

desire to dominate. Although still sexually immature, Beetsme took advantage of his age and size to begin severely tormenting old Flossie three days after Uncle Bert's death. Beetsme's aggression was particularly threatening to Uncle Bert's last offspring, Frito [son of Flossie]. By killing Frito, Beetsme would be destroying an infant sired by a competitor, and Flossie would again become fertile. Neither young Tiger nor the aging female was any match against Beetsme. Twenty-two days after Uncle Bert's killing, Beetsme succeeded in killing fifty-four-day-old Frito even with the unfailing efforts of Tiger and the other Group 4 members to defend the mother and infant...Frito's death provided more evidence, however indirect, of the devastation poachers create by killing the leader of a gorilla group. Two days after Frito's death Flossie was observed soliciting copulations from Beetsme, not for sexual or even reproductive reasons—she had not yet returned to cyclicity and Beetsme still was sexually immature. Undoubtedly her invitations were conciliatory measures aimed at reducing his continuing physical harassment. I found myself strongly disliking Beetsme as I watched his discord destroy what remained of all that Uncle Bert had succeeded in creating and defending over the past ten years...I also became increasingly concerned about Kweli, who had been, only a few months previously, Group 4's most vivacious and frolicsome infant. The three-year-old's lethargy and depression were increasing daily even though Tiger tried to be both mother and father to the orphan. Three months following his gunshot wound and the loss of both parents, Kweli gave up the will to survive...It was difficult to think of Beetsme as an integral member of Group 4 because of his continual abuse of the others in futile efforts to establish domination, particularly over the indomitable Tiger...Tiger helped maintain cohesiveness by "mothering" Titus and subduing Beetsme's rowdiness. Because of Tiger's influence and the immaturity of all three males, they remained together' (*Gorillas in the Mist*, pp.218-221).

<sup>449</sup> It is very clear from this account how very easily any disruption to the love-indoctrination process can cause a regression to the competitive, opportunistic, each-for-his-own, pre-love-indoctrination, 'animal condition' situation—and thus how utterly incredible it is that the bonobos have been able to overcome the agony of the 'animal condition' and be as free as they are from the tyranny of the selfish gene-based natural selection process.

### **Chapter 5:12 Descriptions of bonobos provide an extraordinary insight into what life for our human ancestors was like before the emergence of the human condition**

<sup>450</sup> Indeed, the following selection of quotes provides further insight into how extraordinarily integratively orientated bonobos have become and, through that stunning evidence, just how wonderful our species' time in the innocent, cooperatively behaved, loving, 'Garden of Eden'-like, fully integrated, 'heavenly' 'Golden Age' must have been. I doubt you will find a better clue to our glorious past, and now future, than what you are about to read.

<sup>451</sup> Firstly, the aforementioned bonobo researcher Vanessa Woods gave this first-hand account of bonobos' seemingly unlimited capacity for love: **'Bonobo love is like a laser beam. They stop. They stare at you as though they have been waiting their whole lives for you to walk into their jungle. And then they love you with such helpless abandon that you love them back. You have to love them back'** ('A moment that changed me – my husband fell in love with a bonobo', *The Guardian*, 1 Oct. 2015). I would include with that description, this extract, which has already been referred to, that demonstrates how extraordinarily sensitive, cooperative, loving and intelligent bonobos

are, as well as how few exist in captivity: ‘Barbara Bell...a keeper/trainer for the Milwaukee County Zoo...works daily with the largest group of bonobos...in North America...“It’s like being with 9 two and a half year olds all day,” she [Bell] says. “They’re extremely intelligent...They understand a couple of hundred words,” she says. “They listen very attentively. And they’ll often eavesdrop. If I’m discussing with the staff which bonobos (to) separate into smaller groups, if they like the plan, they’ll line up in the order they just heard discussed. If they don’t like the plan, they’ll just line up the way they want.” “They also love to tease me a lot,” she says. “Like during training, if I were to ask for their left foot, they’ll give me their right, and laugh and laugh and laugh. But what really blows me away is their ability to understand a situation entirely.” For example, Kitty, the eldest female, is completely blind and hard of hearing. Sometimes she gets lost and confused. “They’ll just pick her up and take her to where she needs to go,” says Bell. “That’s pretty amazing. Adults demonstrate tremendous compassion for each other”.’

