

The following is the transcript for the workshop of 19th November 2009.

Stim Morane: Welcome everyone ... this has proven to be a tricky discussion to follow through on, given my many absences. I appreciate your stalwartness in the face of so many interruptions.

Stim Morane: Have you found "naturalness" along the way?

Stim Morane: I've read the last open discussion log ... noted that some are working on breathing, along with other aspects of life and patterns.

Stim Morane: Any comments re all that?

Stim Morane: to put this another way, does "naturalness" matter?

Gaya Ethaniel: I think that was relating to my practice ... check if I'm breathing when impatient.

Stim Morane: yes

Eliza Madrigal is aware of a sensibility shift, though hard to describe.. a kind of softness

Stim Morane: useful, Eliza?

Gaya Ethaniel: I think that checking can become something that is problematic.

Eliza Madrigal: Yes it seems so.. quite subtle so I guess it is something that works with time

Stim Morane: yes, unnatural, perhaps, Gaya

Stim Morane: you feel your alleged cold stare softening? :)

Eliza Madrigal smiles

Gaya Ethaniel: A bit of vigilance is good but ... yes not necessary, unnatural.

Eliza Madrigal: Well I'll have to wait for others to comment there... didn't think I had that when I first heard it :)

Stim Morane: vigilance is a first step, simply meant to overcome heedlessness

Stim Morane: only your nature can really track your nature

Eliza Madrigal: hm

Stim Morane: it's not an object of observation, after all.

Stim Morane: but we have to start somewhere, somehow

Gaya Ethaniel: It goes back to what Eliza said a while ago, asking 'I' to something that is not possible.

Stim Morane: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: RL avatar, cough up please ... RL avatar utters, gollum gollum ...#

Eliza Madrigal: hahaha... trying to force, then...

Stim Morane: the self, one's attentional habits etc, will try to do something, and this may be where we have to start. But the best way is via EXERCISING ourselves in some way, thus bringing out more that is present. Yes, Gaya, well gollum'd.

Stim Morane: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: :P

Stim Morane: So have you found ways to exercise yourself so as to bring out more of your natural capacities?

Stim Morane: Or ways that go against the latter? Either would be interesting.

Stim Morane: I know Pila has a very good understanding of such matters ...

Pila Mulligan: :)

Pila Mulligan: "the farther you go the less you know"

Stim Morane: and the more you are, explicitly.

Stim Morane: "you" in the sense of the whole surround

Stim Morane: OK ... so how about it? Exercise? Dare I say the work, "homework"?

Stim Morane: What have you been working with?

Gaya Ethaniel: I've been watching impatience ...

Stim Morane: excellence

Stim Morane: excellent

Stim Morane: and?

Gaya Ethaniel: It rises up physically like an angry cat ... funny to see it actually, trying to look big.

Stim Morane: interesting

Wol Euler: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: I just saw my shoulders rising ... at the point of impatience arising.

Stim Morane: it's trying to impress, or coerce?

Gaya Ethaniel: I think so ... but noticing it re-direct my attention in a way so didn't get too sucked in.

Stim Morane: sucked in or connected?

Gaya Ethaniel: I guess it's a physical manifestation of 'it shouldn't be like this, I think bla'

Stim Morane: I see. So then what happens?

Gaya Ethaniel: I thought it a bit funny ... that I think of myself so important.

Stim Morane: yes

Gaya Ethaniel: So didn't get angry as much ...

Gaya Ethaniel: Breathed ... stopped puffing myself up ... etc

Stim Morane: :)

Stim Morane: so did this feel better?

Gaya Ethaniel: Well, I notice this better so has been quite tough last week or so since.

Stim Morane: you are distressed?

Gaya Ethaniel: Just trying to see while not forcing to correct ... see what I figure out etc. it's not easy.

Give me some bliss Stim :P

Stim Morane: :)

Wol Euler: :)

Stim Morane: Well I could stop asking you all these pesky questions.

Stim Morane: That might help.

