being. The infinite and the eternal are extensions of our boundaries of human existence. They reside in the fully present and point to undiscovered treasures in life. They are possibilities and promises, resonances with new dimensions. Perhaps the rationalists or materialists will say ridiculous but there are many today who think not, who are willing to open themselves to deeper and more enriching ways of being. We are tending and caring for the growth of a new spirit on the move.

Mystical Resonances

Resonance is a form of vibration, a reverberation *Inbetween*. The Divine in the nature of the human being allows one to approach this dimension of experience, one in which all worldly and taken-for-granted ways of knowing are suspended. At these moments one senses they have tapped the original source coming into contact with the mystical energies of a living universe.

To resonate with the mystical is to feel to one's depths, to listen with one's feel. It is to hear with the heart and to feel in one's bones, it is an absorption in mystery and a surrender to things larger than myself. It is a glimpse of an entirely new vision which has a sense of irreality. It may descend in moments of total rapture with a flower, the patterns in a leaf or while wondering at the magnificence of a sunset. There is a growing concern for the re-development of these capacities and forms of experience in everyday life.

Why should we not be enchanted with our lives, with our self-chosen ways to be? Why should not we find new ways make new lives and deepen our meanings? To do this requires that one first learn to listen, to look, to feel, not on a surface level but with the whole of being. For so many life has become a bore, a monotony, a rut. To develop alternatives one must take a chance, risking to do things differently. Being different carries with it a good many difficulties and the cost is sometimes high. But what is the price paid for staying the same? It is too easy to go along day after day doing the same routine, taking the same route and living the same life, never lifting our eyes from the ruts in which we run. It seems we have learned to ignore the mythical, the mystical and the legendary in our own personalities. Too many have become lopsided with rationality and unable to imagine their lives any other day than the 9 to 5, five-day work week and nights filled with TV. Too many, although they may possess all the comforts of home feel a nagging lack of a sense of completeness or fulfillment in moments alone.

What we are reaching for here is the restoration of a little mystery, mystique and wonder to life. To breathe new breath into life, find new ways of opening out to those things which create *harmony*, to open up to the possibility for inspiration.

To be inspired is to feel the full vitality of knowing that you are alive. Life *becomes* open and one is able to let go of inconsequential worries to which one has stubbornly clutched so tightly, only a few moments ago. Risks are taken to form new ways of directing life, moving closer to life. But to move into it requires one to participate in its creation. No one can

create it for the other but we can inspire one another. We draw inspiration from like-spirited people who share and co-create with us. Full living includes other people, it is the creation of histories together and the creation of futures together. We bring out various characters in one another and help to release one another from cramped and stifled lifestyles. We resonate to the feels and forms and colors of experience. We work together, play together and celebrate together, sharing hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, wishes and dreams.

In such a way of living, of true living through sharing, we learn to release the tensions which keep us so taut and bring into play our potential as we become open to them. We learn to relish in them and find joy in bringing them about, in others as well as ourselves. Life becomes enriched and deeply understood. We become what we could be and want to be and less and less of what we wish we were not. It is a process as we begin to see new aspects to ourselves and realize that they are *all* us, the poet, the philosopher, the artist, the dancer and the one who helped to create them all. As this kind of life unfolds, one naturally becomes aware and in tune, in *harmony* with oneself, less anxious and tense. One begins to move with the flow of being.

Rhythmic nature gives rise to our possibility to resonate with being. The ultimate simplicity found in experiences of mystical resonance is provided by the fact that for even just a moment, one sees directly into the world rather than through a theoretical interpretation of Reality. We sense the power that is inherent within us simply as human beings, the power to transform ourselves and our lives into a harmonious and well-balanced way of living, of creating our own futures and of knowing that is *we* who are responsible. We are our possibilities. The discovery of a little bit of the mystic in each of us can be a dizzying discovery. Is there not a little potential in each of us to see ourselves as anything but what we are now?

One of the problems today and which stifles a creative lifestyle is the idea that one must be an expert to do anything at all, regardless of how simple. Unless we know how to perform with the utmost skill we feel foolish to try. To err is human but we are afraid of erring because we feel inept or inadequate unless we can perform to the ideal of professionalism. In order for most of us to participate we feel we must be highly skilled. What happened to the idea of participating for the sheer joy of doing so, of surprising ourselves with our various hidden talents? Is there such a thing as a person with no talent, no skills or no potential?

