

THE VOCABULARY OF FEELING

The first difficulty we meet in discussing anything concerning the feeling function is that we have no adequate vocabulary to use. Where there is no terminology, there is no consciousness. A poverty-stricken vocabulary for any subject is an immediate admission that the subject is inferior or depreciated in that society. Sanskrit has ninety-six words for love; ancient Persian has eighty, Greek three, and English only one. This is indicative of the poverty of awareness or emphasis that we give to that tremendously important realm of feeling. Eskimos have thirty words for snow, because it is a life-and-death matter to them to have exact information about the element they live with so intimately. If we had a vocabulary of thirty words for love and matters of feeling, we would immediately be richer and more intelligent in this human element so close to our heart. An Eskimo probably would die of clumsiness if he had only one word for snow; we are close to dying of loneliness because we have only one word for love. Of all

the Western languages, English may be the most lacking when
it comes to feeling.

Robert Johnson, *The Fisher King*, NY: Harper Collins, 1993. p.6

<http://www.lorinroche.com/word/word/love.html>