

Chapter Five

CONTROL/RESISTANCE/ACCEPTANCE I

I saw what Alan Watts called the "wisdom of insecurity," a realization that one cannot stop time and change — so why fear them? Make friends with them. There are many things that we cannot control.

LU

AP The Wisdom of Insecurity: Patience, Attunement, Trust.

Hey, A,

. . . .I feel so grateful life has dealt me this particular hand. It's all been great. I can't deny the sufferings, failures or set-backs, because they too helped get me here, just like the successes and accomplishments. Misery, choices. Delights, choices. And here we are. It's all one thing, and it's all good. Blisters and broken hearts hurt like hell, of course, but they also inspire us to research better shoes and can teach us how to love.

My greatest obstacles have been those involved with some sort of "me" inside, a contracted self-sense that feels afraid and needs to feel secure. The need for security caused the fear, and wouldn't-cha know it, fear-based action never made the fear go away! No matter what I did willfully, aggressively, calculatingly, I still felt afraid — and the cycle perpetuated itself. The greater the need for control, the greater the self-sense called "me," the greater the fear and the need for security, yatta-yatta-yatta. (Hamster on the Wheel syndrome.)

However, when I made a friend of insecurity, the "me" inside that felt afraid disappeared. I saw what Alan Watts called the "wisdom of insecurity," a realization that one cannot stop time and change — so why fear them? Make friends with them. There are many things that we cannot control. Therefore, step into the present, the eternal now, and allow whatever is within to sing with its own voice, in its own way, without pressuring it, forcing it, trying to "do" anything whatsoever. Lao Tzu's "wei-wu-wei" principle: action through non-action.

As soon as I learned how to do that, an expansive selfless presence emerged, who was not afraid and who took care of all actions that needed to be taken care of, but did it spontaneously, naturally, without fear, tension, or the compulsive need for control. As Basho once said, "Sitting quietly, doing nothing, Spring comes, grass grows by itself." I guess that is the essence of Trust — the grass *does* come, in its own time, in its own way, by itself. Patience, attunement, trust. Not easy, especially when we grow up in this insane workaholic environment called America.

DS Love Starts Here: Creative Affirmation is the Only Value

Interesting — today while riding in the car with Sonia I mentioned to her that I felt pulled between two poles. On the one hand, I look back at humanity's millennia and see a certain amount of change, a slow, gradual ascension from profound primitive selfishness, into concern for others, into a kind of mental-egoic strength and potential for worldcentric selflessness. But at that point, I also see a locked-in stasis in which egoism, greed, rapaciousness, power tripping and like-minded narcissistic nonsense seem to have reached a murderous standstill.

On the other hand, I feel that if I would presume to love humanity, I must love it *as it is*. That is the only way in which I can contribute to psycho-spiritual evolution. I cannot presume to wait until humanity is "perfect," whatever that means, but must embrace each of us individually and collectively with love, compassion, and

understanding in my heart, *just as we are* — not only for "them," but particularly and especially for myself as an evolving and ever-aspiring human being.

Love starts here and generates the very change that leads to psychological wholeness and spiritually enlightened clarity. Understanding, compassion, generosity, and profound acceptance start here, now, with who we are, right here, in this very moment. Very tricky stuff.

On the one hand, I want to disappear into the bottle or pills or the needle for relief from the madness. On the other, I want to energize creativity to the max. Creative affirmation is the only value.

GS

Yes!

I'm delighted that your friend Martin felt shocked that you aren't as critical as you once were. Yes — you ARE moving along!

Life is fullest, richest, and most creative by virtue of affirmation. I have also found that while a critical mind can be helpful in making distinctions between lies and authenticity, it is only courage, empathy, and Yes! that enables one to connect with and truly understand a work of art or another human being.

Negativity is usually based on fear and a sense of inadequacy, while Yes! nourishes courage, vitalizes love, intensifies creativity, and increases perceptual depth. Judging too quickly is a sign of fear. Looking more closely, examining the issues from multiple perspectives, not being too quick to draw a conclusion — *that* is a sign of intelligence.

Good for you!

TC

Wake Up to Herenow!

One of the reasons I have always enjoyed writing to you is because you are an intelligent, complicated, impassioned guy. You look closely at the issues that confront you — issues that come at you from without, and the subtler issues that raise their question marks from within. You feel things deeply, and you think about them. You look, you see, you watch, you wonder, and you care.

