

BODIES OF EXPERIENCE

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[Esoteric Warning: The following blog is esoteric in nature and probably too heady for some. It does have a practical aspect, but it may be difficult to grasp. You may choose to just ignore this post.]

Good habits and bad habits, both have a strong effect on the mind. Habits are, of course, "habits," but I find that habits also act as viewers into the mind. Let's put the bad habits aside for the moment and just look at the good ones.

Actually, I should say we look "through" our good habits, as I am certain that the habits we build are, in their own way, prisms through which we see internal landscapes we cannot otherwise see, or is it just me? Anyway, I know this works for me.

Perhaps it is because of the concentration required to build a habit, the sheer muscle memory. Who is to say that lenses are only made of glass? A habit too can be a lens into a world we otherwise cannot see.

Certainly any skilled artisan has fashioned a lens with their craft that only members with that same kind of skill set can fully understand. That's easy. I find that this is equally true for mental habits, whether they be meditation or any other kind of mind training.

For me, close-up photography is such a habit, one I formed at a very deciding point in my life, a spiritual turning point, so to speak. It was created in the cauldron of (what was then for me) molten spirit, not something I could recreate now (that habit), because it was a once-in-a-lifetime extended experience. However, this photography habit that was formed back then is something I can still pick up and look through, like a lens. It is an experience, but also a tool.

In the case of photography, the metaphor is real in that I actually look through glass lenses, but that is just a bit of icing on the cake. In reality, I am looking through a very special habit. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the habit itself is a way of looking at the mind rather than something that I "look through," a very special way of looking, one through which I not only see the object I am photographing, but I "see" in a different way. That is their power.

The real object of my photography habit is the "seeing" itself, the kind of seeing this habit allows, which, in essence, produces a greater clarity of mind.

There are all kinds of vehicles, all kinds of bodies that we inhabit and the habits we make can be lived in just like any other bodies. Our habits too are bodies of experience, temporary homes that (like the hermit crab) we build and then live in, exchanging them for yet others as we move

along in life.

For example, the habit of caring for a child, or even of being married. These are lenses (almost like clubs we join) that the uninitiated can only wonder at. These are special habits, special lenses through which to see life.

In the case of meditation habits, in my opinion, these are extraordinarily important habits, lenses that we can use to see all the way through this life and into the future. Moreover, our mind-training habits (so I have been taught) are vehicles in which to travel or transmigrate to yet other future births.

Scientists say that the universe surrounding us is infinitely deep. They keep building new and more powerful telescopes that see farther into the deep space. Habits are like telescopes. Really well-made habits, those at the expert level, are lenses into dimensions closed to our normal awareness. We all have them, and many are invaluable to us. We live in them every bit as much as we live in our bodies of flesh and blood. And some of them will last longer!

In a way, each of us is like an entire universe in which we are surrounded by all of the orbiting habits we have built, all bodies of experience (some clearer than others) through which we can peer and look at life and ourselves. Even our hobbies are habits, bodies of experience that we gather around ourselves like a cloak and then live in. Some are made well and last a long time, while others are poorly made and break up after a while. We lose interest and that energy bound by the habit lives and walks the earth once again.

Of course our physical body is of primary importance, at least at this time. We live in it. However, if you will check around, you will find that we also live in all kinds of virtual bodies that we create and then inhabit. For me, astrology and photography are bodies of knowledge that I have created and spend significant time living in. Even more important are the various mind-training practices that I spend time in.

Some of these virtual bodies that we create are like rocket ships or space capsules that we not only live in now, but can use and inhabit after our physical body is gone. Which is most important? Well they both are, but our mental habits and bodies are at least as important since we are dependent on their future. I have written a lot about this topic in my free e-book on modern shamanism called "Astrology of the Heart," which can be found here:

<http://dharmagrooves.com/#&panel1-1>

In the esoteric tradition, these habits or bodies are called the fixed stars. These habit-stars and their constellations light up our inner sky and serve as guides that light to see us through the night of time.

I warned you this was esoteric. Ring any bells?

[Photo taken yesterday with the Nikon D7100 and Voigtlander 125mm f/2.5 APO lens.]



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