HAKOMI AND THE CREATION CENTERED SPIRITUALITY OF MATTHEW FOX

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WITH THIS ARTICLE GREG JOHANSON (SEE BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE PRECEDING "THE FAITH OF A PSYCHOTHERAPIST") BEGINS A FOUR PART SERIES RELATING HAKOMI THERAPY TO THE CREATION CENTERED SPIRITUALITY OF MATTHEW FOX; A SYSTEMATIC EXPRESSION OF THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN HERITAGE THAT SEEMS TO HAVE IMPORTANT PARALLELS AND POINTS OF CONTACT WITH HAKOMI THERAPY.

INTRODUCTION:

"How will there be a new creation without new creators?" asks Matthew Fox in his book Original Blessing. What kind of new creation is Fox hinting at? One in which "joy beyond measure is part of everyone's potential experience. It is part of recovering an erotic God who plays, takes pleasure, births, celebrates, and feels passion. Eros and hope are part of the blessings of existence."(p. 19) From the influence of feminist movements, Fox adds, we will know that "wisdom and eros count more than knowledge or control"(p.18) in the new creation, the new age, the Queendom/kingdom of God.

Hakomi Therapy is an approach to psychotherapeutic healing that can be articulated in great depth in terms of modern day general systems theory. It is also an approach based on principles highly compatible with major religious tenants of a number of world religions. The spirituality implicit in Hakomi (an ancient Hopi Indian word) could be drawn out in relation to any number of spiritual perspectives. The spiritualities that Hakomi therapists bring to their work with others - each therapist believing their way to be consistent with Hakomi principles - are many.

To me, the creation centered spirituality of Matthew Fox, put in systematic form in his book Original Blessing, is a comprehensive and satisfying way of understanding the underlying spirituality of Hakomi Therapy in relation to the Judeo-Christian heritage. This paper attempts to outline the connections between the two systems. It seems like an important endeavor to undertake. The self understanding of the therapist is very important both to the process of the therapy and the therapist's sense of importance and meaning in his or her work. The clearer helpers are on how their therapy connects with the total spiritual realm, the more vitality, good will, and wisdom they seem to bring to therapist-client encounters.

Matthew Fox is a Catholic Dominican scholar who currently directs the Institute in Culture and Creation Spirituality in Oakland, California. His book Original Blessing puts in systematic form the results of his previous research reflected in such books as On Becoming a Musician, Mystical Beer (a study of modern day justice centered spirituality), Wheel We, we all the Way Home (a study of passion), and A Spirituality Named Compassion: The Healing of the Global Village, Humpty Dumpty, and Us (a study that takes the spiritual perspective of compassion through politics, economics, psychology, art, sexuality, and more). His scholarship is ecumenical and far ranging, including sources in children's stories, feminist movements, world religions, and all the areas implicit in the above titles.

In Original Blessing Fox divides the spiritual way or life into four basic paths: Path I Befriending Creation: THE VIA
PATH II BEFRIENDING DARKNESS, letting go and letting be: THE VIA NEGATIVA. 
PATH III BEFRIENDING CREATIVITY, BEFRIENDING OUR DIVINITY: THE VIA CREATIVA. And PATH IV BEFRIENDING NEW CREATION, COMPASSION, CELEBRATION, EROTIC JUSTICE: THE VIA TRANSFORMATIVA. Each path contains a number of central themes, the four paths combining for a total of twenty-six themes.

In his introduction to Original Blessing Fox quotes Carl Jung talking about his overall experience of people, problems, and therapy:

All the greatest and most important problems of life are fundamentally insoluble...They can never be solved, but only outgrown. This "outgrowing" proved on further investigation to require a new level of consciousness. Some higher or wider interest appeared on the patient's horizon, and through this broadening of his or her outlook the insoluble problem lost its urgency. It was not solved logically in its own terms but faded when confronted with a new and stronger life urge. (p.25)

Fox then comments, "The 'patient' today is not an individual seeking a psychologist's support; the patient is nothing less than Western Civilization and indeed humankind itself. We need a new and stronger life urge. We need a religious vision for wisdom." (p.25)

