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### **Abstract**

Faced with increasing social and environmental disintegration worldwide, and moreover, a seeming inability to respond adequately to the exigency, I problematize the intellectualist bias and resulting disembodiment in our educational practice. I argue that this bias contributes to the problem at two levels: lack of intrinsic valuing of the world; and inability to translate knowledge into action. I then propose the practice of mindfulness as a tool with which we can recover our ability to value the world intrinsically and to embody knowledge.

## **Beyond the Educated Mind: Towards a Pedagogy of Mindfulness**

**Heesoon Bai**

*Whenever I quiet the persistent chatter of words within my head, I find this silent or wordless dance always already going on—this improvised duet between my animal body and the fluid, breathing landscape that it inhabits.*

*—David Abram—*

### INTRODUCTION

Consider David Korten's diagnosis that social and environmental disintegration now affects "nearly every country of the world—as revealed by a rise in poverty, unemployment, inequity, violent crime, failing families, and environmental degradation" (1996). By all accounts, humanity is facing a crisis, and this is widely acknowledged by the public. Yet, what is most disturbing is

our inability to act on this knowledge. Havel states: "[E]ven though we are aware of these dangers, we do almost nothing to avert them. It's fascinating to me how preoccupied people are today with catastrophic prognoses. . . but how very little account we take of these threats in our everyday activities" (1998, p. 56).

The translation of knowledge into action is what education is for and what pedagogy is about. Thus, our inability to take appropriate action for the crisis we face calls our practice of education into question. The starting point of this paper is the question, What factors in our education contribute to the problem? I find a clue to my question in Whitehead's notion of "inert ideas." Received inert ideas, like inert gas, do not interact with you as a whole being, affecting your perceptions and feelings; hence, they do not move you to action.

But what kind of ideas are inert? Whitehead's explanation is most illuminating. Inert ideas are unutilised ideas; and by utilisation, Whitehead (1929, p. 3) means "relating [ideas] to that stream, compounded of *sense perceptions, feelings, hopes, desires, and of mental activities adjusting thought to thought, which forms our life*" (italics mine). In short, inert ideas are disembodied ideas: ideas that are not worked into one's whole being with senses and feelings. Consequently, they are not capable of compelling us to action.

Whitehead notes that inert ideas are a perennial problem in education. The objective of my paper is both to account for the entrenchment of the problem and to point the direction toward solving it. I base my explanation and strategy in the Buddhist theory of mind and the practice of "mindfulness." The key insight that Buddhism provides is this: our linguistic-conceptual mind is inherently disembodied in that it replaces percepts by concepts. When this happens, our ability to experience reality directly as a perceiving and feeling being is compromised by the excessive (and obsessive) engagement with

concepts. This, briefly, is disembodiment.

The pedagogical recommendation that results from my above analysis is two-fold: first, help students become aware of the mind's tendency toward disembodiment; second, provide them with opportunities and tools to work at embodiment by recovering percepts and restoring them to the centre stage of consciousness. Borrowing the Buddhist term, I shall call such pedagogy, the "pedagogy of mindfulness." I will argue that this pedagogy is fit to address not only the pedagogical problem of translation from knowledge to action but also the more substantive problem of human alienation from the world.

#### WHAT IS DISEMBODIMENT?

The claim that we (speaking generally) suffer from disembodiment is bound to raise puzzled looks in people. Don't we all have bodies? Yes, I reply, but "having" a body is not a sufficient, though a necessary, condition for the experience of being a fully sensing and perceiving body. Consider the following examples for an illustration of what I mean by disembodiment.

Suppose that on one glorious autumn day, you and your friend, whom you have not seen for some time, meet at the parking lot of a nearby National Park and set out on a walk through the woods. You have looked forward to this escape from the city and a full immersion into Nature. Not having seen each other for a while, though, naturally you want to catch up with events, and so you start chatting. You then become so engrossed in talking that for the entire walk of two hours you barely notice all that meets your senses.

