

John Main Seminar 2007

The Contemplative Executive – Leading From The Heart

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**We come this afternoon to consider the significance of John Main’s teaching to the corporate executive.**

**In the last four years, I have been working on an anthology of John Main’s teaching, which has now been published by Medio Media with the title, “The Hunger for Depth and Meaning”. The work has been enormously enriching for me in terms of understanding more deeply John Main’s teaching on Christian meditation and connecting it with my own daily practice. In other words, to verify the teaching from my own experience.**

**Wisdom and Transformation**

**I was particularly drawn to a talk which John Main gave probably shortly before his death. His voice was frail but he spoke with captivating intensity and urgency. There were three elements in that talk of particular significance to business executives and leaders. First, he described the knowledge that we come to in meditation as, not just simply new additions to the memory bank, but the knowledge of wisdom, quoting from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians:**

*“I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the all-glorious Father, may give you the spiritual powers of wisdom and vision by which there comes the knowledge of him. I pray that your inward eyes may be illumined so that you may know the hope to which he calls you.” (Eph. 1:17-18)*

**Then he spoke about the transforming power of meditation, as a process whereby our minds are remade, relating it to Paul’s letter to the Romans:**

*“Therefore, my brothers, I implore you by God’s mercy, to offer your very selves to him: a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for his acceptance, the worship offered by mind and heart. Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern of this present world, but let your minds be remade and your nature thus transformed. Then you will be able to discern the will of God, and to know the will of God, and to know what is good, acceptable and perfect.” (Rom 12:1-2)*

**What I found most engaging was the third element which was the sheer practicality of how he described the way to that wisdom and transformation. He said,**

**“This meditation, this pursuit of wisdom and love, must take place in an entirely ordinary, natural way. Meditation must be built into the**

**ordinary fabric of everyday life. It is by being still, in a very simple child-like way, by paying attention.”**

And he advises,

**“To be fit for the great task of life, we must learn to be faithful in humble tasks.”** Then he went on to speak about the humble task of **saying our word, our mantra.**

In this twenty first century, we face more obstacles than ever before in our quest to live our lives with meaning, depth, significance and purpose. The distractions and demands that characterize much of modern living are particularly evident in the life of the business executive.

### **Busyness and Consumerism**

The first challenge for the business executive embarking on the contemplative journey is to take a step away from the busyness of the business world. The unrelenting globalization of business requires more business travel which strains family life. Managing an international business across multiple time zones is taxing on both the physical and mental capacities of more and more executives. And of course, the advances of telecommunication and technology which have produced electronic mail over the internet keep many constantly on their toes. In the past, the home or vacation time provided much needed refuge from work and the office. But today the executive is hooked to the blackberry. You can see this most vividly in how quickly the business traveller whips out this blackberry device the moment a plane lands at an airport, anxious to find out what messages had been sent to him while he was in the air.

The other problem of a modern life-style is that we are all in thrall to consumption; both our own consumption and the consumption of people who buy the goods or services that we produce. We are all in some kind of a rat race. The consumerist lifestyle forces people to work too hard in order to fulfill their consumer ambitions. Even sports and hobbies, which are supposed to be antidotes to our busyness, can themselves be busy occupations. Instead of giving relief, they often add to our exhaustion.

John Main was well aware of the predicament of modern people. He said,

**“It’s as though we were rushing through our lives, and in our hearts there is the flame of a candle. Because we are moving at such high speed, this essential interior flame is always on the point of going out. But when we sit down to meditate, when we become still, when we are not thinking in terms of our success or self-importance, of our own will, when we are just in the presence of the One who is, then the flame begins to burn brightly. We begin to understand ourselves and others in terms of light, warmth and love.”**

John Main also saw meditation as meeting the urgent need of modern people who live their lives at an incredibly shallow level and who desperately seek depth and meaning.

