

2022 Patanjali Class 80

1/23/24

Sutra II:34 – Confrontations such as violence, whether done by oneself, instigated, or abetted, whether precipitated by greed, anger, or delusion, whether mild, medium, or intense, result in endless misery and ignorance; thus, cultivate the opposites.

Nitya’s commentary is a catalogue of polarized action leading to disaster, and for Deb it was almost too much at first, like reading the newspaper these days, full of wars and rumors of wars. On a second reading she felt how underneath the cruelty, Nitya is emphasizing the thread in our lives showing us how to resist the three prongs of violence Patanjali lists, to carefully walk in a clear and loving way, so that the higher self raises the lower self. A main aspect of our self-discipline is absorption in Isvara, where each day we bring in the understanding of who we are with how we’re living. In a time when violence is such a seductive response, we are invited to find a much better way to uphold justice, internally and externally.

Commentary on the sutra naturally focuses on violence, leading, as we well know it does, to misery and ignorance, yet the point really is Patanjali giving us an extra kick to take the “cultivating the opposite” of the last sutra dead seriously, and repeated here for emphasis. The class as a whole shared our despair at current events, and the feeling that misery and ignorance is a wave that could drown the whole world (from St. Bob’s ever-prescient A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall, 1963. Check out [the lyrics.](#))

“God’s” contribution to our discussion was the [Robert Rosenthal obituary](#) from the Sunday NY Times of January 21. He was a psychologist who had a huge effect on teaching and other interpersonal relationships, proving we can consciously and

intentionally choose a path that is more uplifting to those we're in touch with, showing the value of a positive orientation. (Oddly, he was the person given Timothy Leary's post after Harvard kicked him out.) I've included a few excerpts from the article in Part IV. His conclusion was, in a nutshell:

“The same factors operate with bosses and their employees, therapists and their clients, or parents and children,” Dr. Rosenthal told *The New York Times* in 1986. “The more warmth and the more positive the expectations that are communicated, the better the person who receives those messages will do.”

Deb's takeaway was when we feel anger or disdain toward anyone, it is communicated, it has an effect. The same is true of loving enthusiasm. She suspects there are ways we subtly applaud anger and violence, where we could be open to those same situations with love. The teachers in Rosenthal's studies brought out the students' abilities with nothing more than a positive attitude, and we can do the same in every moment of our interactions.

My thought was, while we can't change the world as a whole, we are having an impact all the time. The size of our contribution doesn't matter. We should never think we are helpless and useless: our very being is inspiring or disheartening others, and how we live our life is very important.

Bill was moved by Nitya's last sentence: “If we do not reform ourselves, ignorance will precipitate more and more darkness and we will suffer endlessly.” Once we start down the road of negativity it continues to drag us down. The opposite is to contemplate Isvara, which allows us to go from transactional thinking to the unity of the higher self

One of Nitya's greatest pull-quotes appears in this commentary, and Deb repeated it:

Yoga is not a passive way of closing one's eyes to injustice. If the yogi has a moral conscience, he or she has to challenge all three kinds of involvement in violence (greed, anger and delusion).

She has been enamored of owls over the past year, and recently encountered a beautiful image of the owl as Athena's animal. It was a being of clarity, allowing Athena to see everything in a new light, including what she would prefer to ignore. That witnessing is what allows clarity to come. Deb felt that at the same time we are not becoming enamored of violence, we are nonetheless seeing the whole situation in an unblinded, balanced way. We aren't ignoring the problems.

That morning, Andy had a strong feeling he was abetting evil when he looked in the newspaper. He sometimes feels caught in the history that has been set up by other people, making him a party to something that he can't get out of. We are all entangled. The part of the commentary he finds challenging is that it's a crime to even abet violence. He suspects he abets it just by paying taxes to those selling arms to homicidal maniacs, and when he sees the evidence of it, he's heartbroken. When he looks in the paper and sees a photo of a war crime, he realizes he is a citizen of a country sponsoring it, and he feels he is abetting it.

