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This edition of the NOWletter is prompted by my last issue, number 249, and my notes on the continuing interest of contemporary philosophy in Meister Eckhart. This resulted in me reading the book on Martin Heidegger by George Steiner in which Eckhart is again mentioned and which concludes with a quote by Coleridge : *Hast thou ever raised thy mind to the consideration of existence, in and by itself, as the mere act of existing? Hast thou ever said to thyself thoughtfully it is! heedless, in that moment, whether it were a man before thee, or a flower, or a grain of sand;—without reference, in short, to this or that particular mode or form of existence? If thou hast, indeed, attained to this, thou wilt have felt the presence of a mystery, which must have fixed thy spirit in awe and wonder.*

The mention of Awe and Wonder in this quotation reminded me of a presentation by our neighbour Ginna Hastings which I have been sitting on since reading at the time she gave her address and which I now include here with her agreement.

We also have a poem by our friend, poet, author and musician Lim Meng Sing PhD. And, following the YouTube dialogue between Sam Blight and Richard Lang in which they deal with *How We Resist Seeing*, I asked Sam if he would consider summarising their conversation and let us have his written contribution for this issue and for future occasions when required. Their exchange deals with a number of issues which arise in our discussions, in particular, resistance to the simplicity and relevance of what is revealed by the Headless Way experiments. There is an interesting and completely coincidental point at which Sam and Ginna's contributions find themselves 'at one'. I will leave it to you to spot the connection.

The final item, The Ways of the Spirit is an extract from the book: The Wisdom of the Native Americans which contains some commentaries and addresses by Indian chiefs and leaders whose understanding of what really matters closely match the understanding of our first nations people.

Wonder and Awe

An address to the Society of Organizational Learning SOL 25/8/24 by Ginna Hastings on the 25th of August 2024.

A year ago, on September 1st, I set off from my temporary home between homes to "rediscover *wonder and awe*". I travelled exactly 3300 km around NSW to visit country towns that I've always heard about and never seen. I wanted to discover them. I was curious. After a year of downsizing, tough change, & grief in my life I needed to restore my soul, and the trip was how I chose to do so.

As I travelled, I posted on Facebook my discoveries, observations and shared the *wonder and awe* that I sought and found as much by accident as by design. Some people ignored the posts from my trip, some read every word. It was a journey of discovery. The posts were more or less "postcards from the Universe" that I shared. There was no theme other than what I personally delighted in, things that gave me the *wonder and awe* that I sought.

I know that the wide skies, the world opening to vast fields of green, or grazing livestock, or forests, or fields of brilliant yellow canola plants opened me hour after hour to wonder and awe. Discovering each town's local museum brought me *wonder and awe* to see what the settlers made of the land through grit, determination and hard work. A visit to The Dish, the observatory brought me *wonder and awe* to consider the worlds beyond Earth and how it is all organised in swirling motions caused by gravity and energy. A visit to three zoos brought me *wonder and awe* at the amazing creatures that exist away from human society. At the Canberra Zoo I was particularly touched by the story of the zoo that kept two male animals that would have never been created in nature but were created at circuses. They were ligers, born from crossing a lion and a tiger, felines who naturally live on different continents. These ligers were penned together and loved each other deeply to the witness of all the zoo personnel. They knew love together, odd as they were. *Wonder and awe*.

Human beings are funny creatures. Now I know that animals can think but we don't know how or what they think, how they draw conclusions because language separates us. But I'd like to think that humans have a unique ability to think in such a way that somehow we experience, or sense *wonder and awe* in their lives. Maybe animals do too, I don't know.

I guess that finding *wonder and awe* comes with purposeful thinking. It's about seeing the universe in its breadth as well in its detail and appreciating the Universe with gratitude for all the details it is. It is the appreciation and the gratitude that bring *wonder and awe*.