**“None of us”, he says, “would meditate unless it had occurred to us that there is more to life than just being producers or consumers. All of us know that we can’t find any enduring or ultimate meaning in just producing or consuming. So we seek ultimate meaning. And we come to meditation because an unerring instinct tells us that, just as we can’t find any ultimate satisfaction in consuming or producing, so we cannot find ultimate meaning outside of ourselves. We have to begin with ourselves”.**

### Personal Experience

I first began to learn to meditate about twenty years ago. My wife, Patricia, and I were then quite contented at the level of material needs. Our standard of living well exceeded what we had expected in our youth. I was doing well in my career and enjoying greatly the job of investing money. Family life was happy. We had two children then who were entering their teenage years. Patricia had quit her job five years earlier to spend more time with them, and she felt more fulfilled in caring for them than at her job. Yet there was for both of us a restlessness amidst the material contentment. We felt strongly that there was more to life than material comfort and career satisfaction. In a kind of mid-life crisis, we were searching for a spiritual path that could bring more meaning into our lives.

In hindsight, I discovered Christian meditation at that critical juncture of my life. At that point, the more likely direction of my career would have been an acceleration of the pace, to try to get to the top faster. Whether I succeeded in my career goal is now hypothetical, of course. But I feel sure that I would have paid a heavy price in terms of family welfare, personal relationships, health and spiritual development. Meditation put me on the road less travelled. I changed to a different gear which has made the journey thus far more fulfilling, has restored a balance in lifestyle, and brought greater depth and meaning.

The discipline of meditation was a necessary antidote to my busyness as a business executive. When I first began to meditate, it took me about two years to adjust my lifestyle and daily routine just to accommodate the two daily periods of meditation. But that adjustment process was a blessing as it made me realize that I had been wasting a fair amount of time in trivial pursuits or forms of addiction. For example, I used to spend long hours on some evenings playing the Chinese game of mahjong with friends, sometimes into the early hours of the morning. At work, I spent an inordinate amount of time in business socializing. Much of it unnecessary in the sense my presence was not essential and it really made no difference to my business or to the hosts whether I were attending those functions or not. By weaning myself away from those trivial activities, I not only found the time for the twice daily

periods of meditation, but also the space and time for worthwhile causes, in my case to serve our community as the national co-ordinator for Singapore, and also in Medio Media and also as a trustee of WCCM. With the practice of meditation, I have found a new perspective of time and how to use it wisely. I now guard carefully my leisure hours, and have learnt how to say “no” to unimportant demands on my time, giving priority to relationships. I don’t think I have become anti-social; I enjoy my regular games of tennis and golf with friends and business associates, but try to limit the hours spent on them. With the practice of meditation, I have come to value silence and solitude more, and this requires a certain distancing from noise and crowds, and some abstinence from television and other distractions.

From my own experience, it can truly be said that in giving time to meditation, we are not losing but in fact gaining time. This gain is not only at the profound level of personal transformation which considerably enhances the quality of our life and our work, but also at the mundane level in the sense that meditation will lead you to shed certain lifestyle habits that waste time.

As a frequent business traveler, I have also found meditation very helpful in mitigating jet lag. I can rest better and sleep well even at odd hours. When we are far away from home in a distant country in a totally different time zone, there is an inevitable dislocation to our regular pattern and routine of life and work. The morning and evening meditation, regardless of where we are, provides a certain stability and anchor that mitigates the dislocation of travel.

### A New Level of Consciousness

I am sure most of you here have your own story of how meditation came into your life at a certain point, and made a difference to your life. That difference is a new way of seeing life, of living life.

I recently read an inspiring book, entitled “Chasing Daylight”, by the former CEO of the accounting firm KPMG, Eugene O’Kelly. In May, 2005, O’Kelly stepped into his doctor’s office with a full business calendar and a lifetime of plans on his mind. This was how he described his job:

**“This job of CEO was incredibly privileged, but it was tough, relentless, full of pressure. My calendar was perpetually extended out over the next 18 months. I was always moving at 100 miles per hour. I worked all the time. I worked weekends. I worked late into many nights. I missed every school function for my younger daughter. For the first ten years of my marriage, my wife and I rarely went on vacation. Before this sounds like complaining, I must be honest. As long as I believed I could handle such a high pressure position, I wanted it. I was profoundly devoted to and love my family. But I could not have settled for a lesser job. People don’t walk into the top spot. They are driven.”**

That day in the doctor's office, O'Kelly was told that he had brain cancer, with less than 100 days to live. From that moment, he dropped his job and set about living his remaining days focusing on what was really important, his family, relinking with friends, restoring relationships, and preparing to die well. Before he died, he wrote the following words:

**"I had long believed that a successful business person could, if so inclined, live a spiritual life. And to do so it wasn't necessary to quit the boardroom, chuck it all and live in an ashram, as if only a physical departure that dramatic would confirm a depth of feeling about larger issues, including one's soul.**

