



Rev. Therese Bimka & Friends

The corona files

WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER

MARCH 16, 2020 - ???

" I thought this would be a 1-2 week offering" ~ Rev. Therese Bimka

As the days morphed into weeks, into months and now into years - none of us could have ever imagined we would be meeting 4+ years later. What an unexpected miracle and joy this has been. For quite a long time, the sangha was 50-60+ strong. It became very clear from the onset that this was meeting a great need at a very vulnerable time. I determined early on - if they (the sangha) show up, - I show up. It's that simple. And so this experiment evolved into a living laboratory of love, connection, and steadfastness when our world was unraveling at the seams.

A bow down to Robert Ferrell: Robert has been instrumental in helping to keep this going. He has been the logistical backbone as well as a kind and inspired leader. He graciously created and has sustained the recordings of our sessions. Available at:

<https://contemplativeinterbeing.org/meditation/> Robert - you rock!

I really don't know when I stopped offering the morning meditation 7 days a week. I stopped taking daily notes after day 253 (as per this booklet). When I cut back to 5 days a week, Robert Ferrell and Susyn Reeve each took 1 day a week. Susyn was with us for a few years (took a break and came back) and Robert has been a steady presence from the beginning. Molly Hansen joined 2021 and has been a steady and reliable presence on Thursdays taking over from Deya DeMarco. Susan Nason, Sara Kahn-Gearity, Carol Asiaghi, and others have been steady facilitators for Wednesdays. Thomas Brown and Kindle Perry - our Sangha couple - have also been steady and reliable. Others have joined the team. We honor all - It takes a Village.

And of course - when the 8am sangha began so did the 8 pm sangha.

Deep Gratitude to Gabriele Ganswindt for her vision and service.

The 8 pm sangha is still happening with Thomas Brown and Kindle Perry as leaders and "holders of the flame" and Gabriele and others remain involved.

There has been a whole team of steady volunteers and many who have all been pitch hitters - jumping in when folks go on vacation, retreats or have family obligations.

And now let us bow down to everyone who has participated in this wild experiment:

Robert Ferrell

Susyn Reeve

Molly Hanson

Thomas Brown

Kindle Perry

Gabriele Ganswindt

Susan Nason

Sara Kahn-Gearity

e Asiaghi

yvette shipman

Dawn Reddick-Umoja

Sara Tucker

Catherine Coates

Megan Moore

Janet Dunn

Rosie McLaughlin

Dina Kushnir

Lenore Smith-Aman

Deya DeMarco

Garrett Foster

I know there may be a few more folks who jumped in over the years, please forgive us if we did not name you personally. The group reviewed this list and we did our best to honor all who were part of this incredible outpouring of love.

To all who have held this space - We can not thank you enough.

As they say it takes a village.. We not only have a village - we have a beloved community. A true sangha. We have laughed,; we have cried; we have roared; we have protested; we have prayed, we have prayed again; and in the end, we have cultivated resiliency in the storm... So many lessons. So many teachings,

Thank you does not even begin to touch this gift of community. WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER! AMEN!!

In this booklet, I quote many many teachers therefore - this is not a document that can be shared outside our circles as I worry about infringing on intellectual property rights. I shared what inspired me and I did my best to always cite my sources. Forgive me for where I could not find or cite the quote I used.

After Day 253, you will find contributions by many of those who offered Seva as part of this village, this team. You will be touched, inspired and moved to tears with their contributions.

This publishing platform was a bit time consuming to navigate so I (Therese) apologize for when the format is not as elegant as I would prefer. But I decided to let perfection go and be with the beauty of the content. Hope you enjoy, The Village

Day 1 Welcome everyone – March 16, 2020

So good to be together during these profoundly uncertain times.

It's so important that we find ways to support each other and resource ourselves as we navigate what is unfolding. Contemplative Practices of all kinds are known to bolster the immune system and reduce stress. I will be here – whether its one person or 20 or 60. You show up, I show up.

For those of you new to meditation, please feel free to email me at ThereseBimka.com and I will be happy to set up a special session for new meditators.

For now – let me say that meditation is about presence – growing our capacity to stay present and resourced with equanimity. It is not about entering stillness per se although it is lovely to quiet the mind. But rather use this time to observe our mind as it remains chatty and to grow the witness self – the part of you that can witness your experience with neutrality, curiosity and a dash of affections.

One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it. Clarissa Pinkoles Estes

May this meditation help you kindle your soul light so it shines brightly in these troubled times.

Day 2

Welcome everyone – so delighted to be together. This is an extraordinary opportunity to come together in connection and bring our hearts in alignment with the earth's heart so we remember how we may beat as one heart.

I woke up this morning to a stunning dusting of snow reminding me of the beauty and preciousness of life. In the midst of profound uncertainty, let us take this opportunity to be reminded of the beauty, awe and grace available in every moment. And let us take every opportunity to be reminded of what is beautiful, whole and good in this world. So important for balance and grounding.

Yesterday I introduced meditation as a practice of presence. How do we support ourselves to stay present, awake, resourced and grounded while this situation continues to unfold. The proverbial oxygen mask.

So we continue with the practice of cultivating the witness self.

While the ego is typically steeped in fear, separation and scarcity. The witness self cultivates expansion, generosity, and connection. It is the part that can name and observe the wide range of feelings that arise and recede moment to moment.

Allow yourself to be a witness to whatever is present and like the waves rolling in – allow each thought or feeling to roll back out. In this way, we practice not attaching or resisting – simply naming and being with.

Please join me in silence as I offer a gentle reminder to come back to breath..

End with voooo sounding to down regulate the vagal nerve

Day 3 Self compassion and Self love

Welcome to Day 3 of our daily meditation community - so grateful to have the support for a daily practice.

Let's take a moment to really see each other – please go to gallery mode and scroll through each page. Beam love and light into each other eyes.

Today we begin our meditation with a focus on self love and self compassion and kindness for each other and for ourselves.

As we continue to prepare for this emerging situation, let us continue to inoculate ourselves with love and grounding so we can be as fully resourced as possible for whatever lies ahead.

One of the most important practices for deepening compassion is activating unconditional self acceptance and self love. No matter what. Under all circumstance. Fear can bring out some of our messiest parts but let us be loving and kind with whatever shows up.

So here's a little practice – inspired by Tara Brach. Please close your eyes if you feel comfortable as we will then go right into our meditation.

So let's take a difficult emotion like worry. Imagine worry arising – and imagine that you can hug worry like you would a sweet little innocent child and say *Hello honey – Hello my Dear. It's ok – let me hold you with love, let me hold you with sweet tenderness.* It is the practice of bringing loving attention to any part that is in need. It's the practice of saying Hello Dear One – let me hold you in love, let me cradle you in kindness.

Welcome to Day 4 of our community meditation. Wonderful to be with all of you as we support each other in daily practice.

I loved taking a moment to really SEE each other.

Go to gallery screen and scroll through and beam love, kindness, connection across borders, across any of the false ways we cling to separation. Let's say hello with our eyes, with our hearts and with our smiles.

Let us begin.. I will offer a brief guidance on how to drop in today.

We are cultivating practices on how to fully arrive. Take a moment to notice how you that invitation resonates in your body.....breathe and attune.

Here is one of my favorite images to support a meditation practice. Imagine that the waves on the surface of the ocean may be turbulent and rocky but if you drop a plum line just 6 feet below – you drop into the vast stillness of the sea. Anchor yourself here. Allow yourself to be surrounded by stillness as you witness and observe the turbulence above. BECOME the vast ocean.

Daan van Kampenhout

"Everyone of us comes from ancestors who survived all kinds of disasters. Wars, famines, revolutions, colonization, new illnesses, persecutions... Many of our ancestors saw their world fall apart, faced with events they could not control or even understand. Let's sense into the ancestor field and connect to the strength and dignity behind us. Some of the ancestors may not have known how to cope, but many of them did. We all come from people who have gone through what we will be facing soon, so let's invite their wisdom now, feel their dignity, feel their presence. Feel their strength."

Let's pray that the ways that they managed their fears and challenges reveal themselves in us as we face this crisis together.

And with their help - let us all be the role models we are seeking.

The light we need. The hope that holds our hand.

3/20 Welcome to Day 5 of our community meditation. A place where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

We will begin with a minute of connection. Please adjust your screen to gallery view and scroll through pages. Take a moment to drop into the core of your being – and as you gaze into each other eyes – send love, send kindness – send connection, send blessings. We are stronger together. Breathe and receive.....

Yesterday in our meditation – I remembered the caterpillar's journey. Can a caterpillar who spends her days crawling on her belly possibly imagine the flight and freedom of the butterfly. And yet – in the process of metamorphosis – the caterpillar and her world fully dissolve and IN the dissolution – imaginal cells that have been lying dormant activate and come alive. As they start vibrating at a certain frequency – the caterpillar experiences these cells as a threat to the immune system and attacks the cells but they keep connecting and forming clusters, growing until they vibrate at the same frequency and create a tipping point.

Let us activate our dormant imaginal cells.

Let us hold a seat at the table for that which is not yet imagined or known but which grows out of love and connection and our profound inter dependence.

Please place you hand on your heart: Hello Dear Heart.... imagine that there is a little dial on your heart that you can turn up to raise your own frequency right here-right now...

Imagine hundreds and thousands of pods all over the world doing the same.

Maybe heard? : The butterfly said to the caterpillar, "Yes! You can fly. But that cocoon has gotta go." Let go of whatever would hold you back.

From imaginal labs.com

"The term "Imaginal" has connotations of *imagination*, the process of creating new ideas and concepts of things that do not yet exist.

But in biology, the term is applied to Imaginal cells – and the startling science behind Imaginal cells is where we get our inspiration for the work we do.

We all grew up knowing a bit about the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly. The truly amazing part of this process, however, is in the scientific detail of how it actually happens in nature.

After a period of ravenous consumption, a caterpillar finds an appropriate perch and forms a chrysalis – so far so good. The end result, we know, is a butterfly, but the truly astonishing thing is that there is ***no structural similarity at all*** between a caterpillar and a butterfly.

Inside the chrysalis the caterpillar, unable to move, actually dissolves into organic goop. Cells, which had been dormant in the caterpillar and which biologists have the poetic genius to call "Imaginal cells," begin a process of creating a new form and structure.

At first these Imaginal cells – the seeds of future potential, which contain the blueprint of a flying creature—operate independently as single-cell organisms. They are regarded as threats and are attacked by the caterpillar's immune system. But they persist, multiply, and connect with each other. The Imaginal cells form clusters and clumps, begin resonating at the same frequency and passing information back and forth until they hit a tipping point. They begin acting not as discrete individual cells but as a multi-cell organism – and a butterfly is born."

I offer that each one of us are the imaginal cells that can help transform and meet the challenges of our times.

Let us all stoke the fire in the heart each day so we can resonate at the frequency of love, kindness, generosity and profound admiration for our interdependence. Let us start right now. With THIS gathering of souls. As we drop into meditation – imagine we are vibrating at the same frequency and that there are hundreds or thousands of pods all over the world doing the same.

Let us imagine that courageous leaders are the Imaginal cells within their organizations to help them transform to meet the challenges of our times.

Our life's work is to find new and more effective ways to help courageous leaders imagine a better future and work with others to make their dreams a reality.

3/21 Welcome to Day 6 of the community meditation

Where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice

NOW more than ever - we are being called to practice moment to moment awareness , hour by hour, day by day, week by week.

This is the work of psychological and spiritual stamina.

To grow and strengthen the witness Self.

The part that is bigger than our fears, bigger than our pain.

It is also the practice of cultivating a heart big enough to host the magnitude of these times.

This is the radical practice of being with what is.....

Exactly as it is.

In moment to moment awareness.

With unconditional acceptance.

Our practice is not to simply sit in the light although being a beacon of light and hope is essential, but part of our beauty as humans is that we are capable of an incredible range of feelings. The invitation is to let us learn how to gracefully invite all the guests who show up at our doorstep – the fear, the worry, the planning– Invite them in, offer them a seat at the table.

Do not exile or abandon these parts – shower them with love and offer them shelter from the storm.

I see you in your wholeness.

I am here to be seen.

3/22 Welcome to day 7 of our daily community meditation where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

Spiritual Teacher Thomas Hubl says creating intelligent and coherent collective networks of presence are required at this time for each of us to stay the course and be a beacon of support for ourselves, our loved ones and to up level humanity's response- ability.