Our dreams, wishes, fantasies and mystical natures are very delicate matters and the first to be crushed by a matter-of-fact world. The mysteries of life which have provided inspiration to humankind are being analyzed, organized and systematized by the computer age. The laws of probability

have replaced the laws of possibility. We have been entranced by the machine age and our ability to resonate with the mystical does not seem logical.

But still we dream ourselves to be things we are not, even though we may never speak them. This is a way of re-discovery, of the full development and growth of the human potential, to actualize these promises in our everyday ways of living, bringing together the mundane and the mystical in hopes that even a tiny transformation will take place. A tiny beginning of a new way of seeing, feeling and being. A way of the truly human realization that we are and can become, what we dream ourselves to be. What is it going to be? The choice is up to you.

On the Wings of a Butterfly

The age-old saying that thoughts have wings has carried the vision of human beings on a long and distant journey through time and space. It holds within it the magic of transcendence, the image of flight into the future and new and different worlds. It is a way of traveling beyond what is known. It is a venturing out into the wilderness of the unknown. Our thoughts have carried us beyond the ordinary and today, right now, the flight is landing us at: The John F. Kennedy Airport, New York, after only two hours of traveling in circles over the runway because of the modern day phenomenon known as stacking. Today thoughts are carried on the wings of an aircraft, they have become jet propelled. Unless they are supersonic they are obsolete or quite incidental. The wings of the butterfly have been grounded by many and are seen to be of interest only to those who call themselves entomologists or the studiers of bugs. They seem to hold little magic for the thousands of Dapper Dans of Wall Street whose blood pressures rise and fall with the pulsation of the stock market.

But for those who still take the time to watch and listen, the gliding path of the butterfly in flight seems to be the perfect vehicle for thought. The butterfly sails into the air, slowly and effortlessly winging its way along, hesitating in midair before turning and swooping along a new route, seeming to follow only that which piques its interest. There are no time schedules, no flight numbers and no stacking over its runways. It dips and glides through unmeasured distances and into uncharted futures. For the butterfly, as for our paths, the shortest distance between any two points may be a straight line but it just does not seem to matter. The ways which are of interest are the ones encouraging a sense of quality, not quantity and of the intriguing rather than that of certainty.

The only real certainty that we have about our life is change. To expect that one can arrange everything perfectly and to remain so is to ignore what experience tells us. We wish too often that good times would be with us always and strive to be constantly happy and satisfied. But life has other things in mind and soon the structured tower of certainty begins to wobble, eventually giving way to the ever-changing changingness of things. The living of lives means the changing of times. We can never outlive the changing flow of our lives.

If one is to be in tune with the changes that take place all around, one moves with the tide, sails with the sea and blows with the wind. Currents run through our lives as freely as the wind walks in the trees just as the butterfly has a way of moving, that *goes with*, that which it is in. The patterns and forms are like the magnificent array of color on its wings as it drifts, glides

and seeks out that which holds attraction. It lives close to its life and blows into the world. The butterfly moves with the ease and grace of a stream, as if it knew all the secrets of life. It seems at peace with the world. The process of its transformation as it comes into full existence includes many phases and its rhythms are *of* its life. In the age of modernity the natural times of ripening are accelerated on their way. We force bloom flowers and keep chickens up all night. We put birds in cages and trees in pots. The natural pace is left behind for a fast race. It is time for us to *look* at what we are doing.

Our thoughts have wings but what kind and where are they taking us? The wings that truly fly do not need to be jet propelled. The slower and majestic do just as well. One without the other is a lopsided view of the world. The *feel* of the path in flight is as important as the destination. Can we afford to forget the fragility of the living and try to replace it with the jet propelled autonomy of the automatic pilot? Does the person fly the plane or does the plane fly the person? A reversal has taken place and perhaps another is in order.

There is something very mysterious about the butterfly which carries full enchantment. It seems to flit and flutter in a way that appears to be inviting one to watch. It seems to move so slowly that it is asking to be caught but for those who are so enticed, just at the last moment as one is ready with the net, off it flutters into the wind, gliding along even seeming to giggle at the try.

