

## Orientation for Week 6

We focused in the phone call on the statement in SDTS, quoted in WIR, that TSK has “no point to make and no position to defend.” It’s easy enough to understand what’s being said here, but how do we put it into practice? Phrases like “making points,” “defending positions,” or “stepping outside the framework” invite a level of abstraction that is not very helpful, because it’s not sufficiently tied to how we live our lives. If we stay at that level, we will probably fall into a very common trap: first we will silently take a position, and then we will announce to ourselves that we are not committed to that position, or that we have no wish to defend it. That approach makes a claim and then tries to erase it. But the claim, once made, is not easily erased; it’s like indelible ink, or like making a mess and then trying to clean up after ourselves. That approach is not likely to get us very far.

The SDTS quote gives us another, more practical and immediate way to proceed. Because of having no position to defend or point to make—because it does not take a stand—TSK is not concerned with praise and blame, hope and fear, or right and wrong.” Now we have something concrete to work with.

Go ahead and make this the walking-around practice for the week: notice when your thoughts, judgments, and feelings center on praise and blame, hope and fear, or right and wrong. When you do notice this, see if you can add in the (first-level) dimension of allowing for another possibility, another (non-) reaction. In the beginning, this will probably just be another version of trying to erase or clean up the mess you’ve made. But if you keep the intention to allow other possibilities active, you may find that you are less likely to react to situations defensively (holding on to a position) or aggressively (making a point).

The reading for last week (TSK 111) described ordinary space as a “derivative but distorted” version of Great Space. The distortion comes in when understand ourselves to be situated in space, to be a special kind of ‘something’ (a self or subject) that ‘exists’ in a special kind of way. First-level space, time, and knowledge challenge these understandings in ways that allow us to start to open them up. They set aside the commitment to this or that particular truth. As soon as these commitments lose their tight grip on knowledge, the TSK vision begins to manifest.

The first TSK book names this shift toward the TSK vision as the availability of Great Space, Great Time, and Great Knowledge. In the reading from SDTS, which explores the three levels of space, time, and knowledge, the point is put somewhat differently, and the references to Great Space, Time, and Knowledge are gone. However, SDTS does invoke Great Knowledge at the end of the book (237). You might like to look this quote up.

SDTS offers the model of a three-level structure for space, time, and knowledge as an “organizing principle for inquiry.” As you read the assigned pages, see if this is so. Does the discussion offers points for inquiry? How does that work in your experience?

The sitting practice is TSK Ex. 16. Notice how the exercise asks us to let go of all frameworks, and thus continues the theme of letting go of defended positions and established points.