But to appreciate we have to be able to imagine the BIG PICTURE. We each sit here today in our own thoughts, needs, stressors, and coping with life's demands. But we are able to

go outside our own heads and realise that we are made up of cells that each do a job to maintain our very existence in an incredibly complicated physical manner. We can, through education, know that each of our cells is made up of carefully organised molecules, and each molecule is made up of atoms, and each atom is made up of particles and energy. We can imagine these things in our mind's eye. We can understand and appreciate how our very person, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual is somehow created through a process of organising particles and energy. *Wonder and awe*.

And, indeed, each human is a speck of all of the potential of humanity. And humanity is a collection of specks of beings on a huge and beautiful planet, which looks blue from space. And our Earth is but a speck of all the planets and stars, constellations, and universes that billions of years ago evolved from....Nothing....or something. We don't know. Through human curiosity, study and knowledge, together we have come to realise that from the tiniest particle and blast of energy in an atom to the entirety of all that exists, we are a part of the whole as well as unique in our very existence. Just being able to appreciate this big picture gives me *wonder and awe*. Appreciating the uniqueness of each and every person, animal, plant, solar system etc. also brings *wonder and awe*.

Perhaps language is limiting in the expression of this *wonder and awe*. Is it a feeling? A thought? A knowledge? A "knowing"? It is what gives us purpose and meaning for our existence. Some of us find nature, the natural beauty of this Earth that mothers us, to inspire *wonder and awe*. The whole Transcendental movement in Massachusetts, of such a great influence on Unitarianism, is about this ability to perceive *wonder and awe* in nature and see this as "god". Walden Pond, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau come to mind. Stated in Thoreau's journal he said, "My profession is to be always alert to find God in nature, to know his lurking-places, to attend all the oratorios, the operas, in nature." Is not this "god" Thoreau speaks of also a sense of *wonder and awe* at the infinite possibilities of all creation? A sunset, a drop of rain on a leaf, a rainbow, a view - all can inspire *wonder and awe* in the mind that is open to it.

Transcendentalists experienced *wonder and awe* in nature. Emerson said in his essay Nature, "Standing on the bare ground-my head bathed in the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space - all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God." Acknowledging we are but a speck allows us to see the divinity of all creation. Humility of mind allows us to see the greatness of the universe. *Wonder and awe*.

Another thing that helps us perceive *wonder and awe* is gratitude. It is one thing to understand and acknowledge the amazing intricacies of all of creation, but quite another to appreciate all of creation with love, and to have a deep sense of gratitude. Gratitude

gives meaning to creation for our spirits, our souls, our person. One doesn't have to believe in a specific god to appreciate and be grateful for all of creation. We just know we are grateful. This is also *wonder and awe*.

Human beings survive so well because we live in vast cross structured societies. We are herd animals and the herd rules us, controls us, punishes us, taunts us, loves us, educates us, feeds us, and nurtures us. Survival depends upon our herd. But herd life also strains us, threatens us, hurts us. Ask the stressed in today's society, the whistleblower, the rule breaker. Yet somehow in our humanness there is *wonder and awe*. A mother embraces her newborn and love blossoms beyond measure. The biologist would attribute that to serotonin or oxytocin, while the evolutionary scientist would attribute that to survival of the fittest. But the human in us sees the wonder in that love, and we stand in awe.

Stories that circulate on Facebook of spontaneous gestures of love and kindness from one human to another, unasked for, circulate quickly and draw *wonder and awe* from us. Birth, the regeneration of spring, the cycles of life bring *wonder and awe* to us, if we are open to them. I also wonder at the infinite possibilities of human creation and stand in awe of what it could mean for the betterment of all mankind. There is never going to be an end to the art, the inventions, the discoveries or the designs of the human mind. *Wonder and awe*.

Another thing that brings me *wonder and awe* is humour. A witty remark that delights, an unexpected funny crack, a clever quip, a great punchline that kicks the funny bone, a deep belly laugh. What makes us laugh just brings delight. If we can't laugh at life sometimes we might as well give up. Without laughter, without humour life just wouldn't be worth it - *wonder and awe*!