**After my diagnosis, I still believed that. But I also discovered depths to which a business person rarely goes. I learned how worthwhile it was to visit there, and sooner rather than later, because it may bring one greater success as a business person and as human being. You can call what I went through a spiritual journey, a journey of the soul. A journey that allowed me to experience what was there all along but had been hidden, thanks to the distractions of the world."**

And what did O'Kelly said he learned in the 100 days before he died:

- about enjoying each moment so much that time seems actually to slow down;
- about clarity and simplicity;
- about spontaneity and the need to rekindle it in our lives;
- about spending time thinking about our death and preparing for it.

I could not tell from the book whether O'Kelly had a practice of meditation, but it was evident in those words that he had moved into a level of contemplative consciousness.

O'Kelly stepped out of the treadmill of a busy life because of his imminent death. He wished he had stepped out earlier. John Main saw that consumerism could lead to a dehumanising of modern life, and viewed meditation as a way of breaking out of that pattern. John Main said,

**"It is so easy for us to become dehumanised, to become just consumers in a materialistic, commercial society. It is so easy to live our lives in some sort of mechanical way, going through routines each day, but losing the sense of freshness, of creativity, of freedom. As a result, we live our lives in a sort of rush, one routine following the next, distracted perhaps for a bit by entertainment, by pleasure, or deadened by the pressure of work or play. To break out of this**

**cycle, each one of us must learn to stop the rush of activity. We must learn the priority of being. We must learn to be still. That's what our regular times of meditation are about."**

From my experience, even if we find the work of meditation, of paying attention, of saying the mantra a constant struggle, because of the unavoidable distractions, the discipline of taking time out every morning and evening will bear much fruit. Because of that discipline, we learn to establish the right priorities, and to distinguish between what is important and what is unnecessary. This will benefit not only our own lives and our families. It will also make a big positive experience to the life of our colleagues and subordinates. We will respect their need for life balance by not making unreasonable demands on their time.

John Main had a humorous way of saying why busy people should meditate: so that they do not become busy-bodies.

To meditate requires an act of faith. But beginning in faith will lead us to an experience that validates that faith. And the experience is that a contemplative practice built into the everyday life of a business person will result in a better business person and a more fulfilled human being. In the words of St Bernard, we need to attend to the business of businesses, and our first business as human beings is to allow the work of God to be done in us.

### **Five Attributes of Leadership**

I would now like to consider how John Main's teaching on meditation can affect the practice of leadership at the level of business organizations.

To begin, it might be useful to take note of what the literature on organizational leadership has to say about the essential qualities of a good leader. The literature on leadership is abundant with theory, case studies, commentaries and personal models as recorded by many leaders in their memoirs.

About twenty five years ago, I had the enriching experience of attending several seminars on organizational management led by a Professor Moneim El-Meligi of Rutgers University. Moneim travelled extensively in the United States and in Asia giving seminars to thousands of executives and leaders in both the public and private sectors. He identified five attributes of leadership which in his view transcend cultures. These five universal attributes are as follows:

The first attribute is "the will to lead". This refers to a commitment of the whole person to a goal that is both realistic and worthwhile. Such an act mobilizes energies of vast power. It is a movement into the world, but it springs from one's inner world. It implies a readiness to assume responsibility for others, a willingness to exercise the authority invested in the leadership role, and acceptance of accountability. The will to lead assumes personal integrity. When "the will to lead" degenerates, the leader operates from an egocentric need, to get others to do

things that one decides are worth doing, for the purpose of self-glorification, self-enrichment, or for intimacy. Thomas More wrote that a tyrant “is a man who allows his people no freedom, who is puffed up by pride, driven by the lust for power, impelled by greed, provoked by thirst for fame”.

