

On Nostalgia and Desire by Bob Ferguson

The cycle of desire and fulfillment may seem a trap of monumental proportions, but as all traps built in the framework of the mind, it has no inherent reality. Let's take a look at this cycle of desire, fear, and fulfillment, and how an ache of the heart turned within is our release.

We see that if we want something and then get it, we feel better. After years of this cycle, we fall for the trick of believing that getting what we want is what life is about. And what would make us happy would be getting what we want, when we want it, all the time. We fail to look closer and see what has really taken place. Fulfilling desire simply puts it to sleep, and leaves us in the state of no-desire. It causes no fundamental change, and sows the seeds for our future discontent. If we saw behind the circumstance, we would see that the state of no desire, or pre-desire, is what we long for, and would no longer move from it out into the dual dimension of pleasure and pain, the so-called reality of life. This state of peace has been there all along as our true nature, lying much closer than any pleasure object of the world. But this peace is not peace of mind. The mind is motion, and does not manifest in stillness. This state of no-desire is stillness itself, beneath and primal to mind, and is our rest.



Photo: Bob Ferguson

This trap of desire and its fulfillment also involves forgetting. We forget we are fulfilled as we really are, within, and thus move away through temptation and trickery. Not from being pushed, but from being fooled. We have become mesmerized by the world and its sensations, and have forgotten the peace that lies within. A potent cocktail, equal parts faulty memory and a profound propensity towards fantasy and projection, mixed with fear of unfulfilled desire and death, topped off with a passion for grabbing onto everything that feels good, keeps us on the endless loop of turning our attention out into the world for fulfillment, coming back into ourselves to rest, and then going back out again. We have become identified with the world and its dual nature, and have forgotten we are complete and forever in the state of fulfillment within, our true home. We are not an animal at heart, though we have come to believe this.

This leads to the longing of nostalgia and how we confuse the circumstances of our childhood events with a purer state within that was also present at the time. It is innocence and lack of guilt that we truly long for, a state before temptation and the chasms of the mind led us out into duality. We long for our childhood or nostalgic scenes, not because these props and times can provide peace, but because our inner state at the time was one of peace. We paint this inner state onto the scenery and confuse the two, fooled again. We mistake the event for the feeling, much as we do the act of fulfillment of desire with the state of no-desire. Nostalgia in its pure spiritual state is not the desire to live in a root-beer commercial, which might be nice, but the longing of our heart for its true state of oneness. Our inherent inner peace passeth all understanding, for to ego and mind, it's completely unbelievable.