Gaya Ethaniel: heh :)

Stim Morane: I should explain that, as we've basically already agreed, everything is natural. Even ungrounded reactions are expressive of one's nature ... the trick is to learn to respectfully work with things in us, understand them better, see connections between different manifestations, become more truly what we are, and simpler.

Stim Morane: the tangle becomes more coherent

Stim Morane: this then provides a basis for living better, less discordant

Stim Morane: Also, it's basically meaningless to talk about one's nature in isolation. It's always going to be a relational thing, on one level or another.

Stim Morane: It's only the disconnected sense of self that is not well-contextualized, part of things.

Stim Morane: I think you have all been discussing versions of that point in other forums.

Gaya Ethaniel nods ... see the bigger picture ... hm ...

Stim Morane: Have you found ways to apply it in life, that's my question.

Stim Morane: This makes for a new way to know, respond, help, interact.

Eliza Madrigal: I've been paying attention to the idea of not carrying fortifications, and trusting that what is needed in the moment/situation can happen if I interfere as little as possible... that this is somehow a more natural/light way of being and leaves less stickiness

Stim Morane: how to you hit upon this, Eliza?

Eliza Madrigal: Maybe exhausting myself trying to withdraw from the empty bank

Eliza Madrigal: so the default switches?

Stim Morane: ah, yes, that works!

Gaya Ethaniel: If I want to see real message behind reactions, I guess not having energy sapped is important so in case of impatience, not getting angry initially helps.

Stim Morane: I mean, learning from exhaustion

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Stim Morane: yes. So let's talk about that. And maybe we can lure Pila in here ... how many of you are working with following your energy, seeing what saps it, trashes it, restores it?

Stim Morane: this is an important bit of homework!

Calvino Rabeni: yes

Stim Morane: *you are working

Stim Morane: people in earlier times learned a great deal from this simple exercise

Stim Morane: it bears on healing, being true to one's self, relationships, physical tasks, sleep, artfulness, etc

Stim Morane: relationships

Pila Mulligan: in tai chi, there is the idea of always maintaining an energy reserve

Pila Mulligan: not exhausting

Stim Morane: yes, Pila

Stim Morane: never go to the limit

Stim Morane: that's the Taoist angle

Stim Morane: or you could go to the limit, and LEARN

Eliza Madrigal: There is something to be said for goals/desires which are too large for "I" to meet them, too... that it kind of forces one to find new ways? Stretch?

Pila Mulligan: and be tired :)

Calvino Rabeni: Or go beyond the limit

Gaya Ethaniel: So ... sometimes I try to drop when I see it just keep repeating, spiraling ... like that?

Eliza Madrigal smiles at Pila :)

Stim Morane: Yes, Eliza, that's a limit imposed by our constructions and habits

Storm Nordwind: Such watchfulness even applies in modern business coaching in time management skills

Stim Morane: there are limits to push through, limits to identify and respect

Calvino Rabeni: The limit is elastic, elize

Stim Morane: yes, Storm. Good point.

Stim Morane: yes, Calvino, we have limits that need to be challenged.

Eliza Madrigal: hm, nods

Calvino Rabeni: But they are not really contextual

Gaya Ethaniel: Especially when those situations involved others I try to be more watchful these days. One can't make others do things.

Gaya Ethaniel: Sometimes ... retreat is needed ...

Pila Mulligan: aye

Stim Morane: Yes, Gaya. There are several sides here and each of you is pointing out important things.

Stim Morane: But I suggest, at least for our present orientation here, that we start by learning about "natural limits" ... once we know about those, we can find ourselves more truly, and in the process, spot the bogus limits imposed by the false self and habits.

Gaya Ethaniel: ok :)

Stim Morane: for instance, we can definitely go without sleep for longer than we think, but we should in fact get more sleep than some of us usually do. This is not a trivial thing.

Wol Euler nods

Stim Morane: It's useful to learn about what we have been given, as living beings.

Stim Morane: Most of you know enough about me to understand that I'm interested in "naturalness" as part of my general interest in both contemplative spirituality and ethics too. Ethics without cultivation of one's nature is simply meaningless to me.

