

ATTRACTION

By Joseph Britton



photo by Randy Siegel

I began this journey by writing about my *attractor*, that mysterious force that drives our desires, illumines our mind, and fires the pain of love. On a more down to earth level, like taking a walk, vacuuming in the living room, or eating extreme chocolate how does this attraction between two individuals take place? And if she and he are drawn to one another, what is it that attracted him, and why does her heart burn?

To begin, we must first look at beauty, a gift to all humans from the gods of life, that seems to naturally arise from within. Does the flower exude beauty, or do I give it beauty? Where is beauty's source? Maybe from: the unconscious environmental imprinting during early childhood, i.e. similar faces and body shapes of the people that surrounded us in our youth are considered to possess *true* beauty; the release of sexual pheromones that stir the yearnings of the heart in those who are receptive; the spoken voice that resonates with warmth, truth and poetry; athletic running that is strong and purposeful; graceful, confident walking that soothes and assures; an intellect that blends knowledge with compassion; eyes that brightly shine with a deep knowing; or for some, meeting again after many lives of loving, longing, tears and joy our lost soulmate; for the romantic in us, these dreamy notions are attractive.

It's easy to see why couples' advice has been around since the Garden of Eden; so many desirable things to be attracted to. A popular theme in relationship counseling today is that we are drawn to the one who balances our strengths and weaknesses; this includes the other holding something that we need, like warm hugs, but initially can't give it. Once the other person surmounts this difficulty and, in a natural way, gives the needed form of love, then both are set free. This does not necessarily correspond to her feeling of, "You've got what I want," as that may not be what she needs.

For many cultures, attraction arises after putting together a puzzle comprised of two incomplete humans whose parts of race, intelligence, financial standing, community influence, character traits and personal virtues must properly fit together. With the blessing of their god, the two souls come together as a unified picture destined to follow the true way of the community. Love follows later.

With any of these combinations or conditions in place, the arising of heartlove, one might think, would be commonplace, flowing with the ease of a warm spring breeze. In day to day life though, in going about our business, this is not so.

For some, love seems to appear suddenly, a boon from the heavens. For most, romantic attraction requires practice. Yes, practice in being happy, kind, giving, unselfish, caring, playful, genuinely warm towards another, open to feelings that allow love in, and willing to feel the pain of longing. Being a loving person is never perfected, it`s always a practice that we work on. So easy to do, so easy to not do.

The following pages will take a ride through the land of poetry, stories, philosophy, psychology, contemplation, imagination, and the wonder of love.

Enjoy this universal journey of attraction to the heart of your life.

Pain and Ecstasy
forever embraced
whirling together
on the dance floor
of my life.

Joseph Britton JB

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THE SEARCH



My usual self does usual things in quite the usual ways. Unexpectedly though, there are moments when I begin to feel, to see, to hear a more fundamental source that enriches this moment. I can feel my heart beating a little faster; my breathing quickening.

Flying
 into the sunset awake
Traveling
 among the evening stars alive
Returning
 in the morning singing
Touching
 the hand of a lover
Falling
 into life`s drama
Kissing
 and being kissed
Exploring
 the curving mountain trails
Drinking
 the refreshing waters
Lost
 in the flower`s fragrance
I look for *Attraction*.

I am projected into space, and something wonderful is happening to me, yet I know not what, nor where. Something is moving inside of me. It feels physical, yet it`s deeper than that.

I shudder as she touches me, and am enchanted by her soulful voice. For one moment, from the corner of my eye, I see her move. A playful shimmering of white violet softness laughs and draws my body. Wanting to run after her, I know not which way to move, if only I could move.

These internal murmurings of excited expectation, arrive mysteriously, then disappear back into their source. Part of the coming and going of all life.

In 2003, I spent my summer days walking through the old mountainside villages in southern Spain. One early evening, I stopped at a riverside café, on the plaza next to the majestic Alhambra. This exquisite, yet bold, 14th century Moorish palace, sits atop a small mountain, adjacent to the sparkling river Darro.

In that moment, gazing up at the deep eternal night sky, I realized *Journey* has carried me here.

While surrounded by the stark, bright white, mountain villages of Andalusia; smelling the warm, richly aromatic, gently spiced olive oil drenched Spanish food; sitting by the river listening to classical Spanish guitar as dancers beat my heart and the cool Granada evening breeze kisses my face... I am transported.

In sipping steamy rich cinnamon hot chocolate
by the moonlit river
 reflecting the Alhambra
the classical Spanish guitar colors my brain
 with melodies of life`s passions
the red skirted flaming lips flamenco dancer
 held by her man of intense deep blue forever eyes
with their legs intertwined rhythmically pulsating
 the smooth black stone floor
as the Granada evening
 caresses the longing gathered in my soul
I look for *Attraction*.

Away from life`s demands: the daily duties of home, money making work related responsibilities, schedules that demand our time, important obligations to others, thoughts of past and future, it`s truly wondrous, and fortunate, to absorb, to be within, to be attentive to the unfolding of new life that is appearing at this moment. It can, at times, reveal our more perceptual self.

The music begins to play, lifting me into reverie. Is that an accordion changing to piano overlaid with cello melting into *her* cinnamon voice? Now they move together, flying through new soundscapes. My body is alert. I listen, yet it`s flowing melody I see. The sounds, distinct with color, merge and change. Some colors glow hot, others cool my ears. They dance. Drawn in, I must follow this procession. I begin to dance.

In this life we are forever being pulled along, drawn forward, running toward a feeling, a goal, a dream, an object, a memory, and strongest of all, a lover.

Within my *attraction*, I am focused, one pointed, of single mind, sometimes no-mind, meditative, seduced, all powerful, powerless, ecstatic, pained, pushed toward and pulled along. Who is in control here? Awareness floods my conscious mind. Feeling drives my body. Emotion colors both. I`ve leaped out of my cool, rational process. What is *it* that is attracted and to what is *it* attracted to, in other words, what is the *it* that I am?

Inspirational spiritual teachings and abstract philosophical ideas rush through my brain. I suppose that is where they rush to, or collect in, or are manufactured by. They coalesce into acceptable symbols that seem to give it all some form of multi-dimensional meaning. Now I can say, "I know what *it* is!" Of course I don`t, but I need to think I do. So, getting back to *it*, the Hindu might speak of *atman* the re-incarnating essence of self. The Christian proclaims the rapturous heavenly journey (for some) of the *spirit*. The Muslim finds his *soul* rewarded in the paradise of milk, honey and cool, flowing waters. The Buddhists chant *it* with - 'form is *emptiness*, emptiness is form, no ignorance and no end to ignorance, no virtue, no evil, no this, no thing, nothing.' At times, we feel we are aware of *it*, for we have named *it*.