Our thoughts are much the same. They seem not to pay enough attention to what we wish them to do but flutter off into the breeze and return unheralded. They drift and they float and hold promises of flight. They swoop and they soar and hide from us in the night. It seems they sometimes have thoughts of their own. So what are we to do about the butterflies of our minds? Perhaps this is difficult to fathom for those who feel that they have total control over their lives. But it is only the recognition of an unfilled space, an unacknowledged way of seeing ourselves, of being and becoming other than that which we feel we must be. The butterflies of our minds are inviting us to see and perhaps it seems strange to think of your thoughts as such creatures. But once again we are caught by the magical sense of their existence, how can we afford not to look?

What is being said is simply this: there is another way, to return to the fields and the feels of a universe that seems alive. Not one that is simply explained away via a set of mathematical equations. The world is not a measurement as we are not a number. One must get out of the plane to know that they have been in it. Sure enough as we jet our way across the globe, the shortest distance between any two points is or becomes a straight line. All that is needed is to reach into the handy pocket in front and look at

the maps by which the pilot navigates the world. We see only straight black lines across the round blue-green world. We breakfast in California and dine in New York and all that happened underneath was only six hours, while today the butterfly saw a whole field of flowers. It talked to the breeze and floated in the sun, not knowing that for it, tomorrow would never come.

6

In the Heart of a Rose

In the heart of a rose follows very closely the spirit of which we have been speaking, an expression of the way we feel, the way we live. The heart of a rose is the very center of existence. It reflects the perfection of the universe. It seems natural that the heart and the rose are tied so closely together symbolically. One seems to imply the existence and the validity of the other. The heart has been designated as the center of feeling and emotion. The rose is a symbolic expression of that center.

Today, in psychology in particular, there is a separation between thinking and feeling. The thinking takes place in the head and the feeling takes place in the heart. They are understood to be separate and isolated experiences residing within each living being. The head rules the heart and for anyone who thinks or feels differently there is the title of romantic. They are simply not being realistic. To be other than realistic is not logical or functional and is therefore undesirable. One is not permitted to be in love with being alive, of feeling one lives in an era of enchantment and of seeing with one's heart. Everyone knows that matters of the heart are illogical. Therefore, they take a back seat to the thinker in us all. Yet the notion that we are all of and from a center is in vogue and the poetical insight that the universe may be understood in a grain of sand is acceptable, even laudable.

The feeling aspect of the world of our experience has been given to the dreamer, the poet and the visionary. It is so amazing that these dimensions of human experience have been assigned to such insignificant roles in our lives. For what else is science, technology or the modern day world other than dreams that have come to life? They are embodied imaginations of years gone by, great prophetic insights of how the world could be. Today's technologies stand as tributes to those persons who dreamed them and yet we see that not all in the dream can come true. Not all that we envision is necessarily a healthy way of living. We do have human boundaries of which we become aware. More is not always necessarily the best. Quality comes from the heart, from the feelings by which we live. Quantity comes from the head and from thinking. One without the other or one over the other becomes tyrannical and useless in its tyranny. The search that we have undertaken in our lives is again for the balance, the rhythm which gives rise to *harmony*. Our ways must be looked at with a critical and feeling eye, one that sees with both the head and the heart in hopes of discovering a new light on the path of life. An eye that sees the feel and a head that hears the heart, a mingling of the two in a new way will help us dream a better world, a fully human world.

