

Introduction from Chungliang:

Carolyn Kleefeld and I were both on Laura Huxley's board of advisors of her foundation, Children: Our Ultimate Investment (COUI) and became kindred friends. Carolyn Kleefeld, not only is a fine artist, author and poet, she is one of our most faithful and supportive patrons who have continued to give us annual financial donations. I believe this piece can be a good addition to link up with our support team of friends, also a great chance to say thank you and honor her. Here is a gracious response when I inquired of the possibility of our using this interview--- (by the way, the title HHR when we communicate stands for "Hopelessly Hopeful Romantics", it became the club name we made vows to become members when Laura Huxley and I, with Carolyn Kleefeld, the last time together at Esalen Institute.)

Dear HHR brother Chungliang Al,

Thanking you for your response to the TAO Question/Answer interview.

I would be thrilled to share it with the living TAO members, and be included in your website link to inspire our international "Living TAO friends."

That's wonderful!

May your travels go well, and I also aspire to a person-to-person dance with you, my illustrious, immortal brother.

Much love,
From HHR sister Carolyn



"The Yak of My Soul"

Byoung K. Park, PhD, assistant professor of English at Lorain Community College in Ohio, is translating Carolyn Kleefeld's *Soul Seeds: Revelations and Drawings* into Korean. This translation will be published in early 2012 in a bilingual edition by Korean Expatriate Literature and distributed in South Korea and the U.S. As part of Byoung's work, he asked Carolyn the following questions, as he thought the answers could enhance his translation of her writing.

1. **Byoung:** *Taoism is essential in understanding the general tone of Soul Seeds and in a few specific chapters like "Faith in the Tao" and "Creating from the Unconditioned." Could you briefly explain the concept of Taoism and your direct experience of it?*

Carolyn: To quote the *Tao Te Ching*, "The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao." Also, "The name that can be named is not the eternal Name." And, "The unnamable is the eternally real. Naming is the origin of all particular things." As one who dares to utter of the ineffable, the above words reflect my own philosophy; therefore, my following comments are of a secondary nature, "particular," and purely experiential. A few of these ideas are expressed in this latest poem:

The Unnamable
inspired by the Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu

I'll let the nameless
name me.

And travel its resonance
from nothingness
to One.

Ever relinquishing
to more,
to less,

To the unnamable.

The music without
the chairs.
A life pulsed
by the intangible.

I must know
life is a treasure
until I start naming things--
then I need to remember
that would be the end of
what it means to live
the unnamable.

As I mentioned, if anything, I am a philosophical Taoist. Taoism is a direct experience for me, beyond concept—following sublime intuition, coming from the unconditioned (as much as possible)--through a sacred reverence for life, through the sheer magic of the “unseen design.” In addition, Spinoza, Krishnamurti, Alan Watts, and Lao Tzu, among others, have validated and inspired my journey.

Living the Tao is a yield, a letting go. It is an experiment of living the unknown, being an open instrument in unplanned orchestration, one’s emptiness offered to the mystery, the unknown, into the seas of rebirth (living and dying), in a process of re-discovering oneself, each other, the reflection of each other’s souls.

In being open to the more expansive, to the Tao, we learn to trust, a faith that allows us to be guided by forces that are more dimensional than the personal alone, with sublime intuition as our essential guide. We develop an acceptance that a perfection exists in what is, even if it may not be to our liking.

The indefinable Tao is as natural as the tides ebbing and flowing. Out of necessity the Tao flows, bearing all things. All we need to do is show up!

In our resulting freedom, we may rejoice, finding union in the expanded moment outside of time. The forces of nature that fuel us are beyond our minds, though they may require our consciousness to assist in navigating our dynamics and energies.

2. *Byoung:* *The God in your aphorisms is presented like that from Unitarianism (or American Transcendentalism); could you briefly explain the concept of God and your direct experience on it?*

Carolyn: Since God, the Tao, are unnamable, I speak experientially of the intuitive guidance that thrives in the moment. For me, the sacrosanct is found in silence, in meditation, and is mindless. Exploring the moment can offer innumerable possibilities for transcendent experiences of wonder and of miracles.

It takes time to develop the faith to live this way. As one of my aphorisms, a favorite of the late Laura Huxley’s says, "Silence answers us in our mirrored lake of repose." To me, that is where God is.

3. **Byoung:** *I have been greatly intrigued into practicing Jungian psychology within an East Asian mold—your drawings, along with the aphorisms, clearly connate the archetypes like Great Motherhood of Nature, unisex, and collective unconsciousness—how have you embraced these ideas into your aphorisms?*

Carolyn: Being a Pantheist, I am in resonance, absorbing the essence of the wilderness, and then the various concepts synthesize as One. In studying psychology, its conceptual archetypes and abstractions, I have discovered another facet in the kaleidoscope of understanding. I nevertheless think this interpretation can be limiting if not expanded to the universal. These dynamics are varied ingredients that one can stir into the cosmic soup of the Tao.

4. **Byoung:** *Soul Seeds ends with “Now is the season for our souls to be nourished, for the seeds of spirit to birth a new world.” Why do you believe or claim that “now” is the time to nurture our soul seeds? And, what is your “new world,” although your 24 chapters articulate it already?*

Carolyn: In the planet’s eleventh hour, an obvious immediacy is required for us to challenge the acceleration of catastrophe and worldly chaos. It is a now or never time.

We are required to nurture the one area of our lives that we *can* influence and in which we also have the freedom to create for ourselves—our sacred garden within, or new world. This new world is our opportunity to express and create the lyrical harmony of our visions and dreams--nurturing our souls instead of succumbing to global materialistic corruption. It is a world in which, as Aldous Huxley spoke of, rather than having dissension in diversity, we can have unity in diversity.

5. **Byoung:** *How did you get the title Soul Seeds, what does it mean to you, and what do you expect it to mean to your readers?*

Carolyn: As I do not make poems or aphorisms—they make themselves--out of me, the title came accordingly that way. When I am in a timeless zone, flashes of insight may come--sounding the bells of platonic meaning that intimate an alignment, a resonance with the universal.

The title means a nurturing for the soul, poetic nutrition and universal insights offered to readers as seeds of inspiration. The writing that comes from this sacred place is the music that can be sung by our souls, reconnecting us to our spiritual origins and creating new bridges to expansive understandings and ways of being.

For my dear friend Patricia Holt, my heartfelt gratitude for her invaluable assistance in editing these responses to Dr. Byoung Park.