Stim Morane: We could go beyond those "limits" too, but I'd prefer that we learn to appreciate them. Here perhaps we should stop using the word "limit", since that sounds nasty, and thing of another term, one we can respect.

Stim Morane: *think of

Pila Mulligan: this is an aside, not intended to distract, but in that context I'd say genetic modification is the biggest ethics question of the day

Pila Mulligan: nature = genes?

Stim Morane: so more, Pila?

Stim Morane: say more

Pila Mulligan: that's it - should we take over nature's evolutionary work

Stim Morane: ah.

Stim Morane: it's going to happen, already is.

Pila Mulligan: ethically :) ?

Stim Morane: Many of my teachers were worried about this.

Pila Mulligan: me to

Pila Mulligan: o*

Stim Morane: For instance, as we become new and more proficient in some ways, will we still "care"?

Gaya Ethaniel: hm ... humans have been cross breeding animals ... making new species of plants ... guess how far.

Pila Mulligan: yes, Gaya, gene selection by breeding is common

Pila Mulligan: but changing the gene inside is ont

Stim Morane: We cannot possibly stop or intelligently direct the changes that are coming for the human race, if we do not find in ourselves "our human nature".

Stim Morane: So I would emphasize learning about this.

Stim Morane: My question is "how can we explore that in a forum of this sort?"

Stim Morane: Ideas?

Pila Mulligan: have we been doing it already?

Calvino Rabeni: yes

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Stim Morane: :)

Stim Morane: Hope so. How can we continue?

Pila Mulligan: by not stopping :)

Stim Morane: :) That's the spirit, Pila.

Stim Morane: :)

Eliza Madrigal: the sleep discussion is an interesting one

Pila Mulligan intrinsic smart ass

Stim Morane: Happy to have that nature surfacing.

Eliza Madrigal: haha

Stim Morane: So let me ask you ... have you found your own aliveness? Do you feel like a living being? I could ask related questions about other issues, like ethics, but take this one for a moment.

Stim Morane: To the ordinary self, the notion is an abstraction.

Stim Morane: *abstraction

Stim Morane: Pila?

Stim Morane: This is a simply entry into one aspect of your nature.

Pila Mulligan: ?

Gaya Ethaniel: Naturalness or aliveness?

Stim Morane: Aliveness?

Pila Mulligan: the best

Gaya Ethaniel: ah ok

Stim Morane: yes, it's a good one, Pila. I have found it to be very worth studying.

Pila Mulligan: oxygen in lungs becomes energy in nerves = life

Stim Morane: AND recommend it as homework. Oh, yes, Pila.

Gaya Ethaniel: When sitting, I saw how relaxing that checking allows my body to self-correct posture that is as straight as possible yet not overtly erect ... perhaps that's aliveness.

Pila Mulligan: posture + breathing :0

Stim Morane: yes, posture is normally corrected in sitting by an idea of correctness.

Stim Morane: But it's better to let your aliveness correct it.

Calvino Rabeni: but there is no external form for correctness I think

Stim Morane: This is a very strong thing, once we give it a chance.

Calvino Rabeni: right

Stim Morane: Calvino, there may be external forms, like in some traditions for instance, but they are only starting points.

Gaya Ethaniel: Yes Pila with each breathing, the posture changed ...

Calvino Rabeni: yes

Pila Mulligan: getting the kinks out of the garden hose

Stim Morane: Without natural convergence on what is right, we are adrift.

Stim Morane: yes, Pila.

Storm Nordwind: Linked possibly to the same ideas behind the Alexander Technique perhaps?

Stim Morane: ANYway, this is only one example.

Calvino Rabeni: or Continuum

Gaya Ethaniel: Otherwise ... I haven't seen much aliveness or haven't noticed much yet.

Eliza Madrigal is reminded of protecting and nurturing the little flame ... seems very much related to breath

Stim Morane: Maybe, Storm. Yes, Calvina, there is no one right way, but a continuum ... but for any one of us, there is an opportunity to find what suits better.

