

distinctions

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR CLIENTS AND FRIENDS OF

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

Opening to a Wider World

by James Flaherty

“Though there are many features in this dusty world and the world beyond conditions, you see and understand only what your eye of practice can reach.”

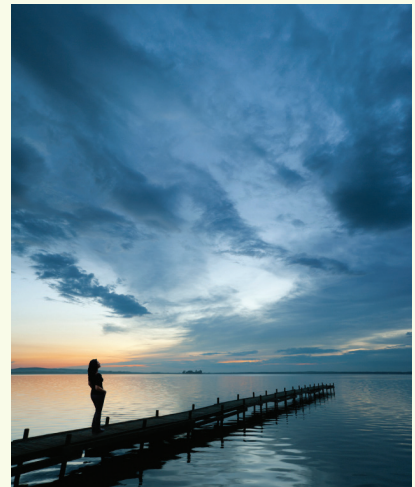
—Dogen, Japanese Zen master, 1233

Our work as integral coaches is developmental. Fundamentally, this means we are dedicated to working with clients so they generate and step into a new world. By “a new world” I mean direct contact with wider possibilities, deeper relationships with self and others, greater freedom and effectiveness in action, and more M.B.C. (meaning, belonging and contribution: what I take to be the grounding for a fulfilling, authentic life).

I’m describing a new feeling about what can happen, who one can be, and what alliances can be formed in a way that is far beyond learning a new skill or having an insight. For many people, the most memorable time of stepping into a new world is when we fall in love. Remember what that was like? Please keep that in mind as you read this article.

To support this project, as coaches we must be able to apprehend/see/sense that such a new world potentially exists for the unique client in front of us. And we are only able to see, as Dogen tells us, as far as our own development will allow. Consequently, opening up new worlds for ourselves is a requirement for all serious practitioners of Integral Coaching.

You’ve heard this in our classes, but the real matter is are you attending to it?



Photograph by Hannes Meier (RelaxFoto.de)

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Opening up a new world intentionally means attending to all Four Human Domains (what we used to call the Four Quadrants). We'll get to that in a moment, but first, let's wonder a bit about how we can notice the world we currently occupy (it's usually transparent/invisible to us), feel its limits, and dedicate ourselves to opening up a new one.

The impetus can arise anywhere in our lives, in any of the Human Domains.

We might find ourselves immensely curious about why we are having the same reactions again and again (Human Domain One). Or we could find ourselves intrigued by someone we can't quite understand or communicate with (Human Domain Three). We could notice with some chagrin that our body is feeling older or less energetic (Human Domain Two). Or we might be inspired by a work of art or a black velvet night sky (Human Domain Four).

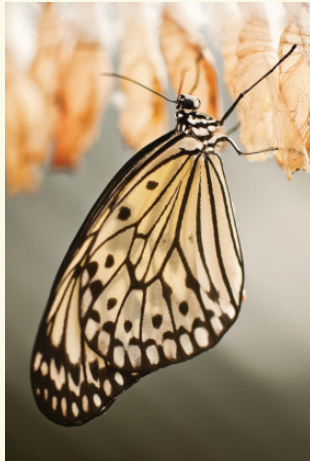
Are you paying attention in all these places? In our quite full lives, most of us have to deliberately stop and let the impact of life in all its manifestations register in our awareness. Do you have practices in place that bring you back, again and again, to these quiet stopping places? Are you in relationships and do you have conversations in which you can feel how life is touching you?

Once we dedicate ourselves to opening a new world, how do we go about it? Above I said that it's important to attend to all four Human Domains. Here's what I mean by that:

Domain One

I think the central task here is to learn about how our particular mind operates. To what do we keep paying attention, both internally and externally? What are our obsessions in terms of thoughts, body reactions, worries, planning, patterns of judgment, and so on? Our current world keeps being re-created in large part by these mental activities.

Self-awareness exercises of all sorts can provide this kind of information for you. A sitting practice can help establish a steadiness of observation that can be a platform for getting to know yourself in the ways described here. A journaling practice can also be of great benefit.