I know you can understand, that when you look at life passing before you in all of its colorful panoramic glory, but reject it because it does not fit your personal desires, needs, or values, that very lens prevents you from recognizing the grace, beauty and poignancy of the passing parade. You know this. You indicate in your letter how it happens with you. You see the life you've lived, but later, not in the now — perhaps the weeping girl before you who only wants to love you and have you love her; the strangely beautiful, provocative, unusual song heard on the radio while lying in bed trying to pass out; the great accomplishments you experienced in the Army but did not appreciate at the time; the extraordinary madness of our aching, lurching, religiously insane human condition on the planet today. You see it, you put a wall between you and it, and later on down the line, you see the beauty and intensity and value embodied in that moment.

All of these things, including the lost, self-centered, unwashed souls sitting at the bar oblivious to your music, constitute the timestream in which your life and mine take place. We too are part of that stream. We too not only observe, but participate. The question becomes, *How* do we participate? With resistance, egoic demands, resentment, comparisons, judgments? Or with recognition that this has always been the way human beings conduct themselves, and there is only one choice: to see clearly, to accept, to embrace and appreciate, to love, and to create — or to push it away, only to feel the beauty of it years later down the line, when it feels safe because it is behind us, and gone, forever gone. Ah, what poignant regret. Do you agree?

And so you raise the central question. How does one learn how to "B-R-E-A-T-H-E"? You already see, without my saying it, the need to regroup and learn how to connect with the living, breathing present moment. It is not so much a matter of outgrowing the fear and rejection of the now, because coming to live this kind of thing is not natural. That is, *we have to learn how to be natural*. Every limitation of perception that hobbles us has been programmed into us. To come to fruition as conscious beings, we have to first unlearn the conditioning that has been inflicted upon us, and thereby open the way for the emergence of our natural selves. You intuitively understand this.

The natural self is open, loving, kind, generous, accepting, appreciative, creative, celebratory. That natural self strives to be heard every moment of your day. That natural self is what gives birth to all of your wonderful songs. It is what attracts you to certain songs and musicians with whom you feel a kinship. It is what manages to create a song such as your "Home With You." It sings through the sludge of all of your fears and resistances, managing heroically to grow like a newborn flower in springtime, pushing its way up through the fears and resentments and comparisons and judgments, finally managing to reach the sunlight — and sing its own song.

When you say you don't know how to break the hold the past has on you, I understand completely. My heart goes out to you. But it's a journey, a work, a pursuit, that is infinitely worthwhile. You begin with what you already indicated you know — the need you feel to wake up to the beauty and wonder of the herenow; the insight that fear and withdrawal are not helpful to you; the instinctive recognition that the "don't hassle me" rejection of life and its sometimes petty and occasionally overwhelming demands is not conducive to affirmation, appreciation and creative energy. These are good places to start: seeing clearly those elements of your personality that help and those that don't.

Are we on the same page?

There *are* ways to go.

JK No Resistance, No Struggle: Such Beauty

Hi, lovely one,

Finally having some gentle rains here, sky overcast nearly to the point of darkness, feels so good, enclosed in the cabin while cozy rain lazily falls outside, washing away summer and autumn's brown dust, revitalizing the leaves, revealing the deep, rich green colors in oak leaves, turning the trunks black under bright green moss. The stream flows more fully now, even as raindrops plip-plop like concentric starlight ripples in crystal clear pools. Great granite rocks shine in subdued light. Everything is coming alive again, washed clean, feeling new strength in the moss and the grasses and the trees and plants throughout the forest. The pine and oak trees that surround the house bend benevolently, gratefully, as if breathing slowly in, out, inhaling clear, clean, cool air. Rejuvenation of sky, earth, streams, stones, waters. . .

There is such quietude and beautiful mystery in the air. Natural sounds — streamwaters, gently falling rain, easy breezes wafting through chill air. The quietude of nature's way. Settle into stillness, let the madness and confusion of glaring sunlight busy-days recede; let the conscious surface-mind evaporate in mist, disappear; settle into complete relaxation, total release, and, yes, gentle rains wash the soul clean, nourish the spirit, bring living waters to the welcoming heart.

No resistance, stony or otherwise; no struggle to alter anything whatsoever; no efforts to change or escape or conquer. Quietude, loving acceptance, rest, release. Doing nothing, sitting still, Spring arrives, grass, flowers, trees grow by themselves. Without struggle, resistance, effort — floating inside the clouds and easy rains, floating inside the dusk-dim earthlight, floating within and among oak leaves, pine boughs, streamside grasses, meshing, blending, merging, disappearing. . . And, yes, the earth receives, and in its time awakens anew. Cycles of light, cycles of soft rains, cycles of night and morning light, cycles of life and death and love and

laughter and tears.

Such beauty in these quiet climes.