Discernment in Soulmaking (Q & A)

Rob Burbea · Notable Dhamma Teachers — Rob Burbea · 57:20

So I'm struggling with a message I'm trying to figure out why, and I think I've started to distill that. A phrase came to me today, which I think is from Kevin, but I haven't checked it out: something about how you don't do justice to the image if you require it to have meaning. I was extrapolating that further—you don't do justice if I require it to have eternality, or for it to love me, and all these things.

I think my logos, my understanding of the imaginal, comes a lot from here, is that image is primacy, and you can come to understand the psyche in this wholly different way—that everything within the psyche is imaginal. So that memory that you have of your mother, that you thought was a representation of the factual account of what happened to you when you were a child, is in a way an imaginal memory. That figure of your mother is an imaginal figure, and you can be in relationship to that. In becoming in relationship to that, something can happen—I mean, you know something can happen, but something can happen.

What came out of that is I realized that actually a lot of my relationship to the imaginal is just coming to view my psyche as imaginal. So if you take the mother example, I come into relationship with the imaginal figure of a mother. But that figure doesn't have eternality. When I work with it, it doesn't love me necessarily. I don't feel a duty to it. I'm going between the images all the time, in a way. I might see that there's an imaginal element to that—it's got this constellation of qualities and images around it—but it doesn't have all of these things that we're talking about.

It's like this dichotomy is forming in my mind between all of that and then this other thing: these images that fit into the lattice. Actually most of my images don't seem to fit into the lattice. They don't have this eternality. Does that make sense? What is the relationship between these two different things, or two different practices?

Yeah, so I'm not one hundred percent sure it makes sense to me yet. If I try and summarize what you said, and then maybe we can see where I'm not understanding, or maybe I have understood...

Iona is sharing that she's having problems with the idea of the lattice as any kind of map of what imaginal might be, and certainly as a demand of what imaginal might be. Rather, her sense of imaginal, which she thinks she's getting from James Hillman, is more that anything that arises in the psyche is image. When she pays attention to her experience, a lot of the images don't seem to have these qualities that we're identifying in the lattice. To require that of them would feel wrong.

I didn't invent the word "imaginal." It was actually Henri Corbin. Hillman got it from Corbin. Corbin meant

something quite different from what Hillman meant, and quite different from Jung. In a way, I would say what we're unfolding here is different from Hillman as well. There are overlaps between all that, and I would say that certainly Corbin really didn't like Jung and probably didn't like Hillman as well. Hillman had huge respect for Corbin. People borrow, because you borrow authority—so and so said this because it lends weight.

So basically there's this word, and what do we do with the fact of two things? First, that people are using it in different ways—there are more ways than that. Now it's become, as I said right in the beginning when I introduced it, quite popular, this word, in certain circles. People mean quite different things by it. Some people are not quite sure what they mean by it, or it's very, very loose or whatever. That's just a kind of fact—a social fact, a linguistic fact.

What do we do with that? And then what do we do also with the fact that all four—Corbin, Jung, Hillman, and what we're doing here—would discern a difference in quality or kind of images? They're not just different contents. You can have an image of your mother, you can have an image of your father—different contents, but they're really different ontological status, whole different kinds.

We somehow have to either just say everything is image in the sense that everything is perception, therefore it's image. That's an important point, dharma-wise.

And people mean quite different things by it. Some are not quite sure what they mean, or their understanding remains very loose. This is simply a fact—a social, linguistic reality. What do we do with that?

And what do we do with the fact that all four approaches I mentioned—Corbin, Jung, Hillman, and our work here—would discern a difference in quality or ontological status among images? These are not just different contents, like an image of your mother versus your father, but genuinely different kinds of being. We somehow have to navigate this territory.

We could simply say everything is image in the sense that everything is perception. Dharma-wise, this is profoundly important. Having this view—that everything is perception, everything is image—already brings a certain kind of liberation and spaciousness to all experience. This is wonderful and valuable.

But in itself, this won't unfold what we're calling soul-making. It will move in a different direction, toward more spaciousness and equality of things. What I'm trying to communicate is not so much a demand as an understanding of the imaginal as dependent arising. Perhaps in time, these aspects will be noticed naturally.

A mother image, if I linger with it and bring all my sensitivity, and if it's not constrained by a particular conceptual framework, will probably unfold these soul-making qualities. Let's call this a postulate, a thesis to be discovered, rather than a demand.