Paul heard newscaster Rachel Maddow recently on how our democracy is being threatened by rightwing extremists, saying we are a people who value democracy, but now we are faced with the question of how far are you willing to go to defend it?

Is she advocating violent resistance to whatever we call the opposite of democracy? In the late Sixties' ferment over the Vietnam War and Civil Rights, this was a heated argument. At every college there were passionate meetings about how much violence was necessary to end the war and establish justice. We

found out later that about 25% of the antiwar movement was made up of FBI agents and informers, who were among the loudest advocates of violence, but with the backdrop of slaughter at home and abroad the argument that we had to fight violence with violence made a lot of sense. It pulled a number of high-minded people into the death spiral. Passions were very high, and the mantras of kill the pigs (police) and even kill everyone over 30, including your parents, were in the air. Fortunately, we had the appealing alternative of nonviolent, passive resistance, from both Vedantic and Christian history embodied by Gandhi and Martin Luther King. Something visceral in me rejected the call to violence, and I was drawn to the equally vast world of peace, kindness and love, turning eagerly to what we are advocating in the Gurukula. It was always clear to me that the more we fought, the more violent it would get. Yoga philosophy advocates turning to non-oppositional stances to mitigate the misery.

Deb sympathized how all of us are entangled in the world of relationships, just by being a citizen of this or any country. Some of our attitudes contribute hatred to a degree. For her, this verse is talking about being clear about those kinds of relationships, not pretending they don't exist. By clarifying our sense of love and compassion for others, it also has a strong effect. During the Vietnam War, we were all confronted with the reality of "living in heart of the beast," yet we could lessen the degree we are caught in it.

Nancy agreed we all feel our tax dollars are not going to take care of individuals in our country who are in pain and suffering, and instead are used to annihilate others. Her Jewish relatives are suffering from this on a far deeper level than she is, because they feel responsible for what's going on.

We wondered how the victims of genocide could possibly become perpetrators of it, how the greatest motto of the last century, "Never Again!" has become "Oh No, Not Again?" Nancy

asked how people who have the history they have, could turn around and do this? Even in that question, there is an implied blaming of innocents. That's what they will say of us if Trump is elected and brings Nazism to the former "leader of the free world." We are not responsible, but we can understand. Part of that understanding is to know what the machinations are within the so-called defense forces around the globe, which are basically out of control and lethally armed. Taking the blame won't get us anywhere.

Nancy's rhetorical question was how far am I able to go to defend something I totally believe in? People are willing to do such awful things to uphold what they believe is right, including civil war. That locus of violence is in all of us some place.

All of us are feeling that heartbreak, Bill added. The antidote is that you wish everyone good will regardless of where they stand, and you don't accept the status quo. It's incredibly frustrating to watch the suffering, knowing you can't change it on any scale. All you can influence is your part in the world.

Musing on the current conflicts in the news, one thing that impresses Andy is that people are led to have homicidal feelings that are rationally justifiable, on both sides. Reason tells them they have been terribly wronged and so they can deny the souls of their enemies. There is a gulf that opens between groups that pulls everybody into it. So many innocent bystanders, including us, are asked to take sides. The violence at the center comes from the absence of allowing the other person to have an atman—you don't respect that they have a soul. Each side has its own devastating logic, but it's really heart-rending to be on the sidelines and see the damage, to feel the pull of competing forms of reality that could suck you into a black hole. He wondered if maybe we are being asked to confront it by increasing our connection with the universal soul.

Andy recalled Nataraja Guru talking of negative absolutism, with his mythological example being Medea, the wife of Jason. The World History Encyclopedia has a fascinating article [here](#), and a thumbnail sketch about her:

Throughout history, Medea is portrayed as a strong, ruthless, bloodthirsty woman who betrayed her own people and killed her brother and children. Yet, despite her life being touched by many tragedies and scandals (most caused by her own hand), she remained resilient, becoming immortal and living out her days in the paradise of the Elysian Fields.