Fox's advice to those in the theological world who would supposedly be a part of fostering this religious vision for wisdom is that, "All theology ought to be endeavoring to articulate the work of the Spirit in people's existence and ought to resist using a tired ideology as a procrustean bed to tell people what they ought to experience." (p.22)

This last statement is relevant to Hakomi Therapists in a number of ways. 1) All psychotherapists in general are indeed part of the theological enterprise. Every contact with a client, every intervention has an implicit religious view of wisdom embedded in it. The style, suggestions and presence of the therapist orient the client toward a specific ultimate understanding of healing, health, and reality, whether the suggestion is towards a reductionistic notion of biochemistry or an inclusive concept of Spirit. It is not a question of whether a psychotherapist is an agent of faith. It is a question of what faith the psychotherapist is promoting, and how conscious he or she is of doing it. For the sake of the client as well as the therapist, it is important that the therapist be optimally aware of his or her value system and in what ways it is communicated.

2) The unity principle in Hakomi is often expressed in terms of Bateson's axioms that a living organic system is a whole that is made up of parts, parts that have a natural impetus to form into wholes. Prigogine won the Nobel Prize for demonstrating this concept of "negentropy" as opposed to "entropy" is true in relation to the biological realm. Fox is suggesting that when we as therapists attend to this force for wholeness and unity within a troubled person, when we explore barriers to efficient, pleasurable functioning and help a person discover what nourishment is needed and possible when the parts are communicating within the whole - that we can understand our task in religious terms as "endeavoring to articulate the work of the Spirit in people's existence."

3) Certainly Hakomi Therapists can affirm a great trust in the self-organizing, self-correcting properties of a living organic system. The wisdom is within. It only needs to be contacted, not manufactured from scratch. The leadings of the Spirit are never discovered in telling people what they ought to experience, but in helping them mindfully contact what they are experiencing.

PATH I BEFRIENDING CREATION: THE VIA POSITIVA

A Radical Affirmation:

Fox's approach to spirituality is characterized by a radical affirmation of the goodness of all creation. The "Via Positiva, is a way or path of affirmation, thanksgiving, ecstasy." (p. 33)

"And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." =Genesis 1:31

"Just to be is a blessing. Just to live is holy." =Abraham Heschel

"The extravagant gesture is the very
stuff of creation...The whole show has been on fire from the word go!"=Annie Dillard

."Beauty is all about us, but how many are blind to it!"=Pablo Casals

."God never began to love us. We have been known and loved from without beginning."=Julian of Norwich

What all these quotes point to is creation, cosmos, and life as blessing. A creation centered spirituality entails a theology of blessing. Therefore journeys on the via positive are "journeys of life, not death; of awareness, not numbness; of Eros, not control. And therefore they are journeys of salvation, i.e., healing power."(p. 34)

Sin according to this view is understood from Meister Eckhart to Mary Daly to be the sin of dualism, separation, subject/object relationships.

"Gandhi held to the Buddhists and Jain view that all sins are modifications of himsa, that the basic sin, the only sin in the ultimate analysis, is the sin of separateness, or attavada. According to a Jain maxim, he who conquers this sin conquers all others."=Raghevan Iyer '78

Dabhar - Panentheism:

There is a reason for Fox that cosmos is blessing. It is because it was created by, is sustained by, contains, incarnates, and manifests "Dabhar"; the Hebrew word for the divine creative energy often translated by the English word "Word". "If we are to regain our own lives, our spiritual roots that nourish us into growth, we must return to the pre-word times of original creation. To the time before the printed word, the radio word, the word processor, the printing press; to a time when there was so much silence about that words still meant something significant...(to) the word that is the divine creative energy. In the biblical tradition this time-before-time and time-before-words is associated with wisdom. It involves play."(p. 37)

.Yahweh created me when his purpose first unfolded,
I was by his side, a master craftsman,

delighting him day after day
ever at play in his presence,
at play everywhere in his world,
delight to be with the sons of men.(Proverbs 8)