Okay then, what is *it* that writes these words that we are looking at and internally hearing? All of me, or not me? I suppose *it* could be the evolutionary end point of a genetically influenced, self-organized, piece of the consciousness pie? As Alan Watts put it, humans are 'the nerve endings through which God experiences Himself.' Does *it* take *its* orders from God? What is deciding *what*?

Maybe the source of my attraction is God the Manifester, the One who ceaselessly nurtures and abundantly provides.

"*God is my customer, He takes me up for only He can purchase,*" proclaimed by the 13th century Sufi mystic Jalaluddin Rumi.

In wonder, I am drawn to a transcendent Love. I imagine (or try to) a Love ineffable beyond my most fantastic dreams. I want to bring this Love down to my level, closer to home. Yes, that must surely be it, this Love is one Love and I return to myself as the one who is pushing toward and being pulled along. As the Sufis put it, "None loves God but God" (2005). I like this aspect of self-elevation, but I still return to my initial inquiry, 'why am I drawn to what I seek?' Easy, available answers surface - self-fulfillment, gratification, indulgence, pleasure, maybe pain,

curiosity, to feel Creation. In pursuit, surely my quest will be rewarded, “Seek and ye shall find.” Hopefully that which I pursue will willingly give of itself and I will know her heart.

I stop for a moment to reflect upon the words of the Buddha, ‘Ceaseless grasping at desire or running away from our fears bind us to suffering.’ This sounds true and feels true and needs to be absorbed fully. I sense though my attraction is occurring on a more fundamental level necessary to what makes a human···human.



MY ATTRACTOR



In my life, from moment to moment, I walk through the space before me and feel the wind of time blowing against my face. I am attracted to something in the future. It is my *attractor* pulling me. A desire to consummate with my *attractor* drives me unceasingly forward. My heart beats faster as I feel my way through the brush. “It’s been here all the time” echoes through the halls of my mind. ‘Yes, that’s it,’ I proclaim.

‘The truth is at hand. It shall set you free.’ What is my *attractor* pulling me towards? ‘Look deeply within then you shall know your destiny’ or ‘There’s but a thin veil separating you from the Way, the Truth, and the Life,’ so many seem to have the Answer. I continue walking forward.

What is lying so heavily on my heart?

The space can be heavy and dull, or light and fresh; the time stretched, or crunched. Space can be ripped. Can it be broken like a heart? Lost in time, I feel the future. Upon meeting my *attractor*, and fully engaging in its presence, the space and time fall away. Sometimes the meeting is sublime; sometimes, hell clearly defined. Nothing exists but my *attractor* and me. We are

one, eternally. There are no limits to this feeling. It is spread throughout the reality that has engulfed me.

How did I arrive at this place? As a human, I have been given the gift of imagination. It is my bridge to the future where my *attractor* awaits me. In acknowledging my good fortune of possessing imagination, a privileged sense overcomes me. I am life. However, I begin to wonder about my *attractor*. Is not the bridge built for two-way traffic? I have imagined my *attractor*... and my *attractor* has imagined me.

She longs for my mouth to drink her cool waters, for my hand to touch her warm earth, for my face to be smiled by her sunlight on a summer morn newly born. I imagine her. She imagines me.

Not all is love and light. An *attractor*, waiting in a field of disharmony, may bring great harm to me. In being drawn towards the *attractor*'s embrace, reality shifts. What I see may be clear coherence, or delusive distortion.

I suppose this is where the Buddha's teaching comes in regarding 'grasping at or running away from' desires. It is also the point of discernment and discrimination.

In allowing my self to move into the stream of attraction I can go as the current takes me, a free spirit traveling with the unfolding of life. I can try to control the movement, the direction, the speed, the force, but can I hold the wind in my hand? As a child of 5 years old, I tried to hold a bee in my hand's grasp. So, soon, my hand was a floating, flaming red, balloon with little fingers popping out. Or, I can find balance in riding the life boat down the rapids; no oar to control my passage, merely my wit, clarity, and sensitivity to the changing waters to guide my way.

BEAUTY



Life is attractive. At first, it would be easy to say my attraction is towards beauty. Over the winter, I had been observing an old tree, gnarled, hard and twisted, almost dead. Why doesn't it just fall over, lie down with its barkly arms contorted upwards, and transfigure back into the earth? One early morning, hurrying along to meet my day's deadlines, in glancing over my shoulder it compelled me to look at it...closely. With the arrival of the warm spring light, it had defied me. This long weathered, dark rooted man of the earth was offering me the most delicate, sweet, white pink, cherry blossoms. How could this be? The next day, these petals were spinning and floating on rafts of air soon to sensually paint the small waterway that moved downward through my neighborhood. To the sea they then traveled providing a colorful festival for its watery residents.

So, what is this beauty that captivates life? Is there a form that universally beholds beauty? A form that all people of all cultures and ages agree, "Ahhh, yes, that is beautiful!" Could it be a rose, a new born baby, a sunset over the ocean, a poem, a song, a face? Most people would say 'Yes, these could hold beauty.' Yet, are they holding beauty? Is beauty a part of their intrinsic nature? Does Cupid dip into

their nectar with his bow then pierce my heart blinding me to all but the blooming flower before me? Without my eyes to acknowledge it and my fingers to touch its silky petals, does this white lily floating on the pond have beauty? Or do I bestow beauty upon it? In my grumpiness can I *beauty* i.e. see beauty and confer beauty? When I am *beautying*, I feel I have met my Maker.

Maybe we need to get more logical, more precise, as astrophysicist Mario Livio (2009) says, “Beauty is symmetry.” In this regard he is referring to symmetry as “immunity to possible changes” as in the patterns of a snowflake rotating about its center, wallpaper design, gravity, mathematical laws, and the `golden ratio` (a ratio approaching 5:3) as found in architectural design, paintings, book designs, and conch shells. Beauty through the eyes of a math endowed mind.

Can we be human without beauty?

Often I have been drawn to the ecstatic beauty of the mystical state, at times arrived at by the breathing, visualization, sound, or focusing techniques found in the ancient Christian Centering Prayer, Islamic Sufi practices, yoga meditations or indigenous peoples` spiritual rites. But I am always drawn back to the ineffable clarity and beauty that is found in this moment here in the field of my reality.