Stim Morane: Calvino, sorry

Stim Morane: :)

Calvino Rabeni: Right, but I meant Continuum as a name of a practice of awareness in movement.

Sorry, go on

Stim Morane: Oh, interesting. Don't know about that.

Stim Morane: There are a lot of these sorts of schools now. Can't keep up! :)

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Calvino Rabeni: Sure, but the basic ideas all relate

Stim Morane: But we can at least follow ourselves, as a kind of learning. Yes, the basics are probably related.

Gaya Ethaniel: But it involves many things Stim. It's easy to notice when formally meditating but not so otherwise ... and when tired etc. so making sure getting enough sleep is good I see that.

Pila Mulligan: this? <http://www.continuummovement.com/cm-overview.htm>

Eliza Madrigal has had bizarre sleep habits since becoming 'contemplative'...one would think it would be more even

Stim Morane: Yes, Gaya. And thanks, Pila.

Stim Morane: Eliza, you're kept awake more?

Eliza Madrigal: yes, far more

Stim Morane: yes, this can happen. Have you been through a winter with this condition yet?

Eliza Madrigal: like... sleep for days, up for days... almost. Not quite that bad

Eliza Madrigal: No, I live in Miami. We don't have winter :)

Stim Morane: I see. :)

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Storm Nordwind chuckles

Stim Morane: Well, the basic approach to that is to not worry about it.

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Stim Morane: But if you start feeling really strung out by the pattern, let me know ...

Eliza Madrigal: it probably has to do with structure of stimulation, but difficult to impose

Eliza Madrigal: Thanks :)

Stim Morane: Studying this could be a good exercise. What seems to be correlated with sleeplessness, vs protracted sleep?

Stim Morane: We usually study books, but not our own lives, and if we do study ourselves, we study our "selves"

Stim Morane: study

Gaya Ethaniel: For me at least two different reasons, one is because of noisy mind another is burst of 'energy' ...

Eliza Madrigal: yes would be good to pay attention to... for me off hand I think it is reading/study...yes energy bursts

Stim Morane: there is a thing in traditional teachings called "hysterical chi"

Gaya Ethaniel: lol

Eliza Madrigal: hehe, that must be it

Eliza Madrigal: Right Pila? love that term

Pila Mulligan: new to me :)

Pila Mulligan: makes sense

Stim Morane: this is a kind of energy that is a bit manic, pushes us beyond what is healthy. But even it has to be accepted, learned from.

Pila Mulligan: kundalini?

Stim Morane: that is more method-based, Pila

Gaya Ethaniel: More pronounced as Moon gets fuller ... maybe I'm getting into 'tree hugger' mode now.

Pila Mulligan: hysterical to me :)

Stim Morane: hysterical chi is natural, but not comfortable, not "refined"

Eliza Madrigal nods, yes I'd not heard the term before but hm... sometimes perhaps applicable... become focused

Stim Morane: it jumps the bounds of more natural, beneficial patterns of being

Eliza Madrigal: hm

Gaya Ethaniel: Yes not refined ... normally I don't feel sure what to do during those burst. Just do more what I do normally ... can't think of anything different.

Stim Morane: this is hysterical chi ... so sometimes, because of our habits and excesses, we slip into that. But you may also be experiencing energy that simply "suits" and needs to be allowed to express itself

Stim Morane: sorry, Gaya, out of sync with your message

Gaya Ethaniel: np I talk too much anyway :)

Stim Morane: I cannot predict what you and Eliza are really experiencing, without actually seeing you ... so here we're laboring under the limitations of the medium.

Stim Morane: But in any case, even something excessive has a rightness about it, and should be listened to.

Eliza Madrigal nods... but Gaya and I can pay more attention...take notes for a few weeks

Gaya Ethaniel: I don't feel bad ... pretty content if it's energy burst rather than noisy mind so maybe it's not hysterical chi after all.