You have auto-piloted through the trail but you have not experienced fully all the sights, sounds, smells, and the feel of the woods available to you on this particular walk. Thus, as far as the nature walk is concerned, that walk has been a disembodied experience. It is as though your body and its senses were

not fully present in the experience.

The next example comes from the legendary Nobel-laureate physicist, Richard Feynman. Feynman was in Brazil at one time, teaching physics to a group of students who were being trained to be physics teachers. He discovered that the students were absolutely great at memorizing everything from the physics textbook and could regurgitate during exams with near one hundred percent accuracy. But, he also discovered, to his dismay, that the students understood little from this memorization. They could not describe and explain the described physical phenomena in the terms of experience:

After a lot of investigation, I finally figured out that the students had memorized everything, but they didn't know what anything meant.

When they heard "light that is reflected from a medium with an index, " they didn't know that it meant a material *such as water*. They didn't know that the "direction of the light" is the direction in which you *see* something when you're looking at it, and so on (1985, p. 192).

Besides illustrating the meaning of disembodiment, the above examples also suggest what typically causes disembodiment: failing to ground ideas, concepts, thoughts in sense perception. This happens easily because when we are preoccupied with the activities of the conceptual mind, such as thinking, reading, talking, or any other symbolic manipulations, we lose "sight of" or "touch with" the dimension of the sensuous. Of course, this does not mean that we stop perceiving. Rather, it means that our sensory awareness moves into the mode of semi-consciousness or even unconsciousness. Consider the times you have auto-piloted safely through busy traffic to your home all the while being heavily preoccupied with something. People speak of unconscious or subconscious body memories and body intelligence. For sure, we can only be thankful for this feature of ourselves. But it is not entirely a positive one.

## MORAL IMPLICATION OF DISEMBODIMENT

Disembodiment poses a serious concern for the way it affects our being-in-the-world. Our primary connection with this physical world is through our body and its senses. This should be no surprise. The body and its senses have co-evolved with the material, physical world. What our senses "tell" us constitutes our primary understanding of the world. This basically is the foundational tenet of empiricism. But what is usually absent in the empiricist thesis is the mention of the affective dimension of the bodily-sensorial understanding. This dimension is the home of the "carnal, sensorial empathy," to borrow Abram's phrase, that connects the being of the human self with the being of other material entities, or taken in totality, the Earth or biosphere. To experience another physical being in the mode of direct and sensuous perception is to realize the primordial bond between oneself and that being, which disposes one to value it intrinsically.

What is this primordial bond like? I find a particularly lucid articulation of this bond in Frederick Franck's description of what he calls seeing/drawing meditation. Drawing for Franck is the Zen way of seeing: seeing that overcomes the usual "looking at" that efficiently labels and judges things for an instrumentalist purpose. When Franck sees/draws, through his sustained and undivided attention to the object before him, he "enter[s] into direct contact with [the object's] life process, with Life itself" (1973, p. 7). What is revealed to Franck through his drawing/seeing is the "sheer miracle" of Being. He states: "The Zen of seeing is a way from half-sleep to full awakening. Suddenly there is the miracle of being really alive with all the senses functioning. . . How wonderously strange and miraculous: I see! I see a lettuce! I see you!" (ibid., p. 28).

When this primordial bonding with the material world is interfered with

by the hyperactivity of the linguistic-conceptual mind, the result is our emotional alienation from the material world. We "look at" the world as a foreign entity, an object categorically separate from us, the subject. Alienation brings about the loss of receptivity and sensitivity to that from which we are alienated. This loss is sensorially experienced as absence of or diminished hearing, seeing, smelling, and feeling. The forest from which I am alienated does not "speak" to me, does not address me, does not embrace me: I do not "hear" the ancient chorus of the cedar trees; I do not "feel" the embrace of the gathering darkness; I "see" no glory of life manifest in the blueness of the sky shimmering between the red and gold autumn leaves. Thomas Berry, an ecotheologian, diagnoses this loss of perception and sensation as a form of "autism" and attributes our insensitivity to nature as due to it:

The thousandfold voices of the natural world suddenly became inaudible to the human. The mountains and rivers and the wind and the sea all became mute insofar as humans were concerned. The forests were no longer the abode of an infinite number of spirit presences but were simply so many board feet of lumber to be 'harvested' as objects to be used for human benefit. Animals were no longer the companions of humans in the single community of existence (1996, p. 410).