*"Drifting pitifully in the whirlwind of birth and death,
As if wandering in a dream,
In the midst of illusion I awaken to the true path;
There is one more matter I must not neglect,
But I need not bother now,
As I listen to the sound of the evening rain
Falling on the roof of my temple retreat
In the deep grass of Fukakusa."*

— Eihei Dōgen (1200 - 1253) Zazen master and founder of Soto Zen Buddhism, (1997, Heine)

CHANGE



All things change. At times I try to control this, but must inevitably surrender to it. One morning, as a teen-ager, I was plunged into the mysterious euphoria and deep beating of my heart. My vision was filled with the movement of my newly found love. How wonderful and glorious these thrilling feelings rising through my body. I then picked up a book of aphorisms. The page opened to, 'All things change, nothing is permanent.' My chest tightened. I called out, 'Is it the way of love to visit my home, exchange life`s fancies, fill my cup with her nectar, embrace in celebration, then shimmer into memory?' This idea of change unsettled my love dream. I sat with it for days, months, years.

I`m reminded of the teachings of Uchiyama Kosho Roshi, the 20th century Zen master (2004) of how the self is quite like the flame of a candle. As the wax melts near a lit wick and burns it emits light near the tip of the candle that appears as a more-or-less fixed shape. The flame, the form, appears to not change. It`s a ceaseless flow that depends on the wax, the air, and its surroundings. What we call *I* is similar to the flame, a ceaseless flow.

The nature of energy is to move, and to change all form. Nothing escapes this dance, not even *nothing*. It`s an endless coming and going.

All things interact on multiple levels with all other things. We try to make sense of it by naming these phenomena - electromagnetic fields, gravity, light, heat, sound, resonance, morphogenetic fields, weak and strong attraction, spirit, interdependent co-arising, and sub-atomic particle pair interaction. Interdependent co-arising, in Sanskrit, *pratitya-samutpada* and the Japanese word *innen-shoki*: meaning each discreet being supports, conditions, and affects the manifesting, existing and dissolution of all life. To exist is to be interdependent. To observe something is to change it, and be changed by it. Love is a *change agent*. We make Love. We give Love. We receive Love. We are changed by Love.

The thunderheads ride across the sky proudly displaying their power. They flex their dark forms and throw light spears at any entity who challenges their might. The sky rumbles and flashes colors. The earth shakes and cries out in ecstatic expectation. The thunderheads rise in excitement. Exploding open, their waters burst forth, moistening the valleys below. All is lost. All is gained. Renewal, contentment, peace. The golden sunlight streams through the emptied thunderheads. The white lily in my garden opens her smiling face. Everything shines. The lovers` embrace.

The theoretical physicist Heisenberg once posited, "What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our way of questioning." The observation and measurement, of sub-atomic particles, are *change agents*. Scientists intervene and explore nuclear worlds using energy sources such as infra-red, ultra-violet light, laser, radiation, sound, and particle accelerators. Our travels into these minute worlds change the space, time and nature of its occupants. It`s like the finger of God coming into *our* world.

Our observation is also *virtual*. We use energy explorers to travel into the unknown and bring back information about the landscape and life in sub-atomic worlds. On a human scale, it would be similar to the Mars Rover touching, sensing, seeing and testing the Martian soil, all forms of a virtual extension of ourselves.

HOLDING US TOGETHER



photo by Naomi Ono

There`s another interaction though that holds my interest: direct communication with the object of my attraction. When my eyes join with the white lily, love holds us together. I bring out its beauty, it brings out mine. My heartbeat and breathing change. The lily seduces me. I send back my willingness to merge. In the moment of emotional embrace my

earthly work and worries dissolve. I feel good, the other feels good. The field that joins us is goodness. From moment to moment, each of us changes, thereby affecting change in the other. The stronger the union, the stronger the affect, until we break the connection and fade into the background of each other`s life space.

I suppose the object of my attention could be a frog, but you know, the frog could be an enchanted princess; or the ragged man knocking on my door... Jesus in beggar`s clothing.

With a partner in attraction a mood is created. Fully engaged in the moment a kiss, hug, touch, or whisper is all that exists.

In biting a juicy, sweet apple the apple and I exchange sweetness. We have come together to make sweetness.

Sweaty, hot and thirsty I drink cool, pure, refreshing water. In that moment, the essence of our relationship is refreshment. The water refreshes me. I refresh the water.

Touching the little foot of my young daughter, love moves from and into my being. We called each other to be in love.

*I said, meet me in the garden.
You know the one--
it is called Smiling Spring.
There are nightingales chirping away,
wine and candle lights,
and companions as soft as
pomegranate blossoms.
You think this all would sound so perfect!
But without you by my side,
what use is the Smiling Spring?
And when you are with me,
what use are pomegranate blossoms?*

Rumi, translated by Shahram Shiva (1999)

WABI SABI EYES



The bride looks into her lover`s eyes. He is old. Valleys rise and fall on his prairie face. Deep eyes, catchers of pain, filters of life, givers of hope, soul smilers, oh how he shines upon her. He glows in maturity and grows in light. His life burnished in the drama of living long. The bride sees her lover with *wabi - sabi* eyes.

Wabi-sabi, the light dancing with shadow. It draws out our yearning for harmony, tranquility and simplicity. Andrew Juniper (2003) defines this mysterious quality of *wabi-sabi* as “an understated beauty that exists in the modest, rustic, imperfect, or even decayed, an aesthetic sensibility that finds a melancholic beauty in the impermanence of all things.”

The Stoic aesthetic expressed by Marcus Aurelius Caesar in his *Meditations* approached the sense of *wabi-sabi*. ‘...We ought to observe also that even the things which follow after the things which are produced according to nature contain something pleasing and attractive. For instance, when bread is baked some parts are split at the surface, and these parts which thus open, and have a certain fashion contrary to the purpose of the baker’s art, are beautiful in a manner,

and in a peculiar way excite a desire for eating. And again, figs, when they are quite ripe, gape open; and in the ripe olives the very circumstance of their being near to rottenness adds a peculiar beauty to the fruit. And the ears of corn bending down, and the lion's eyebrows, and the foam which flows from the mouth of wild boars, and many other things- though they are far from being beautiful, if a man should examine them severally- still, because they are consequent upon the things which are formed by nature, help to adorn them, and they please the mind; so that if a man should have a feeling and deeper insight with respect to the things which are produced in the universe, there is hardly one of those which follow by way of consequence which will not seem to him to be in a manner disposed so as to give pleasure.'

Though Marcus Aurelius Caesar artfully suggested his glimpse of *wabi-sabi*, to understand its true nature one must, for the moment, journey through the historical psyche of the Japanese; there you will encounter *wabi-sabi* at every turn.

Wabi appears as a "philosophical" archetype of refinement, solitary beauty, respect, and impermanence. It surrounds, and is acquired by, natural materials and art, with age. In times past in Japan, the wandering Zen monk nurtured *wabi*. This life perspective began to appear in the Kamakura period from 1185-1333. The struggles of living and old age were deeply viewed as a form of beauty. Chan (1988) called it "freedom from attachment, and subtle profundity."

