



**Some thirty years I searched for a master swordsman.  
How many times leaves fell, how many times branches burst  
into bud.  
But from the instant I saw the peach flowers blooming,  
Now no more doubts, just this!**

**~ Lingyun, 9<sup>th</sup> century Chinese Chan (Zen) master**

Beauty of the sunlight falling on a tall vase of red and white carnations and green leaves on the altar in the novitiate chapel. The light and shade of the red, especially the darkness in the fresh crinkled flower and the light warm red around the darkness, the same color as blood but not 'red as blood,' utterly unlike blood. Red as a carnation. [Red as *this particular* carnation, I would say, and trust Merton would agree.] This flower, this light, this moment, this silence = *Dominus est* [God is!], eternity! Best because the flower is itself and the light is itself and the silence is itself and I am myself...

~ Thomas Merton

(from a 1958 entry in his personal journal;  
in *A Search for Solitude*, 1996, p. 164,  
bracketed gloss added)

**Only human beings have come to a point where they no longer know why they exist. ...[T]hey have forgotten the secret knowledge of their bodies...**

**~ John Fire Lame Deer, Lakota Sioux  
(Lame Deer & Erdoes, 1972, p. 147)**

**The point is to make intimate contact with the real world, real self. *Sacred* refers to that which helps take us (not only human beings) out of our little selves into the whole mountains-and-rivers mandala universe.**

**~ Gary Snyder, *The Practice of the Wild*, p. 94**

**There are no unsacred places;  
there are only sacred places  
and desecrated places.**

**~ Wendell Berry,**

**from “How to Be a Poet (to remind myself)”**







**Deep calls to deep  
in the voice of your waterfalls.**

**~ Psalm 42:7**

**Nature has no ego.**

**Grape meditation.**

**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

**Christmas Sermon on Peace, Christmas Eve 1967**

**(Three months before he was assassinated in that terrible racist attack.)**

Now let me suggest first that if we are to have peace on earth, our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation; and this means we must develop a world perspective. No individual can live alone, no nation can live alone, and as long as we try, the more we are going to have war in this world. Now the judgment of God is upon us, and we must either learn to live together as brothers or we are all going to perish as fools.

Yes, as nations and individuals, we are interdependent. ...It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. We are made to live together because of the interrelated structure of reality. Did you ever stop to think that you can't leave for your job in the morning without being dependent of most of the world? You get up in the morning and go to the bathroom and reach for the sponge, and that's handed to you by a Pacific islander. You reach for a bar of soap, and that's given to you by the hands of a Frenchman. And then you go to the kitchen to drink you coffee for the morning, and that's poured into your cup by a South American. And maybe you want tea: that's poured into your cup by a Chinese. Or maybe your desirous of having cocoa for breakfast, and that's poured into your cup by a West African. And then you reach for your toast, and that's given to you at the hands of an English-speaking farmer, not to mention the baker. And before you're finished eating breakfast in the morning, you've depended on more than half of the entire world. This is the way our universe is structured, this is its interrelated quality. We aren't going to have peace on earth until we recognize this basic fact of the interrelated structure of all reality.

**I make life what it is; life makes me what I am.**

**...Such is the I that is life, the life that is I.**

**~ Eihei Dogen,**

**13<sup>th</sup> century Japanese Zen master;**

**from *Shobogenzo*, “Zenki,” in Kim, 2004, p. 172**

**The human is more a mode of being of the planet  
rather than a separate being on the planet.**

**~ Thomas Berry, YouTube video**

**We are human only in contact, and conviviality,  
with what is not human.**

**~ David Abram,**

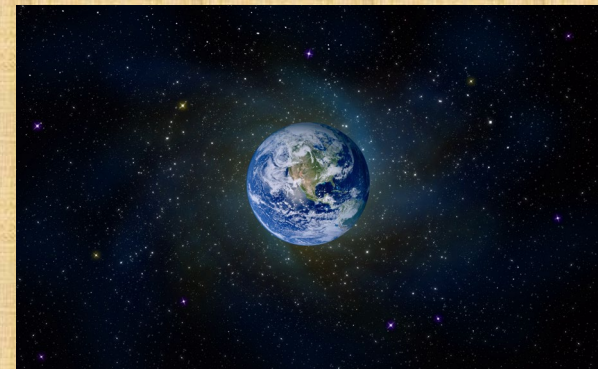
***The Spell of the Sensuous*, p. 22**





So my contemplative practice now. It is not just the bucolic world: 'Let me get into my garden and be in my paradise mind....' I feel like I'm coming as a nurse, tending a patient, something that is injured. I mean I never said that before, but that is true. I did use to come to the natural world like a child nursing. ...That is how I come to the mystery of God. I just sat. I let myself be held. I always felt held because I felt like this was the great embrace of the mother. And now, I feel, oh my God, my mother is dying. It is a deep suffering.... This is almost like an existential dissonance... It is a profound confusion in me, Will, and I am grateful we can talk about this, because it is a problem of faith now. It has moved into that area. ...I never thought I would live to see this happen to the life systems of the planet, to the body that is the great body, that is the mother body. That is for me the sacrament of God. I do not know what is going on in the rest of the universe. I don't know how many of these little blue gems there are. But for me, it is an attack on God. I almost cannot even say more than that because I could burst into tears.

~ Nora, educator, musician, composer





- Ecopsychology explores and addresses the psychological dimensions of our relationship with the rest of nature and the ecological dimensions of human psychology, so as to serve the **mutual well-being** of humans and the more-than-human natural world.
- The focus of eco-psychological work is neither human psychology nor the natural world exclusively, but the psychology of the **interdependent relationship** between humankind and the rest of nature.
- The well-being of humankind and of the rest of the natural world co-arise in concert, in a mutually dependent relationship. Lack of well-being is likewise interdependent.
- In this context, well-being includes psychological, socio-cultural, biological, and spiritual dimensions, all inseparably so.

- Our ecological crisis is not only a biological crisis, but more deeply an **ethical (interrelational) crisis of *consciousness* and *culture***.
- Human psychological suffering involves not only existential, intrapsychic, interpersonal, and socio-cultural dimensions, but also our alienation from and destruction of the more-than-human natural world.
- The suffering and death of the beings, presences, and community of nature are due primarily to human suffering, that is, to confusion, fear, and greed giving rise to destructive world-views, socio-cultural structures, and actions (both individually and collectively).

**Be still and know that I am G-d.**

**~ Psalm 46:10**

**Nature of Place Symposium  
Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens  
Pittsburgh, PA  
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**The Love of Life and the Life of Love:  
Exploring the Psycho-Spiritual Implications of Biophilia**

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