

A Conversation with Nishida: The Beginning

“So?” I ask, as impatiently as a child waiting to open presents on a birthday. “What do you think? Did you like it?”

“A worthy accomplishment, I think. Certainly, you have found the air,” he affirms. “I think your professors will be pleased with how you have spent your time.”

“Thank you, *sensei*. You have been an inspiring guide throughout this process.”

“Yes, well, enough of this foolishness. Now that you are finally done with your writing about organizations with letters and numbers instead of proper names, you can attend to more important matters.”

I could not help but hear the ‘harrumph’ in that last comment. But yet, he was sporting that wry smile of his as a counterpoint to his serious gaze. There was something else going on, something that he wasn’t saying.

“More important matters,” I repeat. “More important than discovering a new approach – potentially a useful approach – to understanding the nature of all of our organizations, no matter in which area of human endeavour they may be? That might not be

an earth-shattering discovery, but it is no small thing in itself. So what might those more important matters be?" I ask.

"Becoming a *sensei* for others," he responds without missing a beat. "There are many whom you can inspire with your passion for healing that-which-is-not-well in human interaction all around us." He spreads his hands wide, palms facing upward. "The writing does not matter; nor do the letters you will acquire after your name. To inspire others to perceive, to question, to contemplate, to reflect, to respond—to *think new thoughts* about all they may have seen for years throughout their lives but too readily accept or ignore. Those are the important matters to which you must now turn your attention. This thesis is done. Now *you* must begin."