Stim Morane: :)

Eliza Madrigal: maybe part of it is expecting a linearness which isn't necessarily natural

Eliza Madrigal: or for things to be the same as they 'used to be'.. to conform to an expectation of normal

Eliza Madrigal talks too much too, sorry :)

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Stim Morane: well ... this is an area to investigate. But what about the rest of you? What kind of juicy homework would you like?

Stim Morane: i mean, what sort?

Stim Morane: I have already mentioned aliveness ... do you see how to study it?

Stim Morane: Obviously you could do taichi, but I'm thinking in more ordinary ways here.

Pila Mulligan: simple exercise: when you feel a sense of lethargy affecting you, stand up and walk around a bit

Stim Morane: yes, good. Others?

Calvino Rabeni: Yes

Calvino Rabeni: when you feel a sense of energy, stand up and follow it around a little

Stim Morane: :) exactly

Stim Morane: that is what I am trying to encourage

Stim Morane: it applies to many aspects of life

Stim Morane: you may find yourself in a new place, thinking or feeling in a new way

Storm Nordwind: How about, simply, when you put your fingers on a keyboard, actually feel what it is like to touch it, then feel yourself feeling it, and then feel the energy that is enabling you to feel it.

Stim Morane: Sure, great idea.

Pila Mulligan: :)

Eliza Madrigal: hmm

Stim Morane: we live in abstractions, usually

Stim Morane: finding your nature will not come from using the abstractions

Stim Morane: although even the abstractions are "natural" ... some natural things can blind us to naturalness, until we become aware of their characteristics and larger ground.

Stim Morane: Anyway, we're out of time, and I'm still thinking I'm in Princeton, or no, on retreat, or no, uh ...

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: :(

Eliza Madrigal: Nice retreat, Stim?

Stim Morane: tiring

Stim Morane: but ok

Stim Morane: I'm a mother hen

Wol Euler: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Eliza Madrigal smiles

Eliza Madrigal: I'm sure the chicks appreciate you

Gaya Ethaniel: Was it in the Redwood?

Eliza Madrigal: as do we all :)

Pila Mulligan: :)

Storm Nordwind would like to see that as a tag above Stim's head

Stim Morane: it was in an area in the far north of california, with 1000 year old trees

Pila Mulligan: before Arnold

Gaya Ethaniel: ah so you saw Mitsu!

Gaya Ethaniel: I envy ... I'm going to save up money now ...

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Stim Morane: Yes, I not only saw him, I kept hitting him up for his nifty wifi gadget

Gaya Ethaniel: :P

Stim Morane: anyway, I doubt that we will push this present topic very much further, because the usual ways I teach it are technical and detailed.

Stim Morane: I just thought it would be fun to see what the group would say about it.

Stim Morane: Try the "following" for next week, and see where you end up.

Eliza Madrigal: :) OK

Gaya Ethaniel: Different levels of energy Stim?

Stim Morane: yes, perhaps, Gaya. Different strands, kinds, etc

Gaya Ethaniel: ok

Stim Morane: it all starts, of course, with noticing, listening.

Stim Morane: but if we make a big project out of that, we won't "hear" anything.

Stim Morane: have fun with it.

Gaya Ethaniel: ok

Stim Morane: See you all again, perhaps.

Pila Mulligan: thanks Stim, bye for now

Calvino Rabeni: Indeed

Eliza Madrigal: :) Thanks Stim!

Wol Euler: bye stim, take care.

Gaya Ethaniel: Thank you Stim and everyone :)

Scathach Rhiadra: good night Stim, thank you:)

Stim Morane: Bye everyone

Timbo Quan: bye stim
Storm Nordwind waves
Eliza Madrigal: Thanks, everyone
Wol Euler: goodngiht all, take care.
Scathach Rhiadra: good night everyone, Namaste
Eliza Madrigal: Night Wol :) Night Scath
Storm Nordwind must go drive through the snow now (Unlike Eliza :)
Eliza Madrigal grins...but envies :)
Gaya Ethaniel: Safe trip Storm :)
Wol Euler: be safe, storm.
Storm Nordwind: Thank you! :)
Wol Euler: bye, my dears.