Much of Medea's mayhem is prompted by vengeance for wrongs committed, and does display a kind of negative absolutism. Andy feels we are called on to have positive absolutism. The Gita, in chapter XV, acknowledges both, concluding we should achieve a third condition, transcendental absolutism.

Paul considered that since we are paradoxical beings, will we ever be able to not be on one side or another? Will we be able to erase one side, or behave in such a fashion that we become balanced, like on a seesaw? With Narayana Guru, he wondered how you wash the lather out of a bar of soap, meaning, if good and evil is in the paradox of existence, there is no way to minimize the other side. At least, Paul has realized the error in trying to develop a protocol prior to an experience. He found, as a fire lieutenant, that each situation didn't go by the same book, the same guidelines, that he had so diligently studied. On the first fire scene he was in charge of, on the way there he kept giving orders over the radio for the different rigs to do this or that. Before long, the engineer, who was driving, elbowed him and said, "Hey, why don't you wait till we get there first, and see what's going on?" It was like a revelation. Paul learned that each situation presents us with a choice of how to react, and at least in spiritual matters we try to

react with transparency, or anyway, good judgment. He concluded, “When I look at a stream of water over time, the history of its development, it really takes some odd curvatures. Our lives do that too, and it’s perfectly normal. We take pride in things going right and feel guilty when they don’t.”

During the Vietnam War we activists thought a lot about the misuse of tax money for lethal ends. I wanted Andy to rest assured that we are being extorted for the money that goes for military aggression. We give our taxes more or less willingly to meet the needs of those who really need help to get by, and if we had our druthers that’s all that would be done with it. Not paying taxes can’t solve the problem, though: we’d go to jail while the government takes all our stuff and sells it to fund more military fiascos. Yes, we should be aware of how insane our domineering attitudes are, pitted against many other countries who are compelled to follow suit. But not taking sides is really central to this philosophy we are studying. The “opposite” we are asked to cultivate is to get out of the dualistic perspective entirely, and this is well affirmed in the Notes from our previous class on this sutra, in April, 2011:

The point is that determining whether we are right or wrong is not the ultimate goal, as if life was a glorified courtroom. We all share rightness and wrongness. The goal is coming to accord, and that starts with coming to accord in ourselves first and foremost. As Nitya concluded in the last sutra:

[We] change the world by changing ourselves. You change yourself by establishing yourself in a spiritual position and becoming equipped with God's vision. The yogi who is ever engaged in Isvara pranidhana has no other identity and thus transforms himself or herself to transform the world.

This is the key to the whole business. Time after time we want to blame the other, reform the other, prove that they are wrong and we are right. None of that is a successful strategy, however. It simply pushes the other into greater and greater opposition, and as we push them away there is an equal and opposite reaction that pushes us away too. We see this in modern diplomacy also, and the result is war, economic destitution, or frequently both. We have to turn the heat of focus back toward ourself. When we reform ourself, or even see ourself more accurately, we give our opponent room to take a similar step. Unfortunately, such an enlightened approach is not considered politically expedient or egotistically permissible.

An excerpt from my commentary on the Gita's sixth chapter, adds to this, and was shared in Nancy Y's class at the beginning of Part II.

What Deb keeps coming back to is what does yoga activate in us? We constantly emphasize that we become what we love, and likewise we become what we hate. So be careful. One of the reasons this is such an important sutra and commentary is how it emphasizes that neutral communion with everyone is more viable as a long-term pathway. Nancy noted it takes a lot more energy to hold on to hate, and not as much energy to love. When you are away from the battlefield, that is.

Bill talked about what we can do when the conflict isn't immanently lethal: participate in a meditation on loving kindness, like the one Gayathri put on after last year's Gurupuja, where you learn goodwill toward yourself, and then offer it to people close to you, and then people farther away, and finally extend it to your enemies. Bill feels that letting go, wishing all beings loving kindness, as individuals, is one thing we can take from Nitya and Patanjali. Starting with yourself, and going outward with the positive feelings is a process of contemplation on Isvara.



