

Part Six

**The Enigma
of
Responsible Action**

Chapter 30

A Being Basis for Responsible Action

The main point to be developed in Part Six is that the action that flows from the religious ferment described in this book can no longer be based on religious beliefs or religious moralities. Nor can such action be based on secular principles, philosophies, or ideologies. Does this mean that there is no basis for action, that everyone is “right” to select their own basis and do whatever they want? No, it does not mean that. Such thoroughgoing relativism is simply one more humanly created philosophy that cannot be our basis for action if we are to begin with being our Being as profound humans.

Rather, the basis for responsible action is profound humanness itself. How can this be a basis at all? What does such a basis mean? When humans have spoken of acting from love, they have sometimes meant acting from profound humanness. When humans have spoken of acting in freedom, they sometimes meant acting from profound humanness. When humans have spoken of acting in hope, they have sometimes meant acting from profound humanness. When humans have spoken of acting in trust of the goodness of Reality, they have sometimes meant acting from profound humanness. In the following chapters I will explore what it means to act from profound humanness.

It is of course true that good religion, even good secular thinking, may be helping us to access profound humanness and to express what it means to act from that basis. Our best religious disciplines, rules, and principles will have a connection with profound humanness. That connection is what makes them best. But religion in itself, all religion, is a finite creation of the human species. It is a temporal social practice, not an Eternal verity. So to base our responsible action on our religion or on our philosophy is to base our responsible action on something less than Reality. “Less than Reality” will always mean some form of illusion or substitute for Reality. At best “less than Reality” will mean an approximation of Reality. But since Reality is Infinitely Mysterious, “approximation” can only mean “some support from Reality” and “a lot more illusion about Reality.”

My development of thought in the following chapters of Part Six will spell out the meaning of “responsible action” as action based on profound humanness, not human creations. In Part Five I explored how all the religions of the planet are finite human creations, build on the foundation of some humanly created primal metaphor. Humans have not always known this. We are now living in an interreligious age, a post-everything sort of times. Humanity is undergoing a vast leap in consciousness. When we confront the bigoted craziness of so many of our political leaders and social movements, we may jump to the conclusion that human consciousness is in a worse state than ever. But that understanding does not go deep enough. The desperate hubbub of our times is in large measure a terrified reaction against the big changes that are happening and are required of us.

All religious communities, all philosophical communities, and all ideological communities are being challenged by the times in which we live to consider a fresh basis for responsible action. In the next chapter I will describe the interior roots of motivation for responsible action. And in the chapters after that I will explore the more outward aspects of choosing responsible action.