The danger of this sort of autism is far more serious than our pale appreciation of the world. What is at stake is moral harm. Evernden tells us about the practice of severing the lab animals' vocal cords so that the experimenters wouldn't hear the cries and can carry on with the vivisection without being disturbed (Evernden, 1985). When we cannot see, hear, and feel the other, it is all too easy to impose our own desire and design on it, oblivious of or disregarding the possibility of harm to the other.

The kind of autism that Berry speaks of is the result of our particular

epistemic commitment that reality is seen as construed and constructed according to our conceptualization. Reality is what you make of it, so to speak. The moral implication that follows from it is the denial of inherent value to those entities which we may recognize as existing but with which we have no perceptual and emotional involvement. That is, all the beings that constitute the reality do not exist *for* themselves but exist for the sake of our needs and wants. Hence, they have only instrumental value. They are not subjects onto themselves but objects for us. Note, beings are "objects" because we have objectified them in the first place. Furthermore, if we objectify the world, then it is at our disposal. The world is a source of materials with which we can realize our projects. And it is a waste sink to receive the by-products of our excessive construction and consumption.

Consider land. As most people seem to see it, land exists for the sake of human use. Its value lies in its usefulness to humans. Hence, it only has an instrumental value to us. No intrinsic valuing here. The kind of exploitative and damaging practices we inflict upon the earth's surface with resulting rampant ecocide are the logical consequence of our exclusive instrumentalist perceptions and practices. We have largely lost the sense of the sacredness of the earth, of its intrinsic value. We have lost it fundamentally because we lost our fundamental grounding in the senses. Percepts came to be absorbed into concepts, losing their centrality in our consciousness.

Thus, education dedicated to the goal of reversing the social and ecological degradation has to start with learning to value the world intrinsically. What this means to me is bringing back the senses to the centre stage of consciousness so that we may take up residence in it rather than in the abstract linguistic-conceptual mode. This does not mean that we must banish words, ideas, concepts, and thinking. It is just that they will be our guests, rather than

our master: they are invited to play with us but not dictate and control us. Names and other linguistic devices are convenient and effective in terms of social coordination, just as money exchange is convenient compared to bartering. But we must not focus only on the gain, forgetting the loss. Language has gifted us a convenient means of *communication* but it can rob us of the opportunities of *communion* which is the sensuously grounded being-to-being connection.

Zen masters have warned us of the danger of reification, using the parable of a finger pointing at the moon: Don't look at the finger; look at the moon that the finger is pointing to. Our language, like the finger, points to the possibility of sensuous experience beyond itself. If language is used with the understanding that it only points to rather than represents reality, we would avoid the trap of reification and its resulting disembodiment. But if language is used without this understanding, it only serves to alienate us from the possibility of sensuous experience. And to carry on with the above metaphor, the reason why we are prone to looking no farther than the pointing finger is because the sky is so completely filled with pointing fingers that you cannot see the sky. To be more literal, one's field of sensuous awareness is so filled with a constant torrent of mind-chatter and external stimuli in the form of words and images that it is difficult to gain a clear view of it. But difficulty is not impossibility. There are ways to control mind-chatter.

## MINDFULNESS

According to Buddhist psychology, the mind's "job" is to convert percepts into concepts (Kalupahana, 1987). To put it another way, mind superimposes concepts on percepts, thereby concealing the latter from our ordinary introspection. And this operation is automatic and ceaseless. How do we interrupt the ceaseless and relentless activity of the conceptualizing mind? The



Buddhist response is first and foremost to become aware of the automaticity of conceptualization. That which is automatic is "invisible" to us, and we cannot change what is invisible.