Taking care of our bodies during this time is critical as it is in our bodies that individual and collective trauma lives and it is in our bodies that we can access our most resourced capacities. We have the cellular memory for how to do this from our ancestors.

As we begin our meditation – I invite you to take a moment - close your eyes to attune and listen to what is happening inside your body right now. Notice where breath flows easily, where there might be restriction, if there is aliveness, or perhaps where we may feel shut down. This is not a practice of assessing and evaluating – rather bring gentle awareness and curiosity to presence what ever is happening exactly as it is.

Be kind and gentle and loving with yourself. These are very challenging times.

I will offer some mediation guidance half way through and we end with our gazing practice.

3/23 Welcome to day 8 of our daily community meditation where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

During this period, finding time to ground every day or several times a day is critical so we can presence and digest what is arising in ourselves and in our world.

As we begin our meditation – I'd like to support each of you in grounding. Please get comfortable.

Lets take a moment to tune in and ask how am I doing right now? Tune into your body and say hello to the miracle of this temple.

I invite you to bring breath deep into your root chakra at the base of your spine and allow yourself to drop in. Imagine that from your tailbone you could push a button and a grounding cord would simply drop down and plug into the earth. Through this cord –witness and invite your body to release fear, worry, stress. Take your time.

Allow the earth to ground that which is not serving. As you empty fear, worry and stress - notice if you can intentionally increase self love.

The greater our ability to love ourselves, the more we have to give. We become a fountain of generosity - giving from the over flow of the well.

3.24.20220 Welcome to day 9 of our community meditation

Where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

We will end at 8:20 as usual but anyone who wants to stay for an additional 10 minutes to offer prayers for loved ones, for health care and grocery workers – please join me til 8:30.

Each day I share various techniques to help stay us grounded, resourced and resilient- both spiritually and psychologically so we can access our best selves in the face of such profound uncertainty. Pay attention to which techniques resonate best for you. practice those.

As human beings we are capable of feeling many things all at once. And in these accelerated times, we need to find ways to slow down so we can listen to what is arising.

Emotions and thoughts arise and recede – like waves. As feelings arise – give them space, respect them, be kind to yourself during these difficult times. Bring love and compassion to whatever arises and then practice grounding so you can resource yourself and digest is coming up. Take bite sizes if you can. We are practicing moment to moment awareness – hour by hour, day by day... our resourced selves can and will find whatever the next step is that we need to take . Trust that.

Lets meditate for 15 minutes – please close your eyes if that feels helpful and get comfortable with an easeful and upright spine.

Last week we used the imagery of the turbulent waves on the surface of the ocean and the vast stillness available just a few feet below the surface. Allow yourself to feel the stillness of the vast ocean right now. Imagine that the ocean holds all your fears, worries and cares. For this very moment – allow yourself to be cradled and held by something greater than yourself – whatever that means for youwhether it is love, divine intelligence, source, god, goddess – imagine being held and rest in the embrace of the divine. Can you trust that the divine has your back?

As you practice mindful breathing – allow the exhale to be long and spacious. If it is helpful – inhale to 3/4 and exhale to 6/8 – double your exhale. This calibrates the nervous system.

Welcome to day 10 of our daily meditation community where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Han shared:

When the crowded Vietnamese refugee boats met with storms or pirates, if everyone panicked all would be lost. But if even one person on the boat remained calm and centered, it was enough. It showed the way for everyone to survive.

We practice together to be that person.

Love is contagious

Calm is contagious

Inner steadiness paves the way and increases our response-ability

So as we drop into our practice today let us come back to the heart

Please get comfortable

Say hello to your heart

Place a hand on your heart

To that seat of wisdom and capacity that can bear witness to all that is.

We are in heart warrior times...where we need a strong back and a soft heart.

My dear sweet tender heart... Where would I be without you?

Where would the world be without you

We need you now more than ever

Let me vow to keep you strong

Let me vow to remember that kindness and love are the only answer

Let me vow to not abandon you when fear and worry will naturally arise

Let me vow to be bigger than my fears

Bigger than any pain

Only YOU dear heart are capable of bearing witness

Only you know how powerful unconditional love and compassion can be

Only you dear heart can save us from our mistakes

Let me vow to keep you strong

My dear and tender heart.

When you hear the gong - Please take a moment to make a vow to your sweet and tender heart.

3.26.20 Welcome to Day 11 of our community meditation where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice

Our practices help us to reduce reactivity and increase response-ability. Another way to lean into this is what Jung called the small s self and the BIG S self. The small s self is the domain of the ego which is typically steeped in fear, separation and scarcity. This is where reactivity flourishes.

The BIG S Self is known by many names: essence, the witness self, the core self, the inner Buddha, the inner divine – this part is bigger than our suffering, it is universal and is the pipeline to an indestructible core that exists in all of us. Like bedrock.

I want you to take a moment and tune into your own inner bedrock. And if you can't quite find it – act as if it exists in your core. Let yourself breathe this into cellular memory.

Know that this bedrock – this core – is always available to you. Always...

Jack Kornfeld: Along with the suffering of these times is a profound possibility: If we are intentional, we can respond to this crisis by calling forth our deepest wisdom, our full compassion. And together, we can help create a more loving and just world.

We will continue to cultivate ways to access stillness even in the midst of this crisis or especially in the midst.

3.27.20 Welcome to day 12 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

One way to support yourself during this crisis is to seek meaning in this unprecedented moment.

Keep the Faith Excerpt by by Kitty O'Meara with edits by Therese

"And the people stayed home. And read books, and rested, and exercised, and made art and cooked meals, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and learned to be still again. And the people listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows and some learned how to bring love to the sharp edges. And in the great pause - the people began to think differently. And the people healed."

And in the great pause – the earth began to heal. Blue skies returned, and we learned once again how to breath together, how to beat our hearts as one. One heart, one love, one spirit.

May this pandemic serve to wake us up to new possibilities

Take a moment to presence and hold a seat at the table for new possibilities. For outcomes not yet known. Like the lotus flower that emerges and blossoms from the muck – may we hold a seat at the table for grace in the midst of chaos.

As you listen to the internal landscape - attune to where there is aliveness in your system and breath from that place.

Welcome to day 13 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

"Human transformation requires the movement from fear to love as our basic operating principle. Presence is the door: embodiment is the key." (citation unknown).

A course in miracles says that at every given moment – we choose between love and fear. This was true before corona virus and will be true post corona but right now – because the field is so amplified – choosing love is a radical act of self care and self preservation. So however we are showing up - Whether we are washing the feet of a stranger, cooking a meal for loved ones, or organizing for political and social change – let us be LOVE in action.

Only love can save us from our mistakes.

So I invite now to place a thought or feeling in your right hand that troubles you. And take a moment to look at it – to presence that.

And place your left hand over the right cupping it. Imagine that your left hand is channeling unconditional love, deep compassion; let your left hand bathe your troubles in divine grace; surrender and receive nourishment from source.

3.29.20 Welcome to day 14 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

Over the course of these 2 weeks – we have been cultivating practices that bring us into contact with our inner strength and resiliency – what I call anchors in the storm.

And for today I want to introduce a contemplative practice called Centering Prayer which I am taking the liberty to modify. In a moment I will share screen and invite you to gaze upon some inspirational words – see if a word chooses you

This word will be your soul ally – a touchstone that you can return to throughout the day to remember, to ground, to drop into your heart.

We don't have the luxury to live in the narrow band that we typically call home. And that is a gift because as expand our capacity bear witness, to host the many diverse feelings that comprise a time like this – we are expanding our vessel

We are all working the same curriculum.

When a widespread difficulty like the coronavirus pandemic grows, it becomes important to draw on our inner strength. It is the time to pause, reflect and bring wisdom, courage and care to ourselves and those around us. We human beings have survived for a thousand generations, helping one another and inspiring each other. We know how to do this. Instead of getting caught in collective fear and anxiety, we can remember to take a breath, center ourselves, and take practical precautions and protections, but calmly and in the spirit of love. Each of us can contribute to the well-being of ourselves, our communities and our world.

3.30.20 Welcome to day 15 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

As we enter our third week of practice – it seems a fitting time to reconnect with the power and beauty of stillness that abides deep in each of our hearts and is available in this great pause. We touched upon stillness yesterday when we visualized our hearts as a clear and undisturbed lake.

So first let's invite that stillness into our field of awareness. Breathe into the quiet and let your soul rest. Imagine a light coming from high above, entering through the crown chakra and traveling down the spine – as if the spine were hollow, open and receptive. Imagine this same light continuing to travel deep into the earth and getting grounded there. AS above – so below. Let your soul be cleansed in this healing stream of light.

One of the best ways to invite stillness and draw on that inner strength is to remember our blessings, to acknowledge what we feel grateful for, even in the midst of this profound challenge.

So please take a moment to place your hand on your heart

Say hello dear one

Breathe into your hand so your heart expands

And find one thing right here, right now that you are grateful for.

Let this blessing accompany you in today's meditation.

3.31.20 Welcome to day 16 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

The Dalai Lama once said Kindness is my religion and one thing we are witnessing in this pandemic is great kindness , great generosity, true courage.

We are witnessing a burgeoning sense of community and collective consciousness that is exploding with great speed because everyone ...everywhere is in this together. This little microbe has changed the consciousness of the world overnight.

And kindness is the gentle giant that can tip the scale from fear to love.

From separation to union.

Union in our hearts when we are kind to ourselves.

Union with our loved ones as we remember how much we love them.

Union with the stranger.

Union with the beloved.

Let us take a moment to bless kindness.

Welcome to day 17 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

Meister Eckart – medieval christian mystic has said – If your only prayer was Thank You – that would be enough.

Thank you prayer for the earth.

Let us presence that this moment in time is also a pause for Mother earth. Some say Mother Earth was tired of waiting for us to make a course correction.

Instead she pulled the plug, hit the pause button, and sent us to our rooms to think about What we have done.

If it resonates for you, please join me in this prayer:

Dear Mother

Please forgive me for all the ways in which I have been unconsciousness, complacent and asleep. I know now – my old patterns must change and I am willing to treat you with the love and kindness and respect and care you deserve... we deserve. We desperately need a course correction. And we so appreciate how forgiving, generous and bountiful you are. Thank you.. thank you, thank you

See If you can make one vow to lower your carbon foot print.....

Something doable.

Welcome to day 18 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

Yesterday we began to practice accessing the ascendant current and the descendant current that moves along the spine. We imagined ourselves as a plant with solar panels all over her body gently reaching for the sun, for the solar energy. It is a stance of yearning, longing and receiving without efforting...

Similarly the roots of the plant go deep into the mother and using capillary action like straws - the roots draw up the nutrients from deep within the earth.

So in your meditation you may be drawn to one current or the other or maybe you like accessing both/and...

Some traditions are ascendantly oriented – engage this as a practice of moving towards the heavens, toward spirit and the universal principles. Some traditions are descendantly oriented - energy moves towards the ripe and fertile soil of the mother – towards the unique expression that is soul.

Spirit and soul – ascendant and descendant. Please join me. Breathe and focus.

Welcome to day 19 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

For most of us this pandemic is the most challenging crisis we have ever faced in our lifetime. And where there is sickness, death and uncertainty of a global magnitude– there is grief, fear and contraction.

But along these sharp edges – we get to choose how we show up.

We come into contact with our deepest aspirations for ourselves and for the world we love so dearly.

This is a time for the boddisatvas to awaken.

To steep our practices in profound kindness so we can show up and serve where the need is greatest.

Tara Brach says:

Imagine a whole web of beings who are waking up together.

How do you want to be relating to the life that is unfolding inside you?

What do you want to commit your heart to in the days and weeks and months to come?

How do we become the boddisatva of these times?

Trust our belonging.

Trust that presence and love is more the truth of who we are than anything.

Shelter in love.

Wake up the longing.

Become heart warriors.

That is the invitation of the boddisatva path.

Welcome to day 20 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

As we continue our practice - I offer that as we shelter in place, let us shelter in love.

Let catastrophe bring forth our best selves.

Our biggest heart - A heart capable of everything and anything.

Today a modified poem by Sally Atkins

Tell me, She said:

What is the story you are living?

What wild song is singing itself through you?

Even in this storm

Listen: she said

Can you hear

In the storm – there is silence in the music

In the spaces between the notes, there is a story, unfolding

It is happening right now in your breath,

In your heart beat still

Drumming the deeper rhythm

Beneath your cracking words.