I don't know anyone who's mapped out the complete territory of possible human images—what constitutes psychic phenomena, ESP, or other experiences. Maybe someone has attempted it, but if so, at some point in human history, it will never satisfy everyone completely.

If we step back and ask what we want—if we want that expansive, liberative freedom and spaciousness—then we can practice seeing everything as image in the sense of perception. This creates its own kind of beauty and limited soul-making, but more specifically spaciousness-making and liberation-making.

If we want what we're calling soul-making, then a certain conceptual framework and attunement of being, sensibility, and attention will help that unfold. What arises in perception—whether imaginative or otherwise—is always dependent arising, partly dependent on our conceptual framework. Even our idea of what soul-making is will unfold in different directions based on how we conceive it.

Rather than making an absolute ontological claim, I'm suggesting this as a possible unfolding that some people may find deeply valuable.

At the end of the day, I retain my autonomy—it's up to everyone to decide what they want. If I decide I want this thing called soul-making, then these ideas, sensitivities, attunements, and conceptual framework might serve that in a sustainable, ongoing way. If I want something else, then I need a different approach.

As a human being, I can actually move between these orientations. From one moment to the next, I could shift into seeing everything as image for spacious liberation, or relate to my mother conventionally for psychotherapeutic reasons, or simply think I should call her because we haven't spoken recently. I can move fluidly between these rather than adopting a rigid posture or conceptual framework.

I encourage everyone to have this kind of autonomy. I'm not interested in imposing anything on anyone. Find your own way, what you're drawn to, your own range of options at different times. This feels really important to me.

The question you're raising touches on soul-making, fabrication, levels of fabrication, and complexity. You're describing a particular experience that feels relatively unfabricated—very body-based, visceral, primordial in quality. Yet the state itself and the movements arising from it feel important to your being, to your soul, even though they feel very different from imaginal images with their depth, resonance, mirroring, and complex layers.

You're wondering whether that experience in itself constitutes soul-making, or whether it becomes soul-making through how you relate to it and integrate it into your life. This touches on something quite

Both really, but the question is about whether that rhythm - the metta, the gentle inquiry, checking with the energy body - would be a model for engaging with soul-making ourselves.

Yes, absolutely. And you've identified something really important there. What's happening in those

exercises is exactly what we might call a soul-making approach to relationship, to encounter with another, and to encounter with experience in general.

So when you're offering metta, you're creating a certain quality of space - a kind of tenderness and care that allows things to unfold rather than forcing them. The gentle inquiry is this willingness to be curious, to not know in advance what's going to emerge, which is part of that sense of discovery that's so central to soul-making. And checking with the energy body keeps you rooted in the felt sense, in the embodied knowing, rather than just staying up in the head with concepts.

And yes, that same rhythm, that same quality of engagement, is exactly what we want to bring to soul-making practice more generally. Whether you're working with an image that arises in meditation, or you're engaging with a difficult emotion, or you're exploring some complex situation in your life - that same quality of tender curiosity, that willingness to feel into things rather than analyze them to death, that checking in with how things are landing in the body.

It's like creating the optimal conditions for soul-making to happen. Because soul-making, as we've been saying, is partly about discovery - and discovery requires this kind of open, receptive, curious stance. It can't be forced or manufactured. But we can create the conditions where it's more likely to emerge.

Does that resonate? Have you found that rhythm helpful in the exercises we've been doing?

Or in yourself? Like, yeah. I mean, not the complete thing, but just... Yeah. In a way, yes.

I don't know that it needs to be quite so linear. In this retreat that we may be doing in June, I think it's called Foundations of Soul-Making Dharma, and partly it's a double meaning with foundations. It partly means what are the personal prerequisites that you need to have to make this work, without which it's not really going to work.

One is, I would say, awareness—bodily awareness, energy body awareness, emotional awareness. And also emotional ability to care, you know, and to handle well what arises. Without those two skills, and also without the kindness. So if I don't... if I'm regarding what happens in myself with judgment and unkindness and dismissal, it's not going to be... it's not going to be the capacity for soul making, you know.

So there are probably just... those are three, right? Energy body, emotional—let's call it awareness and skill—and just, you know, kindness with one's own psychology and being. Those are three out of more we could enumerate, kind of prerequisites for doing this kind of practice.