In later years in Japan *wabi* appeared as a solitary, non-attachment to forms and ways. Today, *wabi* is a reflection of contentment with simplicity, and freedom from ornateness or indulgence.

Sabi is more objective as it refers to an "aesthetic" given to an object, art form or the action of nature's creation. It's the patina of age. It's irregular, reflective, unpretentious, and ambiguous.

Chan refers to *Sabi* as "austere sublimity and asymmetry" (1988).

A Persian proverb about rugs says, "A Persian Rug is Perfectly Imperfect, and Precisely Imprecise." For me, to see *Sabi* is to feel, to hold, the depths of life, with a melancholic appreciation.

Wabi is attracted to *sabi*. *Sabi* grows *wabi*. They are forever linked in growing wonder within each other.

To examine this sublime profundity, one must walk into the life of Sen no Rikyu, tea master of the late 16th century Japan.

The Seven Rules of Rikyu -

"Make a delicious bowl of tea, lay the charcoal so that it heats the water; arrange the flowers as they are in the field; in summer suggest coolness; in winter, warmth; do everything ahead of time; prepare for rain; and give those with whom you find yourself every consideration" (1979)

To further explain the depth of wabi-sabi, Rikyu quoted the great *waka* poet Fujiwara no Teika (1162-1241) -

*All around, no flowers in bloom
nor maple trees in glare,
a solitary fisherman`s hut alone
On the twilight shore
Of this autumn eve.*

The simple, natural movement of earthy form, like the rough tea bowl that fits my hand, or the weathered elderly couple having reached the glow of maturity embrace one another and speak so eloquently of the moment they face; death that lives in life.

The red-white embers in the after fire. A garden, after years of tidying, upon viewing harmonizes my mind. Simple, common materials, used over and over in a refined way. The slow, controlled body shifting and turning of the Noh theatre players with their baritone droning that lulls me into a deep, dreamy state only to be shaken into alertness, and wonder, by the sudden, shrill notes of the Japanese flute.

Wabi-sabi, enriched by the fires of time, looks over the edge of life and reports back what it has seen.

*To be alone
It is a color that
cannot be named:
This mountain where cedars rise
Into the autumn dusk*

Jakuren, Japanese Buddhist priest and Waka poet, born 1139
Walking a few steps over, and looking through another window, *modernism* comes into view. Leonard Koren (1994) states that '*modernism* is at odds with the principles of *wabi-sabi*.' Koren defines *modernism* as imbuing the: rational, absolute, control of nature, technological, symmetrical, polished, lucid, subjugation of senses, materiality, and functionality of life. On the other hand *Wabi-sabi* respectively captures the attributes of: the intuitive, relative, harmony

with nature, natural, organic, rough, ambiguity, expansion of senses, non-materiality and naturalness of life.

This all makes me reflect upon the philosophical principles underlying today`s American political convictions - that of the Conservatives and their arch rivals the Progressives (formerly the liberals). In this sense *modernism* would be appropriated by the Conservatives to support the idea of moving ahead in a clearly defined, controlled and highly technical way, acquiring wealth and its link to an ownership society all in support of its absolute agenda. Today`s Progressives then have a *wabi-sabi* inclination of flowing with all things natural, cyclical, relative, warm, curved, organic, non-attached, with a sacrifice for the whole.

In taking a step further, and looking through the window of science, Conservatives relate to Newtonian Classical physics with everything being definitely one way *or* another, and the Progressives look at their world through Quantum Mechanics eyes whereby reality often hovers in a haze of being partly one way *and* partly another way, as one`s point of reference and viewing changes.

My diversion of bringing *wabi-sabi* into today`s politics may, at first glance, appear to subtract from its profound, melancholic beauty, yet these underlying political philosophies inform what many people today consider *attractive*.

Shall I eat a *wabi-sabi* breakfast today?

WORLDS SO BIG, WORLDS SO SMALL



photo by Randy Siegel

Having moved into the mysterious and, at times, very weird world of Quantum Mechanics physicist Brian Greene (2005) points out “researchers confirmed that there *can* be an instantaneous bond between what happens at widely separated locations.” In classical physics, normally, spatial separation leads to and implies physical independence. In quantum mechanics, in certain circumstances, there is the capacity to transcend space. Greene adds, “Two objects can be far apart in space, but as far as quantum mechanics is concerned, it’s as if they’re a single entity.” These observations have been made upon entering the extremely small world (small from our perspective) of quantum reality.

To live in this ultra-microscopic world it would be helpful to know some of your neighbors. In riding through the local neighborhoods, it appears that they are divided into races - the electrons, neutrinos, muons, quarks and tau, to name a few. These *lively objects* do the best they can in living together without destroying one another. I suppose I can call them *lively objects* as they are imbued with such activities as arising, moving and vanishing from our perception. Each group tends to exhibit their own cultural biases. Some spin like Whirling Dervishes. Some, like neutrinos, aren't very sociable, passing by, and through; others without even giving a nod. At this point though, I cannot tell you if their behavior stems from nurture or nature. There is a wealth of these particles. How do we keep track of all these little things vibrating within and around us?

This is where *super string theory* enters the stage and puts on a one string show. As Greene explains, in string theory, there's only one fundamental ingredient - the string. A string can execute numerous vibrational patterns thereby creating a wealth of particle species. As a violin string can vibrate in a variety of ways thereby producing different notes, so too, "the different vibrational patterns in string theory correspond to different kinds of particles...producing a specific mass, a specific electric charge, a specific spin, and so on."

In reflecting upon these magnificently tiny *lively objects* that appear, move, bond, and disappear into the void, all completed within a fraction of a second, certainly makes me wonder about my own life. I do basically the same thing, although it seems that I round off my life a bit more...eating pasta, slicing fresh fruit, and inhaling the aroma of freshly baked bread; exercising for fitness; reading all the news that's fit to print; disappearing into a movie; and, oh yes, bonding. Surely these are all significant. Right? And I have so much more time to do all that my heart desires. Looking again though, I have so much time relative to what?

Comparing earthly time to that of a sub-atomic particle, I do have more time. Comparing earthly time to the eternity of the Cosmos, my time is but an infinitesimal point. Besides, with time slowing as the speed of light is approached, relative to say, lumbering earthly humans, if I were a neutrino streaking through the universe, within this world of the minute, treasures, surprises and wonder may be experienced for a very long.

In bonding with another *lively object*, possibly the most fundamental quality and element of existence, *love*, is at work here. I'll state that *love*, at this level, is an element and has a quality, for after all, it is the

world of quantum mechanics we are now delving into. It's like light, which is part particle and part wave...depending upon how you measure it. Getting back to this highly unsociable neutrino that stays slim, nearly massless, by moving around at close to the speed of light, and has no charge for attracting others, it rarely interacts. It seems to be on its own mission going where others dare not go, like passing through solid objects in our world. But for the most part, sub-atomic particles do bond, appearing with another and disappearing together back into the void.