Moneim describes the second attribute as “clarity”. Clarity of mind is not to be confused with intelligence. Something more than IQ is required. This something is sound judgment. The most important component in judgment is emotional awareness and emotional control. Clarity is not commensurate to the volume of knowledge. In fact, too much knowledge causes overload and confusion. What is really needed is relevant information. Long preoccupation with, and interest in an issue, precedes what appears to be a sudden insight. What the leader needs is the ability, and indeed the courage, to simplify rather than accumulate knowledge beyond what is needed. I have had the privilege in my career to observe at close range one such leader. He is Mr Lee Kuan Yew, the founder father of modern Singapore. He was a contemporary of Pierre Tudeau. Lee Kuan Yew stepped down as Prime Minister in 1992 but continues to serve in the Cabinet as Minister Mentor. One of his great assets is that clarity of mind which enables him to simplify the complicated. He has a particular gift for reducing abstruse problems to the basic and communicable essentials. He sees that every problem has a heart. If you can penetrate to the very heart, the resolution of the problem will present no difficulty. Having found the essence, he will define it to himself and so to others in crisp, brief and unusually simple terms.

On a day to day basis, clarity can be viewed as a habit of posing a simple question, “Am I clear?”. Going into a meeting, for example, you would ask yourself, “What is my role?”, “What am I expected to offer?” or “What can I contribute?” A supreme indicator of a leader’s clarity is admission of uncertainty or of ignorance, “I don’t know, therefore I must find out”.

The third attribute of leadership is described as “the ability to learn”. The ability to learn presupposes the willingness to learn. Some leaders stop learning when they reach a certain level of over-confidence engendered by success or the admiration or flattery from others. A leader may reach the point of believing that he knows it all. Obsolescence then sets in along with decline of expertise. The leader must learn from his experience. And so the most effective source of learning is in the errors the leader makes. Therefore, learning is inhibited by the fear of making errors, or worse still, the denial of errors. Self-knowledge, or true humility, is the mechanism that makes it possible for us to learn. The ability to learn enables the leader to expand his perception beyond past positions and to adapt to changing circumstances.

Moneim described the fourth attribute of leadership as “similar and yet different”. To be a leader, you must be similar enough to your followers so that they can identify with you, or at least to be able to make sense of your his behaviour and conduct. Also, a leader must share or at least respect the core values and cherished

aspirations of the group. But then to lead, the leader has to be different? His responsibility extends beyond the group because he has to regulate the interaction with other groups within the same organisation or outside. To fulfill the boundary role, the leader has to integrate two opposing perspectives, inward and outward. The leader also has to interpret the organisational mission to the rank and file. Above all, the leader has to offer people alternatives to what they want. There comes the time when the leader has to risk making hard decisions that are not popular but necessary for group progress. In other words, the leader should be an agent of change and continuity.

The fifth attribute of leadership identified by Professor Moneim was abundant energy resources. He has two interesting insights. First, he sees leadership as a reciprocal flow of energy from one human person (the leader) to another (the follower). Second, he stresses the wise deployment of energy, which refers to the regulation of one's energy, the economy of energy, the direction of energy, and the impact of the dynamic leader on the energies of the followers. This is in contrast to the American model of leadership that emphasizes dominance, aggressiveness and assertiveness. Leaders, especially those endowed with charisma, can arouse the enthusiasm of the followers, but may ultimately have a draining effect on them. An overactive leader may waste his own energy and the energy resources of the group.

So Professor Moneim reminds leaders that there is a world of difference between kinetic energy and potential energy. Kinetic energy, as we learn in high school physics, is energy in action or energy engaged in motion. Potential energy is energy at rest or not manifested in actual work. In other words, kinetic energy is energy that is being expended, while potential energy is stored energy or available energy. Wise leaders operate with the optimum deployment of energy, their own and their followers.

The interchange between potential and kinetic energy has a parallel in the balance between contemplation and action. We can think of meditation as a dynamic state of rest during which potential energy is conserved, to be released as kinetic energy in the action that flows from contemplation.

The five attributes of leadership – the will to lead, clarity, ability to learn, similar yet different, and energy resources – are in reality not separate but interact and interpenetrate in the act of leadership. When you ask a person how his boss communicates he will refer to the boss's enthusiasm or lethargy. He may also say that the boss, being enthusiastic, overloads him with information, leaving him without clarity about the central issue.

### Humility

I like to supplement Professor Moneim's five attributes of leadership with observations from two other authoritative sources.

One of the world's best-selling business books is "From Good to Great" by the American Jim Collins. Collins spent five years analyzing nearly 1500 major companies. He found that good-to-great companies usually have CEOs who had a blend of "extreme personal humility and intense professional will." This flies against the common perception of a great CEO who is pictured as thrusting, overbearing, ruthless and insensitive.

