



The Posture of Presence, by Carrie Gray

For years I have been searching for an education that is meaningful -- an education that doesn't press me into predetermined categories or ask me just to satisfy outer requirements, but one that I resonate with on the inside. My interest is in knowledge that addresses me as a whole person, and can offer insight into questions such as: Who is this "I" and how is it connected to that which is known? What is real knowing? What is the relationship between knowing and being?

Between

ideas and life itself? [...] This knowledge of my own existence, which I receive directly by "taste," is the starting place for a new form of education. Taste is like the difference between thinking "apple" and actually biting into an apple. In the moment that I bite, regardless of my past ideas and images, I know "apple" directly, undeniably. This taste is something that the mind cannot produce; it exceeds my ideas. It shifts the site of knowing from a field of outer information or past experience to a receptive relationship with this moment. A connection to the body is the ground for experiencing my own existence via taste. When taste is present, the mind can receive conscious energy, and knowing and being become unified in the form of realization. Knowing and being become direct expressions of each other. Using [these principles], I bring the posture of presence into any aspect of life. The other day while washing the dishes, I remembered the principle "Single Moment/Single Activity." I washed the dishes without any mental stories--it was simply body washing dishes and fully being with that activity. My aim shifted from a focus on the result to being with the process itself. I became included in that process and was energized by it. Time became more spacious and I was both active and receptive. I was no longer rushing around but was simply with each moment. This kind of direct experience helps me to see the limits of what the mind can give me, and helps me to see what I don't know. Instead of looking to the preconceptions of the mind, I connect with the body, with the taste of "I am," and I stay receptive to not-knowing. In this state, knowing and not-knowing are simultaneous, and they support each other. I am available to receive the reality beyond my concepts. Knowledge has become integrated into experiencing my own existence in life. --Carrie Gray