



Mort Kessler © 2009

“A wise man, recognizing that the world is but an illusion, does not act as if it is real, so he escapes the suffering.”

Buddha

This profound and exquisite guidance from our beloved Buddha can be understood in different ways. If escaping suffering is the goal, there are at least two strategies to help you reach your outcome. First, you can follow the traditional route and transcend, or rise above the illusion, by simply acting as if the illusion is not real.

However, if you are a Marketplace Mystic, you may desire a strategy more amenable to living in an uncloistured, noisy, and fast-paced environment. The strategy here is to live the illusion with as much totality as possible as it unfolds, knowing it is not the final reality, but, moment to moment, is the reality of your body/mind. This not only generates tremendous compassion, it frees you to paradoxically escape suffering by being present to it. This occurs by learning to see through illusion into the reality of its true nature.

An excellent explanation of this is the experience of putting your hand under an electron microscope. Through the lens of the microscope, your hand, as it appears on your arm, disappears. Instead you see its deeper reality – spaciousness filled with atoms and electrons and protons. Is one of these two ways of perceiving your hand

real and the other illusion? Obviously they are both valid perceptions– but the hand on your arm is the surface or superficial view. The spaciousness exposed by the lens of the microscope frees you to catch a glimpse of the hand's deeper nature.

The Marketplace Mystic understands that in the domain of the mind, which includes our psychological, emotional, and physical reality, illusion and reality are an interdependent polar pair. They define each other and thus cannot exist without each other. So, is there truly a reality that lives beyond this polar pair? Beyond our understanding? Beyond the domain of the mind? Is this what our mystic is alluding to? If so, is this reality within our reach and our grasp? Do we really have the x-ray vision capacities of SuperMan enabling us to see through the dance of duality while being fully present to it?

The mystic's answer is unequivocally yes, but qualified with the realization that that reality cannot be understood by the mind. It can, however, be known by your Being – in the essence of your soul and in the joy and beauty of your heart. The best the mind can do is understand that reality and illusion are really 'one' and the same, yet dressed in unique distinctions that create the perception of 'two'.

Just as the spaciousness takes on the shape of the hand, the deeper reality of life expresses itself through the more superficial illusion of duality. A Marketplace Mystic understands the mind's notion of reality is actually illusory, and the reality of that illusion is undeniable to the body/mind. With this paradoxical understanding comes the release of suffering and the arising of compassion, relaxation, and a deep ease with letting go.

An organic unity connects every surface and its hidden depth. Your mystical eyes have power akin to the electron microscope and can reveal this depth connected to every surface, as well as the reality connected to every illusion. When we know them both, the wholeness we seek becomes evident. With this knowing as our own, the joys and sorrows of life become a magical spin around the dance floor with our new partner, the incredible lightness of Being.

I invite you to explore your own capacity to see the depth beneath the surface, and the real hidden in the illusory. Until next month when another Reflection will appear, may your mystical eyes reveal how both reality and illusion exist in an intimate embrace – freeing you to move beyond both into the arms of your Presence, living here and now, revealing itself in the simple experiencing of 'what is'.

Ragini