

The following is a transcript of the workshop from April 30th 2009.

Stim Morane: Hi Eliza and Scathach!

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Stim, Gaya

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Bleu

Eliza Madrigal: Hi Bleu, Gaya

Bleu Oleander: hello all

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Scath, Stim, Eliza and Blue.

Stim Morane: Hi Bleu, Gaya

Bleu Oleander: Stim, is there a wiki that I can see to catch up on what you have been doing?

Stim Morane: Bleu, there is a wiki, but I'm not sure if it has the most recent chat logs. Scathach, are they all there?

Scathach Rhiadra: no, I still need to post the latest, sorry!

Gaya Ethaniel: http://www.kira.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=108&Itemid=138

Gaya Ethaniel: Transcript and other information on this page Bleu.

Bleu Oleander: thanks

Gaya Ethaniel: Welcome :)

Scathach Rhiadra: the wiki is at <http://waysofknowing.kira.org/>

Gaya Ethaniel: Great, I didn't know we have wiki as well.

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Tarmel :)

Stim Morane: Hi Arisia, Tarmel

Tarmel Udimo: Hi everyone, with the time change I'm able to pop in but will have to leave a few mins early

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Tarmel and Arisia.

Eliza Madrigal: hi Tarmel

Stim Morane: That's fine. I will need to leave at 5 minutes to the hour myself.

Stim Morane: Hi Mick

Tarmel Udimo: ok ty

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Mick

Eliza Madrigal: hey Mick

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Mick.

Tarmel Udimo: Hi Mick

Mickorod Renard: Hiya stim, Tarmel, Gaya

Mickorod Renard: Hi Scath

Mickorod Renard: Hi Eliza

Stim Morane: Perhaps we should start ...

Marion Diabolito: Oh no, harvey's here. Now they'll not accept my way of knowing at all!

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Stim Morane: Hi Marion

Marion Diabolito: hi stim

Stim Morane: we've been discussing basic precepts of conduct as providing an approach to contemplation.

Stim Morane: I realize that some of you will find this to be an agreeable approach, while others will be discomfited by it.

Stim Morane: And of course there is plenty of room for disagreement re the particulars ...

Stim Morane: Hi Pila!

Pila Mulligan: hi Stim, and everyone (sorry to be late)

Eliza Madrigal: Hi Pila :)

Mickorod Renard: Hi Pila

Stim Morane: After our last meeting, Pila was kind enough to write and post a very relevant piece to this group's wiki.

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Marion and Pila.

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Pila

Tarmel Udimio: Hello Pila

Stim Morane: It's at: <http://waysofknowing.kira.org/6Writings%2f%2fEssays/Satyagraha>

Stim Morane: How many of you have seen it?

Scathach Rhiadra: I have

Stim Morane: Hi gen!

Stim Morane: Why don't we take a couple minutes now just to read through it, so we can then discuss it together?

genesis Zhangsun: Hi!

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Gen

Stim Morane: gen, I'm suggesting that we take a couple of minutes to read:

Stim Morane: <http://waysofknowing.kira.org/6Writings%2f%2fEssays/Satyagraha>

Tarmel Udimio: just reading now

Marion Diabolito: If I'm not the visitor in question, I do agree with them, in the limited sense that I put observations of power relationships ahead of idealistic projections onto situations.

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello gen and Fefonz.

Fefonz Quan: Hey All :)

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Fefonz

Pila Mulligan: I don't know if it was you or not Marion, I just remembered the comment

Stim Morane: hi Fefonz ... we're reading <http://waysofknowing.kira.org/6Writings%2f%2fEssays/Satyagraha>

Marion Diabolito: Put another way, I heartily agree with the US Constitution's 5th amendment, but failing that, I'm in agreement with the idea of not punishing an accused for lying in his defense in court, say.

Stim Morane: well, I'll wait until everyone has caught up ...

Mickorod Renard: I have read it now, ty

Fefonz Quan: thanks Stim

Tarmel Udimio: sounds good

genesis Zhangsun: me too

Stim Morane: Marion, observations of power relationships are important. But they are a rather different subject than the one I'm concerned with here, which emphasizes ethics in a sense based on awareness of one's self and an increasingly refined kind of awareness regarding what one would most like to live from.

genesis Zhangsun: that is an interesting interpretation of the 5th amendment MARion

Stim Morane: I agree with you that an emphasis on abstracted idealism is often misplaced, and in any case it is not at all the same as what I'm encouraging here.