I am particularly struck by the emphasis that Jim Collins places on humility. We shall return to this theme of humility when we reflect on the fruits of meditation in leadership.

### Authenticity

Jack Welch, the former leader of General Electric Company is perhaps the most celebrated leader in American corporate circles. He was asked what core qualities were truly essential to career advancement. He gave a litany of qualities: smart, curious, collaborative, the guts to make tough decisions, self-confidence and humility (a combination he described as maturity), a sixth sense of anticipating market changes. Having listed those qualities, he observed that most of these qualities have to be acquired, developed and refined. He then suggested that the crowning quality of leadership is already inside us, ready to be let out. He called this over-arching quality the authenticity or the humanity of a leader, who we are in our soul.

To be authentic means to be genuine, to be true to ourselves. Authenticity implies a willingness to accept what we are. It means not only trusting our strengths, but also facing our weaknesses, and being patient with our imperfections. We might say it is what true humility is about.

If we are authentic, we inspire confidence in others. We are emphatic friends and good listeners. By paying attention to others, showing genuine concern, we help people cope with conflict and anxiety. We are at peace with ourselves and can therefore help others to feel good about themselves. It is authenticity that makes trust possible: the trust we put in ourselves permits us to have trust in others and to establish meaningful relationships. This trust in ourselves gives us the courage of our convictions in difficult situations, helping us to remain faithful to our values. We are not flags in the wind changing with any pressure that comes along.

### The Fruits of Meditation in Leadership

We have surveyed briefly some pre-requisites or attributes of leadership. These attributes are the will to lead, clarity, ability to learn, similar but different, optimum

use of energy, humility and authenticity. If we examine these qualities closely, we can find a common thread running through all of them. That common thread is the extent to which the leader has transcended his ego.

The root of the word “humility” is the Latin word “humus”, which means soil or earth. In other words, to be down to earth, being realistic, honest and truthful, to avoid the temptation to act as if we are the divine centre of the universe.

It seems to me that the transcending of the ego manifested in true humility is the link between meditation and leadership. This is how John Main describes the essence of meditation:

**“It is learning to stand back and to allow God to come into the forefront of your life. So often in our experience, we find that we are the centre of the world. So many of us see reality revolving around us. We think quite naturally of situations and of people primarily in terms of ‘how is this going to affect me?’ Now that’s all right as far as it goes. But if we really imagine that we are at the centre of the world, then we are never going to see any situation, or any person, or ourselves, as we really are. Because of course, we are not at the centre of the world. God is at the centre. Now meditation is trying to take that step away from self-centredness to God-centredness. And the result is that we find our own place in the world. We find where we should be. We find our relationships in the right order – our relationships with one another, our relationship with creation, and our relationship with God. What we discover, and what is very important for each of us to discover, is that we do have an essential place in God’s plan, each of us responding to the unique gift of our own creation.”**

For John Main, the movement from self-centredness to God-centredness happens because the practice of meditation is a central onslaught on the ego. We meditate so that we may be made entirely free of the domination of the ego.

It is because of the tyranny of the ego that we see a business world today where the standards of ethics and integrity have been severely undermined. Deceit and lies have destroyed major corporations such as Enron, Worldcom and Arthur Anderson. Virtue can no longer be taken for granted, and now has to be taught to executives. People are increasingly sickened by the narcissism, greed and other “me first” contrivances of more and more CEOs. Much of the general public now believes that CEOs are in the game for their own personal gratification. The good of their employees, their customers, their communities, and even their shareholders are merely ancillary issues for them.

The root of the problem lies in character, which determines values and motivation. This is a crisis that cannot be fixed by public relations spin campaigns, or stronger government regulations and accounting rules. Morality cannot be legislated. Those

who we elevate or hire to become CEOs must possess the distinguishing qualities of great leaders: the ability to build trust, inspire dedicated followers, and make service to others their pre-eminent priority. In other words, the core values of CEOs should be examined just as closely as their drive, intellectual depth, financial acumen, or track record. Competence needs to be buttressed by character.

There is a renewed quest in the business world for the ethical mind, a moral compass. We need leaders who by their own example can create an ethical environment where people aspire to do good work, work of high quality that matters to society, which enhances the lives of others, and is conducted in an ethical manner.