Not everything that we see will be right for everyone. We are not proposing any sort of utopian ideal, only giving expression to the personal path upon which we have been treading, with those whom we find we share in spirit, to sense the direction in which it leads us and discover the center of the source which guides us. This is the heart. *The center or heart of our existence guides and directs the flow of human experience.* To be working from a center is certainly not a discovery of the modern day world, the ways of the ancient East have professed for ages that all of us work from a center of gravity. For them this is the hara, the belly. The martial arts, the gentle arts of self-defense, the samurai, ju-jitsu and archery are based upon this notion of a guiding center. It affects the way one walks, the way one sits and the way one sees the world. It is a lifestyle, a way of living. It is a current running through its people and giving a sense of center to their lives, shaping the meanings of their experience. As Westerners, we feel our center to be closer to the heart, rooted in the soul of the earth. The heart of the rose is a symbolic expression by which we have chosen as our natural rhythm and way of knowing. Through this center experience is magnetized, providing an axis, a way of bringing us together into a unified whole rather than seeing ourselves as a network of signals operating on conflicting and separate wave lengths. We cannot really think without feeling, though there are those who seem to feel and act without consciously directed thinking. The crux of the matter seems to be that they feel free to abandon themselves *to* themselves and have faith and trust in their own organic being to act in unity, as for instance the skillfully trained body of an athlete responds to that which it knows. The knowing body understands and moves to ungiven commands. It acts as though it does not understand the difference between the head and the heart, it seems to know that they are only extensions of one another and work together in common spirit, drawing their meanings from their intertwining. If either is not, the other is not. They are inextricably bound and their interdependency means only that they are, in essence, one.

In the spirit which resides at the heart of the rose is where we are beginning. The *heart* of the matter becomes the *center* of care. It is a path which emerges in the spirit of our treading and grows from within, seeing new patterns in the fog and casting a new light on the path before us bringing us closer to richer and fertile ways of living, as the heart of the rose is, as it is for the human, eternally rooted in the soul of the earth.

The Soul of the Earth

Until today, the dwelling place of humankind has always been in, with, on or of the earth. The fertility of the soul has always been known by sinking roots deep within the bosom of the earth. The richness of the land provided the richness of the soul, earth the provider, earth the mother and keeper of the soul. Now humans are whirling about in space, freed from the pull of gravity, spinning across the cosmos as a cosmic seed pod, scattered by the wind. Like tiny white puffs sailing on the swift currents of air, they are tiny spaceships in the vastness which hold within their seeds the promise of new life. They sail and they glide and they drift, scattering their promises in age-old ways of re-generation, in reunion with their ground.

We have broken the bonds with our earth, with our ground and pulled up the roots of our souls to spin in space. This is not said in a critical way but only to illustrate our latest transformation as human beings. For although only a few have sailed the seas of the stars, it is humankind which has traversed the universe. We participate through our own and bring new visions of ourselves and our futures back through them. They are the mirrors into which we cast our eyes and glimpse a new image of our own promise, one of which we can be only vaguely aware. As space traveler we have transformed our image again and extended this knowledge to new boundaries set forth only by those demanded of the universe. The effects of our travels as we wheel through the unknown cannot yet be fully grasped. But the achievement of one shows itself in all. The image of one is reflected in each of us here and our ways of seeing each other and our connection with the world have been transformed. We cannot return to before. We have now actualized the vision of extending our presence beyond all previously known limits and broken loose the hold of our known dwelling place, the one from which we sprang.

Dwelling places are shelters of life. They are special spaces, magical spaces and earthly creatures, warming our hands and our hearts in the light. A dwelling place reflects the natural rhythms of life and provides a shared center for the possibility of our own existence. We move out and we return, we venture anew and feel glad to be home once again.

Today's modern term houses, to replace the intimate name of dwelling, reflects a change in the attitude of living. The feel of dwelling has been cast out as a way of living. The home has been turned into a hotel, with the occupants coming and going as ships in the night, leaving cryptic notes scribbled in ink or scratched on efficiently constructed chalk and bulletin boards. We leave tape recorded messages over the phone and make appointments to see ourselves. It all has a new sense and a frantic pace. We

hurry and rush and feel out of time and at the end of a day we re-count only that which is left undone, forgetting to seek the pleasures of our deeds and of soaking ourselves in the glow of a job well done. We worry and fret our energies away trying to push the night into the next day, all in readiness so that we can get a running start on the worries of the morrow. We have outdone ourselves and can hardly wait to begin again.

A dwelling seems a saner place, one where each can afford to live *with* each other rather than *at* each other. A place where we collect ourselves from the fragments in a day and speak of satisfactions gathered, sharing them with those who are dear. This is where all the little things come into play and make themselves known simply and clearly without being pushed. Where we laugh and play and cry in sorrow, where we share our lives as well as our space.