It matters what you did this morning

And last Saturday night

Not because you are so important

But because it is your story and you are in it

We are all in this story together.

Pay attention:

We are listening each other's hearts into being.

We are loving each other into birth

We know the birth canal is a liminal place

A place of struggle

Find your song and Sing it loudly as you move on through

Sing as if your life depends on it...

Welcome to day 21 of our community meditation practice, Where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice

As we have been exploring in the last few weeks – NOW more than ever - We are being called to called to practice staying awake, staying present, staying – not fleeing and the only place that can truly host us is the ground of moment to moment awareness, hour by hour, day by day, week by week.

This is the work of psychological and spiritual stamina.

To grow and strengthen the witness Self.

The part that is ar bigger than our fears, bigger than our pain

It is also the practice of cultivating a heart big enough to host the magnitude of these times.

This is the radical practice of being with what is.

Exactly as it is.

In moment to moment awareness.

With unconditional acceptance.

Part of our beauty as humans is that we are capable of an incredible range of feelings simultaneously so let us learn to gracefully invite all the guests who show up at our doorstep – the fear, the worry, the sadness, the grief– welcome them all.

Invite them in, offer them a seat at the table, do not exile or abandon these parts – shower them with love and offer them shelter from the storm.

This is the practice of attend and befriend.

Welcome to day 22 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

There is a certain weariness setting in. Days are blending. We continue to wait.. Here are a few practical tips for how to stay the course.

Be a thoughtful consumer of news – pace yourselves, don't listen to news at night before bed.

Remind yourself of, and try to participate in, aspects of life that make you feel fulfilled and grateful. Whether it is time with family, playing games, or listening to music, try to remain connected to what you love.

Do not isolate yourself. Even connecting over the phone is helpful in reducing stress levels and increasing endorphins.

Pay attention to what you eat, to sleep hygiene, to exercise – these are vital. Take care of the temple.

Commit to your practices – these are non negotiables now.

- *Know what you can control. Anxiety increases when we feel powerless. At present, we know that we can at least take the following steps to promote our health: wash our hands, wear a mask, use a tissue to cover coughs and sneezes and then discard the tissue, avoid close contact with people who are sick, and avoid touching our eyes, nose, and mouth.*
- *Try to accept what you cannot control.*
- *Mother Teresa once said – God doesn't give me more than I can handle –I just wish he didn't trust me so much.*

Welcome all that arises and imagine that fear, grief, anxiety can mulch the soil of your soul – keeping you vital, energized and in your authentic heart.

Breath in: strong back/ soft heart

Welcome to day 23 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice

I have thinking about this question a lot : How do we find and maintain equanimity in the storm?

And in our days together, we know that grounding is critical, self care, love and connection are all essential.

And what keeps coming up for me is the word coherence.

When I think of Coherence - I think about the alignment of Body , Mind and Spirit. In a coherent state - We become like tuning forks - capable of higher frequency prayer, service, and love.

Welcome to day 24 of our community meditation practice, Where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

AS the days blend into one another...

As the death toll rises.

The imperative to stay awake...

To stay open hearted...

To embody and offer our best, most resourced selves...

Grows in urgency.

As tonight begins the first day of Passover I want to presence the timeless restorative beauty of the Sabbath practice. A time to rest, restore, reflect, reset, in unstructured time, playful time, family time, a holy pause

As we are in the great pause worldwide, I encourage you to set aside time that is dedicated time for a Sabbath practice. It can be one hour, half a day, a full day..

A digital Sabbath.

Time that is more intentional.

As we continue to show up, pay attention and bring our broken hearts to a broken world, one way to resource ourselves is to pay attention to the nervous system which is very susceptible to a limbic hijack: fight, flight, freeze or fall asleep – all the distractions

Let us VOOOO together. This sound soothes and re-calibrates the vagal nerve which travels from the gut to the heart to the brain. It's like a low fog horn.

Let's Voooo together as a way to start and end our meditation practice today

Welcome to day 25 of our community meditation practice, where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

Rabbi Jacobs: This year more than ever in the time of the global pandemic we need the festival of Passover. The festival is about the courage and resilience of our ancestors when they faced the most difficult situations, it is also for us a chance to draw strength from their example; they can teach us how to do this; pass over is also at the same time about hope that no matter how difficult the situation may be there is the bud of springtime, the ray of light and hope that sustains us and to celebrate Passover at a time when our brothers and sisters are celebrating Easter and Ramadam is to be reminded of our fundamental inter-connectedness - that we are all children of god and we were put on the earth not simply to care for our own but to care for each other.

So I offer this A prayer for spring and renewal by Therese

Tell me sweet blade of grass – how do YOU know your essence?

And you big tree – what gifts does your ancient memory offer?

I am eager to know

I am eager to remember

As we move from the quiet stillness of winter

Dormant with dreams of what is yet to come

I breathe into life the baby buds seeking to blossom

I become the rain that is the dew

I join the cricket song that dances at twilight

I become you dear earth

Are we not one?

As we celebrate the return of Spring during the great pause -

May we take the time to praise and honor your generosity

Your bounty

May we honor and celebrate the beauty that you bestow and offer so freely

Beauty above me

Beauty beneath me

Beauty in my heart

Beauty all around me

May I find solace in the blade of grass that receives the wind and says yes...

And.....

May we ask for your forgiveness dear earth for the ways in which we are so unconscious and have caused such harm.

I'm sorry, Please forgive me . Thank you, I love you

Like a warm breeze on a cool spring evening, we allow ourselves to be touched and we say Yes...we say Thank YOU

So our hearts stay soft and open and offer freely the bounty that is our soul's gift

May Spring bring forth renewal, rebirth, rejoice and remembrance

~ By Therese Bimka

4.10>Welcome to day 26 of our community meditation practice, where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

Chakra balancing meditation:

As above,

So below.

Welcome to day 27 of our community meditation practice where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

Poetry is supporting me these days: I offer the following for today:

As the death toll rises, we lean into our core, our foundation

Each day , each moment,

we seek any source of firm ground that we can stand on

We activate pathways of remembrance

By tilting a light to shine within

And even as it reflects the shards of our broken hearts

It also captures the essence of our beauty, our radiance , our power

Inspired by Mirabai Starr

These days we must learn to abide in holy darkness

In the great mystery

In not knowing

Can we become the root that growing in the dark, in the underneath world

The root That is not yet formed

That does not know what is to come

It is gestating into a version of itself not yet known

Are we not abiding in the liminal space that is sacred ground?

Holy time

That invites deep rest during the great pause

Let us activate The fertile wisdom of the dark unknown, the wild feminine, the untethered soul of wild mercy

Let us learn how to gracefully speak truth to power,

Is essential for what's to come

As we navigate the birth canal

Become the dark root that is not fully formed but which is guided by its deep essence – encoded with purpose for its being

Bring forth the gifts that only YOU can bring

Become the joy, become the love that you wish to see in a world that is scared and hurting.

Let us bring VOOOOO to the dark root that is gestating...

Welcome to Day 28 of our community meditation practice,

Where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

What if this pandemic is OUR moment?

Can you feel the hand of history making its mark?

What if this crisis is signaling a new dawn?

A new epoch

What if our habits, our ways of being and living, our addiction to comfort

What if all these conditioned patterns

need to be radically adjusted Now?

not some future date but NOW – at this time

What if we incarnated in this moment in history to truly be of service?

To help vision and build a world

A just world

A world that prioritizes love, compassion, generosity, and service

Einstein once said – you can't change the world/or problems

with the same consciousness that Created those problems

Are you ready to say yes to change?

Are you willing to BE changed?

Visualize the turbulence at the surface and the vast stillness just a few feet below.....I ask again: ARE you willing to be changed???

Welcome to Day 29 of our community meditation practice....

Where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

Guided Visualization on the core self, the essential self, the bedrock self

4.14>Welcome to day 30 of our community meditation practice.

Where we support each other in maintaining a daily practice.

Pain vs. suffering

What adds to our suffering? Some thoughts on this:

Paddling upstream against the current

Being in an adversarial relationship with what it

Accepting What Is - This is not a passive act of submission.

Rather we say YES and remove the resistance so that life and aliveness

Can arise and guide us.

When we fight (internally) the curriculum we have been given – we can not see or perceive how the divine is emerging or revealing herself in this very moment.

Accepting What Is... is the paradoxical first step in activating change and transformation.

Embody the Figure 8 in the pelvis and then allow it to anchor into stillness.

Ultimately - Separation from the divine is true suffering.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,

The courage to change the things I can,

and wisdom to know the difference.^[1]

Day 31 "Salt remnants of ancient oceans flow through our veins, ashes of expired stars rekindle in our genetic chemistry. The oldest of the atoms, hydrogen whose primacy among the elements should have gained it a more poetically resonant name - is a cosmic theme; mysteriously elaborated billions-fold, it has created from Nothing the Everything that includes us" ~ from eco psychologist -Theodore Roszak

This notion that the even the cosmos and stardust can be found within our most subtle makeup is sometimes portrayed as a new paradigm - but this has been the wisdom of indigenous cultures the world round since the beginning.

Fritjof Capra in *The Web of Life* adds:

" Deep ecological awareness recognizes the fundamental interdependence of all phenomena and the fact that, as individuals and societies, we are all embedded in (and ultimately dependent on) the cyclical processes of nature. This has led to systems thinkingshowing that the properties of the parts are not intrinsic but can be understood only within the context of the larger whole..... *each part is an integrated whole nested within another whole* "Ultimately — as quantum physics [has] showed so dramatically on the sub atomic level — there are no parts at all. What we call a part is merely a pattern in an inseparable web of relationships."

Day 32

I would like to offer a practice for you to incorporate into your day.

During this extraordinary threshold of collective unknown and transition – we are being asked to remember and honor the simplicity of home, family, a well cooked meal – to stay mindful of what we cherish, what we truly hold dear.

And in this profound pause – I invite you to begin day asking – how can I be kind to myself?

In what ways was I kind to myself today or in what ways was I harsh?

We can not change the world with harshness.

And we can not change or transform ourselves without kindness as the core operating principle.

When we crack the whip in whatever form that takes for you – we simply re-enforce the conditioned patterns of defense and restriction. Change is only possible with kind and curious investigation.

This threshold moment in history is asking us to be more kind in the world, in our families, in our communities but the truth is we can not manifest our best selves without being kind to ourselves - especially when we inevitably fall short, go unconscious, lose our way.

Learn to invite your deep self to Come back again and again and again...

Day 33

I love the teachings on Spiritual gratitude by David Steindl – Rast who is a Catholic Benedictine monk from Austria who grew in during the second world war.

When asked - Can you be grateful for everything –is everything a gift?

He says " NO - not everything that is given to you - - can you really be grateful or even receive as a gift.

We are not grateful for war, for abuse and violence; we are not grateful that people are dying in hospitals without their loved ones at their side.

BUT he says - while we can't be grateful for everything that is given to us, we can be grateful in every moment.

We can be grateful that every moment is unique and every moment invites us to learn or grow even from the most difficult circumstances and that is the gift... the opportunity."

He offers this simple practice:

Stop Look Go

Stop, Look, Go - I love the simplicity

Stop rushing - and of course now we are in this profound pause.

Look - What is now the unique opportunity of this moment?

When we recognize the opportunity right in front of us -

We GO and take action and that brings us closer to joy and to what he calls the overflow of the fountain.

When gratitude wells up in our hearts - it's joyful and then heart overflows with Thanksgiving and gratitude.

He adds these aspects of gratitude:

a vessel is inarticulate until it overflows

the bowl of a fountain is quiet until it overflows.

If we simply make the bowl bigger through consumption, it never overflows.

Real joy comes with quality not quantity. The act of beholding and attending.

Day 34

Tara Brach talks about "the net of reactivity."

You will get caught.

That is the human condition.

So it's not a surprise... rather it's about coming back to the home base again and again. Coming back to the witness self. Even if you have broken your vows, come again, come again (Rumi). Come back to the Witness Self. One beautiful support for this practice of return comes from the Sufi Tradition: Polishing the Heart. We polish the heart because it is in the heart space where we can truly rest, and where we can offer our deepest service. Polishing the heart is like sweeping the temple. In the course of living, we gather smutz, dust, grim. We polish the heart to clear away any and all distortion that fosters the illusion of separation. After you lovingly polish, look in the mirror of the heart and see god in your own reflection.

