

distinctions

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR CLIENTS AND FRIENDS OF

N E W V E N T U R E S W E S T

Beauty and Kindness *Doorways to a Truer Place*

by James Flaherty



Beauty is not decorative. It touches us deeply, dissolves our conscious control, and connects us to levels of our being well beyond our day-to-day concerns. Beauty pierces open a sharp clear space in which we directly encounter the immediacy of our experience. We know ourselves at that moment as beauty.

Beauty can appear at any time. Walking a familiar street we may look up and see the moonlight glance off raindrops on a leaf, and the world opens—we might catch the profile of our beloved as she (or he) lay sleeping and we melt—on seeing a statue carved with delicacy we feel our own self fully—hearing a chord or a change in a musical piece, with no warning we plunge into state of clarity, order and wonder that our logical mind could never construct.

Beauty awakens us from the dull contours of our busy turbulence, of our so-important lives. The trance is broken. What is there? Where am I? Who am I? About all this we have no words to say, but we somehow arrive in a place where these questions are already/always answered.

We humans need beauty as much as air. Without it we exist only to survive and procreate (our genes, or our ideas, or our beliefs, or our portfolios). In a world driven to mere efficiency, we are in grave danger of forgetting this. We see the results of our forgetfulness at ever turn: addictive behaviors, massive greed, devastating cruelty—the symptoms of soul death.

Kindness is not politeness. It's the truest seeing and saying of what's truest in our hearts. Kindness has no point beyond itself and seeks no gain or acknowledgement. Being expressed completes and fulfills it. Kindness, given or received, transforms the world into a place where we are known, held and belong.

We don't have to work on ourselves until we are kind. We can begin just now with our next

thought, with the next person who passes on the sidewalk, with the next email we respond to.

No need to wait for enlightenment. Kindness is the fruit, the fuel, the fiber of enlightenment. We become and enact the deepest wisdom when we are kind. We also eliminate all separation between us and other, transcend any inner conflicts and become peace. No one needs to tell you any of this; you keep finding it out for yourself.

But why is this article called “Beauty and Kindness”? To me they appear as having the same power: to be aspects of a more authentic reality and to be mutually overlapping gifts that free us from the constraints of our self-concern.

Recently a friend told me you could tell what people are stuck on, simply by being present with them—and most people are stuck on themselves. (I, of course, wondered whom he could be speaking about and why he was telling this to me.) Kindness and beauty, available to us in every minute, get us unstuck from ourselves.

Let’s check this out for a moment. Look around the place where you are as you read this. How many acts of kindness brought just the physical parts of the environment to you? How much labor, attention and persistence? Don’t get caught up in thinking you know “the real motivation” of the folks who did all that. Life can be kind to us through people who don’t know us. And do we really ever know someone’s true motivation (even our own)? Is the giving of anyone’s time, energy and attention ever compensated for by money?

We are being kind when we think this way, but we are also facing what’s true (they may be the same). Do you feel, do you see what this makes possible? We are the recipients of untold treasures. Centuries of kind acts are displayed in the physical situation we are in at this very moment—furniture,

electricity, clothing all have taken the kindness of endless numbers of people to invent, make and bring them to us. We are surrounded by kindness all the time, and by merely opening to it we directly touch the boundless nature of reality.

Kindness is beautiful.



It won’t take much effort to see the beauty around us if we will slow down. Beauty cannot be met as itself when we rush—speeding past the statue of David just won’t do (although we do rush by to check it off our list of important things to do—again the limitation of being efficient). Pick out anything where you

are and look at it in a slow, concentrated way—see the colors, shapes and the play of light. Or listen deeply to whatever sound is present. Drop labeling the sound and just be present in hearing it freshly.

Is there anything except beauty when we are paying close attention? We did not produce it, but we receive the full benefit of it—being brought to somewhere that feels more real and more secure and more meaningful than the daily scenery we see in snatches, as we speed by on the race tracks of our lives. (And where exactly are these tracks headed?)

Beauty is most kind.

Kindness and beauty are with us all the time. Maybe we are kindness and beauty.

More study of the topic in the writings that follow, in the book and practice of the quarter. The next San Francisco Roundtable on December 8th will also take up the topic.

Take care of yourself.

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These poems first appeared in **POETRY**, July/August 2007.

Art & Science
by Alice Friman



In chemistry, what's severed
looks to latch on to any other
severed thing: orphaned electrons
zizzing in your wires race to embrace,
swirl a DC-do-ing, re-form their rings.
Chemistry likes adherence, every tick
its tock. Split an atom. What a noise!

Then is it not passing strange
when molecules into proteins make
and muster into muscle, teeth, bone, knee,
that when this vast multitude jostling
under skin wakes, it wants to be alone?

What did Greta Garbo have on me?

