

Meditation on Wheels

A lovely whimsical drawing in my doctor's office is accompanied by words written in slightly wobbly letters: "I spent a long time trying to find my center. Then one night I looked and found it had wheels and moved easily in the slightest breeze, so since then I spend less time sitting and more time sailing."

Now, not being one to sit still very much, it appealed to my sense of silliness, that centre on wheels! It also put a few questions in my head about the process of meditating. Is the breeze a distraction or a metaphor for creativity? Is meditation a form of communication with spiritual reality? Is the centre that the artist tried long and hard to find a portal to a world so large that it has no centre?

When I got home I looked up a passage on meditation in the Bahá'í Writings – one that appears playfully chiding. *"The sign of the intellect is contemplation and the sign of contemplation is silence, because it is impossible for a man to do two things at one time -- he cannot both speak and meditate."*

The same quote above goes on to say that, *"It is an axiomatic fact that while you meditate you are speaking with your own spirit. In that state of mind you put certain questions to your spirit and the spirit answers: the light breaks forth..."*

In that case, it would seem the Self that we're talking to is part of a creative force, by whatever name: the universe, the spiritual world, the Divine. It would also seem we need to listen, which is an active form of "being" that ideally flows into "doing"... Maybe meditation as sailing isn't a bad analogy.

What's the point if there isn't a fun part? I don't know about you, but I rarely keep at anything for very long if I don't find a way to enjoy it.

The quote speaks of various means of acquiring knowledge, some more mundane than others. One is the method of following that inner light, by communing with one's spirit. The really interesting part for me is the connection with creativity. *"The spirit of man is itself informed and strengthened during meditation; through it affairs of which man knew nothing are unfolded before his view... This faculty brings forth from the invisible plane the sciences and arts. Through the meditative faculty inventions are made possible..."*

It makes sense that there would be a huge need for all kinds of meditation and reflection in this crazy, frenetic world, and just as great a need for action to come out of it. The former without the latter might have a calming effect but it won't serve the betterment of the world. On the other hand, for an individual or collectively, action without reflection is downright dangerous. Hell on wheels!