



Creative Wordshops

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Writing Letter

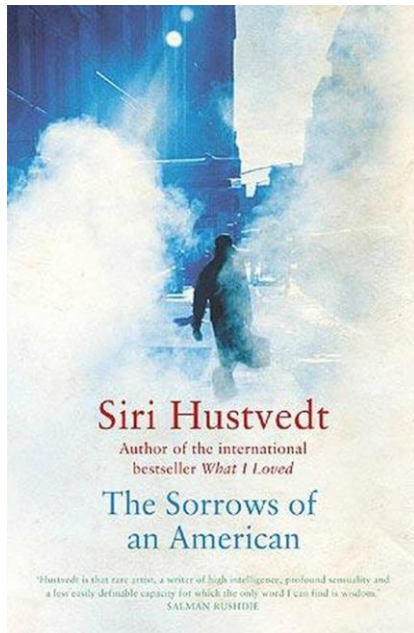
Sept 2021



re-story, re-
create and re-
imagine your
life and work

dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za for this letter, ongoing opportunities + 'what's on.'

Only connect (E M Forster, *Howard's End* preface)



This month I read Siri Hustvedt's *The Sorrows of an American*. In the novel the young girl, Eglantine, struggling to hold her life together, winds a ball of string in the room around objects including the psychiatrist narrator (Erik) who is bound up in the web of her connections. Erik says:

"I've always thought of wholeness and integration as necessary myths. We're fragmented beings who cement ourselves together, but there are always cracks. Living with the cracks is part of being, well, reasonably healthy"

So how do we hold all together? Connect? What are our balls of twine? This letter suggests a few paths including news of 3 retreats that connect writing to meditation (see below). One way is re-member as opposed to dismember. Putting together what belongs together. Erik is also a philosopher:

"Memory offers up its gifts only when jogged by something in the present. It isn't a storehouse of fixed images and words, but a dynamic associative network in the brain... never quiet ...subject to revision each time we retrieve an old picture or old words."

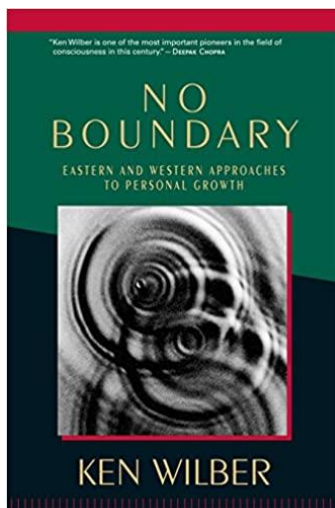
Metaphor is the supreme act of connection. This image moves beyond comparison into insisting that all objects or entities that seem to be from separate worlds,

though hidden, are manifest in one belonging for all the world to see. Homer's 'wine dark sea.' Neruda's 'I want to do to you what spring does to the cherry tree'. Shakespeare's 'tide in the affairs of men.' Anne Sexton on the people she loves:

they help me unravel,
they listen with ears made of conch shells,
they speak back with the wine of the best region.
They are my staff.
They comfort me.



In a recent wordshop people chose a marble as a 'lit match' prompt. Ronel wrote about marbles as childhood currency. Others wrote about the roundedness of the cosmos. I thought of the glass blower within the marble. And an Alice Walker story. When she was eight, her brother playing with a pellet gun shot her in her right eye. Her grandchild years later, contemplating her glass eye, exclaimed "Granny you have the world in your eye."



Metaphors collapse borders. Here is a Ken Wilber extract from his book:

"We live in a world of conflict and opposites because we live in a world of boundaries. Since every boundary line is also a battle line, here is the human predicament: the firmer one's boundaries, the more entrenched are one's battles... The harder I cling to life, the more terrifying death becomes. The more I value anything, the more obsessed I become with its loss. Most of our problems, in other words, are problems of boundaries and the opposites they create."

Rupert Sheldrake (PhD in biochemistry) articulated a theory of morphic resonance. Similar forms (morphs, or "fields ") reverberate and exchange information within a universal life force. "Natural systems, such as termite colonies, or pigeons, or orchid plants, or insulin molecules, inherit a collective memory from all previous things of their kind, however far away they were and however long ago they existed."

If we prescribe our lives by the five senses, that becomes our separate reality. If we reach into the hidden big five - intuition, telepathy, instinct, vision and dream - and going beyond the five as in Amy Tan's novel *A Hundred Secret Senses*? What then?

From the gnostic Gospel of Thomas: When you make the two into one, and when you make the inner like the outer and the outer like the inner, and the upper like the lower, and when you make male and female into a single one... when you make eyes in place of an eye, a hand in place of a hand, a foot in place of a foot, an image in place of an image, then you will enter the kingdom (queendom)."

Geoffrey Chew, an American theoretical physicist, told a story of a dinner party conversation. Seven friends were present. The talk drifted towards inter connectedness. A hard-line scientist sceptic said, "There are seven people round this table. They are all separate. You can't argue with that fact." Chew looked at his newly pregnant wife (only they knew she was with child) and responded, "Seven people you say? I'm not sure. Who can say where one person ends and another begins?"

Who can say where our words begin and end?

Dorian

**On the retreat radar: 3 x ZenPen: Writing Being and Meditation
detailed flyers on request**

We can make our minds so like still water that beings gather about us to see their own images, and so live for a moment with a clearer, perhaps even with a fiercer life because of our silence. (Yeats)



**West Coat Fossil Park 10-12
Sept**

Cost: R750 pp (20% to Fossil Park) -
50% deposit secures*



Buddhist Retreat Ixopo 23-26 Sept (bookings via BRC site)

Plus The Rough Writing Road: Keeping a journal Sun 26 - Tue 28 Sep



Khula Dharma (Haga Haga) 15-17 Oct

Zen (Chinese *chán* 'quietude') invites us to be present, to live and write simply.

Pen (Latin *penna* 'feather') the art of writing and to the implements

In these retreats, surrounded by and part of nature, we explore our connection to writing and meditation.