

Reflecting on Connecting

by Pete Dalton

pili kau, pili ho'oilo

(together in the dry season, together in the wet season)

Someone recently suggested to me that it would be easier and 'safer' if we took a position of detachment from our thoughts, feelings and experiences, that to be disconnected provides some kind of protection from 'bad' things that might happen in life. While I appreciate that sometimes people might get to a position of wanting to be disconnected from negative experiences, it encouraged me to reflect more on what connection is and whether disconnection is desirable or even possible.

As I began to write about this topic from a Huna perspective, I realised just how much the notion of connection underlies and pervades everything in the Huna adventurer tradition and that a short article could never cover it all.

So here I offer some non-comprehensive, deliberately brief and extremely cherry-picked reflections on connection from a Huna perspective. Perhaps this will provide a spring board for you to begin to consider more deeply what connection means to you.

Everything is connected

- To begin with, a fundamental Huna belief is that everything is connected. The Huna principle *Kala* – there are no limits, some translations of which are to 'loosen, untie or release' points to the notion of an unlimited universe where everything is connected always and inextricably.
- Everything is energy. The Huna system posits that everything is energy although that energy may manifest in varying forms. There is an ongoing interplay of energy within the universe. Energy is endless and infinite.
- Everything exists in a universal field of *aka* - the 'stuff' of which everything is comprised. Things only appear differentiated because of differences in frequency of vibration.
- The Huna *kupua* is primarily a healer of relationships. This is because everything is interrelated and connected to everything else both in the inner world (mind body and spirit) and the outer

world (objects, people, events etc) and to increase effectiveness is to harmonise these relationships.

- Love is a driver that motivates us all. It is the fundamental urge to connect and this motivation operates whether or not we are aware of it. This includes the urge to connect to other people as well as things, places and everything else. In this respect, the Hawaiians strongly value *aloha aina* – loving the land like one would love a close family member. This is a valuable connection that is often neglected in modern culture.
- The starting point for the Huna adventurer approach involves focussing on actively increasing focussed connection through love which in turn increases effectiveness and power.
- Separation, epitomised by taking the perspective of *ike papkahi* – or first level objective reality, is adopted when it is empowering and allows us to achieve what we need to do. However, this notion of separateness, while useful, is illusory.

Feeling disconnected

So, if we are always connected how do we get to *feel* disconnected or even develop a desire to disconnect? If love is the urge to connect, then anything that reduces that urge reduces the feeling of connection. Fear, anger and doubt reduce the focus on love and therefore reduces our lived sense of connection. This perceived lack of connection can manifest as a form of alienation on a physical, emotional, mental and spiritual level or a combination of some, or all, of these levels.

Of course, our degree of focus can affect how much we perceive that we are connected to something or someone. There are circumstances when it is useful to consciously increase the perception of connection with one thing and reduce it with another thing.

Let me also clarify that there is a difference between "disconnecting" and "detaching." Disconnection has to do with avoidance and is based on fear. Detachment is about not being attached to an outcome and does not mean severance from anyone or anything.

To actively try to become disconnected from our experiences, apart from being truly impossible, is to deny our own fundamental urge toward connection. Even consciously connecting with less pleasurable experiences with an attitude of acceptance and self-compassion provides a starting point for healing and the learning of valuable lessons. Connecting doesn't mean things can't change, it doesn't mean you are

stuck with what is (I have written more at the idea of connecting without sticking here <http://www.huna.org/html/startingpoints.html>).

Repressing and wanting to disconnect from experiences can come about because we fear the intensity of our experiences, however, learning to connect with and embrace the intensity of *any* experience is part of learning to be fully present in living your life and being fully who you are.

Noticing connection

Take some time to reflect on the notion of connectedness and different ways in which we notice and understand connection. The possibilities are limitless and could include:

- Concepts of your past, present and future.
- Ancestors, peers and descendants
- Physical connections in your body- bones, muscles, tissue, neurons, chemicals
- Thoughts and experiences- real and symbolic
- Relationships with others - those close to you, acquaintances, people you have never met
- The interplay of one thing with another. For example, on an autumn day, the sun heating the surface of the earth, which raises atmospheric pressure, which generates a breeze, which moves the branches of a tree, which causes a leaf to fall to the ground, which makes a crunching sound underfoot etc
- The connection of the land and the sea to the food that you eat.

Whatever you reflect on, just notice how in some way you are part of it - you are connected.

Another exercise to try is as follows:

Take some time to wander into nature and stop and from a position of full presence begin to notice just how connected you are. It might surprise you....

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