

From Dan

Sept. 11, 2024

To Open Minds Community for meeting on Sept. 13th 2024.

To present some ideas to help open up discussion on our topic for today "what does Open Minds mean to me, you or us" This topic means far more to me than a simple definition.

I have gathered a few tidbits of thought, quotes or Koans and I have copied or gisted them here for the group.

This paper presents my simple and at the same time facile answer to the question to hopefully help begin a wide ranging dialogue toward better understanding of others and human effects on ourselves.

1. "Each soul must decide to stay on the safe land of routine predictabilities, custom, and religious law, or to answer the call of its inner voice and launch into the deep".

Celaluddin Mohammad Rumi Balki. Anatolian Mystic (1207-1273 ad). Probable founder of Melewi Sufi Whirling Dervishes .

2. Soul. The three main parts of this tree of knowledge are the faculties of the soul: Memory, Reason, and Imagination. These three faculties are the very basis of human knowledge. History stems from memory, Philosophy is the fruit of reason, and the fine arts are born of imagination.

Francis Bacon (. -) The Advancement of Learning (1605) and Figurative system of Knowledge (1751) by Jean Rond d'ALembert and Denis DiDerot (Both inspired by Bacon).

3. "The superior man is satisfied and composed and does not need to be understood by others, To the self cultivated person the act of understanding others and engaging others is far superior to worrying about them doing the same", This quote goes hand in hand with another of Confucius's powerful quotes: If one remains not annoyed when he is not understood by people around him isn't he a sage?.

Confucius (570-479 BC).

Note. The term superior man can be misleading in our culture 3 millennia after the Spring and Summer period that Confucius lived in. Other words could be used that are less elevating and divisive. Maybe "contented", "healthy", or "mature".

4. "I am not bothered by the fact that I am not understood by others. I am bothered when I do not know others.

Confucius

5. "I realized that I don't have to be perfect. All I have to do is show up and enjoy the messy imperfect and beautiful journey of my life"

Kerry Washington (1977-). Actress, Artist, Dancer, Beautiful woman ...

6. "Letting go gives us freedom and freedom is the only condition for happiness. If in our heart we still cling to any things; anger, anxiety, or possessions, we cannot be free".

Many - unknown

Note: Contentedness may be a better word than Happiness in this case

7. All experiences in life events are formative. All contribute to what we become, year after year, as we go on growing. As my friend the poet Kenneth Koch once said "You are not just the age you are, you are all the ages you have ever been".

Fred McFeely Rogers (1928-2003) of Mister Rogers Neighborhood. The quote is from the book written and published posthumously about him. Book title is: The world according to Mister Rogers.

8. Disjuncture or Standing apart.

Standing apart is to take the view of the outsider without leaving, always oriented to what it is you would have left. It means not fleeing your enemy, which turns out not to be the world - contemptus Mundi - but the channels through which you encounter it day to day. It also means giving yourself the critical break that media cycles and narratives will not. Allowing yourself to believe in another world while living in this one. Unlike the libertarian "blank slate" that appeals to outer space or even the communes that sought to break with historical time, this "other world is not a rejection of the one we live in, rather it is a "perfect image" of this world. When justice has been realized with and for everyone and everything that is already here. To Stand Apart is to look at the world (now) from the point of view of the world as it could be (the future) with all the hope and sorrowful contemplation that this entails

Both apart from and responsible to the present we might allow ourselves to sense the faint outline of an Epicurean good life free from "myths and superstitions" like racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, climate change denial, and other fears with no basis in reality. This is no idle exercise. As the attention economy works to keep us trapped in a frightful present, it only becomes more important not just to recognize past versions of our predicament but to retain the capacity for an imagination somehow untainted by disappointment.

But most important, standing apart represents the moment in which the desperate desire to leave (forever) matures into a commitment to live in permanent refusal, where one already is, and to meet others in the common space of that refusal. This kind of resistance still manifests as participating in the "wrong way": a way that undermines the authority of the hegemonic game and creates possibilities outside of it.

Jenny Odell (1986-) is the author of How to do nothing. Resisting the attention economy.(2019). The 3 paragraphs in item 8 are quotes from her book. (page 61 para 4 and page 62 para 1,2, and 3).

Jenny Odell is a Multidisciplinary Artist, writer, educator and activist.

Pause for now.

Open Minds for me has meant a wonderful and one of the best opportunities to improve my understanding by exploring my own struggles in my life, To learn and practice understanding and at the same time joyful interacting with others. In addition, I experience growth through life long learning (and unlearning).

"Isn't it a pleasure to study and practice what you have learned".

I copied this last quote from ?

Dan

