

The World of Us

It is a world where high-tech markets reign king and master and we are its obedient and dependent slaves, despite our “desires” and “intentions” to still be in charge and at the helm. A world where people talk, and talk, and talk, and often say little, other than the repetitions banalities of here-say and the mundane, though on occasion some chores get done, in spite of the disruption.

We talk on line... via chat rooms, the Internet, then voice mail, answering machines and the “mobile”. The one that we clutch tightly in our hands as if we must possess it, liken to a child, afraid that it won’t ring again and yet in moments of duress, when it does. We wait, we wait... and we wait some more testing our patience and weathered capacities for the next supposedly ‘important call’, the one that will make our day and give our spirits the freedom to soar beyond the body condition. The one that half the time doesn’t even come, for some reason we know nothing about. It is all such a great and perplexing mystery. But if and when it does come it does so unexpectedly and at the most inopportune of times; Like in the cinema during one of the most thrilling scenes, as we feel the tension from other around us, when hearing the incessant ring of the mobile as we are hesitant to respond. Then later on a-crowded bus, trolley on the underground... or when were in the car during traffic when it is at its worst and were trying to maneuver a turn with one hand, while trying to hold the phone to our ear with the other, not always the safest thing to do. We talk and talk now but our ears have stopped listening to what is around us. Now we listen to the cassettes that play constantly in our heads repeating again and again what we have heard so many other times before.

The television blares night and day at home, in the restaurants and bars, and on the walls in the shopping plazas, the metro lines and the gigantic screens atop buildings in the Central Square. How often do we find ourselves listening in on someone’s private conversation? Did we ask for this? Of course not, but we get it anyway, whether we want it or like it or not. When all that we really want is some silence, just some precious silence, and a break from the aggressive and sometimes overwhelming pace of our high tech reality routines.

The one that isolates, alienates and at times provoke us to violence, the unpremeditated and impulsive kind that comes without much warning, like a reflex action when the senses and nerves can take no more. But most of us are trained well and keep our true feelings hidden, and locked inside. We do know the advantages of having to control our lives and world, for fear that if we don’t we will lose perhaps our grip on reality and not know what to do.

Our world today is bombarded with numerous sounds, images, movements that sometimes are “intoxicating” to the imagination, but over time, addictive, limiting and even damaging to our souls peace. There are even times when we are enthralled by some of the more masterful and brilliant inventions of the more high-tech mechanics of the world universe and the apparent interplay that seems to exist between us and them. We are awed by this cosmic drama unfolding. But, other times it is simply too much. We cannot breathe and feel suffocated by the immense burden we must carry because of its assaults to our capacity of being. We try to find some marker of protection and temporary defense from this onslaught of hyper- electric energy, its imposing rhythm smashing and flooding. We further seek shelter for safeties sake, for at least a chance to pause and find our sense of internal calm again. But, at best, this too, is only a temporary reprieve and we look for a more effective means of escape. At first through alcohol, drugs, both hard and soft but when these no longer give us the solace our tortured souls need, we take leave of the world and reality entirely and find some kind of freedom, if possible through the masochistic, anguished type of pleasure through and within the void of madness itself. While this may not be the best of choices taken, it is the best that can be done under the circumstances being offered and available. So goes another sage lived by “us” in the world today.

Does this scene seem familiar to anyone? Do we find ourselves caught up in this routine from time to time? How do we handle it best? Does it have an affect on our relations with others in our lives? i. e. family, friends, workmates... people in our neighborhoods, strangers on the street, in the

shops, on the bus, metro etc. Let us take sometime to think about these questions. Maybe making a few mental notes about some of them wouldn't hurt either. If we took the time to jot some of our thoughts and feelings down on paper this could even be better.