Unfortunately, the phenomenon of conservative backlash, the fear of change, the selfishness of vast wealth, and the ego of one presidential candidate in the US have changed our society in the last 15 years. Covid closed down our lives, upset us, and killed some of us over two years. Spitefulness, greed, selfishness, vitriol, anger and resentment have taken hold of our human society. Just being alive seems to be tougher to do. The urge to "change back to the way it was when I was happy" is the cry of MAGA Republicanism. It is fear. It is lack of hope- It denies human creativity of design and purpose. It is the opposite of what *wonder and awe* are and represent to us. These past 10 years have been tough on us all for many reasons.

Yet somehow in the human soul, individual and collective, hope always springs eternal. "Our lives mean something and together we can make a better society for all" has, in the course of human history, become the cry of evolutions and revolutions in societies. When

we are open to the possibility of greatness, of creativity, of love, of hard work and of ideas for positive change good things can and do happen. It is something that emerges in the darkest of times. Churchill knew how to tap into this innate human characteristic in his addresses to the British people in WW2. Roosevelt tapped into it in his Fireside Chats. Kevin Rudd's address to the Aboriginal peoples to say "Sorry" speaks of it. **Hope,** renewal, rebirth, regeneration. *It is a wonder. I stand in awe of it*. But of all the things that I find *wonder and awe* in, the one that inspires me most is love. It is so much more than an oxytocin or serotonin created emotion. It is more than concept. It is more than an understanding or a knowledge. It is almost undefinable in any human language. It is basic to human life. I stand in *wonder and awe* that we all are capable of knowing love, of giving love, and of acting out of love even if we have been treated without love by some.

Some people that worship god as the centre of their religion place all of their *wonder and awe* upon the god of their imagination and traditions. Hymns of praise to their creator god, their law-giver god, become their *wonder and awe*. Others destroy, manipulate and damage others in the name of their god. Some see the forces of nature and human society as god. Is a single divine being "god" or is "god" a collection of all the energy and forces of nature? I really don't know.

But I do know - and *I stand in wonder and in awe* - **that humans are capable of *wonder and awe*.** It takes being able to see the **big picture** next to the smallest detail, it takes **knowledge**, it takes love, it takes **gratitude**, it takes **humility** to experience *wonder and awe*. It is what makes us truly human and perhaps divine at the same time. It is what gives our time on this beautiful Earth meaning, joy and hope.

Ginna Hastings

Desiderata

Where freedom is
there I'll seek
whether in the deep sea
or the highest peak.

Where there's love
I'll give and accept
be among the dearest
to celebrate.

Where there's beauty
such moments I'll not forget
to keep them in memory
after each take.

Where there's laughter
there I'll be first
to sing and dance
or to recite my verse.

Where the meadow invites
in each fair season
for miles I'll travel
to give reign to my passion.

Where peace embraces
our very earth
all hands I'll hold
in sincerity and mirth.

Peter Lim

How We Resist Seeing Sam Blight

Varieties of Psychological Resistance to Valuing the Headless Vision

One of the great joys of the Headless Way can be sharing it with others. In this community the discussion sometimes turns to wondering why noticing what it's like from one's authentic point of view (also known as Seeing) is not more virally popular, given what a precious boon we've all personally found it to be. While not difficult to share with others, the disconnect between the thrilling liberation afforded by conscious first personhood and the frequent " meh" response or downright rejection from some sharees can be disconcerting. Why is something so obvious, deep, practical and life-enhancing so hard for some to appreciate and value? Why is it that what we recognise as the "bullseye" of meditative contemplation is not immediately taken on board, valued and nurtured by all who are shown it.

While thinking about this I compiled a list of possible reasons, gleaned from decades of sharing this Way, which I also ran past some of my headless friends. This led to an expanded list and a Zoom conversation with Richard Lang, which brought to light further ideas.

The following is a round-up of these ideas presented in no particular order. The hope is that a better understanding of these issues might go some way toward mitigating them in some cases and generally assist our efforts to share this wonderful secret, hidden in plain sight.

The paradoxical inversion of reality can be disturbing and disruptive.