Eventually, it's a bit like when we did the metta in those exercises, and I kind of said, okay... you actually asked, it was you, Bo: do we need to keep doing it when we're listening? Do you remember asking that? And in a way, I think there's a way you can kind of, when these things are established as more just almost easily accessible and almost habitual, then you can kind of let them go a little bit, especially the metta, because it's just there. And if I need it, I can bring it as a kind of... but it's kind of there as a backdrop. So

right now, I just feel confident that there's metta here, you know, and I don't have to kind of keep... I mean, I could, but it's just there as a kind of...

Yeah. And then rather than doing it linearly with the emotional awareness and tracking and the energy, it's more like it's concurrent as we sort of build up to that exercise. Can you share... it's really hard to speak and really be... did you notice this... and be aware as you're speaking of what's happening? So it's one thing to listen—even that can be quite hard—to listen to another, take them in with the senses as fully and track your own process. That's already quite a skill. To do it yourself, you know. But eventually we want this to be concurrent. So if you're working on your own, yeah, the whole kind of... the whole multi-faceted process is going together.

If we separate them, it's an exercise. So we're practicing this foundation and then that foundation. You could isolate something—it's like when you practice, you know, in music or something. You want to... this thing, you isolate it and you develop it, and then you put it back into the mix. Does that make sense? Does that cover what you... yeah, okay.

Oh, Andrea. Yeah. This may or may not be quite long, so do you want to ask? Okay, it might be short. This is kind of what Katherine covered with active versus receptive when you're working on the image? Create, discover?

Well, no. It's more how... I think I put it in as another kind of spectrum that they relate to. Yeah. How active you are in that thing versus just kind of receiving it. And I just... The examples obviously can't be concrete that you give us because with an image or I'm bringing an image in, and there's a sense of I'm moving this thing and I'm not giving it autonomy, but it's too active. And so then I try to pull back into the receptive or discovered thing, and it doesn't quite manifest there. I'm checking the energy body the whole time to see what's alive there, but I didn't know if...

I remember you talking one time about John Coltrane and where he appeared in the room, this particular place. I sometimes think of that when I'm thinking of where this image wants to be—do they want to be behind me or in front? So I didn't know if that's something that comes with time, just dexterity, working with images.

So Andrea's asking about... if I can understand the sort of this range that we have in relating to any practice, actually, not just imaginal—that can kind of lean all the way to the sort of very active end and all the way to the very receptive, just let it happen. Yeah. And so what's the question? Can we develop more...

Yeah, yeah, yeah. So this is really, really common. And again, I'm not just talking about imaginal practice. I'm talking about any practice. We try to be active, and it gets really clunky and forced and too pushy, too much efforting, too tight, and then sometimes even a whole other level of judging oneself that one should be able to do this and that. So I think to me, even outside of the realm of imaginal practice, this is part of the sort of right effort, that balance thing.

And I would say instead of like one point on that spectrum, one point where we just kind of reside and that's where we do our practice—I'm always kind of entirely receptive—I would encourage that the whole spectrum, the exploration of the whole spectrum. And to develop skill, I have to know what it is to make too much effort and be too active and know what that feels like. The thing is, every moment is different.

So it's like... you know... Again, I shouldn't give surfing as an analogy because I've actually never been surfing. But I think what can happen in time is that the doing—we learn how to do really, really subtly.

So if we relate that then to what we're talking about this week, sensing the soul and the lattice, one of the things is just noticing. I'm not actually making this thing happen or demanding it. I'm just noticing—what can I notice? And the very, very delicate attuning of the attention to some aspect or other that's maybe just a little bit kind of... I can't quite make it out. And then just that aroma of it.

This is really, really subtle. It's just a noticing. It's just an inclining of the attention to notice something. That noticing something brings it alive, and then something emerges.

When we talk about doing, it can be really, really gross. You know, like when you're nodding off in meditation and someone says, "Can you do something? Go do some walking meditation, take a brisk walk, open the eyes, cold water on the face, stand up, breathe deeper." That's a really gross doing, and sometimes there are times when there's a real place for that.

And then it might be the same experience—almost the same degree of sloth and torpor another day—that needs something so much more subtle. I just realize, oh, there's this tiny bit of resistance to something I'm not even sure what, and I just soften that. Something gets clear and emerges maybe in the heart, and I pass through that, I work with that, and then I just hold that maybe. Not even that—I just hold that. And then the energy comes back.

Part of the art of all practice, I think, is this willingness to try different things, to develop different ranges and not to know in the moment, not to have this formula of "this is what I do and it's always going to be like this."