Once you understand precisely how your particular mind is making the same world over and over, you can begin shifting what you're paying attention to and staying on guard to avoid falling into old habits.

A lot more could be said here, but that's a way to get started.

Domain Two

An essential place to start for nearly everyone is to take on some new exercise regime that will generate additional energy beyond what you currently have available to you. Deeper levels of development—new worlds—can be described as operating/living at a higher level of engagement, which does require more physical, emotional, and psychic energy. Aerobics that aren't overdone, restorative yoga, tai chi, and qi gong are examples of the kind of exercise to which I'm referring.

A new world will show up in this domain as a brain that has built new connections and, consequently, new capacities. Building these new connections will partially happen from what I suggested in Domain One, but will more powerfully occur if you take up moving your body in an unaccustomed way—especially one that takes concentration. For example, take up playing an instrument, learn an intricate, precise dance, or create pottery.

As before, all I've presented here is a place to begin.

Domain Three

Reaching out and communicating with people with different concerns and alternate ways of communicating—in worlds quite distinct from your own—will

draw you in and keep you interested in stepping into a new world yourself.

What practices do these folks have? What do they pay attention to? What's important to them? What do they consider to be a problem and how do they go about resolving it? Learning some answers to these questions and feeling into what it's like to be with these folks undoubtedly will assist you a great deal.

Domain Four

Change how your environment looks. Purge. Reorganize. Rearrange. Put inspiring quotes, photographs of people important to you, or images from nature where you can see them everyday.

Stay close to nature and study how continuity and change are occurring in every moment. How does that happen? What is changed and what is retained?

Please take on this way of living so that you can be someone who brings freshness, clarity and inspiration to all your clients and to everyone you encounter—and so that you can keep uncovering the person that you more truly are.

More on this topic in the quoted passages that follow, and in the book and practice of the quarter.

Take of yourself.

Love,



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The Integral Coaching Blog is here!

We're thrilled to announce the launch of the Integral Coaching Blog!

Based on James' blog, which has been hosted on the New Ventures website for over a year, the blog has expanded to be a place for everyone in the New Ventures West community to speak on topics at the heart of Integral Coaching. Since our work addresses the whole of life, topics on the blog might be anything from abstract musings, to daily practices, to client work, to existential philosophy, to what we notice standing in the line at the grocery store.

The blog is intended to inspire readers to reach into themselves to find what the world is asking from them, and to live more fully and authentically. To that end, you'll see regular articles by faculty members and other contributors on their experiences of coaching clients and leading classes, as well as their own personal development, learnings, and wonderings.

This new virtual hub of our community is also a place to find announcements of events taking place both inside and outside New Ventures West, faculty appearances, and other news and information related to Integral Coaching.

We warmly invite you to explore the blog and join the conversation. You may also wish to subscribe to the RSS or e-mail feed to stay updated on the most recent news and writings. We hope you find it to be a source of ongoing insights, learning, and fellowship.

integralcoachingblog.com

PRACTICE OF THE QUARTER

Focus: How My Mind Works

Please take on this practice for 30 days.

Please stop three times per day and address the questions below. Please take brief notes so that you can notice patterns.

During this period of time:

- What did I find myself paying attention to in my internal experience?
In the outer world?
- Was I worried or concerned about something? Is this a common topic of worry or concern that happens again and again in my life?
- Were my thoughts in any recurring loop? For example, did I keep making the same plans and resolutions over and over again?
- How does what I observed fit with earlier observational content? What patterns am I seeing? What does that tell me about my mind?



BOOK OF THE QUARTER

The Great Philosophers
by Bryan Magee
Oxford University Press, 2001
Paperback, 352 pages

This concise, approachable book collects interviews done on the BBC with world-class experts on the important philosophers in the West.

The insightful questions and wise, informed responses bring the reader directly and swiftly into the thinking that has shaped our culture beginning in 500 B.C.E. No need to slog through hundreds of pages trying to grasp new vocabulary and concepts as you go—this book gets right to the heart of each philosopher’s work in terms of the effect it’s had on our culture and on other thinkers.