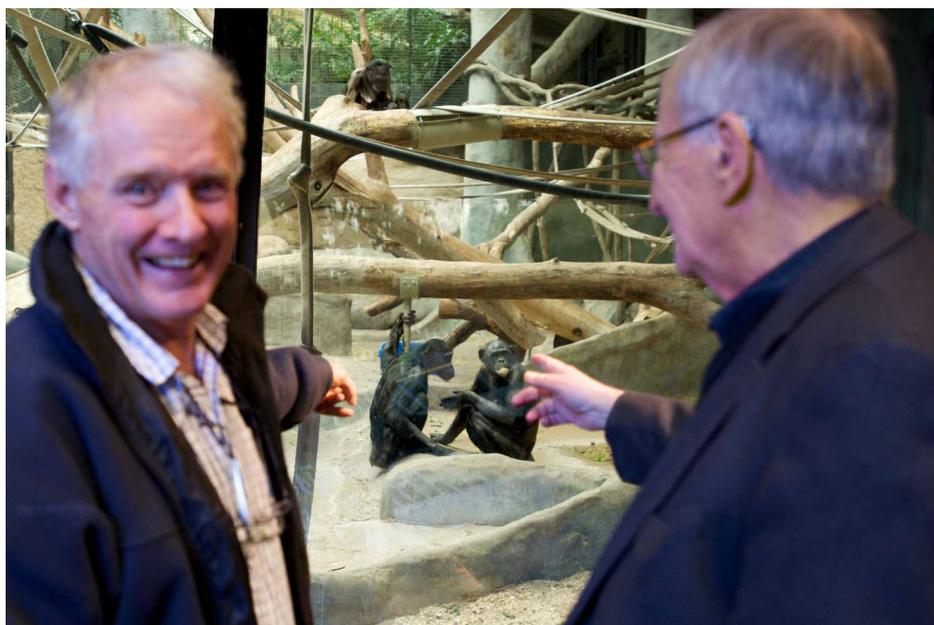
<sup>452</sup>The intensity of personal relationships within bonobo society is also beautifully apparent in the following anecdote from the aforementioned book, *Kanzi: The Ape at the Brink of the Human Mind*, in which Sue Savage-Rumbaugh recounts the extreme elation and affection shown by her famous bonobo research subject, the young adult male Kanzi, when reunited with his adoptive mother, Matata, after a number of months apart (a picture of Matata and Kanzi appears at the beginning of this chapter): ‘I sat down with him [Kanzi] and told him there was a surprise in the colony room. He began to vocalize in the way he does when expecting a favored food—“eeeh...eeeh...eeeh.” I said, No food surprise. Matata surprise; Matata in colony room. He looked stunned, stared at me intently, and then ran to the colony room door, gesturing urgently for me to open it. When mother and son saw each other, they emitted earsplitting shrieks of excitement and joy and rushed to the wire that separated them. They both pushed their hands through the wire, to touch the other as best they could. Witnessing this display of emotion, I hadn’t the heart to keep them apart any longer, and opened the connecting door. Kanzi leapt into Matata’s arms, and they screamed and hugged for fully five minutes, and then stepped back to gaze at each other in happiness. They then played like children, laughing all the time as only bonobos can’ (pp.143-144).

<sup>453</sup>And, as referred to earlier, such displays of sensitivity are not limited to their own kind, as this description from *Bonobo: The Forgotten Ape*, by the primatologist Frans de Waal and photographer Frans Lanting, reveals: ‘Betty Walsh, a seasoned animal caretaker, observed the following incident involving a seven-year-old female bonobo named Kuni at Twycross Zoo in England. One day, Kuni captured a starling. Out of fear that she might molest the stunned bird, which appeared undamaged, the keeper urged the ape to let it go. Perhaps because of this encouragement, Kuni took the bird outside and gently set it onto its feet, the right way up, where it stayed, looking petrified. When it didn’t move, Kuni threw it a little way, but it just fluttered. Not satisfied, Kuni picked up the starling with one hand and climbed to the highest point of the highest tree...She then carefully unfolded its wings and spread them wide open, one wing in each hand, before throwing the bird as hard as she could [to free it]’ (1997, p.156 of 210). The situation reminds one of the compassion extended to Patrick Bleuzen, the animal advisor on the aforementioned French documentary, *Bonobos*, who was comforted by a bonobo after he was hit on the head by a falling branch during production.

<sup>454</sup>This next account (which is very reminiscent of the earlier mentioned orangutan, Sheriff Daisy, and her maintenance of cooperative order) reveals something of bonobos’ strong moral sense: ‘When a maintenance man was working on the heating and cooling system at the Iowa Primate Learning Sanctuary, Kanzi the bonobo didn’t like it. So what did the bonobo do?’

He went to his computer and used his words to tell a researcher to put on a monkey suit and chase after the man. Julie Gilmore, a veterinarian at the sanctuary, said bonobos like to know if everyone is getting along, who is in charge and whether everyone is following the rules. Gilmore said that when the worker came, Kanzi was convinced he wasn't following the rules. She said the worker was luckily a good sport about the whole thing and allowed the monkey suit chasing to commence. The bonobo was so happy that the man was chased away, he watched a video of the action about 100 times. That's just one example of how the bonobos at the sanctuary communicate with the researchers...[At the research sanctuary] Sue Savage-Rumbaugh...taught Kanzi language using a chart of symbols... She was able to train Kanzi to know what word each symbol represented. Kanzi, who is now 33, now understands thousands of words and grammar' ('Talking to another species', *The Des Moines Register*, 21 Nov. 2013). It's worth noting that the big difference between Sheriff Daisy and Kanzi is that Daisy was a juvenile orangutan. Because of the scarcity of food where orangutans live in the rainforests of Borneo and Sumatra they are forced to live competitively as adults; in effect, they are thrown out of the integrative, loving state they are able to experience when they are young. Kanzi, however, is a fully grown, 34-year-old adult and still expects to be living in an integrative, cooperative, loving state. Such is the ideal love-indoctrinating nursery conditions of the world from which bonobos come.

### Chapter 5:13 Milwaukee County Zoo's fabulous group of bonobos



The author (left) and Professor Harry Prosen at the Milwaukee County Zoo bonobo exhibit

<sup>455</sup> In February 2014 I had the incredible good fortune to spend a day with one of the largest and most socially authentic captive breeding groups of bonobos in the world at the Milwaukee County Zoo in Wisconsin in the USA. Visiting the bonobos in their native habitat in the heart of the Congo basin is almost impossible because of the region's remoteness and impenetrable jungle, as well as the horrific civil war and economic collapse that is ravaging the Democratic Republic of the Congo. And even those who *do* manage to travel to where the bonobos are found only very occasionally get to glimpse