What we call intellect is largely the operations of the linguistic-conceptual categories which we have received and internalized through being members of a linguistic-cultural community. Hence the ceaselessness and automaticity.

Consider how readily we can identify and name familiar objects: cup, disk, flower, and so on. It takes a fraction of a second of pattern recognition to name these familiar objects. But when this happens, pattern-recognition-naming preempts a sensuous contact and engagement with the "object." The result is a missed opportunity to experience being-to-being connectedness to the "object."

The Buddhist "mindfulness practice" (*satipatthana*), popularly known in the West as "meditation," is a way to recover the non-conceptual awareness. Its technique is simple and clear enough. You direct your "bare attention" to the moment-by-moment arising and passing of perception, sensation, emotion, thought, and so on. But mindfulness is difficult to practice because of the ceaseless activity of the mind. It has been routinely observed by the beginning students of the mindfulness practice that the hardest challenge is to become disengaged from the constant chatter of the mind. Thoughts come so thick and fast that one gets swept into the torrent and carried away. Before one realizes it, one has abandoned the calm physical awareness of breathing and drifted into the mind-chatter, endlessly thinking of what happened, could or should have happened, will happen, or will be made to happen, and so on. This constant thinking in the form of mind-chatter is not peculiar to meditators but is the usual mode for most people in their waking hours and even in their sleep.

As anyone who has tried to suppress mind-chatter would know, no amount of will power will accomplish the suppression. But, the point is not so

much getting rid of thinking as recovering the underlying foundational field of non-discursive awareness. In other words, the problem is with the hyperactivity of thinking that conceals the non-discursive, embodied awareness. Thus, the meditator's primary task is to calm the hyperactive mind.

The contemporary meditation master in the tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, Soygal Rinpoche, explains of meditation (1993, p. 74): "The secret is not to 'think' about thoughts, but to allow them to flow through the mind, while keeping your mind free of afterthoughts." When thoughts are allowed to arise and pass away freely, which is made possible when we do not cling to them and identify with them, then we can catch glimpses of the spacious awareness between and around the thoughts. In other words, catching the glimpse of, and moving into, the gaps between arising thoughts afford us the best way to establish ourselves in the practice of meditation. Again to quote Soygal Rinpoche (1993, p. 75): "So the work of meditation is to allow thoughts to slow down, to make that gap become more and more apparent."

The standard technique for not getting ensnared into the thought-stream is anchoring the attention to the moment-to-moment arising of sensations. Sensations of breathing are especially helpful as an anchorage because breathing is constant and rhythmic, as well as calming. Still, it is only with much perseverance and effort, comparable to learning to play a musical instrument or mastering any other rigorous art, that one gradually trains one's attention and learns to dwell in the wordless and thought-less space of sensuous awareness. As a well-established resident of this space, we can then welcome the guests who come to visit in the form of concepts and words. The guests come and go, however frequently, but we stay home in our non-discursive awareness.

Attaining mindfulness is an achievement that impacts our relationship to the world. For, through mindfulness we *sense* the "interbeing" (Thich Nhat

Hanh, 1993) or co-emergence of all beings. One realizes, not just conceptually, but in one's senses, that one is not separate from the world, that one *is* the world as its one local expression.

## EDUCATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF MINDFULNESS

Education is foremost an act of disciplining. While learning may take place naturally every moment, even without our conscious effort, education is an intentful act of disciplining the mind-body-heart to be in alignment with certain ideals we set up before us. Thus the heart of education is praxis, or what Whitehead called "utilisation." Education for embodiment is about disciplining ourselves to see rather than look at; to hear rather than listen; to feel rather than react; and so on. For example, in Zen practice, we undertake walking meditation, eating meditation, listening meditation, feeling meditation, and so on. In these meditations, we unlearn the habitual auto-piloting of the senses and re-learn to center our attention on the senses themselves.