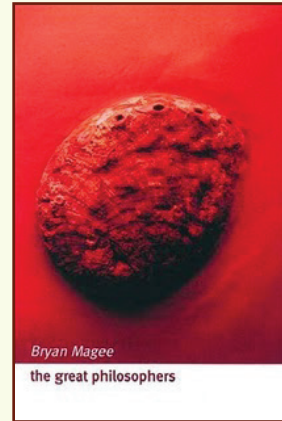
The interviewer apparently has read and deeply studied all of the philosophers about whom he’s speaking with his guests. His questions are respectful, and open up the chance for the experts to lay out the foundational notions of each philosopher.

You can open the book to any page and learn a great deal in the short amount of time. It’s like overhearing a philosophy seminar at Oxford University—but don’t worry, you’ll be able to understand what’s being said.

The book also orients the reader to Western culture and fills in the gaps that may well be missing from our own reading and education. Novels, movies, classical music—as well as the ideas our clients bring us—will all be given a fresh, deep context from what you read here.

An illuminating educational diamond mine.

—James Flaherty



Summary

Scale 0-5



Usefulness



Accessibility



Rigor



Potential to Change Reader

POEMS OF THE QUARTER



#837
by Rumi

We can't help being thirsty,
moving toward the voice
of water.

Milk-drinkers draw close
to the mother, Muslims, Christians, Jews,
Buddhists, Hindus, shamans,
everyone hears the intelligent sound
and moves, with thirst, to meet it.

Clean your ears. Don't listen
for something you've heard before.

Invisible camel bells,
slight footfalls in sand.

Almost in sight! The first word they call out
will be the last word of our last poem.

To a Stiff-winged Grasshopper
by Marianne Moore

As I unfolded its wings,
In examining it for the first time,
I forgot the war:
I thought I had discovered something. Then I discovered
That others, also, thought they had discovered something.
We stood like the snake swallowing its tail, comprising a ring.

Superstition forges rings
Of iron. A ring is the most extreme form
Of symbol. Rings mar
The symmetry of loyal regard: we philosophized:
And said we could not have been acts in anyone's ring,
Had it not been inevitable in the case of this thing.



Marianne Moore

POEMS OF THE QUARTER

The Gift
by Li-Young Lee

To pull the metal splinter from my palm
my father recited a story in a low voice.
I watched his lovely face and not the blade.
Before the story ended, he'd removed
the iron sliver I thought I'd die from.

I can't remember the tale,
but hear his voice still, a well
of dark water, a prayer.
And I recall his hands,
two measures of tenderness
he laid against my face,
the flames of discipline
he raised above my head.

Had you entered that afternoon
you would have thought you saw a man
planting something in a boy's palm,
a silver tear, a tiny flame.
Had you followed that boy
you would have arrived here,
where I bend over my wife's right hand.

Look how I shave her thumbnail down
so carefully she feels no pain.
Watch as I lift the splinter out.
I was seven when my father
took my hand like this,
and I did not hold that shard
between my fingers and think,
Metal that will bury me,
christen it Little Assassin,
Ore Going Deep for My heart.
And I did not lift up my wound and cry,
Death visited here!
I did what a child does
when he's given something to keep.
I kissed my father.



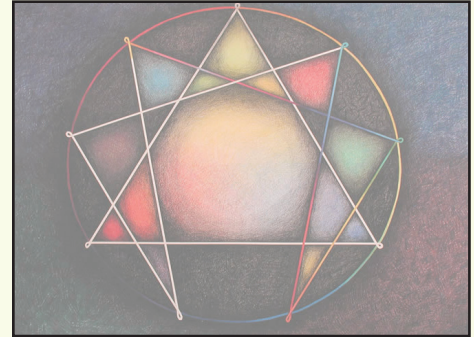
Li-Young Lee

The Enneagram and Integral Coaching® comes to the West Coast

Last year in New York, James Flaherty teamed up with Russ Hudson and Don Riso, co-founders of the Enneagram Institute, to lead an intensive, weeklong course on the topic of the Enneagram and Integral Coaching. This year, we are proud to be offering this class, *Opening New Territory: Realizing Our Capacity for Sustained Development* on the west coast.