Anita finds it overwhelming to keep up with the world, these days. It can be difficult for her to keep her equilibrium. A Buddhist technique she has found recently, as taught by Pema Chodron, is *tonglen*, a meditation for cultivating loving kindness. It reminds her of our class, speaking out, and looking to opposites in the face of violence. It's a way of thinking about something bad someone did. Simply breathe in the bad and breathe out good feelings for a while, while focusing on the person or event. Anita feels it is exactly the kind of thing we can do when faced with negative feelings.

Once or twice, Paul has had a fraction of a second glimpse of equanimity, much clearer than what he normally sees, due to his being conditioned as a child. Even though it's a mere flash, it gives him the perspective to compare it to where he is now, so he knows to apply a different understanding. He told us about a group of friends in high school, who would travel three hours to Fargo, North Dakota to go to rock concerts. One time they got lost for an hour, until someone recognized a place they had been before, and so they all said great, which way do we go? He replied, "I have no idea!" Even though he recognized the place, he had been lost their before, and still was. Paul takes it as one of his glimpses of what the world actually is — he was lost before, so he can recognize when he is lost now.

For balance, we shared stories of acts of kindness people have done to us. Susan's neighbor, who is a bit "on the other side" politically, took her to the grocery store during our recent ice storm, when she couldn't get out by herself, a reminder that the opposition is comprised (in part?) of real people.

Anita has told many stories of kindness happening to her, where there is no reason to be kind other than they are kind people. It helps her balance despair with the world. She wonders why she deserves it, but she doesn't, really. She has unintentionally given them the opportunity to do good, and that's all they want. She is a

gift to them. Very many of us feel that way. Our mere existence is reason enough for kindness.

## **Part II**

12/3/12, for Nancy Y's class—

Nitya's commentary on sutra II:34 is intense and heartfelt. I always liked it when he unloaded on human foibles. He could speak in lightning bolts! Despite all the good intentions and efforts of so many people, the violent side of human nature seems to grow ever stronger. It's sad, but as yogis (or physicians) we keep trying to demonstrate a healthy alternative. Most of us aren't very effective, but we strive to do our part. Thanks to Nancy in particular, for her diligent efforts to keep the wisdom of the Gurus alive and available for practical use, touching many lives in a meaningful way. I guess we'll never run short of opportunities to practice what we preach, under fire.

My Gita commentary on VI, 9 is relevant:

9) As between dear well-wishers, friends, enemies, those indifferent, those in-between, haters, relations, and also as between good people and sinners, he who can maintain an equal attitude, excels.

Now here is a place for practice! There is nothing symbolic about this verse. Interactions with everyone around jostle the psyche, pulling us out of our burgeoning equanimity. Personal slurs sting, and drive us to retreat and build walls around our inner self. Compliments likewise can stimulate exaggerated positive feelings. Either way, the neutral balance we are aiming for is disturbed.

Once we are grounded in the oceanic mind, the comments of others can have no significant effect. When this is not yet the case, we can practice yoga by silently counterbalancing the input with a larger perspective. Add the opposite, and the sum is zero, a dynamic neutrality. If you are complimented, recall a situation where you failed to rise to the occasion. If insulted, bring to mind times when you were kind and helpful. Slowly, over time, your mind will steady itself and become more independent of the opinions of others.

The bottom line is that no one knows very much about any situation. We judge mainly on superficial appearances, and based on our own prejudices. Therefore the advice we give is inadequate. When examined dispassionately, it is much more relevant to us than to the person we are bestowing it upon. We should always remember the world is a somewhat distorted mirror in which we see ourselves.

The same is true for other people as well. They judge us on fleeting impressions, and criticize or praise us based mainly on ignorance. We can learn from them, but we should take what they say with several grains of salt. It's much easier to stay centered that way. Nor do we have to block their advice out of some misplaced gambit of self-defense, because our grounding makes us confident.

