Hi everyone,

I have made a decision that the conversation last Friday was about choices. Like vanilla or chocolate. Or is it that I have chosen the position that last Friday's conversation was about decisions?

Not sure. The hypotheses that we started with is that your state has an affect on the outcome of your experience. Perhaps everything you experience could be different depending on your animated state at the time. Sounds reasonable. When I'm angry, your joke doesn't seem nearly as funny as it did when I was happy.

Is your structural coupling to the event appropriate or not? Roger suggests that you might shift your state in circumstances like an emergency, in which case you would have vivid clear memory, and plenty of time to shift your body in order to avoid getting your leg crushed by a car. It could happen to anyone.

Let's examine our state. We have choice in the area of state. It is generally hard to directly choose our state, but noticing our state allows a choice. If that seems reasonable, now try to distinguish between choice and decision. Think about the case of naming and then choosing either to bypass or engage. Are we choosing bypass or engage, or have we made a decision of one over the other?

We tend to operate habitually. You know that because at some point, your car drives automatically to work when you were headed for the grocery store. Choice is not habitual.

Why choose vanilla? Is that a choice or a decision? If you say I chose vanilla because I chose vanilla, that is more like a choice than I chose vanilla because I like white. That is more like a decision. Logic involves negation, that is how a decision happens.

Think about a spectrum with an object on one end. You are at the effect of circumstance at this end. Your state arises from this. Your state is fixed, but as you move across the spectrum, you get to a place that the fixed state becomes mutable. At the midpoint of the spectrum, it looks like acceptance. You choose the way things are or seem to be. That gets you to move to the other end of the spectrum which is not fixed.

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What happens when you name? You fix a state and separate from it. You change the boundary of the system by the process of naming.

For example, in the fine arts community if they think you are not good enough, they just come out and tell you. It's considered a kindness, but the critics are often wrong. It is a process of naming and engaging rather than naming and bypassing. You changed the boundary.

Another example is how based on your role in an organization, everyone changes the way they relate to you. Two executives decided they would work together collaboratively, but the rest of the organization saw them as being in a power struggle. The plan the executives made didn’t work.

Or you could get a promotion at work, and find all of a sudden your colleagues seemed to behave differently at a meeting. Its like you suddenly became a millionaire and everyone changes but you.

But choosing what is. That is not easy to do. Your attention is on animating a particular state, even if your view is that you have no choice. Inshallah works for Sema’s mom.

Then choice is really not a choice, is it? Sort of.

If you had complete acceptance, it frees up psychic energy that you can use on something else. Think of a monk. The monastery has a fixed structure with no choices, but you can practice in that world. You don’t fight what is, and the acceptance practice opens something else up. You probably don’t spend nearly as much time dreaming up coping mechanisms as you would normally. Coping mechanisms always lead to more coping mechanisms. It goes on and on. So what do you do with all the extra time? You contemplate your relationship to death. You

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From: "Dianne J. DeTurris" <ddeturri@calpoly.edu>
Subject: Dianne chooses vanilla, workshop notes from Oct 19
Date: October 23, 2012 9:56:53 PM PDT
To: Lizabeth Schlemer <lschleme@calpoly.edu>, "Rachel R. Henry" <rrhenry@calpoly.edu>
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cultivate your mastery of desire. You look at where you are habitual and watch it become obsolete over time. Then you choose vanilla.

Lets think about "choosing what is" as our homework for next week. Where do you start? Find something that is, then
1) deny what is
2) exaggerate a decision
3) practice naming what is

Roger cautions that "finding what is" is very difficult. Think about a chair. In order to be sure that a chair is, you rely on memory and separating yourself from the object.

You might find out "what is" for you, and then realize that its just you. Oh. Does “is” require something material? Does it exist if it stands out from a background.

You might have trouble with the homework even if you just simply ask the question “what is?”

Look at what it means to choose your own thoughts. Looking at a physical manifestation is a good way to work with "what is". Roger suggests that choosing what is might get your headache to go away. We could probably get Roger to try his in our class, although it may make us look like witch doctors, depending on your world view.

Think about "what am I resisting?" Practice choosing wherever you are, and notice if it has the effect of redrawing the boundary. Good luck, can't wait to hear how it goes. In the meantime, I am choosing vanilla because everyone else did and I think that is a decision rather than a choice. What's your choice?

Dianne

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"Cal Poly’s ability to provide a rich learning experience depends on each of us choosing to act with integrity, to show respect and concern for one another, and to promote the benefits of diversity by practicing and advocating openness, respect, and fairness." Jeffrey Armstrong, October 15, 2012