To walk in the usual way is just to get from point A to point B. Walking is merely a means of transportation, a slow and cumbersome one for many people who prefer driving. In walking meditation, we return to the experience of walking itself, which is marvelous beyond description. We feel our body interact intricately, moment by moment, with the ground, the air, the trees, the sky, and all that embraces the body. Likewise with eating meditation. We return to the experience of eating itself. We are fully mindful, through the senses, of eating. With our eyes and, later, with our mouth, we meditate on the gift of life. What more intimate moments of communion can there be than in the act of eating? The miracle of "interbeing" between ourselves and the Plant and Animal Kingdoms is enacted in every mealtime.

In the next two sections, I will consider two specific applications of

mindfulness to education: Environmental Education and Civic Education. Challenged by the global crisis of social and environmental disintegration, we need to make environmental education and civic education as central to schooling as the core academic subjects. How can the pedagogy of mindfulness help?

## MINDFULNESS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

There are many ways to address environmental education: consumer education, recycling programs, reforestation projects, and so on. While all of them have something vitally useful to contribute, the kind that I think would make a difference at the foundational level is one that teaches people to perceive the natural world as a sacred order in which they participate as friends and lovers of life. Turning us around from entrenched instrumentalism and orienting us instead towards intrinsic valuing of the world: this is what environmental education can do. How do we teach ourselves to value intrinsically? Through the senses! To quote Abram:

It may be that the new "environmental ethic" . . . will come into existence not primarily through the logical elucidation of new philosophical principles and legislative strictures, but through a renewed attentiveness to this perceptual dimension that underlies all our logics, through a rejuvenation of our carnal, sensorial empathy with the living land that sustains us (1996, p. 69).

One who finds that "[d]awn and sunset are once again transforming experiences as are all the sights and sounds and scents and tastes and the feel of the natural world about us, the surging sea, the sound of the wind, the brooding forests,"(Berry, 1996, p. 411) would not have the desire, with respect to Nature, for domination, manipulation, and exploitation. If I perceived myself as "one-

bodied" with this enchanted world, feel it in my own nervous system, love it in my own heart, and wish to look after it and defend it like my own body, I would be least motivated to do things that harm it, however "useful" and "profitable" such practices may be.

Thus, the most potent form of environmental education is one that occasions in the students experiences of profound interconnectedness or "interbeing" and its attendant love of life. Suppose we take our students to a nearby forest on a warm summer day fragrant with sweet pine and cedar. We sit ourselves down in the cool shade under some pine trees. Calming our mind-hearts, we breathe slowly and deeply, paying full attention to every detail of breathing. This is the mindfulness practice. We notice the sweet pine scented air entering the lungs, invigorating us, and then leaving our lungs; we picture a similar process taking place in the trees. As we breathe in and out, we visualize the trees and human beings exchanging breaths. After breathing thus for a while, how does the forest appear to us? Do we feel the intimate being-to-being, body-to-body connectedness with the forest and all its inhabitants? We can think of a whole array of practices we can adopt to occasion the experience of interconnectedness in any physical environment.

Now, I do not wish to give an impression that in the kind of experiential environmental education that I recommend, we have no use for ideas and theories. As I explained in connection with the Zen parable of the pointing-finger, so long as we understand that ideas are the pointers and that the reason for ideas is to get ourselves oriented towards experience, we can in fact make safe use of these pointers. Thus, we can introduce our students to all kinds of up-to-date scientific theories and science ideas but with a clear understanding of their use as a pointer that orients us towards possibilities of experience. Education for embodiment is not anti-intellectual or anti-cognitivist.

## MINDFULNESS FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

For the most part, humanity lived deeply rooted in its ancestral history and place. But this changed drastically since the "Great Transformation"-- Modern Industrialization. "Never before," notes Rasmussen, "have so many humans attempted to exist without any sense of multi-generational abiding in a meaningful, historical locale" (1999). Communities are eroding everywhere. Families are breaking up. Extended families are disappearing. More and more people abandon their ancestral land and flock to cities only to become wage-labourers and participate in the commodification of labour. Everywhere the monoculture of market consumerism seems to be colonizing the world. American TV channels seed the planet with the same images and messages for the Good Life: "The dream of corporate marketers is a globalized consumer culture united around brand-name loyalties that will allow a company to sell its products with the same advertising copy in Bangkok as in Paris or New York" (Korten 1995, p. 153). What an utter perversion of the idea of interconnectedness!