Lokah Samastah Sukhino Bhavantu DAY 35

May all beings everywhere be happy and free, and may the thoughts, words, and actions of my own life contribute in some way to happiness and to the freedom for all."

"In times of great change and global uncertainty, we are sometimes at a loss to find stability and peace within. Yet, we are supported endlessly by the wisdom of the ages. Lokah Samastah Sukhino Bhavantu is a mantra of power that assists us in our spiritual evolution and acts as a blessing for the world.

May all beings everywhere be happy and free, and may the thoughts, words, and actions of my own life contribute in some way to happiness and to the freedom for all." **Jivamakti Site**

"This is a prayer each one of us can practice every day. It reminds us that our relationships with all beings and things should be mutually beneficial if we ourselves desire happiness and liberation from suffering. No true or lasting happiness can come from causing unhappiness to others. No true or lasting freedom can come from depriving others of their freedom. If we say we want every being to be happy and free, then we have to question everything that we do-how we live, how we eat, what we buy, how we speak, and even how we think.

Let's look more closely at the meaning of each word of this invocalional mantra:

lokah: location, realm, all universes existing now

samastah: all beings sharing that same location

sukhino: centered in happiness and joy, free from suffering

bhav: the divine mood or state of unified existence

antu: may it be so, it must be so (antu used as an ending here transforms this mantra into a powerful pledge)

DAY 36:

Citation Unknown with edits by Therese

A Practice for Transforming Suffering: Tonglen is a Tibetan Buddhist Practice which is an act of Seva to ameliorate the suffering in the world. It is a gift using an ancient sacred technology. Today we will practice tending to our own suffering in a more personal way as part of our Tonglen Practice.

Take a moment to arrive. Sit quietly for a few cycles of the breath, follow your inhale and exhale and let your breath slow down. Practice bringing the inhale breath into your belly, breathing in to the count of 3, holding for 3 and then exhaling for 3. Do this mindful breathing 3x's at your own pace. Now take a moment to resource yourself. You can do this by tuning into your feet imagining big beautiful roots sprouting out from the soles of your feet going deep and wide into the earth. Allow the roots to descend and feel the anchoring they provide. Like big straws – let the roots draw sustenance from deep within the earth and infuse your whole being with nourishment from the earth element. You can also resource yourself by bringing on board any guides – spiritual, personal, ancestral - and imagine these guides are gathered behind you. These can be spiritual figures, animal allies, heroes etc. This is your spiritual back up team – allow yourself to feel the support, feel how they have your back. Breath into that. Lean into that. Now bring gentle loving awareness and attention and allow these gentle forces to gather in your heart, Let them take up residence. Tune into that place of wholeness and luminosity that exists in all people regardless of circumstance – this is the inner divine self that is always ready to radiate out from your heart to bless and heal the world. Draw your awareness into that place in the very center of your being where there is light - a source of radiance, a presence of healing energy that lives in your heart and is ever shining.

Let yourself experience that center of perfect light, like a big beautiful sun shining in your heart. This is the presence of Divine Love, and it is ever present within you. It is this presence IN YOU that blesses, that heals, that transforms all suffering and all darkness into light. Allow yourself to be touched by this profound truth. In every tradition – this is a universal principle. You are a carrier of this divine light. Feel it. Know it. And if something is blocking you from accessing this place of unconditional divine love this morning– simply “act as if” you could find and access that divine light. There are times when we are more in contact with the dark clouds that block the sun but never forget - the sun is always there. From that centered place, within your own light, breathe those dark clouds into yourself, and allow them to be dissolved and dispelled by the light in your heart. Watch them dissolve for this moment in time. And act as if... We will continue today's practice by healing the place of suffering that exists in the human condition – that exist in our own hearts. This is the mistaken belief that we are separate from the divine; That we are separate from the light in our heart. The illusion of separation brings with it great suffering and a profound sense of existential aloneness. On your next exhale – breathe blessing, healing and light right into your heart. Continue to breathe in the suffering of being separate from your true self - breathe it directly into the light in your heart, and see this particular piece of suffering dissolve or burn off. And if any other image emerges to support this healing – go with that. Let yourself be guided and held as you attend to this human wound.

Stay awake, stay present as you continue to breathe in light and exhale light, as a gift and a blessing to yourself. Now imagine a loved one standing before you, and allow yourself to see how this loved one also suffers from the illusion of separation

Place this loved one in your left hand and then cup your left hand with your right hand and imagine that your right hand is bathing your loved one with unconditional love, with god's grace and deep radical compassion. Bathe your loved now and allow yourself to be a channel for this infinite source of love and mercy.

Day 37

When we are faced with crisis, one of the outcomes available to us is that we pause and begin to ask ourselves the big questions. In a sense, we have time to marinate in the larger conversation... and one of the most important questions being asked individually and collectively is:

What is essential?

What do I most value?

What am I fundamentally grateful for when so much is taken away or not available?

These questions have been pondered by many of our most inspirational teachers – people like Nelson Mandela, Victor Frankl, the Dalai Lama - people who have had everything stripped away and had to find meaning and purpose in the essential, in the most fundamental part of our humanity.

We are living now in a very amplified field.

And we are becoming aware of things that we are typically not aware of.

We are both in isolation and more connected than ever before.

The WE space is our vulnerability and our salvation.

Our increased capacity for individual practices of coherence directly impact the group field in a way that is accelerated and precise at this time in history.

Thomas Hubl asks:

What kind of strength and resiliency lives in us that is 1,000's of years old?

Our ancestors knew how to do this.

They have done this.

What is the intelligence in our embodied and psychological DNA that we can tap into?

To help us stay the course, to help us stay awake, to help us??

Day 39

So yesterday, we co-created and dropped into a beautiful resonance field that was quite palatable.

To continue growing our collective frequency – I want to offer the metaphor of an orchestra tuning.

So when we begin – each one of us brings our own music, our own energy which may be chaotic or not, and as we sit together and bring our awareness and attunement to ourselves and each other – into the WE space – we begin to tune together.

And it is quite beautiful to behold and experience.

So imagine that magical moment – when the orchestra members take a breath together – breathe together and become ONE single organism, One choreographed piece of collective poetry and vibrational symmetry.

Let us breath together as ONE.

And again - let us bring in the ancestral line.

Healing is available now in an accelerated form because of the extraordinary events of this time. Heal yourself, heal your ancestors. This is one of the miracles available to us now.

Day 40

Paradox is often at the core of any spiritual life and one of the paradoxes I would like to mention today is cultivating ease with solitude as a pre-requisite with embracing our fundamental inter-connectedness.

Whether we live alone or with others, we have been catapulted into a monastic lifestyle.

There is an art to being alone as a solitude practice vs. isolation and loneliness.

How to BE with our interior selves?

How to keep company with who we are?

How to listen deeply and stay awake and self connected regardless of circumstance is the ultimate freedom. The freedom to know, embrace and enjoy one's interior life anywhere.

I always draw strength from Victor Frankl who in the midst of Auschwitz had a rich and meaningful life – even an escsatic experience. He wrote that even if everything is taken away - this relationship to one's interior life can never be taken away.

The art of embracing solitude with grace, with ease even if it's challenging or demanding... is a spiritual practice. In our culture of profound distraction – we have forgotten how to do this.

And this virus is teaching us how to engage again with solitude.

We can't be comfortable in relationship until or unless we are comfortable in ourselves.

Day 41

Finding freedom where you are.

Not somewhere else.

Not when all the ducks line up...

Not when you feel better...

But right now.

In every moment.

The freedom to choose...

Love over Fear.

Decency over reactivity...

Stillness over impulse.

In the great pause that we are inhabiting,

we get to stop, look and listen.

What stops YOU from embodying and inhabiting your best self?

What keeps you imprisoned in habits that are too small for your soul?

What do you need to give up so you can be most alive?

Find a memory of your aliveness – when all your senses were on board and available.. water that plant.

Following citation not known:

"We have the opportunity to synchronize our individual rhythm with the rhythm of the earth.

We were too noisy.

Too speedy.

But the earth is here to help us, to guide us.

Once we are back in sync,

we are back home

From this place ..

We can learn to listen again.

Feel again.

We have something true to follow.

The sacred source of life.

This will guide us to find our way from the very difficult times to

the good times that are coming.

One heart

One heart beat with the heartbeat of the earth.

To find and play the role that only we can play". AMEN

Day 42

A Puruvian Shaman offered that in this time of pause – as we step out of the frenzied lifestyle so many of us have inhabited, in this gigantic pause which was prophesized - we can now- once again - begin to hear and know the heart beat of the earth.

We can learn once again to synchronize our heartbeat with the gaia.

We can trust that the earth will guide this healing , if we listen and if we let her..

I had an image last night of hugging the earth and I invite you to do the same and as you hug the earth and hold her in your arms – listen for the heartbeat that is always there,

I offer this Ho'ponopono prayer:

Thank you, I'm sorry, please forgive me , I love you

Day 43 4.27.2020

The WE dimension during uncertainty is essential, a non negotiable.

Heart, mind and body connection with self, community and the divine creates coherence.

And when we are in a coherent field – we are much less susceptible of causing harm in this world – through our thoughts, words, and actions.. coherence naturally inspires love, generosity, altruism, connection and support.

Coherence naturally moves us from being consumers of life – what can I get - to being participants – where we give and receive within reciprocal relationship.

Where we channel creativity into the collective generating something innovative, unknown. Where we are capable of generating a miracle...

Let us hold a seat at the table for a grace, for a miracle.

Learn to work with the chatter.

Don't paddle up stream, don't fight, judge or resist.

Host and welcome with kindness and curiosity. Attend and Be-Friend.

Day 44

Meditation cultivates mindfulness - what Jon Kabat Zinn calls full catastrophe living..

Mindfulness activates integration. This brings us into greater contact with our fundamental wholeness....

Restores our capacity to be safe, kind, attuned relational beings.

Mindfulness allows our essential core - the Big S SELF to find a space to breathe, to be known, to be witnessed, to shine.

By cultivating moment to moment relational awareness, we rest in our beautiful core... we gently move aside the chatter of the mind to abide in the bosom of the heart - nestled in love.

When was the last time you stopped to actually say Hello to your heart... Let's do that now.

Dear beautiful heart - How are you this morning?

Remember to hold your heart with great reverence for its beauty, power, service and capacity to bring healing and joy to a troubled world.

YOUR HEART IS THE MEDICINE FOR A BROKEN WORLD.

WE are the medicine FOR THE BIRTH OF A NEW CONSCIOUSNESS.

BECOME THE MEDICINE.

Day 45

How does Dissonance live in your system?

In a world that is both fast and slow.

There is the part that embraces uncertainty and the part that is scared.

There is the part that is willing to surrender to the changes that need to happen for evolution to happen.

The part that wants everything to be the same as it was..

How do you host the cosmic dance of contraction and expansion?

How do you stay present with life in all of its dissonance?

What ever we resist hosting within ourselves....

Whatever we push away because we don't want to feel it - gets energized.

What fires together wires together.

So we learn to host all of who we are and to also bring intention to EACH MOMENT AS an opportunity to choose LOVE over FEAR.

Love EXPANDS AND EVOLVES US.

FEAR CONTRACTS.

Become a love warrior. Don't waste anymore time.

It is the great mother who holds the tears of the world and lets her heart be broken open again and again – she knows that when we allow ourselves to be cracked open, we are forever changed by the both pain and beauty of this world.

Day 46

The Theme for today is self compassion and self love.

Today we begin our meditation with a focus on self love and self compassion and kindness for each other and for ourselves.

Nothing is possible without these fundamental ingredients.

One of the most important practices we can engage is activating unconditional self acceptance. Saying YES... I consent No matter what. This kind of surrender often gets confused with passivity – but actually it's an active act of engagement with life exactly as it is **AS the portal to transformation.**

We often shun our difficult emotions because they bring out our messiest parts.

But I have found in my work and practice over and over again, - nothing changes without love and kindness – NOTHING.

So here is a little practice we did early on, but of course these things never get old .

Please close your eyes if you feel comfortable as we will then go right into our meditation

So lets take a difficult emotion like worry or fear.

Imagine worry arising – and imagine that you can hug worry like you would a sweet little innocent child and say Hello honey – hello my Dear. It's ok – let me hold you with love; let me hold you with sweet tenderness.

t is the practice of bringing loving attention to any part that is in need. It's the practice of saying Hello Dear One – let me cradle you in kindness, god's grace and unconditional love.

