

“Every  
path,  
every  
street  
in  
the  
world,  
is  
your  
walking  
meditation  
path.”

Thich Nhat Hanh



[www.morguefile.com](http://www.morguefile.com)

Our mystic is clearly reminding us that wherever we are, and whatever we're doing, there is nothing that can stop us from being present. There is no particular place, action, or state of being that we *must* reach in order for our Presence/Awareness/Consciousness to find its way into the situation. Have you ever wondered why this seemingly obvious and simple directive is so difficult to actually follow in daily life?

Recognizing that we are biologically driven *to move toward pleasure and to move away from pain* opens the door to understanding why this is such a challenging guideline to abide by.

Our entire brain/body is deeply conditioned to *automatically* embrace and seek pleasure, and to *automatically* avoid and evade pain. When a path is filled with unpleasantness or pain and discomfort, it is a rare person who keeps walking without trying to make it different. Ask yourself – and if you can, be ruthlessly honest - do you prefer streets that are filled with enjoyment and satisfaction, rather than ones filled with discontent and despair? Would you rather put your energy into changing those uncomfortable paths *before* you walk them?

Our mystic reminds us that every street and every path provides us the context in which to be Present. Meditation is not only sitting quietly, doing nothing, drinking in the bliss of just Being. Meditation is also mindfully walking the path we're on. It is being Present to our steps as we walk on our journey – and to the emotions we feel as we experience our voyage - wherever the path leads, whatever the street contains.

In a universe grounded in polarities, setting up what you like against what you dislike is what creates the stumbling block to living our Mystical guideline. And this *setting up* happens automatically because it is part of our biological heritage. There is nothing you can do about that. BUT, you can *change your relationship* to the accompanying two strategies that everyone unconsciously and automatically uses:

- work to get rid of what you don't like, OR
- work to hold on to what you do like.

Both lines of attack fail to extend an invitation to your Presence to *be with whatever is happening – be it pleasure or pain*. And this is the kind of invitation required because *both pleasure and pain* are part of our biological heritage.

I invite you to explore this possibility of learning how to even more deeply accept “what is” on each street and on every path you discover in front of you. Presence and Personality live together. One cannot fulfill its purpose without the other. You embody two levels of reality, co-existing and co-creating your journey, moment to moment and step by step.

Please join me again next month for another Reflection. Meanwhile, may every step you take into this New Year become a meditation in movement – wherever you go and whatever you find yourself doing.

Ragini