If multiple vibrating *strings* form the foundation of our being, and certain combinations hold physical and character traits, what must that influence be that is passed on through genetic material to our offspring?

I'm reminded of the novel *Notebook* by Nicholas Sparks where Noah and Allie, having reached the fullness of their life as their bodies have begun the Big Journey home, talk about the miracle of love. Hand in hand, lying near one another, they depart. We like to say that *love* is forever. How long is the bonding of the *lively objects* and where do they go? What do they know and what holds them together? Is it love? Their qualities and elements are all inside of us forming our corporeality and contributing to our nature, and in their own way, our nurture.

The power of love - songs, poems, and social movements have rallied around this phrase. Is there a scientifically observable power though that is intrinsic to love? To some, this is an obvious "Yes." To explore this ages old idea, the Institute of Noetic Science in San Francisco carried out a series of experiments (reportedly replicated by the University of Washington and a Swedish university) to study if a loved one's feelings could physically affect his or her partner who was sitting in an electro-magnetically sealed room. 36 couples were studied. For each couple, one person (A) was randomly shown a photo (random in time) of their beloved (B) for 10 seconds. B, isolated from A, sat in the sealed room, wired up, and was tested for changes in blood pressure, body temperature, and brain activity. The results - within 2 seconds following A looking at the photo, there were changes in all of the above measured parameters. Then the measurements gradually flat-lined again. According to the researchers, the odds of coincidence were one in eleven thousand.

On the level of every day life phenomena this couple behavior could be mirroring sub-atomic behavior in what is called, “quantum entanglement” , whereby one particle of a sub-atomic pair cannot be adequately described without fully mentioning its opposite `charge` twin. When one particle is affected, the other is simultaneously affected in like manner; this includes appearing and disappearing. It is conjectured by some scientists that they are connected by an energy wave, and the 2 particles are another way of describing the wave itself.

Elements of a similar nature with opposite charges attract one another. The same applies to objects in our world. As for humans, the charge could be male and female energies. But there is something more to this as I am also attracted to the tulips that pop up in my garden after a cold winter. How do they seduce me to care for them and shower them with love? How do I seduce the rose to release its intoxicating fragrance that lifts me into its thrill of passion? Or the burning magenta sky of a New Mexico sunset that calls for me to clean the air? Is it the arising of a love vibration that rests within all of creation?

WORLDS BENEATH AND BEYOND



Many years ago I was listening to a lecture about Kabir, a mystic saint of India who lived during the 1400s. Kabir was asked by one of his students “How many levels of Heaven and Hell exist?” At the time, this was an important question as the Muslims had clearly defined the nature of the 7 levels of Heaven and the 7 levels of Hell...pomegranates and flowing wine at the top and boiling, disgusting liquid to quench one`s thirst at the bottom. As for the Hindus, concern was about where their soul might journey to following death, along with what level of life they might be blooming into in their next re-incarnation. Kabir answered by saying ‘There are infinite worlds beneath and beyond.’

At the time of the lecture, I was just floating along listening to the speaker getting emotional about the religious turmoil on the Indian sub-continent, half drawn in and half feeling drawn out, when Kabir`s statement, so short and so simple, fired into my brain, straightened my back and adjusted my shoulders. What did that mean... ‘infinite worlds beneath and beyond?’ There was something dynamic, alive, and even sensible about Kabir`s answer. Can religious, mystical answers be sensible? How many times have we earth roamers heard teachers speak to us of eternal Life and the infinite reach of the Lord, ‘World without

end, amen, amen?' Why then would God limit Godness to creating but a handle of heavens and hells, and only one physical universe, with boundaries at that? For an infinite power/being/creator/consciousness as God, it seemed, well...so small.

I'm reminded of the classic Chinese story *Xi You Ji* (*Saiyuki* in Japanese, and in English *the Monkey King - A Journey to the West*), written during the Ming Dynasty (1500-1582). It's considered one of the greatest works of Chinese literature. The story of Monkey is told through-out Asia in plays, books, *manga* and TV shows. It's a mythological adventure set in the Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE). The main characters (using Chinese, Japanese and English names) are Priest Sanzang (aka Tang Xuan Zang) and his 3 mischievous disciples: the monkey god (aka Son Goku or Monkey), the gluttonous pig demon (aka Chohakkai or Pig), and the half water sprite (aka Sha Bojyo or Friar Sand). Many names, yes, but as with so many of our time honored mythical adventures, many countries claim the story as their own. The 4 journeyers are in search of the Buddhist sutra that will save the Kingdom. The story centers on Monkey who possesses great power and once rebelled against heaven; for this, he must wear a head band as a power limiter. The 3 "disciples" confront the nastiest of demons along the way, including each other, in fierce battles with skill, cunning and much laughter. One day, Monkey frees himself of the head band, and escapes. To where? He runs for eternity to the edge of infinity. Satisfied with his cleverness and abilities, he stops. In surveying his surroundings, he realizes that he had run from one side to the other side...of the palm of Buddha's hand.

To bring this theme a *little* closer to the reality of today, a number of years ago while studying how people access reality with Dr. John Beaulieu, I first heard the telling of a story of the great early 20th century philosopher/psychologist William James. He had just finished a talk on Life and the Universe and was approached by a bright - eyed elderly lady. "Very good talk indeed," she said. "But of course, you realize your point about the earth being held up by, and drawn around, the sun is mistaken?" James, in looking deeply at her replied, "And how is that my dear lady?" She confidently spoke of this idea about the earth floating in space as being a bit of nonsense. Rather than resort to scientific 'evidence' he took an inquiring approach. "If the earth does not float in space what holds it up?" he asked. "The earth is carried on the back of a turtle!" Catching his attention James ventured further,

"But my dear lady, what holds the second turtle up?" With a knowing twinkle in her eye she replied, "Mr. James, it`s turtles, turtles, turtles, all the way down!"

So, let`s jump, or imagine, all the way up to a more vast, expansive level, at least more than my present perceptual world of writing, consuming and catching baseballs. In traveling through this greater space perspective, I notice many points of light. One tiny, sparkling sphere is our glorious physical cosmos of planets, stars, galaxies and galaxy clusters, of which, in this grand space, has now become microscopic by comparison. Here, giant lumbering forces eat sweet galactic pie for dessert. Some of these curious giants periodically poke and probe into my world sending mysterious energies and thought forms that affect and change... my life. I understand not what these gods are, or want. Some of them I dream as benevolent and call them my protector. Others stream energies of fire towards me seemingly to manipulate me.