"Truly Dabhar is active, imaginative, and playful...as much right brain (affection, play, and love) as it is left brain (verbal, truth-oriented, cognitive)...A creation centered spiritual person is sensitive and aware, alive and awake to the ever-flowing, ever-green, unfolding of the divine Dabhar. For such a person, creation itself constitutes the primary sacrament."(pp. 38 & 40)

."In music, in the sea, in a flower, in a leaf, in an act of kindness...I see what people call God in all these things."=Pablo Casals

."It is in God that we live, and move, and have our being."=Paul (Acts 17:38)

."The day of my spiritual awakening was the day I saw – and knew that I saw – all things in God and God in all things."=Mehdiid of Magdeburg

."We are in God and God, whom we do not see, is in us."=Julian of Norwich

."C.J. Jung has written that there are two ways to lose your soul. One of these is to worship a god outside you"=Matthew Fox

There is a technical name for the concept of God Fox and the others in the above quotes are promulgating: Panentheism, which is not the same as pantheism. "Panentheism, which is a declared heresy because it robs God of transcendence, states that 'everything is God and God is everything'. Panentheism, on the other hand, is altogether orthodox and ever fit for orthopraxis as well, for it slips in the little Greek word 'en' and thus means, 'God is in everything and everything is in God.' Panentheism is a way of seeing the world sacramentally."(p. 90)

Fox notes that a panentheistic spirituality often expresses itself in maternal images of God. "Julian of Norwich, that champion of the motherhood of God, defines motherhood in one place as our 'being enclosed.' For her, the maternal side of God
is enveloping, embracing, welcoming, inclusive, cosmic, and expansive." (p. 91)

"God hugs you. You are encircled by the arms of the mystery of God." - Hildegarde of Bingen

The Wisdom Within:
Thinking therapeutically now, since everyone exists within the creative energy and wisdom of God, we have to go no further than the person him or herself to find all the necessary clues for healing.

"Every creature is a word of God and is a book about God." - Meister Eckhart

"Creation not only exists, it also discharges truth...Wisdom requires a surrender, вергиш на the mystical, of a person to the glory of existence." - Gerhard Von Rad

As Hakomi Therapists we carry out this faith in creation by taking whatever the client presents and using it as a springboard to turn the person's awareness inward toward the reality of their immediate, concrete, passionate experience. Here we truly function as faith agents since clients as a rule do not come with a desire, вергиш на the mystical, to surrender to the glory of their existence. They often come in pain. They might have a profound suspicion of their experience since it seems to be hurting them. The desire is often for some kind of escape from the immediacy of their conflicted thoughts and feelings.

So, the therapist takes the plunge, knowing that healing does not come from simply bringing more light, but more likely from reaching into the shadows to bring experience into the light where it can be healed. As Hakomi therapists, we strive never to do it prematurely, never before someone is ready; but surely, steadily, we cast our faith and the person's fate in therapy in the direction of befriending creation. We pay the person's immediate experience exquisite attention as we would a valued friend. We respect the experience, get curious about it, encourage the client to get curious about it, mindful, to just hang out with it and let it tell us more about itself. We certainly don't try to change experience, or solve experience. A friend is not a problem to be solved. There is simply the faith that by befriending a friend or an experience, we will eventually be told by this other, what is needed.

Savoring:
Fox's word for this kind of mindful attentiveness and appreciation for the 'iness' of life is the same one often used by Kurtz in Hakomi Therapy - savoring. "The art of savoring is our prayer along the Via Positiva route: we befriend and pray creation by entering into it all in search of tasting its 'honey-sweetness' to use Meister Eckhart's words...Today the true contemplative will teach us what it means to con-temple once again, i.e., to become so thoroughly one with what we love and enjoy that we make a holy tabernacle of the event. The true contemplative will teach us the art of savoring." (p. 52)

In Hakomi, there is a two part savoring going on. 1) The therapist is making the client and the client's immediate experience his or her meditation. The client is being mindfully, non-intrusively, curiously, savored, respected, experienced, by the therapist. 2) Hopefully, the modeling of the therapist and the structure of the therapy encourage the client to be doing the same thing in relation to his or her own experience.