How can an ethical mind be cultivated? An ethical orientation obviously begins at home where children see the values that their parents live by for example, whether they strive to make an honest living despite temptations. As they grow older, their teachers and peers have an enormous influence. At the workplace, they are exposed to business cultures, good or bad. Employees may or may not listen to what their leaders say, but they certainly watch carefully what their leaders and colleagues do. As young people go into business today, the temptation to skirt ethics is mounting. We live in a time of intense pressure on individuals and organizations to cut corners, pursue their own interests, and ignore the effect of their behaviour on others. If leaders and peers behave badly and get away with it, employees may feel emboldened to emulate them. On the other hand, leaders who demonstrate ethical behaviour, especially in spite of the temptations of the market, inspire their employees to do likewise. In the long run, the reputation of the organization is thus enhanced. Being ethical really means not fooling yourselves or others. The questions to pose are, "Am I being a responsible worker or leader? If not, what can I do to become one?"

How does meditation help to cultivate the ethical mind? How does meditation help us to develop the spiritual instinct to do what is right? Listen to John Main,

**The mantra is like the needle of a compass. It heads you always in the true direction you must follow, away from self into God. And whichever way your ego may lead you, the compass is always faithful in the direction it points you. The mantra, if you say it with generosity, with faithfulness and with love, will always point you in the direction of God, and it is only in God that our true destiny can be revealed. In saying our mantra, in the daily return to the discipline, we gradually learn to look beyond ourselves. We learn to see with a vision that focusses itself ahead of us, in God. In that focusing of everything on God, everything in our life becomes aligned on God, and everything falls into its proper place. Our order of values is gradually changed. Instead of the value system being based on the ego, on personal success or self-promotion, self-preservation or similar limiting factors, our values system becomes aligned on God."**

John Main spoke of the power of the mantra as loosening within us the roots of the ego that constantly leads us back into self-centredness and desire. This is because in our fidelity to the saying of the mantra, we learn to take the attention off ourselves.

John Main explains, too, why meditation has to be a gentle, gradual process.

**"We cannot vanquish the ego by force. That would itself be egotistical. We cannot use force because force would be a self-directed exercise of the will. The principle to bear in mind is this – we cannot possess ourselves but we can be ourselves. The ego is self-consciousness. To change this introverted image of self, to escape from self-obsession, we have to change the direction of our attention, of our consciousness. In other words, the only way to transcend the ego is to ignore it. No amount of self-analysis, self-pity or self-distraction, will overcome the ego. All of these would be much more likely to compound the egotistical state. Meditation, the recitation of the mantra, is the way of egolessness. It is the path to selfless attention."**

### The Consequences of Saying the Mantra

The basic doctrine of John Main's teaching on meditation is, "Say your mantra, and continue to say your mantra, and be content to say it." Why is this so powerful? Fr Laurence Freeman has commented that, "It is difficult to suggest how the saying of the mantra commits us to the progressive loss of self and to the ongoing experience of conversion in ordinary life. ...Nonetheless, it is absolutely true that simply saying the mantra commits us to living out the consequences of saying the mantra.... We can't meditate everyday and continue to pursue a policy of deception, of self-interest, of revenge. However gradually, we must also begin to commit ourselves in daily life to truthfulness, to love, to God. This is why it is our spiritual life which transforms the world. As our moral integrity begins to develop, our actions will inevitably begin to change. And so the reality of the world we live in, the world of social, political or religious beings, begins to change as well."

The core of John Main's teaching, according to Fr Laurence Freeman is,

**"We must first learn to be, and then we will know what to do. The power to do good, it is said, comes from being good. What we do is only changed deeply and permanently by what we are. This is a way of saying that Christ is simultaneously present in our hearts, in our worship, and in our world."**

Let us conclude with the following words from John Main, which have greatly encouraged me in my struggle to come to wholeness.

**"Each of us must understand the power source that is available to us by being in the presence of Jesus. All of us are sinners. All of us**

**are capable of sin and of the desire for sin. All of us have sinned and do sin. But what is of supreme importance for every one of us is that we come into the presence of Jesus, we are strengthened by him, and our egoism is deflated by the sheer beauty of his being. The journey is a journey away from self, away from egoism, away from selfishness, away from isolation. It is a journey into the infinite love of God. With some of us, the end of egoism requires a big struggle. Sometimes, we are carried more or less kicking and screaming into the kingdom of Heaven”.**

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