Day 47

As we continue showing up for ourselves in this community practice, we continue to look at how to shine the light of loving kindness on ourselves AS A PRACTICE.

We can be so harsh with ourselves.

So for today - We take a moment to work with the inner critic.

We may not be able to go on vacation – but the critic can!

This is a playful way to work with this part.. sometimes we just need to lighten it up and we begin by Offering gratitude for this protector archetype who typically works 24/7 on our behalf.

This full catastrophe living is a courageous act of accepting the present moment and everything it contains as if you had chosen it.....it is the practice of working with the current, not against it.

But perhaps now – you don't need his or her services full time :) Nevertheless we soothe this part by letting him/her know you are not getting rid of them but you may start discussing a re-training program .

Bring humor.

Wholeness.

There is nothing to fix.

The story about God and the canoe, boat, helicopter.

Our being here is the fine attunement of the 1000's of years of evolution..

DAY 48 5.2.2020

Lynne Twist -one of the thought leaders from Pachamama asks:

What haven't you paid ATTENTION TO?

She invites us To use this time to "Get yourself squared away so when you go back out, you can bring reverence and service to a world in desperate need of your wisdom and loving care".

We are hospicing the death of the old structures.

I want to rest wherever I am – by leaning into god's embrace.

Structures that have not served.

Structures that have supported great injustice and inequality.

We are NOW in this moment - midwifing the new structures seeking to emerge.

The humility of our profound inter-connectedness is being revealed - even as we shelter apart.

May we offer a blessing or prayer that the time we spend waiting and watching will in fact serve to help humanity find and live from our deepest wisdom, our greatest love and our most evolved selves.

May it be so...

DAY 49

How will you remember this time?

What will you tell your children or the children of the world about this time?

When they ask – how did you manage the great pause?

How did you show up?

Will you tell them how you loved?

How you cared?

How you forgave?

How you served?

We are the ones we have been waiting for.

We are the change.

AS we enter the second week of Ramadam – we engage the teaching of week 2.

The teachings of the second week are about the power of forgiveness.

Forgivness releases energy and vitality and love.

Is there anyone you need to forgive?

Day 50 5.4.2020 (my birthday :)

"It is through gratitude for the present moment that the spiritual dimension of life opens up." Eckhart Tolle

I would add - that the doorway of gratitude opens things up in unexpected, perhaps unimagined ways.

And as we are discovering: to truly embrace gratitude we need to continue growing our capacity to be at ease with not knowing ...

This full catastrophe living is a courageous act of accepting the present moment and everything it contains as if you had chosen it.. It is the practice of working with the current, not against it.

It is the practice of saying yes to life – to making all of life's curriculum your ally – to not paddling upstream..

When we let go of struggling in this way – we find IN the letting go our grip – the greatest expression of our heart and our innate generosity and gratitude. It's all there waiting for us..

Let us embrace our fundamental generosity of spirit.. and as we do so – let us imagine a whole web of beings all around the world who are waking up together to their own profound deep generosity of spirit...

We are stronger together.

Day 51

I want to presence comfort today because this virus is challenging so many assumptions and paradigms and one of them is our need for comfort.

Dr. Naomi Remen warns about our attachment to comfort.

I found this old journal passage:

"I am acknowledging that my quest for security and comfort has dampened the fires.. comfort can lull me to sleep. In the need and desire for comfort lies complacency and invites a certain dullness that is not sharpened by the proximity of the fire of suffering. I am quick to add a side note to god: I am not invoking suffering as a teacher :) Be careful what you ask for! But I am looking at my pre-occupation with comfort as a very dangerous place to rest".

I want to rest wherever I am – by leaning into god. By being comfortable with change and impermanence. Can I rest in God and gently allow myself to be enveloped in his or her embrace?

I know that the god language is not for everyone and for many years – god was not a word I gravitated to – in fact, I had aversion to that particular word. I invite all of us to not get distracted by language.

Instead - let us take a moment to rest in the bosom of the beloved.

To be held in the arms of unconditional love.

To lean into the divine with a full heart and with full surrender.

Rest in her bosom and inhale deeply.

Day 52

Today's reflection:

Holy aloneness (as opposed to isolation)

Allows for deep restorative listening.

When we are quiet enough, we learn to hear and hopefully listen to the still voice within.

It is a stance of receptivity to the silence.

With silence as a partner to the divine.

Silence as the necessary currency for holy connection and guidance.

We are learning to Listen to how we may be called....

Soul whisper and spirit transmission.

Deep listening evolves right action.

And as we listen, let us remain intimately humble with how little we know without making ourselves small.

we offer blessings gratitude for the privilege of being alive - for the privilege of being able to bestow love and kindness for one more day.

Day 53

Mirabia Bush talks about the need for courage on the spiritual path.

The courage needed to live and be an ethical human being.

So I have been asking myself and journaling with the question:

Where am I being called to be more courageous?

How are WE being called to be more courageous as a humanity?

It may certainly be coming up now as we are in the midst of massive transitions.

How can these massive transitions be embraced with grace and surrender.

To let the endings hold our heart...

I came across this by Christine Paintner probably from the season of Autumn, but it touches me today:

"I listened to the music of the last petal falling to the ground

Breathing the petal down to earth

Time is suspended

Time is full with its own beauty and grace

Watching the petal dance with gravity as it gently spirals in a choreography of impermanence

There is less loss when the moment is pregnant with beauty

Even the beauty of change".

Where are WE being called to be more courageous with change and impermanence as our teachers?

Day 54

FEAR

by Khalil Gibran

"It is said that before entering the sea
a river trembles with fear.

She looks back at the path she has traveled,
from the peaks of the mountains,
the long winding road crossing forests and villages.

And in front of her,
she sees an ocean so vast,
that to enter
there seems nothing more than to disappear forever.

But there is no other way.
The river can not go back.

Nobody can go back.
To go back is impossible in existence.

The river needs to take the risk
of entering the ocean.

because only then will fear disappear,
because that's where the river will know
it's not about disappearing into the ocean,
but of Becoming the ocean".

Day 55

As we complete the second month of the lockdown – there is a weariness afoot

And the challenges of staying grounded, awake, with access to our most resourced selves feels for many a bit more fleeting - at the moment.

Yet we gather.

We gather to remember...

That our temples need daily care.

The practice of sweeping the temple with exquisite care.

Each day - dust gathers.

Cobwebs.

Each day we show up- once again...

Broom in hand - and we lovingly sweep the inner temple.

And as we do so - we offer blessings gratitude for the privilege of being alive.

For the privilege of being able to bestow love and kindness one more day.

These practices are pathways to remembrance.

Pathways to love in action.

Let us sweep our beautiful exquisite temples.

Day 55

It is the great mother who holds the tears of the world and lets her heart be broken open again and again – she knows that when we allow ourselves to be cracked open, we are forever changed by the both pain and beauty of this world.

Dear Sacred Mother,

Help us to abide in the holy darkness without fear.

In the radical not knowing.

Teach us to stand in the liminal space between duality and non duality.

Between what has been and what is yet to come.

It is you Dear Mother who can teach us to choose union with the holy.

To be both lover and beloved.

There is no time left for a life that is not steeped in love, for love, with love.

There is no time left to be out of integrity with you Dear Mother

We are being called to stand in wholeness.

With the best of the divine masculine accompanying the medicine and wisdom of the divine feminine.

Two wings beating together.

The wing of compassion and the wing of discernment.

As we end and enter silence –I offer this this from Mirabai Starr:

Please feel free to close your eyes, take a moment...

"Gather your burdens in a basket in your heart.

Cast them at the feet of the great mother.

Crawl into her broad lap and nestle into her ample bosom and... rest there.

When you awake – the basket will be lighter.

She will transmute your worries but only if you offer them to her freely and sincerely.

Day 57

Strong back, soft heart...engaging the Boddisatva path of awakening.

how to be of sacred service:

to ourselves.

our loved ones.

our communities.

the world.

strong back / soft heart.

growing hearts that can bear witness to anything and everything.

without shutting down

without contracting into something smaller than our greatness.

playing small never works

Let us stand tall in our convictions

In love and in wisdom

Let us stand tall in our gratitude and in our knowing

That we have done this before

I offer this from singer Susan Osborn

I'm making my shoulders strong

For the young to stand upon

Stepping lightly on the backs of those

Who hold me up

It's a chain of life unending

Ever new and ever bending

Grateful is the heart for the chance to be alive

58 5.12.2020

Yesterday we shared the notion of becoming bodhisattvas- the servant archetype - servants to humanity

I offer this from Margaret Wheatley on Naming ourselves

With a little modification from me..

We often choose a name that isn't big enough to contain our entire lives.. they describe where we have been but not where we are going: cancer survivor, victim of war, displaced person etc

What is a name that calls you into your future life?

What is a name that can sustain you for the challenges you will inevitably face?

A name that supports you to encounter life's difficulties, not as a victim but as one who grows stronger and wiser?

What is a name that calls you to be fearless

The term spiritual warrior is such a name.

Spiritual warriors use compassion and insight

and through years of practice and discipline to cultivate these – they offer more skillful service to this troubled time..

5.13.2020

For this morning's reflection, I want to offer that separation from the divine is at the core of all suffering and at the core of all dis-ease.

We know that amazing individuals who have enduring profound trauma and suffering managed to not only survive but thrive in the most brutal of circumstance – all speak to core truth – whether it is love, a higher intelligence, Mother Mary, or any other aspect of the divine.... Known by so many names and yet fundamentally unknowable - Being connected to something greater than ourselves and acting from that place Thich Nat Han calls Inter-Neing – this is the only way out of the mess we are in.

5.14.2020

CENTERING PRAYER: beautiful practice steeped in Christian mysticism and Contemplation.

Chop wood carry water - way of being in the world mindfully

5.15.2020

Voo

All of what we have been doing as we gather these mornings can also be

Named: Nervous system regulation

Resiliency is connected to our ability to down regulate our nervous systems

There will be surges

We are hard wired for FFF

So when we are alarmed, worried,

When fear arises

There will be a spike. Down regulating our nervous systems is about helping the NS re-member how to settle after the surge.

5.16.2020

Two complimentary pieces of reflection touched me this morning

Eckart Tolle shares - Being at ease with not knowing is crucial for answers to come
- for guidance to be revealed

And as we learn to befriend not knowing – we engage gratitude as a practice for hosting the mystery that is unfolding before us.

This from Melody Beattie

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow."

5.17.2020 read Mother Teresa on love

5.18.2020

Corona as a world wide initiation process

From Jack Kornfeld

Human beings are not wired for uncertainty

it short circuits our system

the mind wants to work things out

figure things out - plan etc and in a pandemic that is virtually impossible

the good new is that meditation is best designed to taek the edge off

it teaches us how to

embrace uncertainly

this situation is an initiation

in every human life if we are to grow in consciousness and understanding

we will go through initiations

sometimes they are deliberate and sometimes they come to us as a blow

something very extreme like a medical dx

Circumstances can force us to wake up

Corona virus is a world wide initiation

If we do it wisely – consciously

There are things to learn that we almost cannot do any other way

The question is : how do we support each other to risk ourselves so we can pass courageously through this world wide birth canal

Initiations used to come in rites of passage to help us wake up

We need to learn how to Embrace uncertainty

Only when a person exposes themselves over and over again to initiation, can they find that indestructible core in the spirit of true awakening

Let me live up to my oath

Grown in heart and spirit

Rather than something is simply happening to us

Humanity is stepping up

We can and must do this together

Something new that wants to get born

Interconnected world

We have to feel it

So we can know it

And we have to grow inwardly

And to stay connected to what really matters

Meditation does help with Stress reduction

But it is an invitation for something deeper

To something essential

Inner courage

Dignity and love no matter what

Do this wisely

What does that mean

When I sit and quiet myself - I allow...