Making Connections:
In congruence with the wisdom of contemporary general systems theory, Fox sees the object of spiritual direction to be removing barriers and making connections so that life can do the healing. "A blessing, spirituality is a relating spirituality." (p. 44)

Encouraging communion is a good way to think of spiritual direction or spiritually centered mind-body therapy. When communion is present, when the mind is not divided against itself, when the body and mind are in free communication, when the unified self is connected to the rest of life outside itself, there is a good possibility of health, (leaving out of consideration external toxins and environmental oppressors.)

Fox quotes the philosopher Gabriel Marcel in this respect: "The true function of
the sage is surely the function of linking
together, of bringing harmony. I am not
thinking only or even chiefly of the Greeks,
but of classical China, of the China of Lao
Tze, and what here strikes me in a really
marvelous light is that the sage is truly
linked with the universe. The texts are
unmistakable and revealing: the order to be
established in life - whether of the
individual or of the city or of the empire -
is in no way separable from the cosmic order.
The important thing - and I think it is
hardly possible to insist on it too much - is
that in this outlook the true aim of
knowledge and of life is to be integrated in
the universal order, and not at all to
transform the world by bringing it into
subjection to the human will, to man's needs
or desires. (p. 73)

Here is a strong expression of faith
that when therapists help individuals become
authentically organic, genuinely in tune with
the self's self-organizing, self-regulating
ways, that they are also helping the person
become more aware of their connection with
the organization and Spirit of the universe.
It is also a strong expression of non-
violence. Therapy must cultivate the
listening, receptive, mindful side of a
person to insure that organic signals are
heeded, and that the ego does not impose
forceful, illusory goals that do not lead to
realistic satisfaction. A good sign to look
for in therapy is that of spontaneous
reorganization around a more realistic,
efficient, nourishing way of functioning.
This as opposed to some decision involving
effortful, narrow, prideful strategies.

Pre-Verbal Experience:

It is not easy to keep the ego from
intruding in an unwise way. But it is
crucial that the ego not impose its
preconceptions and predispositions on
experience prematurely. The Hebrew Bible
scholar Roland Murphy is quoted by Fox to the
effect that, "the two most important factors
in learning wisdom according to the
scriptures are 'an openness to experience and
nature and a basic trust.'" (p. 82)

In Hakomi it is stressed that we turn
our awareness inward, not for explanations,
not for theories, not for justifications. We
turn inward toward the basic datum of
experience. In mindfulness we refrain from
imposing familiar judgments or habitual
patterns of response on the experiences of
sensations, feelings, thoughts, and memories
that are witnessed. We allow the mysterious
pre-verbal level of reality to retain its
uniformity and unclarity in the faith that
fresh meanings may well evolve from it, if
savored and befriended enough without
authoritarian meanings dictated from without.

Fox comments that "to make contact with
wisdom is to go beyond human words, which
have, after all, existed for only about four
million years - and have appeared on paper
for only a few thousand years and in print
for only five hundred...What happens when we
let go of a chauvinistic control of words,
which means exclusively the human word, and
return to Dabhar as the creative energy of
God? According to Von Rad, truth happens;
and affection happens; and God happens." (p.
37) Again, there is the affirmation of the
goodness of creation and the importance of
our being connected with it, our not doing
violence by dictating experience as opposed
to simply contacting and learning from it.

This radical trust of life extends also
to its shadow side. Meister Eckhart:"We must
learn to penetrate things and find God
there." "Prayer, the entering into reality,
is always the entering into God, for that is
where God is. And suffering is as much a
revelation of God's presence as joy is. As
Eckhart puts it, 'everything praises God.
Darkness, privations, defects, evil too
praise God and bless God.'" (p. 90) Francis
of Assisi could well add, death can be
trusted. "And thou, most kind and gentle
death, Waiting to hush our latest breath, O
praise him! Alleluia! Thou leadest home the
child of God, And Christ our Lord the way
hath trod. O praise him! Alleluia!" (Hymn
All Creatures of Our God and King.)