The creation of a dwelling carries with it an attitude, a closely knit fabric of the human soul in touch with the earthly meanings of our intertwining existence on, with, of and by the earth. The closeness of our dwelling affords us the grace by which we unfold the meanings of our lives together. The fertility of the earth and the virility of human beings co-mingle to create a dwelling place. Our natural environment has been endangered. The soul of the earth is in peril. The earth as provider is growing short of stock as we clamor and clutter about in our own squalor.

A new way of feeling is the beginning point. The promise of the human being is rooted deeply in our ways of dwelling. We are responsible for the ways we create not only tomorrow's but the distant future's lot. To expand our horizons to long-range view we look for qualities which have been long forgotten. We are reaching to extend ourselves through time to grasp a feel for those ways which are conducive for the re-generation of the promise of humankind. Too many are ready for flight into the unknown of space, willing to sail off into the celestial heavens and neglect the very soul of our earth. Without this soul we would surely perish, as without dwelling our lives are diminished. We are searching for an ecologically sane way of life, to move with our rhythmic nature rather than against it. We are searching for new ways of rooting ourselves in our everyday lives, of gaining firm connections with our meanings and to come closer to an understanding of what it truly means to be alive.

We create our new futures together. We share in its direction and provide in its spirit. We are, in effect, the beginning of a new tomorrow. The experience of dwelling instills within us a place of belonging, a place in which we fit and a space in whose creation we participate. The re-creation of a place in which to dwell seems to be of the essence. We want to enhance the joys of shared living and to loosen our holds on the tails of the stars, to root in our earth as well as fly in our skies. This is a return to the feel of

growing rather than of being built, of listening to our lives and one another in the first person and not on a disc, to see into eyes rather than through them and to feel into hearts rather than break them.

The break of humankind with the soul of the earth is a new frontier already crossed. An old boundary has been broken. Our accomplishments are surely amazing. But the bothersome thing is the break from each other and the very center of our existence. This is devastating to the qualities essential for the fully lived life. The development of the human potential is a journey, one which wanders, falters, regains its footing and continues on its path, pausing and wondering, reflecting and gazing and moving in various moods at once. Our achievements have been stupendous, we return to, to go forward again. Our habitation is our salvation. We live with the land, sail on the seas and now are near to being cosmically free. We remember the source of our existence, the soul of the earth.

Magic in the Air

At sometime most everyone senses a bit of magic in life where things or happenings seem to suddenly open up doors allowing a whole new feeling and viewpoint to flow through the soul. The birth of a child, watching one grow or simply contemplating the abundance of nature's resilient strength. Our lives are possibilities not probabilities. There are untold promises in each simply lying dormant until we take the time to unearth them and help them take root and grow.

Our lives are possibilities each with a magic all its own, as we attend to their growth and let them move at a natural pace. Today we rush too much and linger too little, we miss the small things which give the flavors to our lives and seek instead the obvious. Little treasures are tucked safely away and remain undiscovered, hidden from view. The doors we open are the times and spaces to that which we shall become. What is it that gives one the sense of magic, the mysteriousness of the unknown, a glimpse of a secret collection of partially hidden truths that are there? We are seekers and adventurers by nature, we love to explore and discover new frontiers. We abound new boundaries and hurdle old fences. We create, we rest and then we travel on. The magic is in the air that we breathe and in the dreams that we have dreamed.

Our new tomorrows are the wishes we wished today, the visions and callings of new frontiers. But founding a new frontier demands a strong spirit and a nature with will. We all live with our dreams and wishes and yet only some bring them into fruitful existence. Not all are willing to take the risk. Our spirits of adventure and callings of a quest speak individually. What are we to become? Our answers are all different and our directions intertwine but our decisions should be our own and move us on our way for a given time. As we are open so our lives unfold and as we close them so they stay. To be alive is to be steadily changing and becoming anew. It is an elasticity which lets one bend rather than break. To remain rigid is to grow old and brittle, resisting change. Soon the weight becomes too much to carry or the pressures too great to bear. Too often we clutch to things gone by, not realizing that they still are with us even though we no longer try. To open up is to be re-filled, over and over again as little vessels into which life flows its never ending stream.