[Responding to a question about John Coltrane]

There's something about when you say you can bring an image up. As a writer, you're asking, "Where do I want this figure?" And then, oh... Two things: one is that "where do I want this figure?"—who is the "I" asking? The autonomy is there, but maybe it gets...

If we go back to Hillman, he would jump at and flinch at any kind of practice of the imaginal or active imagination that seemed too deliberate. I would say something slightly different. It doesn't matter how much huffing and puffing and deliberate intention and activeness there is. What matters is the sense of soul-making.

I'm sure many of you have had this—you think, "I just made that happen." And then you think, "Oh, that's

the ego. And the ego is bad. And it's bad in Buddhism, and it's bad in other spiritualities, and it's bad in Hillman."

What I would look for more is this responsiveness. Maybe it was my ego, whatever that is. Maybe it was coming out of excessive yanking. But then maybe it suddenly becomes soul-making. And then we sense when something's soul-making. So it doesn't matter how it got there. It doesn't matter at all. It's not this principle of "this is good and that's bad." It's just that if it's soul-making, you can feel those soulful resonances and trust it at that point.

The thing with John Coltrane—I've moved, I don't live at Gaia House anymore, so we can't be in the same place. We have a different room. But he still comes sometimes. When he comes, actually he and another figure—this kind of Sufi teacher or something—they sit at the end of the bed. And they both share the same spot. And it doesn't matter. It's not that it has to be or not, but it just might be that I can't even tell: do I put them there, or do they just like that spot? It doesn't really matter. It's like, trust the sense of it. If something doesn't feel right, you can—I would use the word *play*. You can just play very delicately, but sometimes play just means: what am I attuning to?

It can be so subtle and so unpressured and unforced. When I go back to what I said this morning, it's like: don't force a sense of soul and don't imagine that it's going to be there every time. There are plenty of times where nothing really works, and that's fine. Not too much pressure.

There are two questions here, so I won't get to these unless someone else has one live. No, it's very long, and it's already... Well, actually, I'll do these. Is that okay? Sorry, yeah. I'll take it back.

So this is from a few days ago, which I didn't get a chance to respond to. You spoke a little last night—so this is already some nights ago, I think—about what people need for permission to work with the imaginal. And when you said eros, that really hit a chord for me. So I was wondering if you could speak or write a little about why it is important, why sexuality is important in soul-making, why it is necessary.

Like all these things, once we go into it with soul, it just becomes huge. So what's the involvement of eros and sexuality?

The way we're using the word eros is more than to mean sexuality. Sexuality is one manifestation of eros. Actually, you can have sex without eros in our book. But eros is this movement or some kind of movement or desire towards the beloved other—some kind of movement to know them more, to be more intimate, to touch them more, to be touched by them more, to enter or fill out or open. That's what eros is. It's a very simple definition.

And Eros has within it this other Greek god called Pothos. And Pothos is always looking beyond. He always wants more, always more. So that creates a certain dynamic. Eros wants this intimacy, enjoys the intimacy, and wants more, more.

Part of that can be sexual, but that whole movement of the psyche—that movement of eros—is something that drives this whole process with the eros-psyche-logos in the way that we described. On the abstract level, it functions as a concept that really holds everything together and is the catalyst to unfold, the catalyst for this dough, the bread to rise. Does that much make sense? I said it quite abstractly, just as a sort of bare concept.

We've covered that a lot. But to me, that whole eros-psyche-logos business is really one of the linchpins of all this work. Understanding it can really... understanding it and getting familiar with it can itself be soul-making and will be part of what really galvanizes the whole process of soul-making—is understanding that eros-psyche-logos, what we call the soul-making dynamic.

So sexuality, sexual longing, sexual desire, sexual energy is one manifestation of eros. It's a kind of eros. And within it has a huge range. Sometimes in the being, or even if we're doing imaginal work, there's so much eros that it kind of has to become sexual—not necessarily in any act, but in the image itself. It's holding a kind of intensity of eros, which is part of the depth and the richness of the psyche. Is this making sense?

But then also, turning it around a little bit—if we're going to have the fullness of soul-making, we need to have the fullness of our eros. And our eros needs to be able to manifest how it wants to at any time. So sometimes it's very, very subtle, not at all sexual. Sometimes it's very, very strong and dramatic and forceful and not at all sexual. And sometimes it's subtle and sexual, and sometimes it's intense and sexual, or in the imaginal realm.