Through relaxing, I try to contact the protectors asking them for guidance and, well, a few favors. I look for signs... dreams, words, a change in the wind. Anything that comes upon me, I look for meaning. It`s all connected, all one, a Yoga, union, one in Spirit, right?

With the bad energy guys, our earthly cultures have tried to appease, befriend or destroy them. Paintings, carvings and statues acknowledge their fierce and mysterious presence. My Tibetan friends draw paintings of these energy deities and call them protectors. My American Indian friends carve their likeness on poles as totems and dance to join with their power and essence. My Japanese and Chinese friends place them before temples bearing their fangs, fire and spears demanding ego-centeredness be left at the gate before granting permission to enter. My Christian friends call this fierce energy Satan, Beelzebub, the devil, and even apple; the evil beast that roams the earth looking to place his mark on your forehead.

To put this all in perspective, the main idea is to gravitate towards the good. But what is it, that`s in us, that sometimes moves toward the...not so good? A common theme in religious mythology speaks to us of a *once upon a time*, and a time it was, when an angel, a god, a son of a god, a bodhisatva, or a worshipped hero fell from grace; maybe the king was wounded; or a most clever trickster had his way. Darkness came upon the land, the rivers dried up, the trees no longer bore fruit, and mothers` breasts no longer gave milk. People lived in fear and

selfishness. Lust, anger, greed, pride and attachment ruled. It wasn't a fun time to be alive dancing through the park with your sweetheart hand in loving hand. One bad apple spoiled it for all of us. We're still working out this karma... flashbacks of bad trips, fantasies that confuse us, addictions that hold us, the romanticizing of war, and feelings of superiority over all things living. Our myths tell us "badness" has been within us from the start.

As "badness" shifts in meaning with the changes in space and time, the Buddhists prefer to look at it as a matter of ignorance causing suffering. Ignorance leads to self-centeredness which in turn leads to anger, greed, pride and attachment; certainly not the conditions for projecting and attracting love, or the plain, simple day to day enjoyment as a relaxing day at the beach with a good book and a loved friend by your side sharing imagination.

IMAGINATION



Life eats life. Animals fight for dominance, for terrain, for mate choice, for money, for satisfaction. Fortunately, there are other ideas on how to be in the lifestream. Cosmologist Brian Swimme speaks of the emergence of human *imagination*. A driving force in evolution is our sexual nature out of which our desires for each other, and our affections and care for one another, arise.

Imagination, what a wonderful word, holds the possibility of humankind finding a different way of being together - living in love, respect and attraction. Instead of purging our soul of bad thought seeds the focus could be on our, and all of life, becoming *becoming*. Oh yes, you are so becoming! Life becomes you.

I suppose we`ve got a long way to go on this one. War has forever been in our collective unconscious creating our mythologies of gods fighting gods, gods fighting demons, demons fighting humans, humans fighting gods. This anti-attraction factor of war lies deeply within our psyche. It fights for survival and then domination. It offers the old familiar rewards of power, glory and control. Yet it serves as a counter-point driving and evolving beauty itself along with our comprehension and appreciation of beauty`s magnificence.

This morning, the early summer rains of Japan, *tsuyu*, have stopped... for a moment. Through my window, a breeze brushes my face cooling this steamy day. Though many of the spring flowers have since returned to the Source, my garden has become verdant and rich with life`s tones. The many shades of green give it texture, depth and color. A number of years back, while looking closely at a Japanese *sumie* painting (black ink on a white backdrop), the tiger, mountains, river, and clouds came alive with pinks, oranges, greens, and blues. Were they moving too?

The green garden and the black *sumie*, attracted me. What was seen? The garden is alive and the painting is just a painting, right? I look out again at a broad, green leaf looking upward. The rain has begun again and the leaf is having its face cleaned; all the better for breathing freely and smiling to its neighbors. In turn, the plant roots will take the rain into itself, purify it and return it to the air. Life exchanges. In one sense, the leaf is an organized vibrating energy pattern that has temporarily found a home in space. I`m reminded of my adventures at the Woodstock Music Festival in 1969. Surrounded by hundreds of thousands of vibrating colorful companions, okay, hippies, I placed my sleeping bag down on the side of the naturally contoured amphitheatre hill. That was my spot for 3 days of wondrous imagining. For this moment, the leaf too has found its spot in the grand matrix of energy and interconnections. Its vibration pattern positions it, shapes it, and tells me it`s a green leaf. Together, we interact. Looking closely at my green garden, I see so many greens. It has become richly colorful.

In another sense, the *sumie* is blackness designed on a 2 dimensional white space. These ink designs comprise black color energy vibrations. Of course some people will say that black is the absence of color. Call it as one may, the vibration we see, we call black. White, being the dynamic blend of all colors within the visual spectrum, compliments the dark void. Each fully acknowledges the outstanding features and uniqueness of the other. White upon black, black upon white. A dynamic tension separates the two, yet a yearning exists for the absorption of one into the other, like lovers in the passion of desire. Heat is emitted where the edges touch. In looking at the whole, colors explode rhythmically moving my universe. My mind dances to this dancing god, *sumie*.

In trying to understand this through physics, specific wave lengths of energy within the visual spectrum went through my eyes and my brain interpreted it as color. Information exchange.

I have chosen life. You might think this is such a preposterous statement, but have you chosen life? My mystic friends tell me that my life was chosen before my birth, in my last incarnation. I was attracted to my birth conditions...father, mother, siblings, environment and even body; ultimately for my growth as a human. I like that idea. A Christian friend, with a wink in his eye, told me that God has a plan for me. With faith (a deep knowing that the Way is the way) heavenly glory, peace and happiness will be mine. I`m attracted to that idea too! My Buddhist friends tell me that through my past actions, and when the conditions were right, the elemental seeds of my mind, body, feelings, will and consciousness merged and formed me. I like team work.

But maybe I`ve been drawn to earth by its intoxicating fragrances.

I`m Lost in the Fragrance of You



For untold millennia, smells have carried the spirit to magical places. These heavenly ointments:

unguents of perfumed, soothing creams;
essences of lavender, jasmine, and rose;
incense of sandalwood, sage and musk;
aromatic herbs of mint, dill and basil;
celestial scented oils of jasmine, lilac and bergamont;
sweet smelling garlands of rose, lily and frangipani;
tears of trees - the aromatic resins of frankincense and myrrh;
the fragrant spices of dill, cardamom, and cinnamon;
and closer to home - warm pumpkin pie, hot baked chocolate chip
cookies, and simmering homemade soup;
and yes, oh yes, the fragrance of a loved one.