We wander out of our center by being attracted to pleasure and avoiding pain, in trying to be good and not bad, right and not wrong. If we had enough faith in ourselves such posturing would be irrelevant, but a seemingly hostile world demands we pledge allegiance to such external idols. In the process we may gain the whole world, but lose our souls. (It's lucky that we *are* our soul, and so can only lose it in our imagination, else we'd be in serious trouble.)

The balanced attitude recommended here is predicated on not holding harsh judgments. If you are addicted to ideas like sin you

will see it everywhere, and it will always shake you up. The Gita is teaching a higher form of reasoning that transcends or unites all pairs of opposites. That's why it counsels that good isn't any more helpful than evil in knowing the Self.

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4/12/11

Sutra II: 34

Confrontations such as violence, whether done by oneself, instigated, or abetted, whether precipitated by greed, anger, or delusion, whether mild, medium, or intense, result in endless misery and ignorance; thus, cultivate the opposites.

One of the strongest attractions Guru Nitya has for me is his unflinching attitude toward the problems of society. His comments level a blast at what he called the "stupids," which includes all of us to a greater or lesser extent. He well knew how we are individually stupid, collectively stupid, and cosmically stupid. His last sentence sums up the import this has: "If we do not reform ourselves, ignorance will precipitate more and more darkness and we will suffer endlessly." It is to end suffering that we join him in trying to pry our eyes open.

Patanjali teaches that the counterposing of opposites is a central technique for overcoming ignorance, and last night we shared a festival of practical examples. Opposites can be offset in any number of ways: horizontally, vertically, three-dimensionally, sequentially; they can be aggregations, one-to-one, qualitative or quantitative. The proof is in the pudding, meaning that if we can make a quantum leap to a greater awareness, our assessment has in some way united the opposing elements. No mechanical rule of thumb is possible.

A lot of our practice comes in our relationships with intimate friends and family. Jan gave us a terrific example, speaking only in general terms. She and her husband Larry had had a disagreement and she was quite upset. She went to her writing class, where the first thing is just to write something, and she decided she would write about the incident. Because of the Yoga Shashtra class, she decided to write it from Larry's perspective. To her surprise and horror it revealed how awful she had been, and that from his perspective she was aggravating the situation much more than she had realized. It brought a real change of heart and she went home and made amends. Larry appreciated her new attitude to a degree, but she herself felt released and much freer because of it. One of the paradoxical aspects of yoga is that by changing our attitude about the other we are doing ourselves the best possible favor. We make more room for the other person, but they may or may not respond—it's up to them. But we have helped ourselves regardless. You could see Jan flush with relief even as she retold the tale.

The odd thing is that, even knowing about this technique, we continue to cling to our side of the story, fearful of risking our social image by admitting some culpability. Jan was brave to make the leap, and found it isn't so hard once you take resolve to do it. We have to learn how to overcome our ego's defenses, that wily ego that doesn't want to take responsibility for any part of any problem, and will twist the facts to suit its dastardly schemes. But it's such a great feeling to put it in its place! It will inevitably sneak back into the picture, but curbing it definitely becomes easier very quickly as we get the hang of doing it.

Deb pointed out that Fritz Perls' gestalt therapy used a similar concept. He had two chairs, and the complainant would sit in one and present their case as if the antagonist was sitting in the other chair. Then they would switch chairs and respond back as if they were the other person, bringing insight and often allowing them to break through their blockages.

Scotty told us of a Buddhist order that does something like that. When there is a dispute, those involved are brought together in the whole community and made to face each other. The first thing they are asked to talk about is the very beginning of the conflict. It turns out that major schisms sometimes blow up out of very minor irritations, and seeing how trivial those are can defuse the situation. Of course, the trivial trigger may have nothing to do with the underlying resentments boiling below the surface, but it is still a way to access them.