There is a particular lesson for Hakomi
Therapists in these last affirmations.
Transformation happens for people when they
are able to contact painful lifelong core
organizing beliefs, and to then reorganize
around more realistic, nourishing beliefs.
People are not regressed to a painful place
simply for the sake of pain. The pain points
the way to what barriers need compassionate
attention in order to let in more pleasurable
functioning. However, beginning therapists
can be tempted to offer nourishing
possibilities too quickly. The ability of
pain to lead to the deepest level of memory where decisions about core beliefs were made can be short circuited. Once painful memories are arrived at, the temptation to bring relief can override the necessity of savoring the experience to mine all its helpful wisdom, and cleansing properties.

The Humility of the Body:

One general guideline for staying out of troublesome ego fed intellectual diversions in Hakomi Therapy is to stay close to the immediacy of bodily experience. The client disciplines him or herself to keep present experience the focus of awareness while commenting on the experience without losing it. To comment on history that is even only seconds old brings an entirely different dynamic and energy to the therapeutic process. Likewise the therapist continually tracks the client's body for signs of change in emotion, energy, breathing, etc., small signs that might flash by in a quarter of a second, but might be important if not crucial to contact. Signs that give clues to the organization of experience and how to possible get in touch with that organization which could well override the importance of acknowledging the specific content of a person's report.

Fox quotes a number of sources on the importance of earthly groundedness:

"Holy persons draw to themselves all that is earthly"=Hildegarde of Bingen

"Our sensuality is grounded in Nature, in Compassion and in Grace. In our sensuality, God is."=Julian of Norwich

"Meister Eckhardt points out that the word "humility" comes from the word humus or earth. In the creation tradition then to be humble means to be in touch with the earth, in touch with one's own earthiness, and to celebrate the blessing that our earthiness, our sensuality, our passions are.

A decadent humility, one that is out of touch with earthiness, represses the child in one and around one. To repress the child is to repress the Divine."(p. 59)

"True humility - especially in today's violent and superficially sexual atmosphere - would return to an erotic and truly sensual way of living and of savoring the gifts of our earthly lives."(p.62) "Pleasure truly pleases and does not merely titillate."(p. 52)

Orienting Around Nourishment & Pleasure:

There can be no understating the importance of orienting around organically grounded, efficient, pleasurable functioning. When people do not live from what is self-authenticatingly meaningful and nourishing, they are being run by their fear and illusions, and end up participating in much sadistically or masochistically tinged destruction and unhappiness, both for themselves and the world around them. "On his deathbed the great psychologist Eric Fromm turned to his friend Robert Fox and asked, "Why is it, Bob, that the human race prefers necrophilia to biophilia?"(p. 33) Hakomi theory along with such theorists as Alexander Lowen would respond that once people have organized around a core belief of for instance, having to settle for crumbs, the most difficult thing they must then face is learning in fear and trembling how to take in realistic pleasure and feeding. That is because to take in more than crumbs would shake the foundations of the present world view, a world view clung to for the secure, even if unsatisfying stability it does provide. Certainly letting go is a prime lesson of all the world's major religions, that is pre-requisite to receiving and blessing.

And Fox has some other things to say. "Religion has failed people in the West as often as it has been silent about pleasure or about cosmic creation, about the ongoing power of the flowering energy of the Creator, about original blessing."(p.33) "Creation is the basis of trust, which is the biblical meaning of faith."(p.50)

"If creation is a blessing, a constantly original one, then our proper response would be to enjoy it. Pleasure is one of the deepest spiritual experiences of our lives. Ecstasy is the experience of God as I tried to make clear in my Whee, We! we book."(p. 52)

"Our calling requires us to return pleasure for pleasure."(p. 53) "Blessing is itself a kind of deliverance...Blessing delivers because it builds trust and pride and hope."(p. 54) Andrew Weil, M.D. adds that this kind of "mystical experience is the
mirror image of negative paranoia. It sees 'the universe is a conspiracy organized for my benefit.'" (p.67)

Psychological depth therapies in our time have too often known more about how to regress people to states of pain than about how to help them reorganize around more pleasurable functioning. A lot of theories fall back on a mysterious ability of the organism to spontaneously reorganize, which is true in a number of cases. Often, however, it is more a matter of chance as opposed to design.

