

## The Art of Parts: Participating in the Puzzle of Life

"For us how difficult to become whole,  
a part is always left out  
and that is the part we have to choose."

Pope John Paul II from his poem The Blind

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The *Whole* (god, fame, fortune, sex, power, knowledge, love) we all search for is created by our search for it. This *Whole* we seek in our lives is in fact the *hole* we each have left to mark our absent place in Unconscious Life Itself.

At birth we emerge from the Whole in which we were dissolved - we are precipitated into a separate, participating part which is our conscious self. As a separate part we become a puzzle we are driven to solve. The solution we seek is our dissolution back into unconscious Life. That is, we try throughout our lifetime to lose or dissolve our sense of separateness from Life as a Whole. What we seek salvation from is our separate self.

Thus the missing Whole you yearn for is the participating part (you as a separate conscious entity) you must learn about. As a separate entity you are *apart from* the originating Whole but you are also *a part of* that Whole. The hole you left in that Whole by withdrawing from it is what you must try to fill in by finding your fit within temporary Wholes so long as you live. Not until you die will you be able to fill that hole finally and become complete again. So long as you have consciousness you will be moved to find your fit within the variety of social Wholes that draw you to them as a separate but social part.

"The person and environment fit together like interlocking pieces of a puzzle, each shaped by the other." Michaels and Carello, Direct Perception

You as a separate individual are both a whole unto yourself as well as a part of the world. You are complete in yourself and not complete. This tension between being *apart from* while being *a part of* the world comes with birth, remains to death, and is the source of your fundamental anxiety as a conscious being.

Your happiness or adaptivity depends upon your "fitness", that is, how well your part fits with other parts to compose its various social wholes. Throughout your life, you as a part participate with other parts to create wholes which provide the meaning of life for all involved.

As an adult, the primary whole that your part is designed to participate in is an intimate committed relationship with an opposite sex partner. From this union you go on to fit into ever larger social units from the family to the nation.

Until you begin to recognise and respect the "form" of your part you will find your fitness haphazard, unpredictable and a source of unease. In order to meet and keep your other matching half - your life partner - you will need to know your self.