

What Do You Love? by Bob Ferguson

Progress on the spiritual path can be thought of in terms of value, or love. What is most important to us is what we value the most, what we really love. The path of self-discovery can be seen in these terms. We observe ourselves, and discover what our true motivations are, leading us to see what we value. Another way to see this is by checking our fact status. What we actually do everyday tells us much about what we value, and perhaps shows us the gap between our personal storyline and our actions. If this fact checking and self-observation are carried far enough, we may begin to get a look at something called our "self" or personality, and begin to see its illusive nature. We may be forced to admit to its exalted status as our real true love, despite our ego's protestations to the contrary. Using this shock as further fuel for the search, we become a bit more honest in our future assessments. If self-inquiry is carried even further, through this process of elimination we may find something more real to love than this "self." Back beyond our mind's motion, something still and silent lies. If you find a love of truth, rather than fiction, it may take you there.

Finding this still-point depends largely on our state of satisfaction with our beloved "self." If this state becomes one of dissatisfaction, we have the incentive to look for something more stable. Hearing from others that have gone before that there is something somewhere "within," and that it is worth any effort to find it, also adds to our incentive. By looking at what we love, we can come to love the truth, and find there is something worthwhile inside us other than mind-motion and change. Let's take a look at how this path might turn out, and some of the pitfalls and signposts along the way from love of "self," to Love Itself.

We hear of this so-called still-point, called by such names as silence, stillness, the center, the Source, what we really are, etc., and wonder. If our intuition is not clouded by the dissipations of relentless pleasure-seeking and the resultant fear, we may discover a longing, a nostalgia deep within that tells us we may have once known this silence, and still love it more than we might know. This longing is fed too, perhaps, by being tired of the jostling effects of life, its traumas and endless no-win scenarios, leading to death and dissolution.

So, we read the books and search the Internet, finding many who tell of the way back to this stillness. They vary from the intellectual work of Hubert Benoit, to the practical experiments of Douglas Harding. We find the paths back to this center also called by many names: "the inner movement," "self-remembering," a "double-pointed arrow of attention, one directed in, one out," "observing the observer," or "looking back at what we are looking out of." Many speak of "silence," and even the many forms of silence. From this information alone, we may not come any closer to really knowing this still-point, but if we persist in looking, we may get lucky and discover much that it is not. We begin to see that it



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cannot be something of the mind, for we find the mind is motion. We may be fooled into thinking that the stillness is something we can manufacture, that it's found only in ashrams or monasteries, or that we can force it onto the relative world through controlling the environment. Or we may decide to create it within by controlling our mind, forcing it to think only what we have been told we should think, and discover that this too is folly.

When the still-point is finally reached, even if only for a moment, it is unmistakable. If we have allowed ourselves to hone our intuition and clear our thinking, we will find that this silent place within is not just a concept, but very real. The movement necessary to turn our attention back away from the outer and inner movies of the mind and senses is found to be also something real, and not a thought or concept at all. We find too, that we forget, and are carried back into the mind at every instant. But if our love for the silence is true, it will turn us back into it again and again, provided our previous experience with the mind and its motion has been enough, or too much.

This is where what we value or really love comes in. If our meaning is taken from the changing scene of the relative world, we will keep our attention directed towards it. We will turn away from the silence within, and our longing will be for the excitement and changes of the mind. We may declare our love for the center, but our attention will long for the agony and ecstasy of the world of form. Boredom with silence too, means our value has not yet moved inward from the world to truth, but remains trapped by the colorful kaleidoscope of the mind, and the energy releases of the body.

This part of the journey is a journey within. We retreat from our former love for motion and change, and move inwards toward simplicity and truth. After the still-point has been found, and correctly valued, our attention is then turned round, and we begin a new phase, one of our new love being tested. While we continue to hold a part of our gaze on the still-point, it being what we really are, we also turn round and engage in the world of action. This is to test our love, to see if the trials and tribulations of the outer world can knock us off course, and change our point of reference. If we come back to the center, time and time again, during and despite every trial, we find we are becoming less of the world and more of the silence. In any situation in life, no matter how difficult or how often we forget, if we eventually return to the still-point as our anchor, we find we are becoming one with it. We become that which we love.