The conventional view of ourselves – the one we're raised with – is the feeling of being a kind of "me", riding around in a human body behind a face, sealed off from the world by our skin. What we know of the world "out there" supposedly comes to us via our senses and is put together somehow by our brain to give us the compelling 3D "movie"of the world we enjoy "in here". The Headless Way experiments interrogate this perception directly and experientially, revealing it to be surprisingly vulnerable to inspection. We suddenly find ourselves not in the world but with the world in us, with no surface separating us from it. This radical shift in perception is something which one could easily find psychologically threatening and might require some kind of pre-existing mental framework to allow it to be accommodated, let alone have its significance appreciated.

The response to this might be that what the experiments reveal is already the case and always has been. This is not the achievement of (or descent into) some new state. There's a strange familiarity to the "set-up" which is often noticed concurrent with, or shortly after the initial shift in perception. Which is to say, the truth of what you're really like is not a new and threatening development – it's always been this way. You've been living with it all this time anyway, whether or not you realised it.

Insufficient curiosity about existential truth

As Douglas Harding noted, what the headless experiments reveal "...can be the answer to a question they haven't asked." The question is some version of “What is it actually like to be me, from my own point of view?” and is motivated by the recognition that relying on one's societal conditioning, -- and possibly getting this wrong -- is likely to prevent one from getting much else in life right. I'd suggest that much psycho-therapeutic effort and spiritual seeking gets off on the wrong foot because of lack of interest in this crucial question. Much of my own has been no exception.

This indifference might be countered, and some genuine curiosity awakened, by pointing out the critical importance of this question: “What is the point of living and dying if I never wake up in the place from where I'm actually doing it.”

Desire for certainty

One of the great challenges of human adulthood is the realisation that life is fundamentally uncertain – there's no-one ultimately in charge – and the anxiety that accompanies it. One clings to the apparent solidity of one's own self-image, its place in the world and one's life story, even if they are far from perfect or even satisfactory, as a bulwark against the unknown and potential chaos. Much of the appeal of conventional religion and traditional spirituality is that it provides some kind of solace in this regard by placing a cosmic authority in charge and promising some kind of continuation of life after physical death.

The re-alignment with one's self-image produced by Seeing powerfully and unavoidably demonstrates its contingent and temporary nature. The irony is that being conscious of and accepting one's open, vast and accommodating true nature can ultimately be profoundly grounding and re-assuring. One experiences, and is at one with, the teeming, tumultuous world from the point of view of a perfect, unchanging refuge.

Interoceptive vertigo

Our conditioned, commonsense self-perception encloses our bodily sensations, thoughts and feelings within a skin boundary. When this boundary and encapsulated sense of separation from the world is suddenly dissolved by Seeing, it can seem like floating or falling, with the contents of consciousness we hitherto regarded as “inner” found in fact to be at large and unconfined.

While at first potentially disconcerting and disorientating, this new, unguarded appreciation of reality can quickly become valued as a much richer, thrilling and more meaningful way of engaging with life.

Fear of annihilation

Looking for the looker and finding awake emptiness can feel like dying. Harding even called it the “present death experience” to distinguish it from a “near death experience”. Since much of our mental life is spent avoiding death--both of our physical body and

psychological identity--the direct experience of our complete absence at centre can understandably come as unwelcome news.

This obstacle can be overcome by remaining with and honouring the direct experience, rather than trying to explain it away or accommodate it to some existing metaphysical concept. One soon comes to notice that this is how one has always been at depth, and that one loses nothing real by noticing it. There can be a strong sense of relief and liberation similar to waking up from a distressing dream.

The psychology of the face game is self-defensive.