Fear

Grief

Sadness

Along with a deep love and a caring

that I can anchor in my body

FFF - I learn to down regulate Fight, Flight, Freeze, Fawn, Faint

I feel more steady to stay present to this

If I stay in FFF – I don't change

We blame bc we cant bear that things are out of our control

The development of wisdom according to neuro scientists is

Expanding the human window of tolerance

Expanding our capacity to stay present and intimate with the fullness of our
humanity – the full depth and breath of our emotional life

Nothing gets exiled or left out

We stay present

It has a double meaning

It means we are able to tolerate our own uncertainty

Rilke – ultimately it is on your vulnerability that you depend

We depend on each other to survive

We become more loving as we access

'The tainted glory of our humanity" Oscar Wilde

James Baldwin: People cling to their hate so tightly because

Once hate is gone - they will be forced to deal with their own pain

We take our seat with some dignity and a loving heart

Lost in thought is a form of suffering

Mr Duffy lived a short distance from his body – Baldwin

Find a way to inhabit your body

Day 65 5.19.2020

On day 3 - we began to directly infuse our practice with self love and self compassion for each other and for ourselves.

I offered this at the time:

As we continue to prepare for this emerging situation, let us continue to inoculate ourselves with love and grounding so we can be as fully resourced as possible.

One of the most important practices is activating unconditional self acceptance and self love. No matter what. Fear can bring out some of our messiest parts but let us be loving and kind with whatever shows up.

So here's a little practice – please close your eyes if you feel comfortable as we will then go right into our meditation.

Let's take a difficult emotion like worry. Imagine worry arising – and imagine that you can hug worry like you would a sweet little innocent child and say: Hello honey – hello my dear. It's ok – let me hold you with love , let me hold you with sweet tenderness.

It's the practice of bringing loving attention to any part that is in need. It's the practice of saying Hello Dear one – let me hold in love, let me cradle you in kindness.

Day 66 5.20.2020

Why is meditation helpful?

Meditation does help with Stress reduction , focus, and becoming more steady

It helps our nervous systems regulate

But it is also an invitation of something deeper

To something essential

It invites us to inhabit a place of

Inner courage

Dignity and love no matter what

It's a practice of developing or accessing deeper wisdom

The development of wisdom according to neuro scientists is

Expanding the human window of tolerance

Expanding our capacity to stay present and intimate with the fullness of our humanity – the full depth and breath of our emotional life

Of the human condition

Nothing gets exiled or left out

We practice inner courage to face and be with it all

with loving kindness

Day 67 5.21.2020

This morning we take our inspiration from Ghandi

"Carefully watch your thoughts, for they become your words. Manage and watch your words, for they will become your actions. Consider and judge your actions, for they have become your habits. Acknowledge and watch your habits, for they shall become your values. Understand and embrace your values, for they become your destiny."

So let us take responsibility for our thoughts

When our thoughts are less than kind

When our thoughts are full of judgement

When we "otherize" and drop into separation

The problem is not out there....

The world reflects who we are and what we have created

That includes all of us

We are all responsible

Thich Nhat Hanh once said that war begins with our attachment in our minds to being right

Our thoughts matter

As we practice – let us bring awareness, curiosity and kindness to our thoughts

Even the more unskillful ones

For only kindness can melt their grip.

Presence the group

Feel the love that is present right NOW

Each one of you a precious expression of the divine

A spark

Have a blessed day and share your light generously

Day 68 5.22.2020

Today we gather inspiration from Margaret Wheatley's little book called
Perseverance

On page 33 she talks about fearlessness

Brian Swimme: Embrace the poison – single cells evolved into complex multi cells

We need to cultivate enough structure so we can navigate chaos

In chaos – we can not keep our form

we are protected by god with the creative force of the universe

Find a relationship to the poison and use it for its own evolution

Every trauma has a pearl which can become our fuel for evolution

Transgressions of human beings of the sacred law

iEvery trauma healing is the restoration of the divne law

The restoration of the flow of life

Day 69 5.23.2020

Gabriele led on steadfastness

Day 70 5.24.2020

Today I would like to invite us to pause

To take a moment to presence the profound losses that have occurred within such a short period of time.

How do we find the courage to hold such tragedy with presence and grace.

Take a moment to place yourself in a sanctuary – a place of great solace and beauty

And In this place -

I invite you to surround your self with your guides – your spiritual support team - whether they are your ancestors who have known pain and survived, your spiritual teachers deceased or alive, your allies from the animal and plant communities

Allow yourself to be surrounded by all of creation – feel into how your spiritual team that has your back

Feel the support - lean in

Know it is there

Know that we do not see the whole picture

We can only grasp the small fragments that enter our field of awareness

Let us place our hands on our heart and breathe into our deep interconnectedness
– one loss is everyone's loss

We hold each other with tenderness, love and profound gentleness.

And we know that only by presencing heartbreak can our hearts truly be alive

Grace under fire

Day 71 5.25.2020

Message from White Eagle, Hopi indigenous elder

03/16/2020:

VISION QUEST 🔥

"This moment humanity is going through can now be seen as a portal and as a hole. The decision to fall into the hole or go through the portal is up to you.

There is a social demand in this crisis, but there is also a spiritual demand. The two go hand in hand. Without the social dimension, we fall into fanaticism. But without the spiritual dimension, we fall into pessimism and lack of meaning.

You were prepared to go through this crisis. Take your toolbox and use all the tools available to you.

Learn about resistance of the indigenous and African peoples: we have always been and continue to be exterminated. But we still haven't stopped singing, dancing, lighting a fire and having fun. Don't feel guilty about being happy during this difficult time.

It is through joy that one resists. Also, when the storm passes, each of you will be very important in the reconstruction of this new world.

You need to be well and strong. And, for that, there is no other way than to maintain a beautiful, happy and bright vibration. This has nothing to do with alienation.

This is a resistance strategy. This is what is asked of you:

Allow yourself to take advantage of this time to perform vision seeking rituals. What world do you want to build for you? For now, this is what you can do: serenity in the storm. Calm down, pray every day. Establish a routine to meet the sacred every day.

Good things emanate; energy - what you emanate now is the most important thing. And sing, dance, resist through art, joy, faith and love. "

Photo: Hopi, White Eagle

Day 72 5.26.2020

lynala Vanzant whose is part African American and part Lakota

Stay open – something bigger is going on here

it has been prophesized as per the Lakota people

it is a purging, a purging of consciousness

The consciousness that brought us to this edge

And PAIN is part of it because we seem to be motivated by pain

Pay attention Inward NOW

EVERYTHING WE do has to be considered for the next 7 generations

Each generation has its work

and this is work of OUR generation

We are in this together

and its our responsibility to address what has been unsustainable together

we have to eliminate

against-ness

othering

We must learn how to go within and get our marching orders from the divine

This is a time for spiritual warriors

No blaming

No finger pointing

We must work with our fears

The three fears that corona has brought to the surface

Fear of the earth that we can not control

Fear of the unknown which includes death and change

Fear of other humans

We brought fear into the quarantine with us

Can we leave fear behind and not carry it with us

Fear will interfere with the power of setting intentions and engaging in wise actions that come from a wisdom that is greater than the ego

Greater than the individual

Can we truly be an instrument of peace and non violence

Beginning with each and every unkind thought that brings us into separation.

That is the work and nothing can change unless we change

Day 73 5.27.2020

[How do we grow and lean into our Generosity of spirit]

From Thomas Hubl with some add ons from me:

When presence is bigger than fear

The nature of the divine is abundance

The nature of the divine is creativity

When we come closer to the divine, we participate in creating more abundance

Scarcity is a function of trauma

When there are massive changes in structure of society , the first that comes up is existential fear. We are doing the inner work to find a way to be with this fear because we can not prevent it from coming up. But we have many tools, and community] to help us navigate fear] so the fear does not keep us hostage

[FEAR is the real lockdown]

Presence is bigger than fear

It allows fear to be part of our life but not rule us [so that we can be our very human selves and do our divine work.]

Water your plant

The plant that yearns/longs for the divine

For the sun

The life force

The innate drive towards wholeness

The innate drive towards self actualization

That will not be stopped

That will always find a way

Through every crack and fissure

It will survive, it will thrive, it will grow

Day 74 5.28.2020

There is a spiritual teaching

You need an authentic NO to have an authentic YES

In spiritual work, we often presence the Yes

The I consent

Acceptance

But what about the NO

Where does a healthy NO live in us

What should we be saying NO to

In our personal lives

In society

The no is connected to self care

To healthy boundaries

To values

To morality

And when we find our healthy NO – I offer this teaching from Ram Dass that I always treasure:

How to oppose without BEING in opposition

How to say NO without moving into separation and othering..

Day 75 5.29.2020

Tuning into the very beginning of our incarnation

Each stage of development has a psychological and a spiritual task

From the earliest beginnings – we are born with the right to BE

To be exactly who we are

Exactly as we are

First chakra curriculum

And in this way we create space

Space to grow

Space to be

Space to be consciousness itself unfolding

Manifesting

Revealing

Imagine being a newborn and giving yourself the gift of unconditional acceptance

Unconditional love

That who you are in your essence is beautiful, radiant and perfect. Feel it; Know it.

Day 76 5.30.2020

As days roll into one another in this time of pandemic – we can forget the urgency of this moment, the invitation of this fertile pause

Yet this crisis is cracking open the inequities of society which were there before the pandemic but which are being magnified

The only silver lining is: Will this wake us up to what Krista Tippett calls a moral revolution and it all begins with paying attention to where we put our precious energy: the world needs us, our children and the next 7 generations need us

I offer this simple quote by Jacequeline Novogratz

She offers it is far more important to be interested in the world

Than to be an interesting person

This speaks to Seva

To love in action

To being part of the solution

How to bring the unique gifts that only YOU can bring forth in this world as an instrument of peace, tolerance, love, innovation and skillful communication.

1. **"We are each other's destiny" — and should act with this ethos of accompaniment.** "Whatever you aim to do, whatever problem you hope to address, remember to accompany those who are struggling, those who are left out, who lack the capabilities needed to solve their own problems. We are each other's destiny. Beneath the hard skills and firm strategic priorities needed to resolve our greatest challenges lies the soft, fertile ground of our shared humanity. In that place of hard and soft is sustenance enough to nourish the entire human family," Novogratz says.
2. **Engaging with the difficulties and challenges of this world is an act of love.** "For anyone who is caretaking someone who's been sick or who has lost someone, for anyone who's accompanying someone in a real way, there are times when that love takes every ounce of courage and perseverance that you have in your body, and those are also the times when you like yourself the best. And I think that is the opportunity we have now in the world," she says.
3. **We must act now.** As Novogratz puts it, "I want future generations to look back on us and say, 'Look how hard they tried,' not 'Look at how blind they were.'"

Day 77 5.31.2020

This morning I want to acknowledge the profound grief, terror and rage that is being felt and expressed all over this country and the world at the senseless loss of life and abuse of power by certain members of the police force

I invoke this blessing for another vision of power

Healthy power

Power within

Power with

Not power over

Power That truly protects

That is visionary - soul driven

This from John O'Donohue

Blessings for One Who Holds Power

May the gift of leadership awaken in you as a vocation.....

Day 78 6.1.2020 69

Today I turn to MLK, Abraham Heschel to help ground my profoundly disturbed soul

King grows up in a family with family ministers

Heschel grows up in a family of rabbis

Before he got assassinated – he was due to be at Heschel's Passover seder

They both talked about praying with your feet when you protest, when you march for justice..

From Heschel:

Prayer can not bring water to parched fields, or mend a broken bridge

Or rebuild a ruined city but prayer can water an arid soul, mend a broken heart and rebuild a weakened will.

Prayer is meaningless unless it is subversive, unless it seeks to overthrow and to ruin the pyramids of callousness and hatred. In any free society where terrible wrongs exist, some are guilty but all are responsible.

For many of us the march from Selma to Montgomery was about protest and prayer . Legs are not lips - walking is not kneeling. And yet our legs uttered songs. Even without words, our march was worship. I felt my legs were praying.

Our goal should be to live life of radical amazement.... Get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted. Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to amazed.

He adds:

That individual dies when they cease to be surprised

We must learn how to be surprised and not simply adjust to violence

May we pray for peace

May we pray for justice

May we pray for leadership

And I close with Christian contemplative Richard Rohr's who offers– There is an urgent need for gentle prophets who can speak truth in love

When they go low, we go high –Michelle Obama

Day 79 6.2.2020

So much of what we practice is being with what is

What is right now I am presenting my broken heart

My grief

My outrage

I feel devastated

We are witnessing a boiling point

America on fire

Pent up anger, fear, terror and rage

Generational trauma

Generational pain

This is not black pain

This is not a black problem

This is our pain

This is our word built on the legacy of slavery and the belief in white supremacy

All decent people are rocked to our core as we witness the casualness with which the Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin murdered George Floyd talking with his fellow officers while a man died beneath his knee, his last words crying Mama

This cannot be our country

This can not be who we are

Again I quote MLK

Riot is the language of the unheard

True peace is not the absence of tension

But the presence of justice

Harvard professor Cornel West offers that this is

America's moment of reckoning

He says Rebellion is not the same thing as revolution

We need a full scale peaceful and moral revolution of transformation focused on truth and justice

Bernice King, daughter of the Rev Martin Luther King Jr., has been a public presence during recent events, speaking about her father's legacy of nonviolent demonstration but also about the fight against injustice.

