

## TRANSMUTATION, 7<sup>th</sup> Power of the Universe

From Brian Swimme's video *The Powers of the Universe*

The obvious piece of evidence for the need for transformation is when the effect of your actions are the opposite of what you intended. This is the state of the planet today.

Transmutation is the deep change that is required.

The human species is under the grip of powerful forces that are largely unconscious. We need to release ourselves from being determined by them. For example, our desire to have children is at odds with the population explosion.

Swimme puts his position in the direct lineage of depth psychology.

- Freud talked about the personal unconscious.
- Jung extends this insight to the collective unconscious, the whole experience of the human.
- Greg Bateson widens it to the whole biological community, the eco-system mind.
- Swimme deepens it to the cosmos as a whole.

The processes that developed the universe are at work in us. THAT'S THE WHOLE IDEA. Our goal is to understand the cosmological unconsciousness.

The Powers of the Universe are studying themselves through us. The processes that shaped the human are now studying the processes. Pierre de Chardin said that we are the Universe reflecting on itself. We are the power of transmutation reflecting on itself through us.

How can this understanding lead to a more vibrant community?

Transmutation is the process of the change of form through time. There have been 5 great transmutations in the history of the Universe.

1. Elemental particles → atoms
2. Clouds of atoms → galaxies
3. Primal stars → stellar systems with planets
4. On earth, molten rock → living planet
5. Early life → advanced form of ecosystems

But every moment is also a moment of transmutation.

It is amazing the way the Universe forces itself from one era to another. There is no choice, no possibility of reversal, no choice not to transmute. When life transmuted from the simple prokaryotes to eukaryotes, because of the change in atmosphere, the old form of life could no longer survive.

What do we do at this moment when we are forced to leave the Cenozoic era and move into the planetary era (called the Ecozoic era by Thomas Berry)?

There are powerful enabling processes of transmutation:

## Constraint :: Judgement and rejection

### Constraints

What was formerly free is constrained. For example, the magma that was formerly free to move is now constrained by the earth's crust. The movement of continents is constrained by collision with other continents and mountains are formed.

The constraints enable the planet to blossom. The bird is constrained by the grasshopper and the grasshopper by the bird. Their desires are in opposition. If the grasshopper moved slower, the bird would lose its swift agility. If the bird moved slower, the grasshopper would lose the ability to be visually alert. The excellence of each depends on their opposition and the creativity is spread through the whole system.

### Judgement

Those that can't change are taken out of the game. The dynamics of opposition and judgement are what we know as natural selection. The bird's beak reflects the dynamics of the bark. They are intimately connected. This creates the beauty of the biome.

The entire history of the planet has been determined by the integrity of the whole, which is maintained by the struggle of the whole.

We have taken the whole system into collapse. How did this happen?

The power of language and symbols has enabled the human to get around the constraints and judgements of the system. Language draws in all the powers into the service of the species. We have found a way to get around the discipline of the community.

We are called to bring the constraints on human activity that were previously provided by the community. Natural dynamics must proceed under conscious self-awareness. This will enable this power to develop in a new form. The powers can no longer guarantee the integrity of the planet. They must be realized through the human.

The power of transmutation shows up in humans through laws, customs, and disciplines that constrain human activity. Some things shouldn't be done. Up to now, our laws have focused on the human. Now they must focus on the whole community of life in order to prosper. The Endangered Species Act is a new kind of law that embodies this fundamental shift. It is evidence of a major change in human conscious awareness of the integrity of the whole.

How is the power of transmutation embodied in the human?

- Intense concern for the bottom line, which is energy.
- Sensitivity to the dynamics of the whole
- Drive for success, for survival.
- A pragmatic mind. Not dogmatic. Ability to change in order to make it through.
- Highly disciplined person
- Awareness of structure

Negative forms of transmutation in the human, evidence that the power is frozen:

- Depression
- Cynicism
- Guilt

What does it feel like to be have the power of transmutation in a human?

- It feels as if one doesn't fit in.
- It feel cut off, rejected
- And all the wounds that go with that.

What is the response?

The most wounded have the most capacity for providing what is necessary.

The constraints on human activity must enable the earth to flower.

There are three choices:

1. Eliminate the oppositional constraint.
2. Give up, become the victim.
3. See in the opposition one's destiny; embrace the rejection. See the way the Universe is rejecting part of you, those elements of oneself that are maladaptive such as consumerism and the notion that we can destroy our opponents.

The planet is withering because we have accepted a context that is much too small such as one's job or the corporation. We must move to a planetary context.

When we embrace the rejection, we identify with that which opposes us in our search for a vibrant planetary community. We embrace the wound of not being seen or heard by developing the excellence to show oneself. This is the process of moving into the realization of that which opposed you carries your own destiny.

Identify the context of transmutation. The plant and animal biome transmutes in the context of their DNA. The human context is the universe. It extends from the distant past into the future. Our decisions will influence far into the future.

Identify our adversaries and our models. Let the great moments of beauty in the universe become our guides.

We are attempting to become those beings in the future that enable the whole to flower.

We must align human energies with the energies of the Universe.