

The Wisdom of the Cosmos



One of the ways in which the Cosmos looks after itself – and us – is by scattering its gifts

A famous basket-ball coach said to his team as they lined up to begin a match, "And remember: Winning is not the most important thing. Pause. It's the only thing!" I sometimes find myself daydreaming of scenarios in which I am somehow on a public stage, and whatever happens next, I win. I think lots of people are like that. Well, three cheers! It's an indicator of psychological health! The thing is to find in your life that particular area where in fact you can

think such thoughts and know they are true! Parents in our society often insist that their daughters/sons take on a particular branch of study in which they themselves have won laurels, and prosperity: and persuade the youngster that this is worth all their attention. But it may not be. And trouble starts here, because the tension between wanting to please the parents and the inner wish to be something else can cause pain. That's a well-worn path, and you reading this are familiar with its implications. Let's shift things a little. The Cosmos is alive. That's not news. In its being alive, it takes care of itself – and our silly efforts at personal enrichment via earth-destruction have resulted in earth's response via COVID-19. That's not news. What might be news is, one of the ways in which the Cosmos looks after itself – and us – is by scattering its gifts. In the context of this wee essay, I refer to the gifts it gives to you and me. So your dad might be a successful business-man, good for him! but may insist that his daughter/son follow in his footsteps. The daughter/son, however, might be differently gifted – interested in dancing, carpentry, flying, poetry, wrestling, personal beauty, teaching, spirituality, golf.

The world can as a unit be a comfortable place to live in

Haven't I said this before? Yes, but I am adding the important coloration of parental, or social, interpretation. In other words, I am reminding you that society/parents may interfere in this gift being explored and developed, and that the whole cosmos is thus impoverished. This happens all the time. When I was working with street girls, one emerged with a gift for dancing. When we tried to enrol her in dancing school we were warned that if she were not accompanied by some responsible adult all the time she would be destroyed by the males in the set-up. We had to drop it. A senior lad in my class was a gifted sketch-artist. When he went for a job with a major newspaper they treated him as an idiot, and offered him an insulting salary. He did a degree in economics, in which he had no interest. Long-term result – life boredom. I could, you could, lengthen that list, I'm sure. The cosmos is alive, and one of its gifts is to you and me, gifts distributed so that the world can as a unit be a comfortable place to live in. I do recognise that of course society has a right to look after us too – but when that 'looking after us' is unreasonable, is self-centred, is anti-person, then rulership needs to recognise its obligations.

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