

Meddling

[View in your browser.](#)

The hearing that is only in the ears is one thing. The hearing of the understanding is another. But the hearing of the spirit is not limited to any one faculty, to the ear, or to the mind. Hence it demands the emptiness of all the faculties. And when the faculties are empty, the whole being listens. Then there is a direct grasp of what is right there that can never be heard with the ear or understood with the mind." Chuang-Tzu, Chinese philosopher

In essence, the more we listen to what is going on inside our self, the better we understand what is happening outside. The more apt we are to allow the other to just be present in their experience, and not be so ego-driven to change, fix, advise, educate, console, story-tell, shut down, interrogate, explain or correct the other in their experience.

Believing that we have to in some way "fix" another is the paramount obstacle to being present to and with the other.

Each of us is exactly where we're men to be on our journey. Not ahead; not behind. Exactly where we are in relationship to our personal cocoon, to the unfolding of who we are and how we are.

In our Western approach to living and to life, many of us are caught in the strong urge to fix, give advice, or reassurance and to explain, directly or indirectly, subtly or not so subtly "our own position" or feeling.

The Buddhist way

There is a Buddhist statement that says, "Don't just do something; stand there." Stand there and just "be" there, indeed.

When we're engaged with others who are experiencing, pain or suffering in some way shape or form, what works with them, is asking ourselves, "How I can be respectful, empathic, and present?", sensing our own body, breathing, being consciously conscious of where I am in allowing this field of experience, so that I can just "be" with this person, knowing that their experience is just as it should be, that, in fact, they do have whatever "answers" they need in this moment, i.e., their answers and their moment, not "my" answers and "my" moment.

The Butterfly and the Cocoon (anonymous)

*A man found a cocoon of a butterfly.
One day a small opening appeared.
He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours
as it struggled to squeeze its body through the tiny hole.
Then it stopped, as if it couldn't go further.*

So the man decided to help the butterfly.

*He took a pair of scissors and
snipped off the remaining bits of cocoon.
The butterfly emerged easily but
it had a swollen body and shriveled wings.*

*The man continued to watch it,
expecting that any minute the wings would enlarge
and expand enough to support the body,
Neither happened!
In fact the butterfly spent the rest of its life
crawling around.
It was never able to fly.*

*What the man in his kindness
and haste did not understand:
The restricting cocoon and the struggle
required by the butterfly to get through the opening
was a way of forcing the fluid from the body
into the wings so that it would be ready
for flight once that was achieved.*

*Sometimes struggles are exactly
what we need in our lives.
Going through life with no obstacles would cripple us.
We will not be as strong as we could have been
and we would never fly.*

So, with respect to the butterfly and the cocoon, perhaps the individual's "kindness" and "impatience" got in the way of the butterfly's growth and development.

Meddling

So, it's worth thinking about how we feel the need to meddle in another's growth and developmental experience from "our" perspective, not theirs, from our states of impatience, or knowing, being the "sage," from our ego-driven needs to be "right," to have the answers, knowledge, wisdom, etc.

The question underneath the question is:

Why?
Really, why?
Really, really, really, why?

There's much more inside each of our cocoons than simply air. There's knowledge, wisdom, insight, energy, and much opportunity for growth - in mind, body and spirit. The question is whether we have the strength and courage to stay there for a while, and learn, and be, and allow

others to do so as well.

Some questions for self-reflection:

- How did/do you experience your cocoon?
- Are you comfortable being with your own pain and suffering?
- Do you look outside immediately for answers to your pain and suffering?
- What is/are the message(s) or lesson(s) you're getting from your challenge(s)? How so?
- How do you respond/react in the face of another's challenges?
- Are you quick to want to change, fix, advise, educate, console, story-tell, shut down, interrogate, explain, or correct another when they are hurting in some way?
- Can you just "stand there?" Is that difficult for you? Be honest.
- On a scale of 1(low) to 10 (high) where would you rate yourself, generally, with respect to being (a) compassionate, (b) understanding and (c) empathic? Would your spouse/partner, child(ren), best friend, workmates, or other family members agree with you. Would you feel comfortable asking them?
- Can you love yourself and leave yourself alone (not judge, criticize or beat yourself up) when you're experiencing pain and suffering?
- Can you honestly believe you're exactly where you're meant to be right now in your life? Why? Why not?

(c) 2014, Peter G. Vajda, Ph.D. and True North Partnering. All rights in all media reserved.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to share this reading with you and I hope you find it insightful and useful.

Perhaps you'll share this with others, post it on a bulletin board, and use it to generate rich and rewarding discussion.

What is the one thing that is keeping you from feeling successful, happy, confident, in control or at peace as you live your life - at work, at home, at play or in relationship? Maybe you know what that thing is maybe you don't. You just have a feeling that something has to change, whether or not you embrace that change. And how would that change support you to show up as a "better you?"

I'm available to guide you to create relationships that reflect honesty, integrity, authenticity, trust, and respect whether at work or outside of work. I support you to focus on the interpersonal skills that enable you to relate to others with a high level of personal and professional satisfaction - unhampered by personal inconsistencies, beliefs, "stories," and behaviors that create barriers to a harmonious, pleasant, conscious, compatible, healthy and productive relationship.

I coach by phone, Skype and in person. For more information, 770-804-9125,

www.truenorthpartnering.com or [pvajda\(at\)truenorthpartnering.com](mailto:pvajda@truenorthpartnering.com)

You can also follow me on Twitter: @petergvajda. Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/TrueNorthPartnering>