We afford ourselves the power to change and re-vitalization and re-generation. We are the ones who can rise above the fall and begin again to climb the towering tree of life. For it is in the ascent that a new horizon can be seen. The dawn of a new horizon fills us with the strength to go on. Any new creation is a tender and fragile thing, treading paths fraught with

dangers and perils of the unknown. But in these travels we are committed and to this path we are devoted, sharing in the failures as well as successes. The strength we gather comes from each other. There are days filled with beauty and days filled with agony, each helping define the other, freeing us to experience all that we can be. We are convinced that one cannot live solely in the clouds forever and it is foolish to try. Each of us suffers and each of us must die. The meanings *in* our lives are the meanings *of* our lives. Our meanings are our centers and the network by which we live. The patterns they create are our views of the world and provide the directions by which we travel. They are never complete and so left undone for others to freely take upon our leave.

The notion of being left undone is essential, for where would we go and what would we do if everything were complete? It seems to be in our nature to know that there is always somewhere else we can go and someone else we could be.

By this it is meant that our lives are never exact or static but always growing, changing, as we struggle with each new feat. It is the personal quality of growth which is an expansion from within rather than attachment from without. In this growing we are extending ourselves out, working from our centers. We venture anew and return once again to the vitalness and strength in the dwelling sense of life, re-gaining our footing and direction before the next new venture. We restore our balance and begin again, seeking another new horizon to venture through.

The magic in the air is simply another expression of the enchanting call of life, beckoning us inward for discovery of our very own lights. It is only when touched personally that one opens to change and it is through this openness to touching that one is called out to be all that they can be and to bring to bear all the promises living within.

Metamorphosis and Metaphor

Metamorphosis is a way of transformation and metaphor is a new way of thinking about old things. These are two primary notions to our current way of thinking. They seem to express how we see our way of going about the creation of the meanings of our world and our place in it. Metamorphosis and metaphor are processes in life, thought and language. They are expressions of the powers in human living which enable us to create from that which already exists. To think, to feel, to live anew is a re-combination of the past and the promises of the future. Metaphorical thinking is not a logical view of the world. It is on the other hand not a simple cloud in the sky but it is a new pattern in the fog.

Today we are taking our lives into our own hands and recognizing their shapes, feeling their feel and hearing their ring. We are re-gaining a sense of growing and letting things unfold, of sitting in silence to discover just what it is that we think. We are touching deeply what we see, going to the very heart of existence.

It is a transformation, a metamorphosis in the meaning of life. There seems to be a hunger for new ways, a thirst for inspiration which has been sadly relinquished. We are tired of seeing a machine in the mirror each time we look. We are tired of hiding ourselves behind the door. We are ready for a new way of the old, of picking our treasures and making new starts.

We want to learn what and how to do with and for ourselves and those with whom we share. We want to speak to those who might wish to hear. We want to re-gain our touch with our world and feel the sense of its beat. We want to grow new roots and nourish our souls. We want to teach our children by the ways we live and banish the darkness from learning and life. We want to carry our pasts forward and see them safely through. We want to resonate with our mystical selves and the powers with which we dwell. We want to provide new hope by the way we have chosen to live for those who cannot find their own way, sharing our lives. We want to recognize and realize that we become what we create, to grow our own way and see in the products the pains that we suffered. We want to reverse the person-machine complex, take it apart and see ourselves again. We want to feel ourselves swell with pride at the price that we have paid and to sense the magic once more of the power of becoming that of which once we had dreamed.

We are in the midst of our own metamorphosis, we are becoming what we behold. Our lives deepen each time we reach out to touch them. They gain a sense of the new, exploring creative dimensions, instead of following a technological blueprint. We feel a new spirit and see a new light

and we wonder about things the way they are. We feel ourselves moving and to where we are not sure but we know as well as can be that we are definitely not alone.

Perhaps the easiest way of saying that for which we seek is the joy to be found in living our lives as they fill the space in our worlds, each day as it comes. We know that we have futures as long as we live and in them we plan to take a hand. The handmade future is our way and in its creation is to be each new day. Metamorphosis is already underway. The transformation of our boundaries gather the natural rhythms of life and the dreams with which we play. We are on our own path of becoming and it is a new way of being. It is just a beginning but then what is not? We live from our pasts and in the hope of our not-yet-structured and uncreated futures. That which we create will be an expression of the meaning of our lives and in turn, the meaning of our lives will become that which we have created. We grow our world as it grows us and for that we must lend a hand. Metamorphosis and metaphor takes on a personal sense only when from participation emerges the re-creation of our very own lives. Possibilities permeate existence, the choices made become my life.

