

The One Mystical Rose

“If we are to give birth fully to a new, larger, deeper consciousness – a consciousness of communion with others and with all that is, we must *breathe*” writes Madeline in her beautiful reflection last month inviting us to breathe ~~~ to breath deep ~~~ to breathe wide ~~~ to breathe into the breath the essence of life. How consoling and inspiring it was as we read Madeline’s words in lock down, waiting with trepidation as the virus impacted around the world and touched us all.



Just one month later so much has changed. We are social distancing, businesses are opening and restrictions are relaxing. Yet, I am feeling an unease at the growing urgency to return to the ‘old normal’ despite the fact that, as Antoinette Klatzky observes: “Everything we knew that wasn’t sustainable is collapsing now”.¹ Otto Scharmer explains the divide at the centre of the collapse: “Individually, almost everyone wants something different. Yet collectively, we keep producing the same results, manifesting in the deepening of three major divides of our time: the ecological divide (the disconnect between self and nature), the social divide (the disconnect between self and other) and the spiritual divide (the disconnect between self and self).”² Thirty years ago, Bede Griffiths writes of the same divisions:

*It’s urgent. We must get beyond these terrible divisions which are destroying humanity. We are destroying the universe around us, the whole planet . . . We can never get over it as long as we remain on the physical or psychological level.*³

In this June reflection, I invite us to ‘get beyond’ or perhaps ‘go beneath’ these divisions by delving into the relationship between *individual consciousness*⁴, which seeks to unify through external energies (and so replicates the collectivity on the same level of unity⁵); and

¹ Otto Scharmer, *A New Superpower in the Making: Awareness- Based Collective Action*, <https://medium.com/presencing-institute-blog/a-new-superpower-in-the-making-awareness-based-collective-action-83861bcb9859>, p.4.

² *ibid*

³ Bede Griffiths, “Spiritual Awakening,” a talk for the *Mystics and Scientists Conference*, Winchester, England, 1992. Available from the Bede Griffiths Trust.

⁴ Some might describe this as collective consciousness, that is, the sociological perspective developed by Emile Durkheim where a group of individuals identify with various shared beliefs, values and assumptions. This understanding of collective consciousness can be differentiated from Teilhard de Chardin’s definition of collective consciousness which aligns to Beatrice’s communion consciousness. Note too the collective consciousness is different again to Carl Jung’s collective unconsciousness.

⁵ Beatrice Bruteau, *The Grand Option: Personal Transformation and a New Creation*, University of Notre Dame, Indiana, 2001, 51.

communion consciousness which sustains and draws unity forward interiorly (by bonding the central energies of the preceding levels⁶). As organisations seek to gather people together to galvanise change, my hope in opening up this conversation is to help us to continue to locate our energies in *communion consciousness* as it becomes more accessible to us, as Madeline encouraged last month.

In her book *RADICAL OPTIMISM*, Beatrice Bruteau introduces her image of the ‘mystical rose’ to help us to see different layers of consciousness operating at this evolutionary moment.⁷ She begins by inviting us to imagine a rose in bloom, with each petal representing the total consciousness of one person, and the tip, middle and core of each petal representing different levels of shared consciousness.

At the tip of the petal there is no overlapping and so no sharing of any part of itself with another petal. Beatrice explains: “The full petal represents total consciousness, but our reflexive consciousness - our consciousness of being conscious, and consequently what we think to be our ‘self’” – takes in only the tip and thinks it is the full extend of my selfhood”.⁸ This *individual* consciousness is a place where we feel quite separate and disconnected, even alienated and alone, with such separation arising from the way we identify with particular labels we use to describe ourselves to others, for example, “I am a grandmother,” “I am a musician”, “I am forthright” etc.⁹ The difficulty here, Beatrice says, is we feel we must continue to pile up descriptions to help us feel somehow different, worthy or special in the world and which, sadly, further isolates us from each other.¹⁰ Turned in upon itself the ‘tip of the petal’ is inherently dualistic in its nature.



Beatrice then invites us to notice the middle section of the rose petal, where it begins to have some degree of coincidence with other petals. Here we share common values, beliefs, insights and ideas with other petals, and as we go a little deeper, we encounter more profound levels of consciousness, for example telepathy, psychic consciousness, archetypes etc. This is perhaps something of the psychological consciousness to which Father Bede is referring. Here in the middle, the petal is in relationship with other petals. However, it identifies with these commonalities from its separateness and so, efforts to attain unity with other petals fail. This is because, as Beatrice describes, “the energy of identity and the energy of attempted communion are working against each other”, inevitably producing conflict.¹¹ As it is not possible to achieve a true and viable unity with outside labels and descriptions, we continue to

⁶ *ibid*, and see Beatrice Bruteau, *Evolution Toward Divinity*, Theosophical Publishing House, London, 1974, 33.

⁷ Beatrice Bruteau, *Radical Optimism: Practical Spirituality in an Uncertain World*, Sentient Publications, New York, 1993, 117.