James and Russ will be leading this dynamic, experiential class that is specifically designed to lead to breakthroughs in your work with clients. Focus will be placed on developing new awareness of your own habits and defenses and illuminating new ways to approach key moments with clients. This is a unique opportunity to be guided by masters in these fields in expanding our understanding of how Enneagram can be used to deepen our experiences of the world.

This class takes place from June 19-24 in San Francisco. Read more [here](#).



East Coast Appearances by James Flaherty



James will be on the east coast this spring for two speaking engagements before heading on to Europe and Asia. If you're in the area, these events will be great opportunities to connect with James and come away with some new insights about our work.

First, James will be presenting the full-day pre-conference seminar for the **Executive Coaches Conference** in **New York City on March 28** on the **Enneagram and Integral Coaching**. More details can be found [here](#).

James will also be speaking at the **Leading to Well-Being Conference** at George Mason University in **Washington, DC on April 8**. This conference is co-sponsored by the Center for Consciousness and Transformation and MasonLeads, and will feature presentations by notable scholars, authors and practitioners on ways to lead that promote human flourishing. More info [here](#).

New Class: Thwarting the Inner Critic

Sarita Chawla has designed and is leading a brand new two-day class, *Thwarting the Inner Critic*. The Master Class that Sarita led on the same topic was so well-received that she's turned it into a regular offering! The class is intended to dismantle the paralyzing inner voices that infiltrate most things we do, so that we might open up to greater courage, imagination, and authenticity. And, it's open to anyone with an inner critic—not just New Ventures West students and grads—so feel free to pass on the news to anyone you think could benefit. Read more [here](#).

Please join us for this unique new offering, and spread the word! The next class will be held from April 13-14 in San Francisco. Please contact us if you're interested in bringing *Thwarting the Inner Critic* to your area.



New Ventures West is hiring!

As many of you know, for the past year and a half, New Ventures West has been truly a family-run business: besides having Stacy and James at the helm, daughter Devin has been staffing the Director of Communications desk. But now, the inevitable time has come for Devin to move on (don't worry, she didn't get fired...at least...not yet) and NVW needs that perfect someone to fill the void. No, you don't have to be related (although, looking and talking like Devin, or being named Devin is a plus) and no, you don't have to have dinner with Stacy and James on the weekends (although they'll probably invite you to), but you do have to love New Ventures West and be qualified across the wide range of domains pertinent to the position. To apply, please send a resume to stacy@newventureswest.com. We look forward to reading all about you!

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Available June 2011

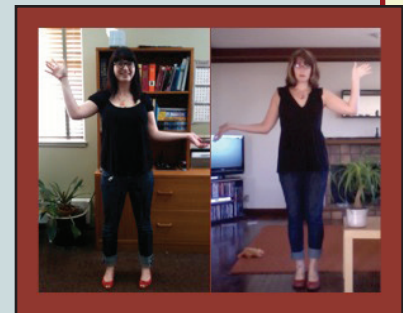
The Director oversees and manages NVW's public communications including website content, newsletters, program announcements, advertising, and public relations, helping to bring Integral Coaching and Development to the world through effective and considerate marketing and messaging.

S/he coordinates with the President and other Directors to determine promotional locations, schedules and content; she writes copy for program descriptions and announcements. S/he aims to broaden the company's visibility through opportunities such as social networks, press releases, article placement, public videos, and maximizing website traffic.

We're looking for someone with these skills and qualities:

- Excellent language skills
- Excellent people skills
- Experience in marketing, advertising, social networking
- Knowledge (experience preferred) of NVW's Integral Coaching approach and programs
- Excellent project manager
- Proficient on Macintosh
- Basic HTML skills
- An eye for graphic design (manage the work of the design dept.)
- Use of CMS tools (e.g., Constant Contact)*
- Use of FileMaker database*
- Use of image databases*
- Use of Google AdWords*

*Specific technical skills will be taught, but experience in these areas is a plus.



Devin (left) and Joy Mazzola, her assistant/clone

We would like to begin training someone in April to take over the position on June 1.