

Week 9 - Guide

Spring 2010 - TSK Online Program – The Self in Question: part 3

This week's reading is the final chapter in Part One of Love of Knowledge. As you know, we are using it as the final reading for the program as a whole, having worked our way through many of the themes in Parts 2 and 3 of Love of Knowledge earlier.

Once again, the reading points out that transformation is not the same as transcendence, at least in the sense that "transcendence" suggest going beyond ("the potential for transformation appears within our present situation"). As I said in the phone call, your job now is to activate this kind of inquiry when and as you can, or when and as it occurs to you, so that the flavor of TSK inquiry becomes part of each situation.

At the bottom of p. 89, this possibility is linked to the idea of expanding the imagination (see also the middle p. 92). Usually we think of what we imagine as being 'less real' than what we experience, and if you look up the other references to the imagination in Love of Knowledge, that is how the term is used. But here the potential for the imagination is being presented differently. We can imagine knowing differently, and if this imagine itself becomes 'real', then there are no more obstacles: we really do know differently. And this is possible because the knowledge through which we know is always and necessarily available to us.

At the bottom of p. 90, the text points out that knowledge is available less in what we know and more "in the activity of knowing itself." This is another way of stating the main point we have been exploring. It's good to keep in mind, though, that the distinction between the activity of knowing and what is known is ultimately artificial, because the content of what is known is in fact a kind of 'ongoing knowledge production'. The suggestion that we can be sensitive to the "quality" of our knowledge (p. 91) is a good way of countering the tendency to make these kinds of polar distinctions.

The closing section of this chapter refers to the prospects for a "remarkable intimacy" that unites all beings. It is not unusual to hear invocations of such possibilities: the idea that "we are all one." Again, though, it helps to understand this in the simplest, most immediate way. If knowledge is not owned by the self, the knowing is available mutually. We may still hold our own positions, but as positionings. Or we may even be able to go beyond this way of understanding entirely. As the final chapter suggests, it all depends on learning to "let knowledge be."