Some say these smells are the intermediaries between heavenly spirits and humans, joining the earthy mind with the sublime, showering all with a gentle rain of grace. Others talk of smells being a unifying force, bringing all of life into focus. These essential smells draw me toward my *attraction*.

I`ve thrown away my psychologies and my religions. There`s only love. 🎵 `Love,` said brother John, `is all we need,` 🎵 really!



“Love is that flame which, when it blazes up, burns away everything except the Everlasting Beloved.”

Rumi, *Mathnawi* 5:588-90

ATTRACTION in ACTION



Now that you`ve traveled this far, would you like to move feeling into action? If so, continue by experimenting and playing with the following relationship building exercises.

PARTNER MERGING in Meditation

Let`s join. Sometimes I will use “he” or “she” , but the gender is inter-changeable when doing the exercises.

Sit comfortably, facing your partner. Hold his hands firmly. With tenderness, close your fingers around hers. Begin a very light, gentle, slow deep breathing, matching one another`s. Through the mouth or nose is fine. As this is an exercise of merging, in the beginning some energy is required. Through-out, come back to your breathing. Look into your partner`s eyes. What do you see? Continue to look, while holding your gaze. If possible, do not blink. Tears may roll down your cheeks clearing the eyes that you may truly see. His face may begin to shimmer. Her face may shine with different hues of light. Maybe his nose will stand out, or disappear. Maybe her demeanor will be so bright! or so mournful. Can you capture her goddess radiance? Do you see the divine king before you? For the first time, 3 minutes is fine. In later times, try to build up to 30 minutes of merging breath, eyes, touch and energy.

In a short amount of time there will be a dissolution of separateness. Your two bodies will seem to melt into each other. Thought and feelings become enjoined. There is a union of the spirit. Sit with the feelings. Allow feelings to arise. When the time is right, discuss your experience with your partner. It`s best to listen, without judgment or deep analysis. Asking for clarification is fine. When one is finished, allow the other to speak freely. Stay on the fun, light, playful side.

CHAKRA MERGING Meditation

Sit facing one another. Hold hands. Eyes can be closed (easier for internal visualizing) or looking into your partner`s eyes is fine too.

For five, long, deep breathes together imagine a red beam of red light going between your root chakras (bottom of spine, anal area);

continue with five long deep breathes together and a beam of orange light flowing between your second chakras (sexual organ area);

next yellow light (continue with the breathing pattern) connecting your third chakra (just above the navel);

green light connecting your fourth chakra (at the heart center);

blue light at the fifth charka (the throat);

violet light at the sixth chakra (center, lower forehead);
and white light uniting the top of your heads at the seventh chakra.

Feel and see (imagine) that all light beams are flowing between yourself and your partner, a rainbow connection. Remain seated, for now. With the rainbow light energy flowing between both of you, connecting your chakras and body, begin moving your torso and head in a gentle wave pattern from side to side and forward and backward.

Energy merge with your partner.
Sit and be with the feeling.

SING A SONG, now is a very good time

1. choose one that you both know or
2. listen to a recorded song that you can sing together like karaoke
or
3. find the written words to a song, then
4. hold his hand, look into her eyes, and sing to each other

POETRY

Written for and expressed to your beloved, by you, as in...

*“How could you keep talking about the way it should be,
without even trying to feel my body
so soft and so hot.
Aren`t you sad?
How sad it is.”*

female Waka-poet in Meiji-era, Akiko Yosano

*“Love is the warm glow of dawn
Glistening the cool drop of dew
Resting upon the hot, red lip of the rose”*

JB

COOKING

Over time, as a couple becomes aligned with one another your thoughts and bodies will be influenced by the food you eat. Prepare a fun and delicious dish for your partner and pour 100% joy into the preparation. You can` t cook? With healthy ingredients, lots of loving thoughts, and a little bit of creativity, surely it will bring a smile of endearment to her face and happiness to her tongue.

By the way, extreme chocolate, more than 65% cocoa, by itself, or mixed in with milk, a natural sweetener, and cinnamon then heated and served as the French call *chocolat chaud* can be extremely sensuous.

STANDING

Stand. Hold hands. Face each other. Feel your weight go down into mother earth through your soles, while energy goes up through the top of your head to the heavens.

Supported by the earth, uplifted by the heavens, being together in this moment

WALKING

Feminine qualities - receptivity, creativity (non-linear thought and action), beingness, connections, relationships, fluid

Masculine qualities - doing, structuring and building, linear thought and action, directed, making ideas tangible in the outer world, focused

Walk in a feminine way - fluid and connected to all.
Now walk with a sense of masculinity.

Combine a feminine with a masculine walk.
Gracefully move through a room, a forest, along a riverside, by the beach, together.

DANCING

Moving in rhythm with your loving friend

Mirror your partner`s walking style - watch, then match by walking behind him

Body - He moves his arms, she mirrors the motion
He moves his hands, she mirrors
He dances with his head, she follows
continue with different parts of the body, then switch roles

Chakras - 7 energy centers from the 1st at the base of the spine,
2nd - sex glands, 3rd - solar plexus, 4th - heart center, 5th -
throat, 6th - lower center part of forehead (3rd eye), and 7th
- top of the head (crown)

Both partners are standing

Together, begin moving your 1st charka and mirror your partner partner

Next, match your partner`s second charka movement

Continue up to the seventh (crown) charka on the top of the head, and

Finally - both people together, all charkas together, having a charka matching dance

Free form - she leads by dancing in her unique style. He follows.

Change leader and follower.

Now, both dance together mirroring each other simultaneously

Effortlessly change the dance style

Experiment with new forms of expression, but always staying together, in sync, as one unified body, with two different personalities

LISTENING WITH THE BODY

When the other person is speaking, be conscious of what is happening in your body.

Be aware if specific statements or thoughts by your partner trigger body reactions. If so, focus your attention on how your body is responding. Is it more relaxed, tighter, difficult to breathe, is your heart beating faster, are you cooler, hotter, is your stomach queasy, is your body more awake? Are you drifting away?

When **listening**, keep your breathing long, slow, deep and relaxed. Release judgments, biases and preconceived ideas about the person speaking and the subject spoken about. Hear with a fresh, receptive mind. Observe. Feel.

AFFIRMATIONS

An affirmation is a projection of thought and emotion, by you, that is felt in the mind and body as a truth. Through repetition of the affirmation, while feeling its positive effect in the body, the natural forces of life that sustain our existence resonate with this projection. With focus and clarity the affirmation becomes a reality.