Sunday morning on Twitter, she added two spiritual references.

One was a quote from the Book of Isaiah: "Learn to do good; seek justice; correct oppression." The other was from her father: "Use me, God. Show me how to take who I am, who I want to be, and what I can do, and use it for a purpose greater than myself.

Let s us cradle our broken hearts and our outrage

Day 80 6.3.2020 69

"GO TOWARD THE ROAR:" ON DEALING WITH FEAR By Michael Meade

For decades I have worked with severely "at-risk" youth; some who willingly put their lives at risk, and others who find themselves at risk for reasons beyond their control. Of course, all youth are at risk to some degree, as each young person must risk themselves in the world to learn who they are at the core of their life. Now, amidst growing fears and uncertainty about the future, young people sense that everything around them is at greater risk. Young people, who are supposed to be the "future of the world," can find themselves fearing that the world has very little future to offer them.

Whether it be educated youth considering the increasing dangers of climate change or less privileged ones who feel the bite of poverty and the growing disparity between rich and poor, modern youth grow up amidst threats of natural disaster, nightmares of terrorism and bewilderment at the ineffectiveness and lack of courage of those who seem to have the most power. Increasingly, I hear young people asking how to act in a world that seems to be coming apart at the seams.

Having found my own way through the world by studying myths and stories, I tend to answer with old tales that show how people have survived great troubles and the spread of fear many times before. Too much fear can lead to unnecessary panic as well as a paralysis of imagination. An old story can help contain the fear and reduce the tendency to panic and run away from life's inevitable risks.

This old teaching story comes from the great African savannahs where life pours forth in the form of teeming, feeding herds. As the herds eat their way across the plains, lions wait in the tall grass nearby, anticipating the chance to prey upon the grazing animals. In preparation, they send the oldest and weakest members of the pride away from the rest of the hunting pack. Having lost much of their strength and most of their teeth, the roar of the old ones is far greater than their ability to bite.

The old lions go off and settle in the grass directly across from where the strong and hungry lions wait and watch. As the herd enters the area between the hunting pack and the old lions, the old ones roar mightily. At the sound of the roaring, most of the herd panics. Blinded by fear, they turn and flee from the seeming source of danger. As they rush wildly in the opposite direction, they run right to where the strongest lions wait in the tall grass for dinner to arrive.

"Run towards the roar," the old people used to tell the young ones. When faced with great danger in this world, run towards the roaring, go where you fear to go, for only there will you find some safety and a way through danger.

Only there will you find true courage

Trouble that is faced when it first appears can be the roar that awakens a person's deepest resources.

In times of trouble or tragedy, a person either steps into life more fully or else slips into a diminished life characterized by fear and anxiety.

The modern world has begun to roar in a big way and fear has become the dominant emotion amongst people of all ages. Old folks fear that they will lose health care and retirement benefits; those in their prime earning years fear that they can't earn enough or could lose their jobs at any moment; and young people fear that there is no place for them in this fearful world where the whole thing could seemingly end at any moment.

Clearly, there are real fears and wild uncertainties in this rapidly changing world. There are many people waiting and willing to exploit the fears of others. And, the tendency to panic as part of the herd can suddenly strike anyone. Everyone feels some fear when panic is in the air. Yet, fear can also be a guide that clarifies what needs to be risked for a greater life to be found. That's what I tell young people when they ask what to do as the world around us becomes increasingly riddled with great uncertainty and blind reactions.

Don't get caught in the blind fears that grip the herd. When the world roars at you, it is time to go where you fear to go. The real risk in this life has always been that of becoming oneself amidst the uncertainties of existence. On this earth everything we are given can also become lost. The notion that life should be safe or even that retirement should be secure misses the point of fully living the story seeded in one's soul from the beginning.

The old soul in the human psyche knows that the whole thing has hung by a thread all along. Not that there aren't real fears, but that those who are older are supposed to draw wisdom from surviving the trouble in their own lives. Those "old enough to know better" are not supposed to panic and foolishly add to the roaring of the world.

Those looking for security in the midst of radical change become easy pickings for those trying to benefit from the roaring troubles of this world. Those who believe that life should be predictable or that their security should be guaranteed wind up caught in the teeth of blind anger or debilitating fear. As an Irish poet once said, "A false sense of security is the only kind there is."

In the end, what we fear will not go away, for it indicates what we must go through in order to live more fully. As an old African proverb advises: When death or danger finds you, let it find you alive! Whether it be an individual, a community or a country, when faced with tragedy or fearful uncertainty we either enter life more fully or else begin to accept a smaller way of being. In the end, or when the end seems near, genuine security can only be found by taking the risks that lead to a greater sense of life and a more inclusive and encompassing way of being in the world.

(Published on HuffPost Healthy Living, 8-19-11)

Day 81 6.4.2020

angel Kyodo williams is one of our wisest voices on social evolution and the spiritual aspect of social healing. She is an esteemed Zen priest and the second black woman recognized as a teacher in the Japanese Zen lineage. For those of us who are not monastics, she says, the world is our fierce field of practice.

"We cannot have a healed society, we cannot have change, we cannot have justice, if we do not reclaim and repair the human spirit," if we don't do inner work, if we haven't trained to do the work that is upon us now.

Living with fearlessness and grace

She talks about the hard choices that liberation takes

Inner liberation as the pre-requisite for any true transformation of culture.

She talks about unconditional love and forgiveness and the necessary task of "undoing ourselves"

Well, I think it's actually uncomfortably un-knowing ourselves. [laughs] It is this willingness to keep being willing to come undone — to do what we can to understand the world around us and how we operate and what is impacting who we are and how we are, and to allow that to keep coming undone. That's what I think is really the paradox in what is possible, from a liberatory standpoint, is to recognize, oh, we're not trying to become something, we're trying to un-become. We're trying to undo ourselves.

And that is really what is most challenging for us, because we want to be known to ourselves. We want to be known to others. But the moment we try to do that, we're actually fixating in a way that traps us, so we feel both safe, but it's also confining.

The fearlessness and grace of Becoming undone

Day 82 6.5.2020

Perhaps this is the moment in 1955 when a gentle soul named Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus

Her quiet refusal

Her soft NO became the moment

That changes everything

And perhaps Mississippi share cropper Fannie Lou Hamer perhaps said it best

I am sick and tired of being sick and tired

How can we take our deep love and compassion for all of humanity and bring it forward with energized grace, fierce compassion, skillful action,

Heart driven action fueled by a persistent call to love.

Darkness can not drive out darkness

Only light can do that

Hate can not drive out hate

Only love can do that MLK

Can each of be a Skillful beacon of love in action

This is our moment

Day 83 6.6.2020

A chakra meditation – 13 minutes!

Creating coherence to navigate the turbulent waters

Step by step attuning

Inviting the chakras to spin clockwise

Follow the arc

Solar plexis: align personal will with divine will

Heart – feel all 6 dimensions, greening the heart

Tune into the coherence

The more we anchor coherence, the less susceptible we are to the fragmentation of trauma as it shows up in us and in culture

Day 84 6.7.2020 Sunday

When folks within his movement questioned him about only loving those worth loving- King would laugh and laugh and say, 'Nope, you've got to love everybody.'"

Rev. angel kyodo williams: You don't have to like anyone at all! [Laughter] People always tease me about this. I hardly like anyone. But I *love* everyone. And that is possible. In fact, it's the very thing that bridges the spiritual life and the activist life.

When I came to Buddhist practice, I thought that when people were at the pinnacle of their practice they would see the need to respond to the problems in world. Isn't that what would happen once you get there, wherever "there" is?

But that wasn't my experience, so I switched my focus to the activists. They were trying to change the world, and I felt that if I could support them with meditation and awareness practices, then they could do it more effectively.

What I ran into, of course, was that they pretty much didn't love anyone. [Laughter] So love is what I've focused on, because in social justice work the only option is loving everyone. Other- wise, there is no path to real change. Whether we're leaning toward the spiritual community or the activist community, what we need is the combination of a mind that wants to change the world and a mind that is steady, clear-seeing, and seeks change from a place of love, rather than from a place of anger.

Love in public looks like justice – cornel west

I AM THE PRESENCE OF LOVE – BLESS EACH PERSON

Black botanist

[https://www.google.com/url?](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjmwO21nvLpAhUbl3IEHWCGCfoQtwlwBX)

[sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjmwO21nvLpAhUbl3IEHWCGCfoQtwlwBX](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjmwO21nvLpAhUbl3IEHWCGCfoQtwlwBX)

DAY 85 6.8.2020

The Road is always beckoning by David Whyte

INSIDE YOU AND FAR BEYOND YOU

The road seen, then not seen, the hillside

hiding then revealing the way you should take,

the road dropping away from you as if leaving you

to walk on thin air, then catching you, holding you up,

when you thought you would fall - and the way forward

always in the end, the way that you came, the way

that you followed, the way that carried you into your future,

that brought you to this place, no matter that

it sometimes had to take your promise from you,
no matter that it always had to break your heart
along the way: the sense of having walked
from far inside yourself out into the revelation,
to have risked yourself for something that seemed
to stand both inside you and far beyond you,
and that called you back in the end
to the only road you could follow...

David Whyte

To have risked yourself to stand for something that seemed to stand both inside
you and far beyond you and that called you back in the end to the only road you
could follow

A Road Always Beckoning

We are in a really remarkable time that is both full of anticipation

There is a road beckoning but we don't know when we will be able to walk

But there is also The road inside where we can drink from a deeper well

The act of preparing

Finding another foundation inside ourselves

Deeper than anything we have ever known

Onto which we can step and into our possible new lives post virus

Day 86 6.9.2020

what gets in the way of manifesting your authentic life; a life steeped in and in alignment with your core values

When the pain of *the unlived life* begins to beckon, it is time to listen. It takes courage to tackle that which no longer serves and to be willing to step into the life that is waiting for us. This is the "journey we take from innocence to wisdom, from stagnation to new life" – also known as the hero's or heroine's journey.

There is a reservoir of wisdom that exists deep inside which is bigger and smarter than any of our wounds. [With right kind of support] we can learn to become more still, deep, and open; this helps us access an inner wholeness that has always been and which remains intact despite our pain and conditioned patterns that keep us stuck, living a life that is much smaller than our potential.

Healing is not forcing the sun to shine, but letting go of that which blocks the light.

—STEPHEN AND ONDREA LEVINE

Be an open channel

A hollow tube

Receive the light

A shaft of white light

That is both personal and universal

What's it like to truly receive this energy, this power

How do you live a life that is smaller than your potential?

Letting go of what no longer serves, individually and collectively

The world reflects who we are

Day 87 6.10.2020

Discovering fearlessness comes from working with the softness of the human heart.

– Chogyam Trungpa

Mindfulness and heartfulness are a powerful duo on the spiritual path: a quiet mind without an open heart is a pretty brittle and boring proposition. But an open heart that doesn't have the support of a quiet and tamed mind is equally unhelpful.

Without spirituality, therapy can turn into a never-ending search for self-fulfillment.

Without heartfulness, spiritual practice can lead us away from the adventure of being alive. Lesser, Elizabeth (2008-11-18). *The Seeker's Guide: Making Your Life a Spiritual Adventure* (Kindle Locations 2940-2943). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

The heart is like a bank of messages. Deep in its vault is everything you need to know about yourself: old wounds, misguided conclusions, secret truths, wise guidance. Put together, the messages become the story of who you are and who you aren't; what you really love; decisions you should make; and how you can find lasting happiness. If you don't listen to the heart—if you don't bring your longing to consciousness. Lesser, Elizabeth (2008-11-18). *The Seeker's Guide: Making Your Life a Spiritual Adventure* (Kindle Locations 3192-3196). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

Rumi offers – There is some kiss we want with our whole lives

There are a 1000 ways to kneel and kiss the earth

Practice BEING loving kindness

Day 88 6.11.2020

Guest for today...