Outside my window the great poplar
tosses her leaves hand to hand like
so much change as if she were rooted
to a corner waiting for a bus. How antsy
she is for all this autumn fuss to be over.
Who knows but that November rains
whet the appetite for cold: the annual
jettison of gold to stripped-down shudder
and pause. The air holds its breath. Listen.
One red dot on a bare branch, singing.
In here, the violin's one note at a time.



POEMS OF THE QUARTER

Over and Under
by John Brehm

So sexy to slide underneath a river,
 to sit inside this snakelike submarine-like subway car and freely imagine the world above — the Brooklyn Bridge invisibly trembling with the weight of its own beauty, the East River still guided by the grooves Walt Whitman's eyes wore in it, the bulldog tugboats pushing the passively impressive broad-bottomed barges around, and the double-decker orange and black Staten Island ferries, with their aura of overworked pack-mule mournfulness, and beyond them the Atlantic Ocean which I lately learned was brought here by ice comets three billion years ago, which explains



a few things, like why everybody feels so alienated, and of course the thoughts being thought by every person in New York City at this moment — vast schools of undulating fish curving and rising in the cloud-swirling wind-waved sky, surrounded by the vaster emptiness of non-thought which holds them and which they try not to think about and you lying in bed in your sixth-floor walk-up sublet on St. Mark's Place — such a breath-taking ascension! imagining me rising now to meet you.

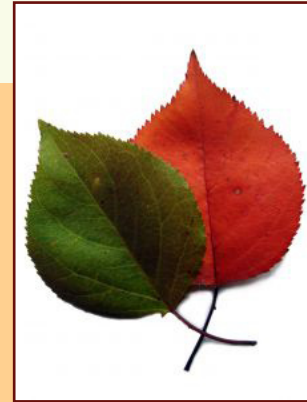
POEMS OF THE QUARTER

The Song of the Trolleys**by W. S. Merwin**

It was one of the carols
of summer and I knew that
even when the leaves were all
falling through it as it passed
and when frost crusted the tracks
as soon as they had stopped ringing
summer stayed on in that song
going again the whole way
out of sight to the river
under the hill and hissing
when it had to stop and hum
to itself while it waited
until it could start again
out of an echo warning
once more with a clang of its
bell I could hear it coming
from far summers that I had
never known long before I
could see it swinging its head
to its own tune on its way
and hardly there before it
was going and its singing
receding with it growing
smaller until they were gone
among the sounds only there
when they have come to silence
the voices of morning stars
and the notes that once rose
out of the throats of women
from cold mountain villages
at the fringe of the forest
calling over the melting
snow to the spirits asleep
in the green heart of the woods
Wake now it is time again



PRACTICE OF THE QUARTER



Beauty, Kindness, Getting Over Myself

This practice has three parts.
Please do each one for thirty days. Please do them in order.

Beauty — Thirty Days

Please stop three times each day and ask yourself the following questions. Please write out your answers to the last two questions, at the end of each day.

During this period of time:

1. What beauty did I encounter? What beauty did I bring to the world?
2. What effect did the encounter have on me?
3. How open am I to opening myself to beauty?
4. How can I open myself more to beauty?
5. What action(s) will I take from what I observed in this exercise?

Kindness — Thirty Days

Please stop three times each day and ask yourself the following questions. Please write out your answers to the last two questions, at the end of each day.

During this period of time:

1. What kindness did I feel, observe or engender?
2. What effect did the kindness have on me? On others?
3. Did I ignore, tone down or mitigate any kindness?
4. What can I do to be more open to expressing kindness? Experiencing kindness?
5. What action(s) will I take from what I observed in this exercise?

Getting Over Myself — Thirty Days

Please stop three times each day and ask yourself the following questions. Please write out your answers to the last two questions, at the end of each day.

During this period of time:

1. What about me (e.g., concerns, problems, projects, worries, pain, etc.) did I get caught up in?
2. What did it feel like to be caught up in myself?
3. Did I feel free of my self-concerns? Were kindness or beauty part of what I experienced when being free?
4. What assisted me in letting go of my self-concerns?
5. What action(s) will I take from what I observed in this exercise?

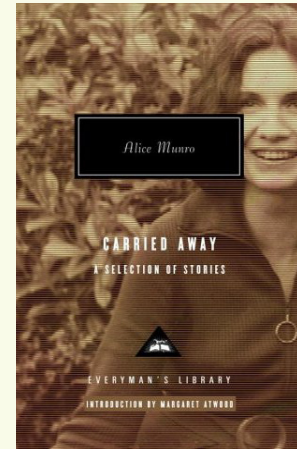
BOOK OF THE QUARTER

Carried Away: A Selection of Stories

by **Alice Munro**

Everyman's Library, 2006

Hardcover, 600 pages



This book is full of mysterious power. The author has found a way to show many worlds (the volume is a collection of short stories, written over decades) that seem very much like our own. We can recognize situations, identify with emotions, get caught up in what will occur next. Yet the reader is constantly surprised because the rendered worlds simultaneously feel deeper, more tottered by happenstance and shaped by human passion than our own. Very high art is in play in a transparent way.

