

Round & Round & Round

A different Light – 7 July 2018

I'm in training. I have an event looming on the horizon. I need to be in tip top shape, a lean mean vice-free machine. My neck surgery is looming up like a grey iceberg in a grey corridor, on an overcast day. Why grey? Because the outcomes are uncertain, not black and white. But one thing is for sure, so I have been told by plenty of experts in the medical know, I need to be as healthy as I possibly can for the surgery to have the best possible result.

As such dry July has been dry. The other four of my vices have dried up too. People around me say I'm edgy, highly strung, vaguely belligerent. My wife and PA are plotting to form a mutual support group. If you ask me, however I'm just the same, happy- go- lucky scamp, just a bit more efficient at present.

Yes, I'm efficient. I'm in training. I wake at 4:30am and after procrastinating, by lying in bed investing in 10 minutes of bitterness, I get up and compound my acidity by consuming a glass of lemon juice and water followed by 4 shots of espresso derived from those overpriced capsules. This is my ritualistic build up to hopping on the exercycle for ½ an hour. In my new efficient mode, I don't waste time because time is ...time. I multi-task. I watch Ted Talks. Thousands of presentations delivered by the world's most unlazy, intelligent, faux diverse and anally earnest. My horizons are broadening, my cup of conversational topics runneth over. I have listened to astronomic biologists, I've listened to a blind astronomer, composer,s singing about the digital age and decomposers talking about making friends with death. Negative you may say, but oh contraire! They all seem to be alchemists peddling global problems into nifty solutions, while I pedal into a fervour of a panting sweat, round and round, straight ahead, going nowhere fast. I listen to how boomers are moving into their senior years with empty pockets and what to do to avoid that (downsize, yuck!) Round and round, one two, one two....Youth unemployment in Africa directly causing and affecting civil war; solution, intensive micro farming of course (someone tell Shane Jones before we take up arms). Round and round, left-right, left-right, pant, wheeze! An astrophysicist loses her sight, does she quit? Hell no! she had a revelatory insight: the light curves she could no longer see could be translated into sound. Of course! Through sonification, she regained mastery over her work, and now she's advocating for a more inclusive scientific community. "Science is for everyone," she proclaimed.

Round and round, round and round, gasp, rasp. A talk on the 'politics of disgust' pointed out how facial expressions throughout the world and throughout history do not vary, when confronted with images of dog turds and festering sores. Eeek! The presenter went on to segue these concepts of disgust into politics. "Throughout history, certain disgust properties -- sliminess, bad smell, stickiness, decay, foulness -- have repeatedly and monotonously been associated with ... Jews, women, homosexuals, untouchables, lower-class people". Hang on I thought, wait a minute, I've seen micro-expressions on people's faces when I am meeting them for the first time and they are trying to understand what I am saying through my speech impairment (I'm thing of a particular local Café owner). My pedalling slows as rumination starts its own cycling. A crash course in Organic Chemistry; yep I'll have a bit of

that. Hydrogen makes one bond, oxygen always makes two, nitrogen makes three and carbon makes four. That's it. HONC, say that again. As I rewind, trying to wrap my fatigued neurons around the monocular concept, the pedalling slows even more. A modernist Buddhist Monk who was talking about mankind being on the brink of ruining our environment, provided me with an excuse to step off the exercycle and call it a morning. "Five years ago we were at a vast precipice. Today we take a big step forward". Aargh... into the grey...

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