The success Ron Kurtz has had in developing notions of barriers to specific functions of increasing sensitivity in people, as well as specific ways of working through those barriers, must be applauded as a significant contribution to contemporary psychotherapy. Likewise, his style of freedom, openness, and enjoyment of people which so powerfully models for them the therapeutic outcomes hoped for.

Inner vs. Inward Journeys:

It is important to underline that it is creation that blesses and is the basis of truth, not ego; that the pleasure that truly pleases and does not merely titillate is grounded in reality, not illusion.

Fox notes, "Our spiritual task is to get out of its (Debar's) way enough that we might be filled with it and go about our task of healing, celebrating, and co-creating. For Debar wishes to be incarnate in us." (p.39)

The task of getting out of the way, emptying, letting go is tricky. The ego is indeed the subtlest of all God's creatures. An inner journey to check in and see who's home, see what is realistically needed, can easily be perverted into an inward journey of flight, fantasy, and never ending wanderings. We can easily go from letting go of characterological rigidities to reinforcing character. Fox puts it this way:

I believe it is important, in order to understand both the appeal and the tragedy of a too-introspective spirituality, to grasp the critical distinction between an inner journey and an inward one. An inner journey is altogether healthy and necessary - we take inner journeys into ourselves, into our loved ones, into trees, into Mozart's music, into death, into pain and suffering and injustice, ideally all the time. To pray is to enter in, thus to make an inner journey. But a person who takes an inward journey looks only into himself or herself for God or for spiritual refreshment. It is introspection. Therein lies the death of cosmic spirituality, the death of cosmos, and the excessive quest for personal salvation. The world does not need more inward journeys, but there are no limits to the inner journeys we can make." (p.77)

In hakomi, the crucial skill on the part of the therapist is to be able to track whether the person is engaging in the rather austere discipline of focusing awareness on simple, live, present experience, and being able to comment on it while maintaining continuous contact with it. The one seeking help must put him/herself in the position of a learner, of being willing to be taught by the reality of experience, whether that experience confirms past prejudice or not. There are no end of ways for the process to be short circuited, for people to get lost in an avoidant fascination with dreams, to come up with ever new material to support old explanations, justifications, and rationalizations, to use internal thoughts and images as a way of keeping experience at bay, to find comfort in memories or fantasies that let them know their self-created world view is, as a matter of fact, the way of the real world.

So, the therapist must be exquisitely sensitive to whether there is a quality of open ended curiosity, wonder, mystery, not knowing, and exploration, that leads to the possibility of new meanings emerging, new integrations happening. If the ego is cautiously, selectively, sorting through the inner world to seek confirmation for dearly held illusions, there is inevitably a sense of boredom, forcedness, control, about the whole process, even in the presence of much emotion in some cases. Here the therapist must intervene and go back to issues of safety, secondary gain in the therapy, or whatever seems to be directing the exploration away from the pre-verbal, open, creative, energetic source of Debar.

What Form Psychology?:

If "the universe itself, blessed and
graced, is the proper starting point for spirituality" (p.26) then it is clear that any psychology that participates in this perspective will of necessity be a psychology of trust.

"Trust shows the way." - Hildegarde of Bingen

"Go your way. Your trust has made you free." - Jesus of Nazareth

"You can never trust God too much. Why is it that some people do not bear fruit? It is because they have no trust either in God or in themselves." - Meister Eckhart

"What God does first and best and most is to trust his people with their moment in history. He trusts them to do what must be done for the sake of his whole community." - Walter Brueggemann

...Fox summarizes: "Each of the four paths is a journey into trust and a journey of deepening trust. In the Via Positiva we have already experienced the sense of trust in Dabhar, in life as blessing, in our earthiness, and in the cosmos by which we launch our spiritual journey." (p. 82)

He further notes that "a trust psychology is necessarily a growth psychology, one that encourages the ever-expanding possibilities of ourselves and the universe...not a preservation psychology, whether of innocence or money or reputation or status quo or personality or institutions. It is the psychology of Jesus in the parable of the talents - that we are here to expand our gifts and not, 'out of fear,' to bury them."