Marion Diabolito: the 5th amendment makes it unnecessary to lie

Marion Diabolito: it's where something like it is lacking that the necessity comes in :)

Fefonz Quan: (what is the 5th amendment?)

genesis Zhangsun: or other way around, to tell the truth thereby incriminating yourself

Marion Diabolito: in the US constitution, the 5th amendment after it was ratified said an accused cannot be legally compelled to testify against himself or his case

Marion Diabolito: it has to be the choice of the accused

genesis Zhangsun: it sort of just dodges the whole awkward situation (anyway this is a tangent I think)

Stim Morane: One point in Pila's article is that the disregard for truth can lead to a disregard for the welfare of others, ultimately manifesting as callousness, theft on various scales and violence. Do any of you have comments on this?

Fefonz Quan: I am not sure, sometimes not telling the truth saves others from suffering

Mickorod Renard: only that I agree

Fefonz Quan: 'what you don't know won't hurt you'

Stim Morane: Fefonz, that is a possibility. But it is not entirely inconsistent with the intent behind Pila's idea.

Eliza Madrigal: Makes sense that one 'truth' would encompass the others

Stim Morane: Both share a concern for others ...

Stim Morane: Other comments?

Marion Diabolito: maybe most religions that say thou shalt not kill are lying

Tarmel Udimo: well it makes me ask - what is truth?

Bleu Oleander: are we talking personal truth or universal truth

Marion Diabolito: would be my observation :)

Stim Morane: OK, Marion. I did ask ... :)

Fefonz Quan: so i think that the concern for others is more basic here. if you lie in order to help yourselves, other will be hurt.

Mickorod Renard: sometimes the, being kept in the dark is painful, why should someone feel that they know better than to deny you the truth

Scathach Rhiadra: Disguising the truth, or compromising it can hide true intent

Stim Morane: Pila, you are the author here ... would you like to elaborate?

Pila Mulligan: ah, yes

Pila Mulligan: my approach here is from personal experience during several decades of studying and applying Gandhi's work, starting in the 1960's with the civil rights movement and then protesting the Vietnam War, involvement in anti-nuclear and environmental issues, and on to the present Native Hawaiian rights movement

Pila Mulligan: as you can see I am deep in that rtu of expereince

Pila Mulligan: but these truths transcend mundane issues

Pila Mulligan: they are very personal

Pila Mulligan: and I believe their value is personal

Stim Morane: that is not a limitation

Stim Morane: my interest is ethics is nothing if not personal

Pila Mulligan: :)

Stim Morane: the whole idea is to use this approach to find the real person

Stim Morane: Would you agree, Pila?

Pila Mulligan: yes, I agree Stim

Pila Mulligan: and in finding the real person, peace follows

Fefonz Quan: this real person changes all the time

Stim Morane: well, the term means different things, Fefonz

Fefonz Quan: today

Stim Morane: I admit to making an obscure reference at this stage.

Fefonz Quan: today's truth might be a lie tomorrow

Marion Diabolito: I can't see any way to separate the roots of science from the fruits of science, by the way

Fefonz Quan: and moreover, this person sometimes don't _know_ the truth, even about himself

Marion Diabolito: science is 100% results-based

Marion Diabolito: no results, no science

Stim Morane: when I refer to the real person, I'm talking about something central to contemplative traditions, the notion that we can land more truly on who we really are, in a sense that has spiritual relevance.

Fefonz Quan: so real in a sense of 'more pure'?

Stim Morane: I think this inquiry has some relevance to certain discussions concerning science, Marion, but we're not there yet.

[Marion Diabolito: okay :0

Stim Morane: 'purity' has apparently become a pejorative term, so I'm not sure if I should use it.

Mickorod Renard: well, not being honest to yourself will never allow you to see yourself honestly

Moyra Ares: still rezzing

Stim Morane: Yes, Mick

Fefonz Quan: (that's good stim, me not knowing what pejorative means ;-))

Marion Diabolito: It's a paradox, really

Marion Diabolito: I think accepting people lets them be more truthful

Stim Morane: :)

Moyra Ares: oh yesss....hello everybody

Marion Diabolito: hi moyra!

Eliza Madrigal: Hi Moyra

Stim Morane: yes, accepting people is also central to what we're discussing.

Tarmel Udimo: (sorry for the interruption folks, just introducing Moyra to the group)

Stim Morane: A second point in Pila's wiki piece is that moving toward ending violence may necessarily involve or be aided by a greater emphasis on truth. Comments?

