

Worth Is Not Hierarchical

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The Position

Different people are not more or less worthy based on how the world sees them.

Even if Einstein were to be sitting in front of me I would not feel insufficient.

That is why I am vegan.

What This Means

Worth is not earned through achievement. Worth is not calculated by external recognition. Worth is not a scale where some shine brighter and others dimmer.

Worth is intrinsic.

If worth is intrinsic, it cannot be confined to humans who "accomplish" things. A cow does not accomplish anything by human metrics. Neither does a chicken. Neither does a child before they have achieved anything. But they are not worth less. They simply are.

The same capacity that allows me to meet Einstein without insufficiency is the capacity that extends my moral concern to animals. The structure is the same. If worth is not determined by external recognition, if it is not earned through achievement, then it is intrinsic to being.

The ethics follows from the psychology. Not the other way around.

On Levelling

To level with someone requires seeing them as fundamentally equal in worth, regardless of what they have achieved.

Many people cannot do this. They rank themselves on a scale, and so they must rank everyone. Worth becomes contingent on achievement — and this calculus applies to all of humanity.

Their world is hierarchical. Mine is not.

To level is to meet another person without calculating where either of you sits on the scale. It requires being willing to be seen without the protection of hierarchy. "I am no better than you" must be true all the way down, not performed for social acceptability.

Politeness can conceal ranking. The ranking never stops.

Chromatic Dispersion

When white light passes through a prism, it separates into its component wavelengths — red bends least, violet bends most. The prism does not create the colours; they were always present in the light. It reveals them.

A hierarchical worldview sees worth as a single beam — some people shine brighter, others dimmer, all on one scale. It cannot see the spectrum.

But when worth is understood as intrinsic, what emerges is not a single hierarchy but a full spectrum: human worth here, animal worth there, each being's worth everywhere, none of it brighter or dimmer than any other.

Each wavelength continues in its own direction. They do not merge back into white light unless something reassembles them. A hierarchical worldview cannot see this. It would have to pass through the same prism, experience the same separation, in order to see what this position sees.

What This Is

This is not arrogance. It is what might be called genuine self-esteem — the quiet, unshakeable sense that worth is not contingent on achievement, recognition, or comparison. It is the position from which one can meet any other human being without either inflation or collapse.

Different people are not more or less worthy based on how the world sees them.

Neither are animals.

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