Rare is a school mission statement that does not mention economic progress. In fact, I have not seen one. In the current context of economic discourse, economic progress means competitiveness in the global market economy feeding on the monoculture of consumer capitalism. Thus, to partake successfully in economic progress means becoming vigorous consumers whose life profiles may include: urban dwelling, upward mobility, youthful looks, high income, fancy cars, spacious homes, overseas vacations, lots of flying and driving around, a limitless amount of prepackaged and disposable products, overconsumption of a high-fat, high-calorie, meat-based diet, fashion-conscious clothing, and so on. In short, successful participation in economic progress implies ecologically and socially unsustainable lifestyles. Civic education

dedicated to the vision of a more equitable and cooperative world would change this.

Civic education is not for teaching the young to memorize all kinds of information about who, what, where, when, and why from our country's past and present. It has a far more important role than this: to teach the young the value of rootedness, neighbourhood, community-building, local history and local initiative, conservation of resources, protection of land, frugality, diversity, and all manner of manual work put to the service of caring for our local environment and community (Orr, 1994).

But such education cannot be accomplished without cultivating in the young a profound love for the local habitat and community in the first place. Since there is no such thing as love from a distance, the first step in the cultivation of love is physically taking ourselves to where we want love to take root--to our neighbourhood fields, forests, streams, mountains, ocean; to the streets, farms, kitchens, community centers, hospitals, daycares, wilderness rehabilitation centers, prisons, and so on in our vicinity. The usual sight-seeing and field trips that act as a diversion to an overwhelmingly indoor pedagogy are not what I have in mind. In such trips, students and teacher are like tourists, mostly just sight-seeing, disconnected from the people and the places they see. But in the civic education based in Interbeing, we go out to these places precisely to overcome our disconnection and to stretch and enlarge our boundaries of self and self-interest. There, we *surround* each person and each thing we encounter with our mindful awareness, feeling our sense of interbeing grow, and learning to share ourselves and what we have with each other. We would genuinely feel for our neighbours. We could not bear to have homeless fellows. We would feel hurt if they were without food and shelter.

While the usual notion of citizenship concerns knowing one's rights and

obligations and participating in public debates and voting, from the perspective of the pedagogy of mindfulness, citizenship is primarily about realizing the interbeing of oneself with all the members of small and large civic and biotic communities. Out of this realization, we would be disposed to practice conservation, build communities, recycle, and in general care about and care for places and people.

#### CONCLUDING REMARK

Words and concepts, though handy and lovely in their own right, can never substitute for direct sensuous experience which can generate in us the sense of interbeing and show the oneness of the perceiver with the perceived. To be, says Thich Nhat Hanh, is to "inter-be" (1991, p. 96). The experience of interbeing is the direct source of empathy, compassion, love and care. Here, I shall quote Franck one last time for his articulation of the insight that the realization of interbeing is the source of love and compassion:

Zen experience is. . . a direct seeing into what I am in reality. It is the healing of the alienation (in French 'aliéné' means 'mad') that hides my true identity—which happens on its deepest level to be my identity with all that is born and will die. This insight into my real condition is the wisdom that is inseparable from compassion (1973, p. 14).

I outlined in this paper a solution to globally spreading social and environmental disintegration. This disintegration is human-induced and thus reflects "a prior disorder in the thought, perception, imagination. . ." (Orr, 1994, p. 2). I argued that this disorder is the result of our increasing disconnectedness from Nature and humanity. I further argued that excessive linguistic and conceptual activity interferes with our experiencing a deep being-to-being interconnectedness with the world. If my analysis is correct, then the greatest



contribution education can make is to help us all to recover our non-discursive, sensuous connection to the physical world and all its inhabitants. I have termed the art of such teaching "the pedagogy of mindfulness." There is much to explore and develop in this pedagogy, but I must leave that task for another time.

