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Evolution of an Aphorism

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Evolution of an Aphorism

The tapestry of an idea is woven with strands of education and experience. As our awareness evolves they become increasingly complex so we look at the image of the tapestry rather than the individual strands of which it's composed. In that way complex concepts tend to be passed along to others in simplified form, a distillation. When such refinements of ideas are valued as substantial, they are aphorisms; when descriptive, proverbs; when superficial, clichés.

Let's begin building an aphorism with a common youthful experience. Telling lies is a good one. We've all done it and mostly get caught ... eventually. Building a tissue of lies is a waste of time because you have to remember to whom you told what. Ultimately, like the proverbial house of cards, your stories will probably fall apart with consequences from embarrassment to punishment.

Though learning that lies are a losing strategy, the white lie is still used to avoid unpleasant situations caused by blurting out our 'real feelings'. Even this sort of fib tends to have an effect of eroding one's integrity and that is only partially mitigated by the conviction that you lied out of kindness. In time we learn that maintaining silence rather than lying for convenience is a better strategy.

Beyond simple lies personal accountability becomes the issue. Our words theoretically carry the weight of action. They are supposed to have meaning. Institutional lying is so prevalent in this world that people's words often have little or no meaning at all. Even worse, many times you can assume the opposite to be true. It is almost axiomatic that those who toot their own horns the loudest about honesty and responsibility are the worst practitioners.

In observing rhetoric vs. reality, when words and actions diverge ... believe actions. Having one's words and actions correspond becomes a valuable assessment of our individual reliability. There are also direct personal consequences. When we tell ourselves we intend to do something our words have meaning. Solidarity of character is a vital element of a rich existence.

For those so fortunate to evolve in spirit, integrity gains a whole new level of meaning. An inevitable consequence of spiritual evolution is increasing veracity. The places within, hidden with deceit even from ourselves, are the first to be illuminated by the light of truth. Spiritual growth isn't a comfortable undertaking. All your weaknesses are exposed so they may be left behind. If you are sincere in undertaking an approach to God, don't bother with words. When you ask for help, your heart's desire is heard, not your words. Your deeds are assessed by the impact on the spirits of others, not your words. God isn't snowed by your internal eloquence. Your heart is an open book.

In fact, "Actions are the words of our conversation with God." Now there's an aphorism for you ... and its evolution.