After class I thanked Jan for her perfect example, one that we can use a thousand times with almost certain success, and told her of a variant. In a very important incident in my life, with a tremendous lot of misery and psychic rupture, I knew perfectly well that I was right and the other person was way off base. Still, I put myself in their shoes and I suddenly saw how I looked to them, and it was a stunning revelation. From their perspective, and with what they knew, I appeared to be a monster. Although I was confident in how honorable my actions were, the other person saw them differently, and the entire misunderstanding grew very logically out of it. It was a profound lesson, and allowed me to forgive even as I knew I would never be forgiven myself. It was okay. And over a very long period of time, my changing my stand affected the relationship positively. The point is that determining whether we are right or wrong is not the ultimate goal, as if life was a glorified courtroom. We all share rightness and wrongness. The goal is coming to accord, and that starts with coming to accord in ourselves first and foremost. As Nitya concluded in the last sutra:

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engaged in Isvara pranidhana has no other identity and thus transforms himself or herself to transform the world.

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Deb gave us a sweet example from a different angle. She and my mother had a period when they were on each other's nerves. My mother was very prickly for many years after my father died. Deb remembers going to bed really angry after a very unpleasant evening, and waking up the next morning still fuming. But our daughter Emily, who was around ten years old, awoke fresh and clear, as if the night before had never happened. Deb took it as a lesson to let go of her resentments and try to start fresh herself. She was holding on where the little girl could more easily move on.

Deb also gave an example of Nitya's, from *Love and Blessings*, showing how life itself has an inherent balance and compensating propensity. Nataraja Guru was a master of opposition, and the book is filled with great examples. Nitya had just attended his sister's wedding, solemnized by Nataraja Guru, and then right after he was with his father when he died. He concludes:

Within twenty-four hours there was a happy wedding and a not so happy death in the same family. Guru read of my father's death in the paper the next day. He sent me a card saying, "This is typical of the incidents in the life of an absolutist, to have the plus and minus aspects balancing and canceling each other out, leaving the absolutist in the silence of a neutral zero." (163)

Michael spoke of how personal and private his sketchbook is. He doesn't show it to anyone. Last week, though, he sent me a few pictures from it, and I immediately asked if I could share them with the group. Even via email I could hear Michael's reluctance! But then he thought, well, this is about Isvara, the Absolute, and so what could there possibly be to hide? He brought in a handout of the humorous sketches to give to everyone, and explained all about them. This is another direction of opposition: we have a private self that is screened off from the world, but not everything benefits from being sequestered. It is very freeing to permit friends a glimpse behind our walls. It can be overdone—some people become addicted to the process and want to pour out their guts—but it is wonderful to feel enough trust in your fellows to open up, and then learn how it was okay all along. It's an important spiritual step, and it was not coincidental that Michael was wearing a t-shirt with an image of his first guru, Kendrick Perala, on it. It's helpful to have a stalwart friend at our backs when we take a new step.

I added a highly practical and simple example. Ann was facing a very serious operation, and came home from a trip to two phone messages after hours on Friday, from her cardiologist and oncologist, asked her to call right away because they had important reassessments of her previous lab reports. Of course, she feared the worst, and there would be no contact until Monday morning. She was imagining all sort of terrible news. Strictly as a contrarian, I suggested that it could well be good news, and she shouldn't worry until she heard what it was. I hope she took the advice, because it



was in fact good news, that her condition had improved enough for her to undergo the operation, which had been in doubt.

We all have these challenges frequently. We worry and fuss over what will happen, but we don't have any idea, really. If we can take ourselves in hand and let it be, we will save ourselves a lot of grief. This is in part what is meant by not having expectations.