The real power, though, is that we see ourselves and the hidden currents of our lives in a stark, unvarnished directness. Never speaking of us, Alice Munro nonetheless shows us how we think, how we decide and how we make sense of our lives. She shows us what we have hidden from ourselves.

Her courageous clarity (she must be watching her inner and outer life very precisely, and has the bravery to say what she observes) is an act of immense kindness. We enter her stories and find ourselves known and our way of feeling given a place in the human family. We imagine we are looking at someone/something else, and we see only our own heart.

We are left in a state of wonder and appreciation.

This book, read slowly, can change how you are in the world forever.

—James Flaherty

Summary

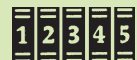
Scale 0-5



Usefulness



Accessibility



Rigor



Potential to Change Reader

COURSE SCHEDULE

COACHING ROUNDTABLES

One-day free seminars for graduates and guests.

San Francisco December 8, 2007
 February 23, 2008

Cost: Free

COACHING TO EXCELLENCE

Two interactive days on the foundations of coaching.

Boston November 13–14, 2007
Chicago February 12–13, 2008
San Francisco December 4–5, 2007
 January 29–30, 2008
 March 19–20

Cost: \$695

INTEGRAL COACHING PRINCIPLES

Three days for experienced coaches from other schools and disciplines.

San Francisco May 20–22, 2008
 September 23–25, 2008

Washington, DC January 15–17, 2008

Cost: \$975

PROFESSIONAL COACHING COURSE

Certification program for independent and corporate coaches. Year-long programs begin:

Boston January 2008
San Francisco February 2008
 May 2008

Cost: \$8,500

COACHING REUNION WEEKEND

Continuing education for PCC graduates.

San Francisco January 4–6, 2008
 January 25–27, 2008

Washington, DC January 18–20, 2008

Cost: \$750

CRW TeleClass February 5, 2008
 March 4
 April 8
 May 13
 June 17
 July 8

Cost: \$450

Cost for both: \$1,000

CTE LEADERS TRAINING

Certified coaches become licensed to lead the Coaching to Excellence course.

San Francisco April 23–24, 2008

Cost: \$875

STUDY GROUP WITH JAMES

Monthly conference calls with guest authors applying current texts to coaching cases.

Quarters begin January, April, July, October.

Cost: \$375/Quarter

Authentic Leadership in Action

James and Sarita presenting at Shambhala's Summer Institute 2008

The Shambhala Institute for Authentic Leadership has graciously invited Sarita and James to lead one of the ten skill-building modules at their prestigious annual weeklong program. The title of their module is *“Integral Development: A Systemic Path for Unfolding Leadership in Ourselves and Others.”*

They are delighted to be part of a faculty that includes Wendy Palmer, Bill Torbert, Margaret Wheatley, Adam Kahane, and many, many others.

We invite you to consider joining them next June in Halifax, Nova Scotia. You will be able to study and develop with a group of conscious, curious, forward-thinking leaders from all different areas of business, government, education and civil society. Each day begins with mindfulness meditation; creative processes and the arts are interwoven with the study sessions for a rich, deep week of learning. **Learn more here.**

N V W GRADUATE DEPT

THE GRAD BLAST

for graduates of the *Professional Coaching Course*
by Ellen Myers King



PCC leaders and spouses on retreat in Tuscany

Welcome New Readers!

Remember that old Paul Simon song, *Still Crazy After All These Years*? Try this on: Still Coaching After All These Years. How about this one... (The Beatles) “It was twenty years ago today Sgt. Pepper taught the band to (coach?) play...” You say, OK, what is she up to now? Welp—NVW has been in the training coaches trenches for, get this, TWENTY YEARS. Can you easily name any other coaching school with this longevity? I didn’t think so (and even if you can, please keep it to yourself).

What else was going on twenty years ago? Not only did NVW open its doors, but the Bangles recorded *Walk Like an Egyptian*, we were all freaked out by how the unhealthy Enneagram-Type-Four Glenn Close proved to be in the film, *Fatal Attraction*, and my fellow countryman (Rusyn) Andrew Warhola, a.k.a. Andy Warhol, transitioned to another realm (that’s Californian for “dead”). What were you up to twenty years ago? Twenty pounds lighter? Twenty times less aware? Twenty years old? Thought twenty bucks was a lot of money? Had 20/20 vision?

New Ventures West Twenty-Year Trivia Factoids:

Cities we have taught in: New York City, San Francisco, Chicago, Washington DC, Detroit, Atlanta, Denver, Seattle, Boston, Los Angeles, Little Rock, Minneapolis, Portland, Cape Town, Ottawa, Paris, Singapore, São Paulo....and more.