"Fear is driven out by perfect love." - John 4:18

How far can we grow? "Our expansion has not limit...Meister Eckhart calls us to our ultimate growth, our growth into divinity." (pp. 84-85)

Justice Making:

"As a rule, it was the pleasure-haters who became unjust." - W. H. Auden

"Any right understanding of the proper relation of man to man and man to the universe would make war impossible." - Robert Henri

"Every added protection against the natural world contributes its bit to the steadily building illusion of independence from nature, so that in time that greatest of illusions is erected: the omnipotence of man." - Frederick Turner

"One should identify with the universe itself." - Simone Weil

(on what the cosmos meant to our medieval ancestors) "The whole penetrates each of its parts; it is one universe; God conceived it as a unique, living being, and its intelligible Model is itself a whole...The universitas is a cosmos; its contemplation is a source of delight. The universe itself is sacramental "filled with God." - M. D. Chenu

"The most important function of art and science is to awaken the cosmic religious feeling and keep it alive." - Albert Einstein

There is a definite implication and dimension to any discipline such as hakomi that affirms and participates in the principle of the unity of all things, the ultimate interrelationship of all things. It is an implication not always underlined in hakomi as it is also missed in the literature of other psychological therapies. Fox calls unmistakable attention to it - it being the political dimension of justice making.

"Blessing is politically dangerous," says Fox. "The art of savoring is politically suspect; pleasure is too often a route to sharing the pleasure - which is justice making." (p. 54)

And he notes that "pleasure, not will power or coercion, is how you most deeply transform people...When the human race learns - if it learns soon enough - that it is to our pleasure to outlaw war, then war will be outlawed...As Gestalt psychologist Fritz Perls put it, 'The organism does not move by will, but by preference.' A blessing theology names our deepest preferences and encourages us to name them and celebrate them." (p. 55)
Certainly it was a celebration of the created order and of the gracious covenant of Yahweh with the people of Israel that moved the Hebrew prophets to rage against the corruption and cheapening of the gifts that had been freely given.

Fox notes that in the Hebrew tradition "a cosmic spirituality is a justice spirituality, for it cares with a heartfelt caring for harmony, balance, and justice. The Hebrew people believed that the entire cosmos stood on two pillars: a pillar of justice and a pillar of righteousness, which was justice internalized. 'Justice and right are the pillars of your throne.' (Psalm 89:14) If a crack or rupture appears in either of these two pillars, then the entire cosmos becomes off center, off balance. Injustice then is a cosmic issue. 'All the foundations of the earth are shaken, the psalmist shudders, 'when the weak and the orphaned are deprived of justice.' (Psalm 82:3-5)" (p. 70)

When we celebrate and act out of a sense of unity, the joy of the other becomes a part of our joy, the suffering of the other becomes our suffering. Justice making becomes necessary as a means of keeping the parts of the whole in necessary contact with each other, of removing the barriers or oppressions or separations of some parts from the whole, all for the sake of organically satisfying functioning that effects us all.

((The next installment in the new edition of the Hakomi Forum, "Path 11: Befriending Darkness, letting go and letting be: THE VIA NEGATIVA))

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YOU WILL FIND SOMETHING MORE IN WOODS THAN IN BOOKS.
TREES AND STONES WILL TEACH YOU
THAT WHICH YOU CAN NEVER LEARN FROM MASTERS.

-BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

WHERE THERE IS CHARITY AND WISDOM,
THERE IS NEITHER FEAR NOR IGNORANCE.
WHERE THERE IS PATIENCE AND HUMILITY,
THERE IS NEITHER ANGER NOR VEXATION.
WHERE THERE IS POVERTY AND JOY,
THERE IS NEITHER GREED NOR Avarice.
WHERE THERE IS PEACE AND MEDITATION,
THERE IS NEITHER ANXIETY NOR DOUBT.

-ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI