

Orientation to Week 3

I have decided to return to my practice (used in previous online courses) of providing an Orientation for each week. I will use it mostly to review and expand a few points from the previous phone call, remind people about assignments, and perhaps point ahead just a bit.

In the phone call, we experimented with the practice of expanding. I enjoyed people's comments, which are embedded in the recording. I had emphasized that whenever we describe something in words, we are using a metaphor—with "expanding" as an example. So it's not surprising that you were playful with words: "inpad" as an optional variation on "expand," for instance, as well as "enrichment" as a more powerful version of "enrichment." Michael made an important comment: inquiry is not always a matter of questions as such. Exploring or cultivating attitudes such as appreciation and gratitude are also forms of inquiry; in fact, inquiry happens whenever we do not accept what is taken for granted. David gave a good example: 'expanding' through opening his senses. Seen in this way, it becomes pretty clear that "expanding," in all its metaphoric modes, is very closely related to inquiry. We see this also in the image of being more "open" to experience as a form of inquiry: to open experience is in part to expand it.

The writing assignment for the week comes from *When It Rains*, p. 15: "Reflect on your own motivation for working with this program." The assignment is required for teacher trainees. The best way I have come up with to let you submit these assignments while maintaining confidentiality is to have you send them as file attachments to a new email address that we will create: assignments@creativeinquiry.org. It should be ready by Tuesday.

I promised to post online a quote from *Knowledge of Time and Space* that I referred to in the phone call. Here it is (KTS xviii):

The mind has many patterned ways to prevent [the special TSK form of inquiry]: boredom, easy distraction, bemused reflection, or a steady stream of conceptual insights. Relying exclusively on words and thoughts, judging in terms of previous understandings, accepting uncritically beliefs proffered by others, turning inquiry into game playing, rejecting rigor and precision in the name of 'direct experience'—all these approaches only further habitual and frustrating ways of knowing and being. Even eager acceptance turns out to be a way to adopt another identity or attach ourselves to a school of thought or doctrine. Such an understanding only supports ownership of knowledge and the sterile production of commentaries on what is no longer living.

I suggested at the end of the phone call that as you practice with TSK Ex. 24, *Marriage of Sound and Breath*, you ask how to do it with rigor and precision, without in any way turning away from direct experience. I welcome your comments on that point online.

The reading for next week explores "no-ownership knowledge" as a hallmark possibility for TSK inquiry. The reading for this past week contains a passage that points in the right direction:

The ego can be seen as a manifestation of a narrow focal setting on time and space and knowledge As time and space and knowledge open more fully, this narrowness automatically drops away in favor of a more comprehensive knowingness."