From the other perspective, I said that as the soul-making dynamic gets more into our life and our life becomes involved in that, more and more aspects of our being and our existence get drawn into the soul-making dynamic. One of them will be sexuality. In other words, sexuality gets made soulful.

It might already be quite a lot for many people in our culture for sexuality to be heartful—and let's not underestimate that. But for sexuality to be soulful, what does that mean? And again, this might be the actual physical sexuality, sexual acts, but also just the whole realm of sexuality. Part of that will touch on the body—to be ensouled, to become subsumed, to be given dimensionality, to give this sense of sacredness. And it doesn't mean just light—it can be dark as well. Body, sensuality, the senses, sexuality—they become drawn into and ignited in the soul-making dynamic.

It's necessary in the sense that it's necessary to the fullness of the process of soul-making. It's necessary that it spreads out that way. And eros is fundamentally necessary to soul-making. No eros, no soul-making.

There's an energetic dimension to this that's crucial to understand. What often happens when there's sexual desire is the desire and the energy get cramped somewhere in the body. They're not given space, the energy itself. And this relates to the question: can I bring the whole energy body in? When the energy gets constricted, it becomes hard to tolerate, and I feel I have to act immediately.

There's also a deeper level involving the eros-psyche-logos dynamic. If everything is just flat, flatly material, and just what it seems to be to conventional agreed perception, then the pothos in the eros that wants more can only go in one direction. When we're talking about sexuality—though this applies to any area where there's craving—the eros wants more, but where can it go?

It has to go into material manifestation, and then I'll get bored of this particular material manifestation, this particular partner or whatever it is, and I'll seek another one. Because it can only go horizontally. I refuse dimensionality because I'm not engaging the sensing with soul. And so the eros that wants more can only seek another high, another experience.

But if I allow the eros to inseminate psyche, to fertilize psyche, then—to use an image—the dough rises, and it's allowed to become imaginal. Then the more that pothos and eros warms, it gets more by virtue of the dimensionality, the complexification, the multi-aspectness, the divinity. And actually it doesn't need the endlessly horizontal satisfaction of craving.

Eros, this wanting more, can either go into craving—and it just demands more and more. It's insatiable, as the Buddha said, this unquenchable thirst, tanha. But it can only go horizontally when I refuse to see, or I'm not encouraging a sense of dimensionality.

If I do allow dimensionality, then things can get what they need in the dimensionality itself. There's more, and it grows more dimensionality. So there's an energetic pressure, and there's also a kind of psychic pressure, but it's getting more space to be, to get its needs met, its desires met.

We have so much good stuff in our culture—so much sexual liberation and sexual possibility that perhaps wasn't there in different places at different times in history. And we have many other positive developments. But we also have a lot of difficulty with that freedom sexually, and we're given different challenges.

Like so many other things, from a certain perspective, they could use being more ensouled. And this is not to say it's always easy at all—not at all to imply that. But one can have choices, and the imaginal amplitude that fills things out gives one more choices.

And it's not to say you should or shouldn't, you know, within the limits of ethics, but there's space there that can be filled in.

There's a question here about reality and ontology. I've resisted asking a question about ontology because I imagine it would take too long, but if somebody else... Let me say something very brief. I'll read this note and then say something very brief, because part of what I want to say is that ontology is endless.

Does everyone know what ontology means? It's the branch of philosophy that deals with the question of what is real, what reality is. So this comes up because of what we're talking about. We have a typical kind of cultural norm of what's real and what isn't, and imagination is definitely in the "not real" category in

the typical cultural norm. When you start doing this kind of practice, it starts to raise some of those questions.

This person wrote: "Sometimes I have the perception that I am autonomously creating/discovering an image, but at others I perceive the image to be autonomously creating/discovering me. This is quite uncanny. Given the equal emptiness of all things—i.e., our equally insubstantial claim to inherent existence—truly mutual perception in co-creating/discovering each other raises some perplexing ontological questions. I would be grateful if you could clarify."

I'd be grateful if I could clarify! So let's just see. What's important here? A lot.

I find this is part of the Eros-Psyche-Logos dynamic. This is exactly this thing happening—when I start to practice this way and when I move this way and I have repeated experiences, it pushes on the Logos, part of the conceptual framework. Part of that is: "Boy, is it real?" So that's part of it expanding and pushing on the logos. We would expect this kind of process.

