The Empathy Trap
– a lack of grounding in Non-Separation

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A close friend sent me a link to a short Instagram post[i] by Vsevolod Gorobets titled “The Empathy Trap” – I assume because I share a flat with my dear friend “X”, whose social participation is severely limited due to being hard of hearing. Due to her situation she has a major topic with depression – which in turn means that I’m exposed to both her physical and energetic expression of that depression.[1]

The post asserts that while you may think you are doing something good, you are in fact physically compromising your own brain and cellular repair mechanisms, and thus will age biologically much faster. This may or may not be true in and of itself – and differ for different people – but it misses the point. As Bhagwan once said “the first step went wrong”. The underlying assumption, and the drive of the author in general, appears to centre around get individuals healthy and full of energy with insights from psychology, medicine and gerontology.

In my understanding, there are various levels of “health”:

- that of the individual physical organism,
- that of the individual energy body,
- that of the human morphic field, in which all humans participate,
- and most importantly, that of perceived and embodied non-separation.

On the physical organismic level – yes, bodies do get old and wear out. At 72 (time of writing) I’m doing much more than I used to have to do to maintain my physical health and mental acuity. I do so not out of fear, but because there’s so much I still want to do, to give – and for that I need to remain healthy. Part of what I do – long walks in nature, meditation – is also good for my energy body and mental attitude. But that’s nothing special, lots of people do such things.

Nowadays there seems to be no lack of offers for personal coaching, health tips (especially on the internet), fitness training and such – all centred on individual wellbeing. I have nothing against that, except the attitude from which it stems – the very idea that health and happiness can be achieved on the individual level, as personal attributes of

1 I’m also exposed to all the madness going on in this turbulent world currently. When your perception is open enough, you can’t avoid it. However, I perceive it all from a standpoint of non-separation, a standpoint which encompasses and embraces all.

beings who perceive themselves as separate from the whole. But circumstances are not the same thing as being anchored in non-separation. Circumstances come and go, but non-separation is always there, it is a basic fact of Existence.

So, to let go of fear and to stop defining ourselves by personal circumstances, we must transcend the individual, transcend even the human morphic field, and arrive at a deep conviction – based on personal experience – of ultimate non-separation. Become anchored in the Absolute, the Ultimate, in Existence itself. This is the basis of real and abiding empathy and compassion. They are based on experience rather than projection. My attitude to "X" is based on this understanding, on this perception of Existence. I'm not pursuing the myth of personal success and wellbeing; rather, I do what I can for humanity, and for Existence. This is the active embodiment of the Buddhist Metta Meditation[ii]:

> May all beings be safe
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> May they be healthy
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> May they be happy
>
> May they be at ease
>
> May they be filled with loving-kindness
>
> May all beings be peaceful

i The Empathy Trap: https://www.instagram.com/p/DfKT4nGFTz9/?img_index=5&psln=MWZtaWZlYzl6MmZ6NQ%3D%3D

ii Metta Meditation: https://www.lionsroar.com/metta-meditation-guide/