Douglas Harding coined the term "Face Game" as a way of describing our initiation into social reality, where it is necessary to take ourselves to be the one others see, rather than the one we experience ourselves to be. The Face Game, in short, requires pretending to be just a person. Learning to play it is a pre-verbal process that begins in early childhood with our recognition of our own reflection. In time we come to identify with the one in the mirror and become a sort of third person – a thing – to ourselves, losing touch with our first-person reality. Harding describes this in depth in his book "The Face Game" . There's also a short article by Harding on the subject on this website. This identification comes to be more than physical and soon includes our thoughts and emotional states, which we mentally place inside the body we've identified with. This is a necessary development in terms of our ability to function fully as social beings but it comes at the heavy price of a deeply entrenched sense of separation from the world. It is an inherently self-defensive psychology which can trigger distress when it feels threatened. The Headless Way experiments are designed to inspect the assumption that we are as we appear to others. Little wonder that psychological alarm bells might sound.

I for one found the explanation of the Face Game, given in the workshop where I first encountered the experiments, very helpful in making sense of and accepting what they revealed.

It's hard to abandon tribal conventions

Alan Watts wrote an excellent book entitled "The Book on the Taboo Against knowing Who You Really Are." There is a kind of tacit social disincentive to sharing a perspective on the real state of things, even if you're lucky enough to become aware of it. It can feel a bit like letting the side down to admit the obvious once it's noticed, and push-back from the uninitiated can be fierce and derisive. Rather than face this, some will turn away from the headless vision in order not to risk their social standing.

Fortunately, it seems impossible to discern externally when someone is Seeing. It's a private experience with no involuntary tells. Also, there are now increasingly many opportunities, online and in person, to socialise with a community of others for whom Seeing is the normative condition and to share reflections from this perspective.

Unmet expectation of psychological fireworks

For many spiritual seekers, enlightenment or realisation becomes associated with the expectation of elevated and overwhelming inner experiences. The “enlightenment stories” of gurus and spiritual teachers, as well as personal psychedelic and other spiritual experiences, often include powerful and sometimes terrifying psychological aspects, sometimes culminating in spectacular self-erasure and rebirth. These experiences are usually framed within the pre-existing beliefs and world views of the experiencer: the religious tend to meet the deities of their culture for instance, while those with a secular background may encounter an all-absorbing unification with the universe. These experiences are no doubt real enough for those having them (I've had a few myself) but I'd suggest that their common feature of simple self-transcendence is subtle and easily overlooked, while the more eye-catching and spectacular experiential trappings become emphasised and remembered.

While to some the first experience of headless Seeing can feel like a powerful breakthrough, to others it can seem quite bland and unspectacular, leading to the “this can't be it” response that's sometimes encountered. The “active ingredient” without the accompanying fireworks can be underwhelming to say the least. This is perhaps one of the most insidious barriers to valuing Seeing and possibly the hardest to overcome, until the readiness develops, often through the disillusionment with the diminishing returns produced by increasingly desperate attempts to create or reproduce the big “Wow” event.

Unmet expectation of arduousness

Real spirituality is often, and certainly traditionally, presented as an arduous and sometimes many lifetimes long journey with the big payoff at the end. To find oneself at the goal right from the get-go can seem implausible, even anti-climactic. This can apply despite the repeated admonitions of many great teachers that you are, in fact, already at your goal and nothing need be added.

Everything else we learn or achieve in life requires time and effort, so it's natural to assume that seeing who we really should not be any different. The thing is though, in turns out that this is not a skill or accomplishment but more like a birthright that requires only that it be noticed in order for a radical shift in perception to occur. That shift is the end of a kind of seeking but the beginning of a new and far more fulfilling journey into living as who you really are.

Explanation from the third person -- the "So what?" effect

Rather than remaining, even briefly, with the view the experiments provide, some will revert immediately and unconsciously to the third person self-concept and fixate on explaining away the first person experience as a trick based on the limitations of our senses. For instance one might ask, “So what if I can't see my own head? That's because

that's where my eyes are. What do you expect?" This defends against noticing the actual first person experience of the missing head by evoking the learned, third person self-image to account for it conceptually. This "explanation to avoid experience" is quite common and understandable, given our Face Game conditioning. What's required is letting go of commonsense presumptions and being unguardedly present to raw experience – just looking, feeling and sensing, which can be genuinely difficult to do.

