

In the Stream of Consciousness

Yoga is not just sitting cross-legged and freezing into a static corpse of the past, it is a conscious participation in the scheme of life. By constantly pulling ourselves out of the tendency to freeze, to become morbid, numb or inertial, and lose awareness, we make ourselves available to the meaningful vitality of the moment. (31)

When I say “they” I create a barrier and cause a limit to my own I-consciousness by cordoning off an area of my consciousness. Then I fill the other side with an indistinct grouping of centers of consciousness of ‘they’ which are so feeble that no single individual can function separately. Yet I assume ‘they’ has a collective dynamics to honor me or shame me, to grant me its approbation or to condemn me with its disapproval. In this way it becomes my social counterpart. (27)

The contiguity of time is manufactured by the mathematician and is forced upon us by the commercially minded technologist. When I pick up a hot cup of tea or chocolate, I am not worried about the space it occupies nor am I thinking about how many seconds elapses between the cup and my lip. But all this irrelevant data is laid on the table as the precious findings of the philosopher, who is bent upon manufacturing metaphysical problems for the edification of his own sense of vanity. (SOC 28)

Our reference to death is mainly aimed at a state of mind that refuses to grow, refuses to change, and refuses to flow. Such a misfortune can happen to anyone if they bottle themselves up, even though it might be through a legitimate discipline or technique. (31)

All our early training at home, in school, on the street, in the marketplace, and even in church is to convince us to adopt the ways and means of successful transaction. We are taught how to

labor and get its fruit, how to learn and practice over and again to obtain efficiency, and how to apply a well-structured formula or technique to get a desired effect. Afterwards when we come to seek the spirit, we presume that we are expected to do something similar to achieve results. But masters like the Buddha and Christ and the rishis of the Upanishads draw a distinction between the world of transactional gains and the world of spiritual attainments, pointing out that transactional methods only serve us well in their appropriate context. The Indian saints call the world of transactional gains one of “small pleasures” and the world of spiritual attainment “the great happiness.” (41-2)