

Lesson From Nature: Health and Wealth

By Allison Weeks (Ewoldt)

At a Project NatureConnect gathering on San Juan Island in the spring of '00, our group was interviewed by resident island author Janet Thomas. She was in the process of writing her well-researched and thought-provoking book ***Battle in Seattle*** and wanted to know what we thought about the then-recent WTO protests and their possible impact on the future. Mid-way through the interview someone suggested that Janet actually do a nature-connecting activity with us, so PNC founder and director Dr. Michael Cohen suggested we go to Nature with a question that captured the essence of the WTO protests: "What is wealth?"

Physical reality is formed through attraction energies that we perceive through our senses, so Reconnecting with Nature activities begin with sensing an attraction in nature. Usually something claims my attention right away, but this time was different. As I walked alone along a forest path asking permission from nature to learn from it about wealth, I waited for something to attract me. Everything looked beautiful, but nothing in particular caught my attention. As time went by I began to realize that this time my attraction was not the vibrant color of a flower, the beautiful song of a bird, the strength of a massive tree, or the softness of the moss on a rock. It was the forest in its entirety. My attraction held, so I sat on a small boulder to 'listen' as the wordless lesson began.

How does one express a non-verbal, purely sensory experience in words? Something is always lost in the translation, but I will try. As I watched, the attraction energies giving rise to the diverse and teeming life before me became apparent: The insect attracted by the flower, gaining sustenance from it as it helped it in kind by assisting pollination. The plants reaching for the life-giving energy of the sun and sharing it with the caterpillar. Roots attracted to the damp, moist earth while holding the earth in place. The 'dead' leaves and trees transforming before my very eyes into new earth for new life. As I began to become aware of the exquisite interconnectedness of it all, my consciousness shifted and I stopped seeing separate entities. Instead, the physical reality before me became a beautiful, continuous flow of energy attractions that gave rise to Life. Everything received enough just enough energy to sustain itself in health, returning energy in like kind back to the web. Even death of the individual gave rise to the health of the whole. I began to sense myself as part of this whole-- and I, too, experienced the seamless flow of energy, the joyous fulfillment of mutual support and reciprocity.

"Ah," said my rational brain, never too happy to be wordless for long and determined to translate my nonverbal awareness. "This is the lesson about wealth you were seeking. True wealth is the seamless flow of energy attractions in mutual support and reciprocity. When a sense of separation, resulting in fear, blocks this flow, the result is greed. Blocking the flow disrupts the intricate and exquisite balance of the web of life, and soon many problems arise—poverty, crime, degradation of the environment which sustains our very lives... The list of negative consequences is almost endless. Even those who take

and hoard more than they need without giving back equally to the web, thinking this makes them “wealthy,” are really impoverished of spirit and bereft of true joy and fulfillment. Energy flow, besides being the basis of wealth, is also necessary for health—individual, social, and environmental. When energy is blocked—again, because of fear, the major symptom of disconnection, and trauma—the result is illness. Health and wealth are really identical, the result of seamless energy flow—mutual support and reciprocity.”

I returned to the group at the appointed time. As we shared the wisdom of global consciousness that we had experienced through our attractions in nature, our personal values shifted closer yet to those of the Web of Life of which we are a part. And we felt wealthy beyond measure.