Mickorod Renard: hi Moyra

Moyra Ares: ~waves~

Fefonz Quan: on some situatin, mostly political/national, ending violence may require the other way around, for people to abandon some ideas of their 'truth' and 'justice'

Mickorod Renard: I think violence is a quick fix, and often a result of not wishing to see what was really behind the problem

Stim Morane: Fefonz, I agree. But there is a big difference between ideology and what Pila means by truth, I suspect.

genesis Zhangsun: peace maybe requires a synthesis of two clashing extremes

Stim Morane: Yes ...

Fefonz Quan: so what does Pila mean?

Fefonz Quan nods

Stim Morane: :)

Pila Mulligan: the synthesis Genesis refers to is more genuine and enduring if it is based on accurate facts

Stim Morane: and more than facts, actually _seeing_ the other people

Stim Morane: including them

Pila Mulligan: and the need for peace

Pila Mulligan: seeing it also

Fefonz Quan: agree with stim. facts, though, are so vague in this over-communicated world

Stim Morane: That latter is not peace.

Stim Morane: yes, peace is an underlying dimension of value in these contemplative concerns. It doesn't just refer to "cessation of hostilities"

Pila Mulligan: facts usually underpin conflicts, Fefonz

Fefonz Quan: it's a little peace at least :)

Mickorod Renard: trusting another party is often hampered by seeing through eyes with no self integrity

genesis Zhangsun: yes that synthesis reflects the "truth" because it balances the extremes and forces them to consider the perspective of one another

genesis Zhangsun: (sorry little late)

Stim Morane: Facts are the least of our concern. Well ... it all looks very difficult, doesn't it.

genesis Zhangsun: everyone types so furiously here

Marion Diabolito: violently fast!

genesis Zhangsun: *ferociously?

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Fefonz Quan: why furiously? very calmly

Tarmel Udimo: well to be honest folks, I am lost

genesis Zhangsun: :)

Tarmel Udimo: I came here for a session looking at life from a contemplative perspective

Stim Morane: Yes, I understand, Tarmel. But what about Pila's own wiki article. Does that seem confusing to you?

Marion Diabolito: I am mostly interested in who, and what sort of who, gets to define for everyone what is violence, what is peace, and what is truth

Tarmel Udimo: and instead we end up right back in the usual muck

Marion Diabolito: for me social relationships, economic relationships, and power relationships precede philosophical and religious ideals.

Tarmel Udimo: sorry but sometimes I wish people would actually try listening

Marion Diabolito: not as common a perspective as it once was, but there it is.

Tarmel Udimo: they keep stating the same things from very limited points of view

Stim Morane: Marion, those are interesting issues. But in order to get to them in a way that is grounded rather than merely opinion-mongering, I'm proposing an on-going experiential inquiry using these precepts drawn from ethics.

Mickorod Renard: if someone has been honest but not actually factual, that's a mistake only

Tarmel Udimo: It's frustrating and we never get to a deeper level

Tarmel Udimo: no I didn't find Pila's article confusing

Stim Morane: Marion, I won't say much more, but will just repeat my earlier comment to the effect that I'm not recommending religious ideal of any kind.

Marion Diabolito: Stim, I think eventually Ouroboros is going to see his tail, and then you'll find those questions aren't far from what I emphasize

Stim Morane: Rather, the point is to conduct a direct inquiry.

Stim Morane: I understand your point of view, Marion. It is not complicated.

Stim Morane: :)

Marion Diabolito: Tarmel, at least we're not all coming home from work, fighting traffic, and turning on a TV as we join 2nd life and this convo

Marion Diabolito: Tarmel we have to be somewhat more contemplative than many are right now.

Stim Morane: But I'm offering you a chance to understand something quite beyond any sort of "thinking" or opinions.

Fefonz Quan: (yes, some of us has no work ;-))

genesis Zhangsun: yes please go on Stim

Stim Morane: Pila also touched on the way truth, as understood in the languages of some ancient cultures, has an embodied or enacted character: Satyagraha or "truth in action". This is extremely important for my purposes in this forum or in any other context where I'm discussing the subject of ethics as understood by contemplative traditions. Again, it's very different from what I call "robot ethics" --- or in this case mere factual accuracy.

Stim Morane: Do any of you see his idea here?

Gaya Ethaniel nods :)

Stim Morane: On that point ...

Tarmel Udimo: yes

Stim Morane: Pila quotes Mahatma Gandhi as saying "The Satyagrahi's object is to convert, not to coerce ...". I think this also deserves some discussion. The meaning of "convert" in this context is, as I would understand it at least, not quite the same as what we may be accustomed to when we hear the word used in standard religious contexts.

Stim Morane: It's not a matter of getting someone to become a member of a new group or adopt a new belief. The point is much larger than that --- if truth permeates someone's existence and way of existing in relation to others, it wakes up something in the others.