The Handmade Future

The handmade future holds in store the restoration of the center of personal existence. By this we mean that we are searching for the ways and means of genuinely creating our own times and lives together. The handmade future is an attempt to re-create the feel of a life. One lived in balance, *harmony* and a sense of belonging to that which we create and to that by which we have been created. We recognize the humanness of our own experience. We are striving for a humanly fulfilling lifestyle. We want to let our lives make sense to us as magically endowed human beings. A person is not a robotized automaton. We are, in essence, responsible for that which we create, especially our own futures.

The handmade future is essentially an expression of vital living in a mechanized society. We do create our futures together via our wishes, dreams and inspirations. To be effective vehicles for change these are brought to bear directly upon our *everyday* ways of living to bring to fruit a certain transformation in lifestyle. We are creatures of possibilities and promises, holding within us an element of the Divine.

We are looking for ways of re-integration of the head, hands, heart and soul. It is imperative that we seek the unities of living with nature rather than outside it. We are fostering an attitude of cooperation to complement that of competition. What we are speaking of would perhaps be called an ecology of lived human reality and the re-enhancement of the qualitative dimensions, to once again allow and encourage us to be in touch with the pure enchantment of being alive. Each generation is responsible for finding new ways to continue traditions as well as to create futures together, a living example of metaphor. The way is toward simplicity, it is an uncomplicated *attitude* filled with inspiration, reaching into the depths of meaning for affirmation.

If we are to be responsible for the creation of our own futures, they are in effect then, handmade futures. The choice of what they shall be should be our own. But we are opting for an even closer relationship to the meanings to which we give rise in our everyday ways of living. We want our meanings to be as delicate as flowers, rooted in the fertile soil of everyday life, with a spirit that sails on the wings of a butterfly. We want to give expression to the wonder of simply being alive and let our world reflect the marvels which are to be found.

Each of us is a unique and individual being, bound together by our nation, our heritage and our own will to be. We want to look at unremembered pasts and seek out the feels that one can see, like artists

capture on their canvasses, ones that speak a language of a concrete and universal appeal. Artists have a definite hand in our futures as they capture living truths and externalize the magic in moments, drawing us in and together as only they know how. They speak with color and form, a language needing no words. They work in the depths of what it means to be alive. We too can paint our own path and in a unique way, the future is ours together.

The handmade future is an opportunity to recognize and re-affirm that we are in the midst of creating for our own the meanings of an aware life together. We do not exist outside or independently of one another but we are simply one, we are all one. We are all differently that which we behold and that which flows through us. We are uniquely the same.

What we are speaking to here is that people from every walk of life, of unique and varied biographies all share a common spirit of being. This is one which allows us to return to the touch of our lives. *The double possibility of touch brings forth the possibility that as we touch others we become in touch with ourselves.* Touch may seem a strange sort of word in a time where everyone is encouraged to keep to themselves. Touching is not encouraged. For those who insist on such blatant attempts at intimacy, social rapprochements abound. Touch is only a first step and quite essential in lending a hand to the creation of our futures. For touch is a willingness to reach out, to share, simply just to care. How many do you know and even yourself, do you readily reach out to others whom you meet? To those you know? To those for whom you care? Touching is the reflection of genuine interest and concern, an expressed openness for life. Those who are afraid to touch, live only in their minds. Their bodies have become a thing to be watched over and controlled, rather than a true expression of a deeply felt meaning or attitude toward life, a true expression of being. We like people who touch our lives as we touch theirs. They are the ones who seem willing to share. Being in touch gives to each the possibility for growth.