- 1987—Our first coaching course, *Coaching I*, was launched.
- 1988—*Coaching II* and *Coaching to Excellence* courses are added to the curriculum.
- 1989—The first *Coaching Roundtable* was offered in San Francisco.
- 1994—The *Professional Coaching Course* (PCC) is first offered in San Francisco.
- 1999—James Flaherty’s first book, *Coaching: Evoking Excellence in Others*, is published.
- 2002—NVW’s Graduate Department is formed, thank you, Ken Homer!
- 2003—*Integral Coaching Principles* is added to the line-up.
- 2004—Integral Leadership, LLC is incorporated.
- 2005—Wendy Palmer joins the NVW faculty and brings her Conscious Embodiment to our PCC students.
- 2007—PCC Leader Body now includes 9 individuals from the US, Canada, Mexico and South Africa

To date, over 750 people have completed the PCC and 1,500 more have attended other NVW classes, not to mention the thousands who’ve joined us at free Coaching Roundtables.. OH and ...we continue to ROCK!!!

What is so great about the Fall? In the spirit of diversity and inclusion, I added to my life TWO NEW HOLIDAYS, and I invite you to do the same.

One: September 19 is (I am not making this up) is Talk Like A Pirate Day. Guess how to celebrate it? Pretty obvious. Avast me hearty... The only danger in this holiday is not what gift to plunder, or who to send to Davy Jones' Locker, but to remember not to schedule any public speaking engagements, otherwise YOU may be walking the plank. Unless, of course the audience members are also pirates... what a visual (and I don't mean the ones from Pittsburgh) www.talklikeapirate.com.



Two: October 9th is International John Lennon Day. How to celebrate it? First, be sure you sign the petition to make October 9th a bona fide international holiday in honor of John (you can find it online). Once we get the 64 million signatures (representing 1% of humanity) it will be presented to heads of state with the intention to make John Lennon Day a celebration of humanity and peace. You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one, I hope some day you will join us and the world will live as one.

What are our grads up to?

- Besides being a part of our community and able to talk like a French pirate, H el ene Beauchemin is also the sole NVW grad and Canadian contributing author to *Winning Without Compromising Yourself: Unlocking Personal and Professional Mastery in the Political Arena*. More info at: www.nocompromising.com.
- Dottie Kay, Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand and NVW grad, is looking for pen pals for some of her students. Her students don't have email, so the letters would be exchanged the old-fashioned way. Call or email me if you know any kids in the 4th, 5th or 6th grade who may like to engage with someone as a pen pal in Thailand. Remember to wear your yellow shirt on Monday.
- Current PCC student Nicole Lambrou heads up the board of directors of the organization Oasis. Oasis is an organization that works right here in San Francisco to help girls ages 10-20 from all ethnic backgrounds feel connected and celebrated as they learn valuable skills, develop a clear sense of self and become the leaders of tomorrow. If you would like to see more about what they're up to visit www.sfoasis.org.
- PCC grad Dave Dresden jumped out of a plane...he paid good money and the plane was not on fire, according to the video. When he landed, Dave was on fire, though!
- New Grad websites: www.humankindmedia.typepad.com created by PCC grad Chris Naff.
- Sweet Baby James Thomas Fox in the house!! Angie Fox and Daddy Rob welcome JT to their lives. He showed up on the planet September 7, 2007 at 5:12 am to her OTT happy parents.

GET IN HERE!!

Want to know how to put **your listing as a certified coach** or your **workshop notice** on the NVW website? Easy shmeezy. Send your information to me, and poof: you are on the web.

With deep affection, a Haiku for our **Recent Grads**:

Last day PCC:
Wilted flowers, students too?
...deep beauty beneath.

—EMK



Robert Brownstone, San Carlos, CA
Rudolfo Carbajal, San Francisco, CA
Emilia Coria, Mexico City, MEXICO
Martín Echavarria, Coral Gables, FL
Angela Fox, Hercules, CA
Erin Glenn-Hash, Lincoln NE
Ivy Gordon, Cardiff, CA
Jeff Hasenfratz, Shanghai, CHINA
Ann Healy-Raymond, Port Ludlow, WA
Jim Hockstaff, Bremerton, WA
Catherine Hufano, Ann Arbor, MI
Elise Hufano, Bethesda, MD
Lawrence Hurst, San Jose, CA
Coyote Karrick, Seattle, WA
Lorilyn Parmer, Davis, CA
Heidi Schriefer, Portland, OR
Carita Shanklin Walker, Austin, TX
Lynda St. Dennis, Salt Lake City, UT

That's it for now. Keepin' it real,
Ellen Myers King
Director of Graduate Development

