

## A Bird's Eye View

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I am composing this monthly newsletter from my hotel room in Ahmedabad, India; a few blocks from Mahatma Gandhi's Ashram. He launched the famed Dandi march to protest the salt levy imposed by the British on poor Indians. This march shook the foundations of the colonial rule and eventually toppled the mighty British occupation of India by a non-violent, peaceful civil protestor which showed down a well-armed adversary.

However, on the subject closer to my goal, I decided to reflect on how I was feeling about my life in USA from a faraway lens. From across the globe, life takes on a bird's eye view of my life. When I am in Milwaukee, it is a ground up view of life, with its daily challenges, concerns, issues, priorities, opportunities and Samsara/Maya tangles. There is snow to shovel, my patients to worry about, my children and grandchildren, taxes to file, preauthorizations for continuing therapy of patients, insurance hassles etc.

Now, it is a bird's eye view from a 30,000 feet altitude. As I prepare to teach, volunteer, lead a study group etc. in India, it is indeed very interesting to take a high altitude perspective on life in my daily

abode. The dance in my soul between these two cultures in life is fascinating.

But more esoteric issues aside, it is a rare window into my life and priorities, both from a horizontal perspective in my routine life in USA and a vertical, distant, bird's eye vertical view of my life from India. This is the cross – the juxtaposition of the horizontal and vertical perspective on one's life. This helps each one of us to move from the mundane to the profound and the sacred view of our life.

This helps us reset our priorities from a higher altitude. In our daily life, we have mouse perspective, but from an altitude, we have an eagle's perspective on our mousey existence. It helps us look at the imbalances in our life sectors of love, work, play, creativity and spirituality. It puts our hang ups and karmic tangles in sharp contrast to our long term goals and spiritual purpose or Dharma. It helps us to acknowledge our gifts and blessings with gratitude and relativize our problems.

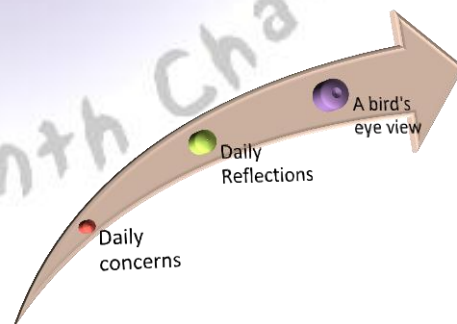
Perhaps that is the wonder of psychotherapy and inner work, that it permits such a balanced view from bird's eye without having to travel across the globe. In the sanctuary of the therapy hour, one can rise above the daily mundane concerns and take an eagle's eye view of our domain. What feels like a nagging wife may now seem like a well healed advisor, a rebellious teenager may be seen as a source of spontaneity and enterprise, a snow storm an important opportunity to get

some well needed outdoor activity for a sedentary office worker, a troublesome workmate may be perceived as a welcome intellectual challenge!

Distance fosters a reflective attitude and a mentalization exercise to measure twice and cut once as my good friend Peter says. In the twelve steps program, this is an important parameter to take a daily inventory of our problems and gratitudes and then turn them over to the God Box before we go to sleep and surrender our life to the Divine.

Here are some things we can explore using an eagle eye perspective among others.

1. What is the most pressing problem in my life and how does it look from a mouse eye perspective versus the eagle eye view?
2. From afar, how (un) balanced is my life? How well-proportioned are the four sectors of love, work, play and creativity in my daily life?
3. From the eagle eye view, what is my most troublesome hang-up or complex and how does it facilitate or impede my life?
4. How well is my daily life aligned with my long term spiritual purpose or Dharma?
5. How much stage time do my significant a-vocational pursuits claim in my life?
6. Do we make time in our daily life to move from the ground up view to a bird eye view of our life?
7. Do we protect sacred space for prayer, reflection, journaling and daily inventory of our life?
8. Are we able to move from a mundane to a sacred view of our life and its' impact on ourselves, our family, community and the world at large?
9. Do we have the courage to integrate the insights we get from the bird eye view into our daily life? Do we walk the Walk?
10. Having done our best; both from the ground view and the bird's eye view of our life and activities, are we able to surrender the outcome to the collective, to the wisdom of the Universe and surrender to the Divine? To let be, let go and Let God of our understanding?



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Dr Bedi is a Diplomat Jungian psychoanalyst and a board certified psychiatrist. He is a member of the Royal College of psychiatrists of Great Britain, a diplomat in Psychological Medicine at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of England, a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. He is a Clinical Professor in Psychiatry at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee and the President of the Carl G. Jung Institute of Chicago. He is Honorary Psychiatrist at the Aurora Psychiatric Hospital and the Aurora Health Care Network. He has been a psychiatric consultant to several agencies in Metro Milwaukee. Presently he is the consultant for the Sexual Assault treatment center at the Aurora Sinai Samaritan Hospital, Dewey Center at the Aurora Psychiatric Hospital for treatment of Addictions and the Pastoral Counseling Service of Greater Milwaukee.

Trained in India, Great Britain and the US, he is interested in the emerging frontiers of Spirituality and Healing and the synapses of the Mind, Body, Soul and Spirit. He is author of the book, Path to the Soul, Weiser Books, 2000, Awaken the Slumbering Goddess: The Latent Code of the Hindu Goddess Archetypes, Booksurge Publishers, 2007 and the coauthor of Retire Your Family Karma, Nicholas-Hays, Inc. 2003, These and his other upcoming

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Ashok Bedi has been in practice in Milwaukee for over thirty years and specializes in Adult Psychotherapy and Jungian Psychoanalysis. He regularly presents lectures and seminars in India, Great Britain, Ireland and USA on the topic of the Spiritual and analytic dimensions of treatment, healing and personal growth. Over the last several years, he has been the International Association of Analytical Psychologists liaison person for developing Jungian training programs in India and travels annually to India to teach, train the consult with the Jungian Developing groups at several centers in India including Ahmedabad & Bangalore. He leads the annual "In the Footsteps of Carl Jung in India" study group to several centers in India under the auspices of the New York Jung Foundation.