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See Brown et. al (1999) and Pintasilgo et. al (1996) for a comprehensive update on the state of the world.

Action tends to follow from perception and feeling. Recognition of this fact has had a salutary effect on our moral theorizing: it has shown us that as moral educators, our primary site of work is our students' moral perception and emotion rather than their moral reasoning. See works by Murdoch (1970), Blum (1994), Nussbaum (1990).

This understanding forms the fundamental basis of the current cognitivist theory of enactivism. One of the chief proponents of this theory, Varela states: "[O]rganism and environment enfold into each other and unfold from one another in the fundamental circularity which is life itself" (Varela et. al, 1991, p. 217).

The best known *school* of empiricism is that of the British empiricists of the seventeenth Century: Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. However, empiricism as an epistemological / ontological *orientation* has been with us from the beginning (consider Aristotle) and is still very alive in such contemporary schools as pragmatism and phenomenology whose influence is massively felt in Education. For instance, consider Dewey's educational philosophy and the central role that experience plays in it.

This constructivist thesis (that reality is what we construct) goes hand-in-hand with the fundamental tenet of Linguistic Philosophy that all our perceptions are conceptually mediated; that is, mediated by language. In the latter's understanding, seeing is always "seeing-as" (e.g., Wittgenstein, 1958; Hanson, 1958). While I agree that much of our ordinary perception is in fact conceptually mediated, I reject the implication that there cannot be unmediated perception. More on this later in the discussion of the Buddhist mindfulness practice.

Let us not forget that the conversion of land into economic property was a historical invention. Before the "commercialization of the soil" took place in modern Europe, people had a different conception and attitude towards land. See Polanyi (1957).

Think of the difference between communication and communion in this way: Suppose I describe to you, who have never tasted an apple, what an apple tastes *like*. I have given you information which might give you some idea about the taste of an apple. I have communicated to you. But, if I gave you an apple, had you taste it for yourself, then you and I can have an experience of communion with respect to the taste of an apple.

In the view of Buddhist psychology and epistemology, the conceptualizing mind is counted as one of the senses, along with eyes, ears, and so on. In other words, unlike in modern Western tradition, Buddhism does not equate the conceptualizing mind with consciousness or awareness. See Kalupahana (1987).

To explain the Buddhist understanding of percepts: "[W]hen you become first aware of something, there is a fleeting instant of pure awareness just before you conceptualize the thing" (Gunaratana, 1991).

"Mindfulness" or *sati* is defined as non-conceptual awareness. *Satipatthana* literally means setting-up of mindfulness. Another name for mindfulness is "bare attention." See Gunaratana (1991).

The Buddhist term for this concept of inherent interconnectedness of all beings and their phenomena (in fact, in the Buddhist ontology, there are no "beings"--only phenomena) is *pattica-samuppada*, meaning "dependent origination." The original formulation of this notion is as follows: "When this is, that is. . . This arising, that arises. . . When this is not, that is not. . . This ceasing, that ceases" (Walpola, 1959, p. 53). See Macy (1991) for a lengthy treatment of Dependent Origination from the perspective of contemporary Systems Theory.

The reader may ask: "Isn't visualization a form of conceptualization?" Yes, it is. "Are we not trying to discourage conceptualization because of its disembodied tendency?" Yes, but the point of this discouragement is strategic: to recover the non-discursive awareness. When this recovery is made (permanently or temporarily) and we dwell in the space of non-discursive awareness (even if temporarily), then one can use conceptualization for specific purposes, such as, in the present example, enhancing our awareness of how we are intrinsically and vitally interconnected with the forest.

See Polanyi (1957) for an extended historical treatment of how Europeans became de-placed people, having become disembedded from the land which coincided with land becoming commodified. Individuals severed from their embodied connections with the land have become floating social atoms, ready to become "human rentals," that is, wage-labourers.