When we see that everything is empty, that functions in one sort of very basic way in relation to this work, and then possibly other ways. But one of the basic ways it functions is this: if for someone who really goes into the emptiness teaching and the fabricating and unfabricating and understanding all that and that whole depth of that journey, and you see that absolutely everything is empty—as the note says, what we can say about everything is that fundamentally they're equally empty.

What that does is... one of the things that does, one of the most basic things that does, is it relaxes a kind of objection in the consciousness that says, "That's not real." And it came up in another Q&A. Implicit in that "that's not real"—of whatever experience I've had—is a hidden whole set of assumptions about something else being real. Once you see everything's empty, then that whole... whatever I'm thinking is real gets relaxed. So the whole dichotomy of real and unreal just gets loosened. Does this make sense?

So what that does—it's a slightly different thing to say everything has exactly the same reality status than to say everything has the same kind of emptiness status. So that's an important point.

And as I said, going back to I think it was Iona's question, I don't know anyone who's mapped out all this ontology, or it could never be mapped out to everyone's satisfaction. One of the interesting things I find about ontology, which really is a important subject to me, fascinating, etc.—there's a movement in modern Western philosophy of people who say: Because we can't arrive at any final position about reality and unreality, let's just drop the whole ontological business. It's just a waste of time.

I find that not very soul-making. And what you'll notice in certain philosophers that do that is exactly an absence of soul-making. And also a default fallback. So they might say, "Yes, yes, yes, we can't say what's real." But in their lives and the way they live and their commitments, they're falling back to just the conventional modern Western view of what's real. That giving up of ontology—it might be quite fashionable in certain modern philosophical circles, but it's actually not a deep giving up. It's just a kind of

shrugging and going back to how one lived before anyway.

I don't think humanity—however long, I don't know how long humanity has been around, and all the different cultures and all the different histories and all the different thinkings and perceptions—I don't think that because we haven't arrived at any conclusive ontology... I mean, we have certain ontologies that people favor at different times, but in the sense that modern Western philosophy says we can't... I think it's endless. This ontologizing, thinking about these things and changing our perceptions and adopting different conceptual frameworks about reality and non-reality—that's endless, and it's part of soul-making. Does this make sense? It's part of the logos getting caught up and activated in the Eros-Psyche-Logos dynamic.

Now there's one more thing: Why am I ontologizing? Or why do we do ontology? Oftentimes it's because I want to arrive at the truth. What if I was ontologizing because I want to soul-make? It's a different purpose. What's the purpose?

Do you understand? And so that's quite a radical difference of intention. I'm not going after some kind of finally objective truth that humanity will then embrace - like we've done that, tick. Rather, maybe the nature of reality will remain an endlessly fertile mystery that we can participate in, in that creation-discovery of the reality of reality. And that's part of the whole soulmaking journey.

If we hone in on this note a little bit, again, I would expect this kind of experience in the very unfolding of the imaginal work. Because of the autonomy, there's this kind of flipping - it's still create-discover, but it's just flipped around. And then what is it to be able to seriously entertain that conceptual framework that I am being... I and my life is being created and discovered by some image that in some sense has, you could say, more reality than me. But I'm not settling on that as something that I'm going to then argue about or convince others of. Do you understand?

So there's this malleability of the deepest level of conceptual framework. But again, the question is, what happens?

I didn't know what the word uncanny meant, because what does canny mean? It means knowing. So uncanny means not knowing - weird. It is weird, certainly weird compared to most modern Western ways of looking. There probably are other cultures that may have something like this.

What I would prefer in terms of practice is when someone has arrived at this complete flip of experience and conceptual framework has emerged out of practice in, I think, the most beautiful way. Is that fair to say? And it's startling and opening and radical. Rather than then look for another culture or philosophy - because I might think, oh, is it like it's all Vishnu's dream or something like that? Does that exist somewhere? Yes, that exists. I could go and find that. But something might die for me in the aliveness of that very experience and the way it's unfolding in my practice.

I'm not demanding anything. It's emerging. And then what's my own personal ontology, if you like - my

own conceptual framework - what does that do to my soul? So there's ontology for the sake of soulmaking and the experience, inhabiting that experience. What does it do to my sense of existence and life and my journey when I have that sense? And I don't need to make it a gospel truth, you understand? But I can have a real kind of entertaining, a real seriousness about it in terms of its reality status.

So that's all I'm going to say about ontology for now.

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