Resistance from religiosity

For those with strong religious beliefs, particularly those of the Abrahamic religions, the expectation of encountering the kind of external deity represented in these traditions can make the experience of headlessness seem at best lacking and at worst threateningly nihilistic. The Headless Way is also a profoundly empirical approach which relies on direct experience and doesn't require anything to be "taken on faith". Seeing, as Harding says, is better than believing. There's no polite way of asserting this to someone to whom certain beliefs have been central and provide their main source of meaning and psychological comfort.

Resistance to perceived religiosity

For those with a strong aversion to religion, the whole project of self-realisation can easily be conflated with all manner of fruit-loopery. Let's face it, even the word "enlightenment" has fallen into some questionable company. Many of us have become quite rightly sceptical of anything that might seem like believing weird things without any evidence.

Fortunately, while anyone is free to frame what the Headless Way reveals in terms of any religion of their choice, they're also free not do so, and to approach the experiments in the same spirit of sceptical enquiry that's found in science.

The expectation that all head sensations will disappear

The point of the experiments is not to get rid of our sense of having a head but to trigger an authentic experience of the first person view, unmediated by concepts. If the former is taken to be the goal, it's easy to fall into thinking that the evidence of head sensations, the appearance of a huge blurry nose, glasses frames hanging in mid air and (for some of us) the appearance of a huge blurry moustache at the bottom of the field of view mean that we've failed to get rid of our head and are therefore missing the point or doing it wrong.

One might ask though, to the extent that there's evidence that you still have a head, what kind of head do you have (for yourself)? I'd say it's nothing like the one you see in the mirror and that to map the sensations and sights you're having onto that head requires hard-won unconscious mental gymnastics. It is not what is given in your actual experience.

The "not invented here" issue

This seems to mainly affect both traditional and non-traditional teachers and practitioners who might be predisposed to being sceptical that something not already included in their approach could be of any value. For them as well, the directness and ease of contacting the mind's true nature using the Headless Way experiments might seem like an affront to the venerable edifices of knowledge, technique and effort upon which their approach might be based.

I think this can sometimes be due to mistaking the result of the headless experiments as some kind of end point or destination, when in fact they merely open a Way which must then be travelled, using whatever tools are found to be useful. As Harding points out, “This meditation doesn't preclude, and need not interfere with, any other kind of meditation - such as 'sitting meditation' or za-zen - which you may find helpful. What it does rule out is meditation which assumes the meditator isn't already at Home.” ~The Results of Seeing Who You Really Are

The “already invented here” issue

Certain more direct traditions like Advaita, Zen and Dzogchen Buddhism contain “pointing out” instructions not dissimilar to the Headless Way experiments. The temptation is for practitioners of these traditions to regard the headless experiments as variations or slight improvements on methods they are already aware of. In these cases, instead of staying with and exploring the experience the experiments can provide, they switch into an intellectual framing of them in the context of teachings and methods with which they are already familiar.

This difference though, with the Headless Way methods, is that while they seem to be most effective for those with a certain type of psychological readiness, the process required to attain this readiness is not constrained by the methods or strictures of any given tradition. People who “get” the experiments come from all kinds of cultures, traditions and spiritual paths, including those with a non-spiritual curiosity about reality. Nor do the experiments have to be protected from exposure to the uninitiated, as seems to be the case with the pointing out techniques in traditional, teacher-based approaches. This allows a new openness, egalitarianism and creativity in the ways Seeing can be shared.

To quote Harding again:

“This meditation is safe, not only because it can't be bungled, not only because it avoids dependence upon others on the one hand and self-pride on the other, but also because it is uncontrived. There's nothing arbitrary or fanciful about it, nothing to strain your credulity, nothing to go wrong, nothing to set you apart from ordinary people, nothing special. It is safe because it is finding out how matters stand, not trying to manipulate them. What could be less dangerous than ceasing to deceive yourself about your Self, or more dangerous than not doing so?” ~The Results of Seeing Who You Really Are

The sunk cost fallacy

This can be a hazard for those with impressive spiritual resumés who've invested significant material resources as well as long and intense effort into their search and may even have gained some status in the tradition of their choice. The very obviousness and availability of conscious first personhood can be dismissed, by comparison, to be “too easy”, so that the effectiveness and likelihood of success on the path travelled so far need not be re-examined.