### **Part III**

Susan did her homework! This came in the mail:

Lucky me, I have had so many conflicting situations this week to think about. Most of them, however, have been internal and not external. The following example is dedicated to Anita Carpenter because it's a driving example and she has had so many great ones over the years. I always think of Anita during driving epiphanies. So anyway, I was driving to an appointment. It was a beautiful morning and I admired the blossoms as I went down the hill and the little green leaves coming out on the tree branches. I wasn't late but I wasn't early. I turned into a line of cars at that awful 6th Avenue/I-405 overpass and we were all waiting to turn left. My world suddenly narrowed down to the line of cars. I started obsessing about the fact that the car in front of me had an entire car length in front of it and I was thinking that if it had just pulled up, I would be that much closer to the turn and also this would allow more cars to get in line behind me. My body started tensing — especially my shoulders and my colon. I tried to breathe through it. Minutes passed like molasses. I moved up a bit further, the car in front of me still leaving a football field between it and the next car! Then I was within three cars of the left turn and the cars were taking their time about turning or they weren't turning on a red light when there was plenty of room to do so! I was talking quietly but adamantly under my breath to the drivers — turn! turn! turn!

(not like the song but with growing anxiety). Then suddenly, I caught myself. I witnessed almost a POOF! as the lens of my awareness went from very small to the whole wide world. It was amazing. I suddenly thought, “Wow! I am just this tiny speck on the earth and everything is going along just fine and why am I so fixated on this little thing over which I have no control?” In that moment I felt connected to everything and everyone, and my stress and anxieties disappeared. That was a great feeling. From this I take away the realization (and this isn't the first time, alas) that it is so easy to get sucked into reacting to a situation very narrowly — from the kind of visceral floods that happen inside me. I seem to sense that I have an outer conflict (the driver in front of me) and my imagination takes off and acts it out. So I guess one could think of this as an inner and (perceived) outer conflict. It seems a very good balance to let go and relax into a much larger sphere which is free of conflict, judgment, and myopia.

Charles sent this today:

Marriage is the living embodiment of the Absolute. It has unitive and separative aspects which in classical times were imagined as Venus and Mars, Love and Strife.

For it to work at all long term, love must include strife. The war between the sexes has been going on down through the ages.  
**THE LOVE MUST BE STRONG ENOUGH TO NURTURE THE STRUGGLE.**

Both love and strife are given by God or Mother Nature.

In our times we participate in the struggle of feminism with patriarchy. A couple (unitive aspect) is made up of two individuals (separative aspects).

Brenda and I will celebrate ten years of marriage this Friday, April the fifteenth. I have been living with her as she evolves as a creative individual. As we individuate, we separate, we struggle. We participate ontologically as opposites contending within the Unity of opposites. As dialectical counterparts, we are thesis and antithesis developing through struggle and strife into the evolutionary synthesis of these, our historical efforts on the intimate level of domestic partnership.

More specifically, she and I are of different temperaments, complementary and sometime's opposed. In addition, she is a woman in her prime and I am an old man. These differences are included under the separative aspect, contained within the unity.

I offer my experience of honoring the separative tendency as my wife's own individual destiny. She is who she is, a mystery. She is becoming who it is her destiny to become, in a life time that will probably extend beyond my own. At least in my imagination, my death is included in her life, that separation included within that greater union.

## **Part IV**

Robert Rosenthal obit in the NYT of 1/21/24, well worth reading—this is shortened for “fair use”:

Dr. Rosenthal, who spent much of his career at Harvard, was best known for his work in the 1960s on what he called the Pygmalion effect — or, more technically, “interpersonal expectancy.”

In one famous experiment, he gave an aptitude test to students at a California elementary school, then told teachers that a group of the students was set to “blossom” in the next year, while

another one wasn't. In fact, the two groups were selected at random, though the teachers didn't know that.

A year later, he retested the students and found that those in the "blossom" group had gained an average of 27 I.Q. points, regardless of how they scored initially, while the other group performed much worse.

"The bottom line is that if we expect certain behaviors from people, we treat them differently," he told Discover magazine in 2015, "and that treatment is likely to affect their behavior."

"The same factors operate with bosses and their employees, therapists and their clients, or parents and children," Dr. Rosenthal told The New York Times in 1986. "The more warmth and the more positive the expectations that are communicated, the better the person who receives those messages will do."