Stim Morane: It's not a matter of converting people to a different group or creed, but of activating their own ethical capacity. This latter necessarily commits them to acting on behalf of everyone rather than just of some people.

Stim Morane: Pila, am I still being faithful to your intent?

Pila Mulligan: still reading :)

Pila Mulligan: yes, exactly

Stim Morane: sorry

Stim Morane: none of this is about idealism or religion in the dogmatic sense

Fefonz Quan finds 'truth in action' a good pointer

Eos Amaterasu: Is that what Tarmel was asking for here?

Stim Morane: it's about your own natural sensibilities, ones that may be rather buried

Stim Morane: I hope so ... Tarmel?

Tarmel Udimo: yes Eos

Stim Morane: I am accustomed to teaching contemplation to live groups.

Eos Amaterasu: :-)

Stim Morane: Attempting to offer the essence of it in SL is very tricky for me.

Tarmel Udimo: nods

Fefonz Quan: it is like true in the meaning of 'right'. (right action comes to mind)

Pila Mulligan: not to complicate things, but 'sat' can also means reality

Stim Morane: We could throw away everything that people associate with "right" and still preserve what contemplation-based ethical feelings and insight are about.

Stim Morane: Yes, thanks Pila

Stim Morane: That is precisely the point here.

Gaya Ethaniel: What could we do to make it less tricky Stim?

Stim Morane: We live in a world that has many different meanings for "reality", without usually including the one that matters to me here.

Stim Morane: Gaya, move to Berkeley CA

Marion Diabolito: the sage falls asleep not because he ought to or even because he wants to, but because he is sleepy

Pila Mulligan: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: *big smiles*

Stim Morane: or Hawaii

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Stim Morane: Yes, I agree, Marion. We're working on it ...

Stim Morane: But more to the point, the sage has no opinions.

Mickorod Renard: can I come too?

Marion Diabolito: I think the Alaskan wilderness is pretty contemplative, or i found it so when i was living in it, gathering mushrooms and plants every day.

Eliza Madrigal: Capacity can't be forced or be talked into at a level that inspires action/non-action, only awakened. Is that the difference between coerce and convince/convert?

Marion Diabolito: it's easier to be contemplative in isolation, probably

Stim Morane: Yes, it's much easier to work with these issues in a more natural setting. But we're often not there, and must make the best of it.

Mickorod Renard: some of our UK mushrooms are very contemplative

Eliza Madrigal: I think of convince as inspiring inner conviction

Stim Morane: That is part of my point ... we can find our "nature" even in the midst of a war zone.

Stim Morane: It helps to be in the Garden of Eden, but even there we can be lost.

Stim Morane: We must work with what we have.

Fefonz Quan: or bit by a snake

Stim Morane: and where we are

Tarmel Udimo: [14:41] Stim Morane: We could throw away everything that people associate with "right" and still preserve what contemplation-based ethical feelings and insight are about.

Stim Morane: Yes

Gaya Ethaniel: And you said we need button pushers Stim :)

Tarmel Udimo: I wanted to know more about this

Stim Morane: Tarmel, thanks.

Stim Morane: I'm trying to get past all opinions.

Stim Morane: My point was simply that we don't need idealisms or opinions.

Stim Morane: Contemplative insight is not about opinions at all.

Stim Morane: Do you agree?

Mickorod Renard: ermmm

Gaya Ethaniel nods.

Tarmel Udimio: yes I agree

Stim Morane: It's easy to explain this, although perhaps hard to understand.

Fefonz Quan: I agree, though it is very hard

Stim Morane: The issue is the mind ...

Tarmel Udimio: it brings up the question what is left?

Fefonz Quan: right? :)

Stim Morane: ordinarily, we use the mind to learn and contrive.

Fefonz Quan: (sorry...)

Stim Morane: But we don't learn to refine the mind, to let it mature.

Stim Morane: A more mature mind doesn't trade in opinions at all

Stim Morane: one can actually learn to tell the difference

Stim Morane: otherwise, ethical sensibilities are impossible ... we would just have opinions.

Stim Morane: Conventions, etc

Stim Morane: We don't need that stuff.

Eliza Madrigal sneaks out quietly. Thanks Stim and everyone :)

Stim Morane: Thanks, Eliza.

Eos Amaterasu: Problem is the words undermine their truth

Tarmel Udimio: so you're saying it has to come from being ethical

Eos Amaterasu: being indistinguishable from opinions as soon as they are spoken

Mickorod Renard: or should the truth underline the words?

