

Intro:

Werner continues by pointing out some of the presuppositions of our society, which dictate to a large degree how we relate to our problems.

Werner:

There's a kind of, you know, we think, we say, I think this, and I think that, and I think the other thing, and I believe this, and I believe that, I believe the other thing, and I did this, and I did that, and I did the other thing, and it's kind of like we take it for granted, or the way we have life construed without knowing that we've construed life that way, that we are thinking, and that we are believing, and that we are doing, and that we are acting.

But if you step back a little bit and take a real look at it, most of what you and I think, we didn't think, it's something we have, like thoughts show up, and we have this thought, rather than we really think that.

Now that's very difficult to get, I think that's very difficult for most people to get, because, as I said, we live in this conspiracy, in this kind of unwritten presumption, or presupposition, that if you think something, you thought it, and if you believe something, you believed it, and if you did something, you did it.

But if you're really honest in examining yourself, you notice yourself thinking something, you notice that you thought something, now maybe we do think, and maybe we do believe, and maybe we do act, maybe we do do things, so I'm not saying we don't, but I'm saying that, for the most part, what we think, and what we believe, and what we do, kind of shows up there, it's like, rather than we think, thinking us's, it's like thinking's doing something to us, not we're doing something to thinking, as I say, maybe not all the time, but plenty of the time, and beliefs are doing something to us, we're not doing something to beliefs, and action is doing something to us, we're not doing something to action, as again, not all the time, but often.

So I want to call that, that seems to already be there, when we show up, that thing which is kind of acting on us, that which is already, like seems to be there, and we show up in it, I want to call that the thrown-ness, and I mean that word in all of the kind of subtle meanings it might have, like we're thrown to be a particular way, or there is a thrown-ness in which we operate, and yeah, we may go down this channel, or this channel, or this channel, but we don't go down to places where there are no channels, we only go down to places where there are channels, so it's like, it's thrown, and we're thrown, and we're thrown into the thrown-ness, so all those possible interpretations or nuances of it.

So I talked about thrown-ness, so that you and I can begin to see that we show up in something, that there's a something already there when we show up, male is already there, female is already there when we show up, like we don't show up as a male, like as a new event, male is already there, and we show up in that, lots of possibilities are like that, you can call that society, or socialization, or culture, or enculturation, or culturalization, that's a word, but I'm going to give it the name thrown-ness, so I'd like to say that people are thrown, that problems are bad, that you shouldn't have problems, and as a matter of fact, if you have a problem, there's something wrong with you, and that's how we know something's wrong with you, is you have problems, and those

people who don't have problems, there's nothing wrong with them, and those people who do have problems, there's something wrong with them, and if you've got a lot of problems, there's a lot wrong with you, and if you have very few problems, there's very little wrong with you.

But I want you to see that it's already there. You don't need to think that.

Your thinking shows up in that ground of being, in that structure of presuppositions, in that thrownness. Your thinking and your being and your life shows up. So whether you ever thought problems are bad or not doesn't make any difference.

Whatever you think, you think in this thrown 'problems are bad' and if you've got some problem there's something wrong with you. So you know if you've got problems in your relationships, if you've got a problem in your relationship, there's something wrong with the relationship. And if you've got problems at work, there's something wrong with your job. And if you've got problems with your children, there's something wrong with your family. And wherever you've got problems, there's something wrong. And for some people that's so obvious they say, well yeah certainly.

But God didn't say, probably you didn't say either, it's the thrownness which makes that determination for us.

Superstition is a very good example of what I'm talking about.

There was the age of superstition when kind of everything was interpreted as demons and goblins and evil spirits and people, you know, if they, the mirror broke that meant seven years of bad luck. And you know people had all kinds of little activities that they did and some not so little had some big activities that they did which reflected their superstition. And I'm inviting you to take a look at that you did not say and God did not say and it is not necessarily true that when you have a problem there's something wrong either with it or you or them or the other person or anything else.

It's not necessarily true. Yet you and I live as if it's true. And there's some interesting consequences.

See if you've got a problem and that means there's something wrong with you, now you got somebody who's disabled to deal with the problem. That seems not a good situation. If I have a problem I want to get the most able person I know to deal with the problem. Not somebody who's disabled, but somebody with whom there's something wrong. Yet given this thrown interpretation in which we live this kind of superstition and it's really like pure superstition that's what I like about it. I mean if you don't examine it it seems perfectly valid.

Like evil spirits I'm sure were witches. I mean it was just clear cut people were witches. I mean you've got to understand it was clear cut was so clear cut that people got burned to death for being witches.

That's pretty clear cut. And this notion that if you've got a problem there's something wrong with you is just a clear cut. That's the way it is.

Not even to be examined. If you don't examine it it really seems valid. And there are these consequences.