⁸ *ibid*

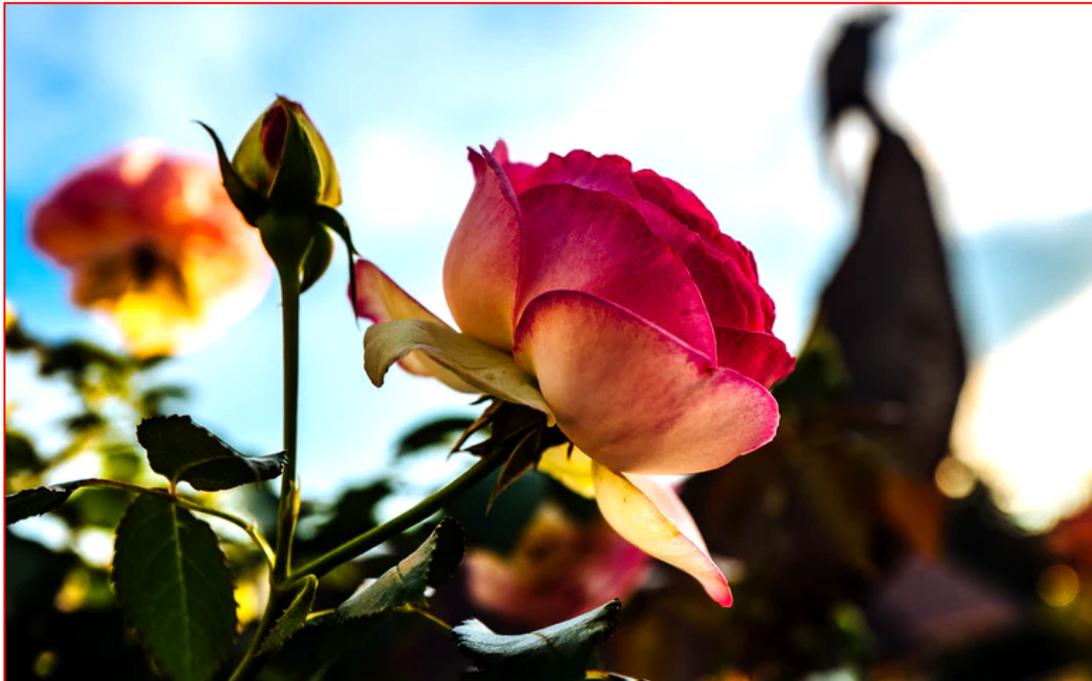
⁹ *ibid*

¹⁰ Bruteau, *The Grand Option*, 50.

¹¹ *ibid*, 161.

produce external and artificial unions and so continue replicating the same consciousness.¹² We hear this effect echoed in Otto Scharmer's observation of how we continue to keep producing the same divisions, despite our desire for unity and change. This is so important. While we may be gathered in community and united by a single cause, we may not necessarily be gathered in *communion consciousness*.

Beatrice then invites us to gaze at the base of the rose. Here the petal is aware of the overlap at the core of its being with all the other consciousnesses at the core of their being.¹³



At last, the petal is aware of its full consciousness. Unimpeded by preconceptions and attachments to various qualities, it is free-flowing energy. Uninhabited by extraneous labels, it is unself-conscious. Here the little petal experiences the fullness of her being interiorly, *noetically coinciding* with the other petals in I-I relation.¹⁴ No longer can it look at the other petals and say: "I am not you". The petal's whole sense of selfhood has been reordered, says Beatrice. It discovers that it "freely and consciously indwells every other person, and that every other person dwells in us".¹⁵ And, most beautifully, here at the base of the rose, the little petal discovers she *is* the ground of existence. Here she is *more* conscious and so has more ability to participate in the unfolding activity of Omega Love.

Kerrie Hide takes this intimate connection between awakening in the ground of our heart and our participation in this next phase of evolution even further: "Communion consciousness awakens as we enter the ground of our heart, recover our original memory of being one in Christ, and stabilise in the organic identity of our participation in the ecstasy of the Trinity".¹⁶ Interestingly, the Fibonacci number sequence¹⁷ also reveals itself in the spiral of a rose bloom,

¹² id.

¹³ Bruteau, *Radical Optimism*, 117.

¹⁴ Bruteau, *The Grand Option*, 51.

¹⁵ Bruteau, *The Grand Option*, 167.

¹⁶ Kerrie Hide, The Ecstasy of Agape, in *Personal Transformation and a New Creation: The Spiritual Revolution of Beatrice Bruteau*, Iliia Delio (ed), 89-108, Orbis Books, New York, 2017, 103.

¹⁷ Wikipedia, *Fibonacci Numbers*, In mathematics, the **Fibonacci numbers**...form a sequence, called the **Fibonacci sequence**, such that each number is the sum of the two preceding ones, starting from 0 and 1... Fibonacci numbers appear unexpectedly often in mathematics... They also appear in biological settings, such as branching in trees, the arrangement of leaves on a stem, the fruit sprouts of a pineapple, the flowering of an artichoke, an uncurling fern,

suggesting that far from being the end of our journey, communion consciousness is the origination point of an endlessly unfolding awakening from the ground of our heart.¹⁸ It is this unfolding and deepening into communion consciousness that will be the essence of the *Contemplatio* meditations, written by Kerrie, which we will share for four weeks, from Pentecost until the feast of the Trinity at the 4pm Friday Zoom meditations¹⁹.

At a time when we are seeking to unify so many divisions and separations, Beatrice's mystical rose helps us discern where our central energies are being invested so that we in CEN may awaken and stabilise communion consciousness from the ground of our own heart. Beatrice wants us to know that this activity of uniting is completely internal. In other words we cannot unite from the collective. We must unite from within. And when we do, like the beautiful aromatic rose petal responding from the core – the “sacred heart” of its being, to the question, “Who do you say I am?”, we sing with Beatrice:



You are the new and ever renewing act of creation. You are all of us, as we are united in You. You are all of us as we live in one another. You are all of us in the whole cosmos as we join in Your exuberant act of creation. You are the Living One who improvises at the frontier of the future; and it has not yet appeared what You shall be.²⁰

Blessings, Robyn Fitzgerald

the arrangement of a pine cone's bracts and the family tree of honeybees. Field daisies most often have petals in counts of Fibonacci numbers. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fibonacci_number#cite_note-36

¹⁸ *ibid*, 103.

¹⁹ To join the 4pm meditations go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84131832538>

²⁰ Bruteau, *The Grand Option*, 173.