

Guidance for Week 3

In the phone call for week three, I suggested that you practice in accord with the instructions on page 144: attending to what is immediately present without assigning that presence a role within a past-future causal nexus. The text suggests that this way of focusing on the presence of things (inclusive of views, meanings, and thoughts) makes more available the 'timing' of time. Identities appear, but they are not confirmed. The possibility arises for "immediate contact with the transcending unity at the heart of reality" (147). All this has to happen in connection with a knowing that does not depend on logic, for logic only works within 'established' or identified realms.

This week's reading starts by suggesting that an openness to 'time' grounded in this understanding makes available alternatives to our usual ways of experience. 'Timing' becomes less conservative, and some truly remarkable, even miraculous (!) things may happen.

The reading suggests that we should not congratulate ourselves when miraculous events occur. I would add that we should not get discouraged if no such events manifest at all. The real miracle is that we can challenge the existing order. When we learn how to undertake that challenge, we discover that even the "law-like regularities" of the conventional are themselves "singularities." (150)

The suggestion is made at 149 that we can "feed time back into time." Some of the diagrams in the reading help clarify what this might mean. Go into this possibility as much as you can; you may want to do it as an exercise, but at least reflect on what is being suggested. As the reading says, this way of working with time leads to a time that is timeless, that does not go anywhere, and yet is intensely alive. The world is not 'timed-out' in the usual sense. Our experience is both (152) very ordinary and very new. How does this 'ordinariness' relate to the possibility for miracles discussed a few pages earlier?

In describing this second-order time, the reading often refers to the openness and accommodating capacity of space. We have not read Part One of the book, in which space is the focus, but we can get a sense of what is at stake if we explore what it means to de-emphasize things, meanings, views, and so forth. The suggestion at p. 153 (returning to a discussion earlier in the chapter) that every point is permeable to interaction is a reminder that when time connects us to the openness of space, change offers the promise of freedom.

There is an interesting discussion on p. 156, suggesting that at the second-level, the potential to of all points and identities to interact becomes an obligation to interact. Usually we would say that TSK does not tell us what to do. Is this an exception? Here is one way to think about what is being said: 'should' itself points to a possibility for ways of being. It is not so much a command as a way of both engaging and transcending the level of meaning at which we ordinary operate.

Finally, notice the discuss of meditation and yoga at 157-58. It seems to be linked to a warning: even when the second stage of time offers the special and the extraordinary, we cannot allow ourselves to get stuck there.