Like I say there's this consequence of now having a disabled person, a person with whom there's something wrong got to deal with the problem. So I'd like to suggest the possibility that relationships are supposed to have problems in them. And that if you've got a relationship in which there are no problems you either are living in a fantasy or you don't have a relationship.

And that when a relationship has a problem in it it doesn't mean that there's something wrong. It may mean that you've got a relationship in which there's a problem. There may be something wrong with the relationship.

There may be something wrong with you. There may be something wrong with the other person. But it's also possible that you've got a relationship with a problem and there's nothing wrong with either person nor is there anything wrong with the relationship.

And there are consequences of that being so as well. Consequences of that being so is that you've got a healthy relationship with which to deal with the problem and two healthy people who are not in any way disabled. And it's not a matter of words.

It's a matter of what's really so. I mean what is actually so there? And I say this notion that there's something wrong is just a part of the throwiness. It's something we inherited by being born into this culture and society.

Was already there. You didn't get the vote. That's not fair.

You should be able to vote. I think that until a person can come to grips with and be fully alive in the face of a problem that the person has really hampered themselves in life. Really kind of stopped themselves in life.

Kept themselves from being fully alive. So I'm not talking about positive thinking or some pollyanna see good in everything. Because I don't think everything is good.

Number one, I don't see good in everything. I think that certain things are evil or not good. And I hate positive thinking.

I think that honest thinking is very powerful. I also hate negative thinking. It's as naive and childish and as shallow as positive thinking.

There's some people only think positive thinking is bad. They put down positive thinkers. But if positive thinkers are shallow, then negative thinkers got to be shallow too.

So I'm not talking about positive thinking or pollyanna everything is good. See good in everything. I'm simply saying let's call things what they are.

And let's take the blinders that in a manner of speaking we could say we inherited from society. And begin to look at problems as an integral part of life. And this kind of sloppy, non-rigorous way of living with problems is really counterproductive.

The ability to be with your problems or with the problems lets you be. People who cannot let their problems be cannot be with their problems. And just in case someone's misinterpreting what I mean by letting something be, I don't mean again as we discussed before giving into it or surrendering to it.

I mean simply knowing that you've got a problem and that life is a problem. Life is a problem. People who really don't want to have any problems, there's a cure for that.

You have all of the organs that you don't need absolutely removed. And you suspend the rest of it in tepid water. And then you never have any more problems.

But if you're going to be alive, you're going to have problems because life is a problem. Life is a problem. Being alive is a problem.

And those of us who want to embrace life need to be willing to come to grips with this whole issue of problems. And stop treating it like something that shouldn't be there. And something you don't want.

Now it's true that you don't want problems. Nobody wants problems. But that's you like what you're thrown to be.

Not you like yourself. So you can bring yourself forth as a person who lives in the face of problems. And whose commitment is to deal with and solve the problems of life.

To embrace the problems. You know a problem becomes an opportunity to be alive. And I don't mean calling problems opportunities.

Because some problems are just damn problems. They ain't opportunities at all. Now I like what Higgins said earlier.

That what he said about when you got a problem that you're stuck with. It's almost invariably that you've got a scarcity of possibilities. I think that's right on.

And that if you can begin to generate possibilities around a problem. The problem stops being stuck. So I like that.

But that's not to call it an opportunity. It's a damn problem. That's what it is.

That's its name. And it's something that as I'm thrown I don't want. But did you ever notice in life that when you get everything you want you're not happy anyhow? It's like the song.

Is this all there is? Is this what it was all about? Now I got everything I want. So getting what you want doesn't make you happy. I mean really.

It's better if you've got a choice of getting what you want and being happy or not getting what you want and being happy. You can be happy both ways. I prefer to have what I want and be happy.

But I'm very clear that getting what I want isn't going to make me happy. I had the privilege of working with Japan's leading Zen master. And besides being at that time Japan's leading Zen master, he was also one of Japan's leading calligraphers.

And he did a set of calligraphies for me. And they were like so. And he would do the character.

And then underneath it would put a little inscription also in Japanese. One of the characters was the character for happiness. And what he wrote underneath it is I don't want it.

It's pretty hard to get that. What do you mean you don't want happiness? I think he was talking about something about wants don't make you happy. Wanting happiness doesn't make you happy.

Wanting what you want doesn't make you happy. I mean it's just that simple. So none of us want problems.

Okay. I know I don't want problems. I know the way I'm thrown is I don't want them.

So all I'm saying is something very simple. That the tranquilized obviousness with which we live, this thrownness, the everyday interpretation with which we live, that which is so so for us that we never bother to question it, that we need to be willing to do a little violence to that. In order to break up this thrownness about problems so that we can live effectively.

Because to be alive means to have problems. And to be fully alive means to be able to engage the problems like something you are accepting the existence of. Something to which you are granting beingness.

Something which you're allowing to be. Not something which you're succumbing or giving into or surrendering to. But something which you're allowing to be.