Overcoming this requires some disillusionment with whatever approach that's been used to date, which can take time to happen.

Closing Thoughts

All of these ways of not valuing the importance of the headless vision, (and no doubt others we haven't thought of and are not covered here) should not be seen necessarily as failures of courage or character. We must accept that not everyone is psychologically ready to have their world view inverted by suddenly encountering their true nature.

This is no doubt why many traditions attempt to provide a kind of “ramp” in the form of some form of sustained practice to prepare the seeker for the final reveal (if indeed they provide that reveal at all).

This traditional approach also has it's dangers though, as, absent the experience of conscious first personhood, the very methods, doctrines and symbols employed can become an end in themselves and crystallise into revered forms of practice, ritual and belief, which come to form proxies for Seeing, and indeed reliable obstacles to it. Even the relatively benign practice of secular mindfulness can produce negative psychological results if practised too intensively and/or by those for whom it's unsuited.

In the gap between the seeker and the sought, there's always the strong tendency to give authority to others in the matter of who we really are. Historically, that authority has tended to be abused both by individuals and organisations, in the form of various types of gas-lighting and exploitation made possible by the steep power gradient it produces.

The Headless Way has the advantage of avoiding both these negative aspects of traditional religion and spirituality.

Firstly, the cost of initiation into Seeing, in time and effort, is low enough that someone not ready to accept it can easily reject and avoid it without the trauma that can result from the wrong kind of sustained practice, the acceptance of damaging beliefs, or high demand cult involvement that can be required by other approaches.

Secondly, the headless initiation is itself the Way, immediately placing all authority in the matter of True Nature with the initiate themself. This prevents the development of an authoritarian hierarchy and with it, the opportunity for the kind of oppression, and abuse which has come to bedevil other approaches.

So as a Seer who enjoys sharing Seeing I'll continue to do so and not be too discouraged by those who reject or discount the headless vision on first viewing. This is especially in

view of my experience, as well as that reported by other Seers, that often those initially underwhelmed by Seeing will have a kind of seed planted by their brief exposure to it, which will germinate when the conditions later become favourable.

Sam Blight

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The Ways of the Spirit.

From: The Wisdom of the Native Americans—Page 85.

> *Is there not something worthy of perpetuation in our Indian spirit of democracy, where Earth, our mother, was free to all, and no one sought to impoverish or enslave his neighbour?*

We do not chart and measure the vast field of nature. Or express her wonders in the terms of science; On the contrary, We see miracles on every hand-the miracle of life in seed and egg. The miracle of death in a lightning flash and in the swelling deep.!

The Great Mystery.

The attitude of the American Indian toward the eternal, the Great Mystery that-surrounds and embraces us, It's as simple as it is exalted. To us, it is the supreme conception, bringing with it the fullest measure of joy and satisfaction possible in this life. The worship of the Great Mystery is silent, solitary, free from all self-seeking.

It is silent, because all speech is of necessity feeble and imperfect: therefore the souls of our ancestors ascended to God in wordless adoration.

It is solitary because we believe that God is nearer to us in solitude, and there are no priests authorised to come between us and our Maker. None can exhort or confess or in any way meddle with the religious experience of another. All of us are created children of God, and all stand erect, conscious of our divinity. Our friends cannot be formulated in creeds, nor forced upon any who are unwilling to receive it; hence there is no preaching, proselytising, nor persecution, Neither are there any scoffers or atheists. Programme.

Our religion is an attitude of mind, not a dogma.

Ohiyesa

Ohiyesa (Charles Alexander Eastman) was an American physician, writer, and social reformer. He was "one of the most prolific authors and speakers on Sioux ethnohistory and American Indian affairs in the early 20th century. Eastman was of Santee Dakota, English and French ancestry. Wikipedia