Growth is a fertile term, for it means to allow for natural rhythms to mature and to bring to fruit all the promise held within. Growth is *harmony* as it is an integration of that which rises out of the old and simultaneously gives rise to the new. The simple wonder of it all is a true expression of the attitude and lifestyle toward which we are working. Simplicity is a goal to be achieved, not a condition to be taken-for-granted. Simplicity in a mechanized and technological world is a very complex matter. To live life has become a task but the complications involved in creating an uncomplicated lifestyle are very much worth the time and effort.

Today's time is worth more than ever before. Time is of the essence of the structure of modernity and most of us live in a time which definitely moves of its own accord, ignoring the natural flow of living. We structure

our lives in such a way that we can eventually no longer live within that structure. We run, we dash and we hurry, just to see our lives run away from us before we have had a chance to discover just exactly what it all means and where it is that we might fit.

The time is now and the way is our future, the people are our own. Our people are our futures, as ours may be theirs and for this we may be grateful. To move with and not away from is our key and live as we know there may be no tomorrow. It is *in* us to see that without each other there would be no other way other than to remain as that which we already are. We each can help the other be. It may seem romantic but being in love with life is the only way to be more.

Our handmade future with those for whom we care and with whom we share, are the futures for only which we recently hoped to dare. Each of us is an agent for the destiny of us all and what would you like for that to be? Those of us who care about our own created time are looking to each other and the simple wonder of it all. We are looking for the closeness and the intimacy of which we have been so deprived. It is a spiritual bond which helps to keep us alive. The handmade future is carved from the block of meanings in our lives, shaped and fitted, expressing a sharing of our very own lives. Time and space are simply mediums of art to be created by those who dwell within them, to give form and color to the living. We live in our time and in our time we die but our handmade futures live on as though and as if we shall continue forever.

We live as though we are what we will become and touch each other as if there would never be a next time. Today is the lifetime that we live through each day. What we mean and what we are here to say is that tomorrow is the future which is handcrafted today. So in the world that you create where is it that you fit? What does it all mean? When are you listening to what you have to say? Watch and listen, did you really love being alive today? What we are asking is simply this, how much are you in touch with your own life? What does it mean to you and how is the creation of your own future to come about? Will you grow it for yourself or will you depend on others to create it for you?

In the handmade future we are looking for creative and artistic ways to bring forth the meanings of our time together. We want to fully feel the sense of life, to touch the vitalness of one another's lives and bring into the open all promises hidden within. We want to share in our own created destinies. We want to know that we are alive and we want to recognize that we are not alone. Together we are responsible for the meaning that this bears. We are and we become through each other and not entirely on our own, as we shape ourselves through the hall of mirrors into which we gaze. We become what we create and create what we become. There really is no

other way, at least not for those who care or dare to create that which they have dreamed. To create for ourselves means that we are the guardians of the future. What we do, what we become and who we are is, in essence, the future of tomorrow. For in the future the past is embodied with modification and the actualization of what is now. To live only in the present is a misnomer. For one is a synthesis of what was and what one is to become.

The meanings in our lives and the answers to the questions are expressions of our experience, for our experience makes us what we are. We are then striving to get in touch with what we have been through during the years to bring us to be what we are now. For what we have been and what we are now is only a premonition of what we will be tomorrow. To become is a truly magnificent quest. It is not simply the following of that which was but a free and responsible choice of what shall be.

But then, what shall we be? Whom shall we become and where shall we go? These are very personal and profound questions. For that which questions the meaning of being asks very serious questions indeed and we are asked what are you to do with that which has been so graciously given?

This is a difficult question to face. For what are you to become and where is your place? The meanings of our lives have become the most important and comprehensive questions. From the days of myth and legend, fairytale and fiction, we see the dreams and inspirations of humankind unfold before our eyes. What is our future and what can it possibly mean? Have you ever reckoned with the possibility of your demise? Well, if you have then you know what we feel. If you have not then for you we truly feel.

Today there is great controversy over the self. It is existential as it happened to us. We are what we do and we become what we will do. The self is not a one but one of the ones that can be. But what, we ask shall that be? In the creation of our futures we are to see beyond that which we are, that which we do, to that which we dream ourselves to be. We are what we behold and we behold what we have become but to move any further takes a direct and sensitive seed.



Sunnie D. Kidd has published several books and articles in philosophy, psychology and spirituality.

Jim Kidd, Ph.D., teaches at the University of San Francisco.