Eos Amaterasu: it should :-)

Stim Morane: well, I am certainly suggesting we could look into the issue.

Eos Amaterasu: so being elliptical...

Stim Morane: One of the things I started off emphasizing in earlier meetings, and which I then realized was too difficult to follow up on at that time, was the issue of "what kind of mind are you using?"

Fefonz Quan nods

Stim Morane: At this point in our consideration of "contemplative ethics", I would ask you to consider your own insights and comments here to date ... many of you have offered suggestions about how the simple precepts of conduct I've mentioned can be understood in deeper levels.

Marion Diabolito <-- 2nd life beginner's mind

Stim Morane: yes

Stim Morane: And it is precisely this possibility of extending these basic precepts to more subtle levels, that constitutes what I'm calling their "contemplative" dimension. Some practitioners in the past have used precisely this approach as their main form of meditation.

Tarmel Udimio: nods

Stim Morane: In such an approach, a person would start by understanding a given precept like "no lying" in one way, and then considering it more and more deeply, looking into its implications in much more subtle spheres. The same applies to "no stealing", or "no violence". But in doing this, one of the main realizations that's available is that a certain sort of mind is being used at the outset, then gradually replaced with something else... possibly something more direct and insightful and respectful and inclusive of others, etc.

Mickorod Renard: cool

Stim Morane: It's possible to start off with "thinking" and end up with something that goes beyond the ordinary mind altogether.

Fefonz Quan: for example, if we use the 'fear mind' when lying Stim?

Stim Morane: yes

Stim Morane: That would be a good result, Fefonz

Stim Morane: I don't care about beliefs, etc, but about seeing more directly

Fefonz Quan: seeing it or using it?

Stim Morane: and being changed by what we see

Stim Morane: seeing that we are using a fear mind is worthwhile, don't you think, Fefonz?

Fefonz Quan: sure, just wanted to make sure about the good result sentence

Stim Morane: It might give us pause

Stim Morane: Yes.

Stim Morane: we will have to stop soon ...

Stim Morane: I am learning things by attempting to discuss this in SL

Stim Morane: But I'm not sure if I'm being helpful to you!

Pila Mulligan: it seems to me that you are being very helpful Stim

Gaya Ethaniel nods :)

Mickorod Renard: does bulls..t come under lying?

Stim Morane: Everything hangs on actually working with this, using it as an opportunity to see ourselves, our tendencies, etc anew.

Fefonz Quan nods too

Tarmel Udimio: yes there are very few places that we can go and discuss these things

Stim Morane: Thanks, Pila, Gaya

Tarmel Udimio: I mean in SL :)

Stim Morane: Mick, it's at least worth seeing it for what it is. We can then decide if we want to take another tack.

Fefonz Quan: and RL too Tarmel.

Mickorod Renard: ty

Tarmel Udimio: nods

Stim Morane: Well, I will have to find better ways for you to do experiments at home, in RL, or this approach will die.

Marion Diabolito: I think it's also easier to be contemplative if you allot a great deal of time to it

Marion Diabolito: :)

Marion Diabolito: including for a discussion

Marion Diabolito: a lot

Stim Morane: that is true. And out of fashion these days.

Mickorod Renard: I find this all fascinating stim..I was not trying to be negative

Stim Morane: Anyway, must go. Thank you all for your insights.

Pila Mulligan: this is a unique realm of teaching, Stim, so please don't be discouraged

Mickorod Renard: thanks Stim

Stim Morane: No, I understood, Mick. I enjoy your comments very much.

Stim Morane: Bye everyone

Pila Mulligan: bye

Mickorod Renard: bye

genesis Zhangsun: bye

Tarmel Udimio: bye

Fefonz Quan: Bye Stim and thanks

Marion Diabolito: bye stim and tx
Tarmel Udimio: I too must go
Scathach Rhiadra: bye Stim
Gaya Ethaniel: Thank you :)
Tarmel Udimio: have to rush to work
Fefonanz Quan: by tarmel,
Marion Diabolito: gaya ethaniel you made me think of harvey
Scathach Rhiadra: bye Tarmel
Gaya Ethaniel: Have a good day/night all :)
Gaya Ethaniel: ty Marion
Fefonanz Quan: you too Gaya
Marion Diabolito: Tarmel perhaps you'll only be able to be contemplative during lunch break
Mickorod Renard: bye Tarmel, Gaya
Marion Diabolito: if it's not physical work
Scathach Rhiadra: good night all, Namasté
Pila Mulligan: we need to help Stim find ways to do experiments at home in RL
Mickorod Renard: nite Scath