˘Each day our relationship is fresh˘

˘I enjoy my life, and I enjoy being with you˘

˘I support your growth into wholeness, and you support mine˘

˘You are my Beloved˘

The RELATIONSHIP JOURNEY a review
The Romantic and Spiritual path of the heart



*Life is relationship.
Relationship is being alive.
Being alive is to feel.
To feel is to go where true love goes.
I go where true love goes.*

JB

The following is a **reminder** for conscious union

Who can enjoy this union of the heart

Couples

Single friends

Benefits

Spiritual and psychological growth

Transitions and life changes

Being love

Exploring

Repairing

Renewing

Refreshing

Senses wide open

Emotionally feel your partner

Touch with hands of love

See with new eyes

Speak with poetic meaning

Delight with intoxicating fragrances

Listen with your heart

Heart exploring

What does she want

What does he truly need

What are her plans for a full life

What are his dreams now and into the future

Action together as one

Eating

Cooking

Touching

Caring

Storytelling

Singing
Dancing
Couples yoga
Affirmations
Meditation
Healthy lifestyle

Creating

Agreements
Conflict resolution
Goal setting
Support
Foundations
Core values
Clarity
Honesty
Trust
Values
Relationships in other cultures

Where

Romantic local settings
Exotic locations abroad

And Experience

Cultural richness
Delight to the senses
Foods that nurture the soul and satisfy the palate
And above all, a higher romantic relationship with yourself, with your surroundings and with your dear partner

*Let the lover be disgraceful, crazy,
absentminded. Someone sober
will worry about things going badly.
Let the lover be.*

From Essential Rumi by Coleman Barks



ATTRACTIVE PRESENTATION - Merging with your audience

Sitting on the side, awaiting your moment to speak, to present yourself, begin taking light, long, deep breathes. Focus on the flow of your breathing, in and out. Inspiration will naturally arise as this refreshment of life is carried in the breath. Allow the revitalizing air that surrounds you to fill your lungs, your blood, your finger tips, your cells, your nerves, and your brain. Take several, long, slow breathes. Let the spirit of life invigorate you with a gentle and peaceful, yet confident and determined, power. Sit with this feeling of warm energy.

Now, with this energy moving through you and around you, extend it outwards enveloping your audience, whether it`s one person or one hundred thousand. Feel your energy field merging with theirs.

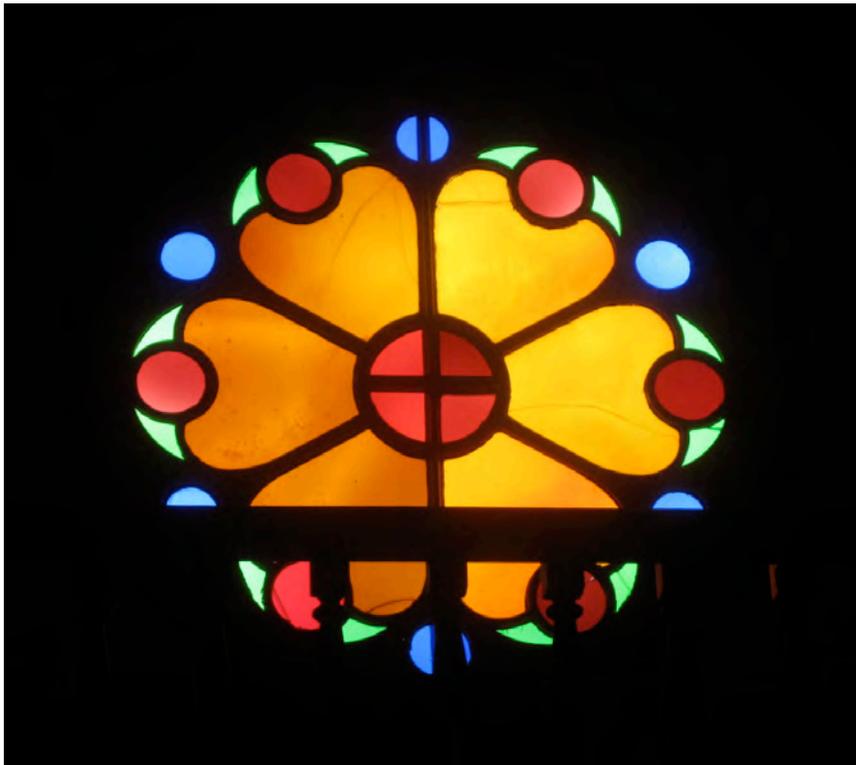
When your name is called walk with strength and poise. Stand majestically. Gracefully thank your introducer while looking at her. Thank the distinguished members present. Look at your audience and acknowledge them through the sparkle in your gaze. Keep the sense that you and your audience are merged in one dynamic energy field. There is no separation between you and them.

Look at one person, as an old friend, and begin speaking your first thought. Look at another person... another new friend, and share your next thought. Continue with this "friendly" conversation for the remainder of your presentation, always keeping in mind that it`s also a performance of the true self whereby voice, movement and words dance with surges of power, light and feeling.

Main points for your attractive presentation

1. *while awaiting* your turn to speak, take long, slow, gentle breathes
2. *fill* your body with life energy
3. *Imagine, envision, and feel* a successful outcome
4. *surround* everyone with your light and energy
5. *speak* to one person at a time, as a friend
6. *remember* bring life to your performance
7. *know* you are confident, dignified and refined

Attractive you are!



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YES TO LOVE

YES TO LIFE

Our universal Y2L Club

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Joseph Britton (JB)

In 1969, a tumultuous time in the States, as a university student studying engineering, Britton was introduced to Mildred (Milly) Johnstone by her niece, Margaret Buchholz, the owner and editor of the Long Beach Island's *The Beachcomber* newspaper. Aunt Milly, as a world renowned tapestry artist, friend of Pablo Picasso, and dance student of Martha Graham, wove mystical tapestry scenes often within the industrial settings of steel mills. For Britton, more importantly she was the grand matriarch of the New York City Japanese tea and Zen Buddhist scene, wherein he was introduced to many teachers, creative thinkers and spiritual explorers of that time.

During the 1970`s and early 80`s, in the late afternoons at Princeton University, Britton taught an experimental class in yoga highlighted with meditation, spiritual movement, and sacred sounds. Earlier in the day on the campus he was an engineer designing energy systems.

Britton has directed a yoga center, and co-founded a holistic health association, along with having studied and practiced Christian mysticism, Sufi dhikr, and Buddhist Zazen.

In Uji, Japan, within the setting of traditional tea farms outside of Kyoto, he had the fortunate opportunity to study for several years personally with the world renowned Zen master, Uchiyama Kosho Roshi, (*Opening the Hand of Thought*) in the tradition of Dogen Zenji, the 13th century founder of Soto Zen.

Britton is the author of the book *Attractive Presentations*; a Professor at Osaka Prefecture University in Osaka, Japan; directs the Y2L Club (Yes to Life, Yes to Love) in Kobe, Japan; and writes stories and poetry