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The Musings of Great Grandma

By Peter M.K. Chan

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The Musings of Great Grandma

As it was in that familiar old song, says our great grandma, there are three coins in the fountain. The question is: which one will be the fountain bless? The three coins I am referring to are theism, atheism, and agnosticism. Theism is an affirmative theory. Atheism is a disaffirming theory. Agnosticism, it seems to me, is a kind of 'I don't know' or 'don't ask me' non-theory of sorts. Which one would you choose? Our great grandma is asking her great grandchild.

Consider, says great grandma, theism offers a much bigger and more interesting package than all the rest. It has many goodies in it, consisting not only of God, but also winged angels, devils with tooth and claw, if not also lesser spiritual beings such as fairies and ghosts (this last is actually not too nice a label for departed soul, I must say). Now, for his child-like impression that more is always better than less, our great grandchild is of course naturally more impressed by the big theistic package. But he is also a bit worried about what those other not-so-nice characters might do. Don't worry about that, says great grandma. Just be a good boy, and everything will be fine.

In contrast, continues our great grandma, atheism does not really have anything to offer. It just says that there is no God. And this niche has also been quite comfortable. Since there is neither proof nor evidence for the non-existence of anything, this disaffirming ploy is good enough to ward off those who might ask him to justify his position. Thus, the only way for the theist to out-smart the atheist is to try and invite the gods or God to confront him. But so far, the theist has not really been able to do anything of the sort. All he has done is to point to some inconclusive evidence and subjective indications that he deemed to be pointing toward the possibility of such supernatural existents. But possibility as such, as

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we all know, is a far cry to the real thing. The atheist is thus not only unimpressed, but tells the theist straight in the face to peddle his possible goods elsewhere.

By this time, the great grandchild is beginning to loose interest. This kind of dialectical analysis is just too deep for his naïve little brain. But our great grandma is also by this time already too absorbed with the intricacy of dialectics to notice that her great grand child is already loosing her. So she just rambles on in her great and grandmotherly sort of way.

You see my child, she says, with any indirect evidence or subjective indication, the agnostic has always been more sympathetic. He is that kind of a guy that is willing to entertain the possibility of almost anything as he entertains the possibility of mermaids, winged horse, and flying carpets. Thus, even though he is also not too impressed with what the theist claims to `see', he is yet very hesitant

about ruling anything out of court, that is, to assert that it is impossible for God or gods to exist. He says that one should not judge and make commitment about matters of which one is not really in the position to arbitrate.

With this, continues our great grandma, the atheist is not very happy. For he still remembers very clearly that once upon a time, it was this very entertainment business (wondering about the possibilities of this and of that) that was to lead to that eventual leap of faith toward the direction of God and lesser spirits. But the agnostic appears to know his facts rather clearly as well. For his reply is that the atheist should not be ungrateful. Had there been no one to do the entertaining and perform the leaping, the atheist would still be looking for a job. Besides, he does not understand why the atheist would not just wash his hands (since he is already so dead sure that theism is mistaken) and call it the day. Do you know what I am saying and see which coin to choose, child?

Why don't we go for a walk great grandma? Before we do that my boy, says great grandma, let me tell you what great grandpa used to say. It is better, he often said, to believe in the existence of anything that may have the slightest possibility of making a difference to our lives. His reason was that if it does not exist, nothing would be lost. On the other hand, if it turned out to be alive and kicking, so much would have been gained. Do you see the point my boy. It is always smarter not to risk losing anything at all.

Author: Peter M.K. Chan

<http://www.geocities.com/hemysteryofmind>

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Author of a book titled The Mystery of Mind. It is a systematic account of the trials and tribulations of the human mind toward understanding its own realization — a critical introduction to the philosophy of mind.

Keeping In Touch With Grandparents

By Dionna Sanchez

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Grandparents are one of the most treasured blessings we can give to our children. It is so delightful, to see the joy and sparkle in their eyes when they get to visit.

Some children are very lucky to live near their grandma and grandpa. Some, aren't as fortunate. For these kids, it can be sad sometimes. They aren't able to share things as consistently as their friends can.

There are wonderful ways for your parents' and your children, to stay in touch and really get to know each other. It's an important part of life for both parties' to be able to be involved with one another.

*Have your son or daughter keep a daily calendar. They can write what they do at school, the weather conditions, and even how they feel each day. Have grandma or grandpa do the same. Then, each month – they can exchange calendars through the mail! A great way to know how each other's days are going.

*Record cassettes or video tapes, and send them back and forth. Your kids can sing their favorite songs and read their favorite stories.

*Let your children memorize their grandparents' phone #. Let it be the one number they can call anytime without permission.

*Send pieces of art, school work and drawings.

*Grandma and Grandpa can have a special bond with your kids by sending them care packages every once in awhile. They can include mementos, educational tools and maybe a treat.

If you help cultivate a relationship like this, your children can learn valuable family morals and traditions. Not to mention wisdom! Don't deprive them from an important bond, just because they live in separate places. They just might carry the tradition on to their own grandchildren!

Dionna Sanchez is Editor of Emphasis On Moms at <http://www.EmphasisOnMoms.com/> Emphasis is sent out monthly to encourage moms not just as parents, but as special, individual women.



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