Day 89 6.11.2020

Working with aliveness

The ability to witness and experience the full range of human emotion

And the time came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom. **Anais Nin**

Notice where in your system there may be constriction

Emotional, physical spiritual, intellectual

Bracing

If that constriction could speak, what would it say?

Where does fear live in your body?

Uncertainty?

Where does NO reside?

Rain Practice by Tara Brach

Recognize

Accept

Investigate with kindness

Now, nurture.

How to grow a vessel big enough for our complicated human capacities

How to stay awake, stay present and show up

Day 90 6.13.2020

Cornel West reminds us that Love in public looks like justice

Richard Rhor offers that our evolution seeks justice

The arc of the universe bends towards justice

If we uphold love as the core truth – then our spiritual work must align with and seek justice as the public face of love.

. I, Richard—like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.—believe that “the arc of the universe bends toward justice,” [1] but it depends upon our participation. What is your work to do today to bend the universe a little more towards justice?

How open is your heart right now

Judith blackstone meditation

There is meaning to be found in the shards of our most broken moments. Elisabeth
Lesser

Be breathe

Be energy

Be love

Day 91 6.13.2020

Judith Blackstone meditation

"Nothing worth doing can be accomplished in our lifetime " (source not known)

Be a vehicle of grace

Day 92 6.14.2020 Sunday

From Mark Nepo On The Heart

"Keep literacy of the heart alive during this time

Spiritual physics – if we are closed – life will break us open

God breaks our heart again and again and again until it stays open

How do we learn to return to the wisdom of the heart again and again

What is your practice of return

We need each other to return home

The storm is not as important as the path it clears

The world is incomprehensible but it is embrace-able

Maybe we suffer so we can journey together into the heart

Let your heart inhale and exhale

We all go through the arch of loss,

We all love a BIG Loss or a Big suffering

This Changes the landscape and we are invited to make a new map

Making a new map is the process of return" (check quote for length and accuracy

TB: Heart Meditation

All three dimensions

The practice of an awakened heart

Energy follows attention

Attention invigorates intention

Intention supports manifestation

The ripple effects of a magnified field of awakened hearts

We are born whole but we need each other to be complete

Poetry offers the unexpected utterance of the soul

Big A art helps remove what's in the way

Stay in authentic proximity

Not diverting each other from the endless angel that we wrestle with

Question- what is your argument with life right now? All the above: Mark Nero

DAY 92 6.15.2020

Reclaiming the light As Nelson Mandela said in his 1994 inaugural speech as president of South Africa, "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate, our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us."

Zweig Ph.D., Connie. Meeting the Shadow of Spirituality: The Hidden Power of Darkness on the Path . iUniverse. Kindle Edition.

WHERE DO YOU GIVE AWAY YOUR LIGHT IN THE HOPES THAT SOMEONE ELSE
WILL CARRY YOUR LIGHT FOR YOU?

WHERE DO YOU DISOWN YOUR LIGHT?

Have people said:

TO NE IT DOWN

MAKE YOURSELF SMALLER, DIMMER

LESS RADIANT THAN IS YOUR TRUE NATURE

CAN YOU ALLOW YOUR RADIANCE TO SHINE IN THIS MOMENT

CAN YOU BREATHE YOURSELF INTO BOLDNESS RIGHT NOW

WHERE DO YOU HAVE A WISH TO PARTICIPATE more FULLY IN LIFE?

This part that protects often knows how to say no

But for today –see if you can find your yes

DAY 93 6.16.2020

A Jewish creation story: source unknown

At the beginning of time: The vessels of creation, or Keilim, as they are called in Hebrew, were created in order to provide a container for the light of the infinite, called the Ein Sof. But the light of the divine was so powerful – that it could not be contained and it shattered the vessels sending sparks of divine light throughout all of creation. And so it is that everything in the universe including each one of us sitting at this table carries a spark of the divine – a fragment of the holy ember.

In this story – the world is seen as broken and fragmented but the Jewish mystics believed that however broken and fragmented things may seem, all of life is in fact evolving toward a state of wholeness and that we humans have an active role and responsibility in furthering this evolutionary healing process... And we do this by participating in the sacred work of healing in two ways: through our acts of Tikkun Olam, healing and fixing the world – and through Tikkun Ha'Nefesh, healing and perfecting our own individual souls. These two expressions of the work of tikkun are actually deeply connected, for it is not possible to perfect one's own soul without also becoming deeply committed to the work of healing the world and the planet....."

Day 94 6.17.2020 57

From Mark Nepo: on how the brokenness of our hearts blazes the path back to our deep humanity

My soul tells me we were all broken from the same broken heart

Below our strangeness

Mark Nepo

I believe we are all connected at the deepest and most elemental level and that experience and circumstance manipulate us away from our better selves. This poem speaks of that place.

My soul tells me, we were

all broken from the same name-

less heart,

and every living thing wakes with a piece of that original

heart aching its way into blossom.

This is why we know each other

below our strangeness,

why when we fall, we lift each other,

or when in pain, we hold each other,

why

when sudden with joy, we dance

together.

Life is the many pieces

of that great heart loving itself

back together.

Hand on heart

Each of us a cell

A contribution to the one infinite heart

We are all whole and part..

6.18.202 Day Day 95 Deya DeMarco

6.19.2020 day 96 62

Inner and Outer Freedom

Love and Justice Are Not Two

Friday, June 19, 2020

Juneteenth

Love and Justice are not two. Without inner change, there can be no outer change.

Without collective change, no change matters. —Rev. angel Kyodo williams, Sensei

I enjoyed getting to know Rev. angel Kyodo williams when she presented at the CONSPIRE conference in 2017. She is one of very few black women Zen Senseis (teachers). Through her Buddhist practice, she seeks to liberate both the oppressed and the oppressors, which is appropriate as we celebrate Juneteenth in the United States today, to recognize the final day of emancipation from slavery in our nation. In this passage she shares her path to becoming an agent of transformative, peaceful social change. Source unknown

"Not long after finding my place as an activist for social justice, I came up against the need for not just reacting to what was happening in the world, which gave me a sense of purpose, but developing a way to look at what was happening, which provided a sense of meaning. I found a second home in cultivating a spiritual life.

. . . My formal Zen practice and training were teaching me to find a more restful place that I could abide in within myself despite the chaos and calamity [of] living in an unjust society. . . . It also gave me a way to be in response to sometimes overwhelming situations that could just lead me to a downward spiral of anger and negativity. . . .

The Zen community I eventually became engaged with [the Zen Peacemaker Order] . . . [was] explicitly committed to social action.

I was captivated by the bodhisattva ideal. . . . In their infinite wisdom and boundless compassion, they responded to the cries [of the world]. Even though liberation is available to them, they hold it off until every person can be awakened, too. . . .

I advocated for [a] more balanced approach to fiercely address injustice from a place of empowerment as a warrior—but one that was ultimately committed to peace rather than aggression. This path recognized the clarity and resilience brought about by cultivating one's inner life. . . . I saw this as a more sustainable path, especially for Black people, whose road to victory in the external landscape would likely be a long one given the deep entrenchment of the forces of oppression set against us.

In response to the events of September 11th, I wrote what became known as the Warrior-Spirit Prayer of Awakening. . . .

May all beings be granted with the strength, determination and wisdom to extinguish anger and reject violence as a way.

May all suffering cease and may I seek, find, and fully realize the love and compassion that already lives within me and allow them to inspire and permeate my every action.

May I exercise the precious gift of choice and the power to change [as] that which makes me uniquely human and is the only true path to liberation.

May I swiftly reach complete, effortless freedom so that my fearless, unhindered action be of benefit to all.

May I lead the life of a warrior".

DAY 97 6.20.2020

Therese Bimka: : WHEN WE TALK ABOUT CONCEPTS LIKE FUNDAMENTAL WHOLENESS AND THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF ALL LIFE –

THESE beautiful IDEAS OR BELIEFS CHALLENGE OUR MOST BASIC WAYS OF BEING IN THE WORLD – AND THE MOST DIFFICULT PLACE THIS SHOWS UP IS IN OUR HUMAN TENDENCY TO OTHERIZE – EVEN IN THE MOST PRIVATE REALMS OF THOUGHT – ONCE WE OTHERIZE – WE CREATE SEPARATION AND DEHUMANIZATION AND THAT IS THE BEGINNING OF ALL VIOLENCE

--Thich Nhat Hanh: Buddhist Spiritual Teacher, Peace Activist, Author, Nobel Prize Recipient

Call Me by My True Names by Thich Nhat Hanh

Do not say that I'll depart tomorrow because even today I still arrive.

Look deeply: I arrive in every second to be a bud on a spring branch, to be a tiny bird, with wings still fragile, learning to sing in my new nest, to be a caterpillar in the heart of a flower, to be a jewel hiding itself in a stone.

I still arrive, in order to laugh and to cry, in order to fear and to hope. The rhythm of my heart is the birth and death of all that are alive.

I am the mayfly metamorphosing on the surface of the river, and I am the bird which, when spring comes, arrives in time to eat the mayfly.

I am the frog swimming happily in the clear pond, and I am also the grass-snake who, approaching in silence, feeds itself on the frog.

I am the child in Uganda, all skin and bones, my legs as thin as bamboo sticks, and I am the arms merchant, selling deadly weapons to Uganda.

I am the twelve-year-old girl, refugee on a small boat, who throws herself into the ocean after being raped by a sea pirate, and I am the pirate, my heart not yet capable of seeing and loving.

I am a member of the politburo, with plenty of power in my hands, and I am the man who has to pay his "debt of blood" to my people, dying slowly in a forced labor camp.

My joy is like spring, so warm it makes flowers bloom in all walks of life. My pain is like a river of tears, so full it fills the four oceans.

Please call me by my true names, so I can hear all my cries and laughs at once, so I can see that my joy and pain are one.

Please call me by my true names, so I can wake up, and so the door of my heart can be left open, the door of compassion.

--Thich Nhat Hanh: Buddhist Spiritual Teacher, Peace Activist, Author, Nobel Prize Recipient

DAY 98 6.21.2020 Father's day

From Michael Beckworth founder of Agape

"Let your dreams awaken you

Let them initiate you into your greater purpose

ALLOW the LOVE and beauty of the universe to flow through you

The intelligence of the universe is constantly expressing itself

Revealing its essence

Mystics know this

This intelligence is known and is present in all the traditions

The inner voice will guide you to your best self

To your purpose and passion

Every single one of us is a unique spiritual composite of the cosmos and has everything you need to manifest your life

We are here to surrender and to yield that in

The cosmos that contains the undifferentiated wholeness

The primordial void of darkness out of which everything

Arises and all of the universes and the galaxies bursting into expression as a visible and elegant expression of that

Is within you.

He calls this practice : Dreaming myself awake

Falling awake

How might we fall awake and access the elegant brilliant love beauty of the universe as it seeks expression through us and with us?

Day 100 6.23.2020 whohoo!!

From Michael Beckwith Founder of Agape and from his book on Visioning: Sacred Tools to Manifest Your life..

How are we being called? Individually and collectively

What is essential?

Where there is willfulness, there is a wall

Where there is willingness, there is a way

All circumstance offers opportunities for awakening

And the darkest moments contain the biggest invitations

These are the times when we search for our sacred Yes

Creating a place of

“Receptivity that is open, spacious of mind and heart

that tills the soil of consciousness into a fertile yes

It clears the way for deeper knowing below the surface

Softening the hard held places of cherished attachment and points of view that sabotage a more expansive perspective on the limitless possibilities of your life.

When you are receptive, your consciousness becomes flexible, teachable and this gives entry to new vision seeking to emerge in your life

Invite sweet surrender

I am available to what wants to emerge through me. I give my consent to it.

I See myself in all of humanity

Day 101 6.24.2020

We practice to become a laser beam of attunement, wisdom and compassion

We practice to cultivate integration

Which requires that we pay attention to the various levels of inherited trauma which cause fragmentation

We inherit fragmentation not only from individuals, but also from the collective trauma of the culture in which we live.

Thomas Hubl:

Traumatization reduces the capacity for evolution, individually and collectively

It creates zones of reduced capacity

Fields of density that can not integrate the light of consciousness

Therese: : But Practice moves us from fragmentation to flow

It helps our nervous system remember what coherence feels like

To know what is true and reliable

Embodied practice helps us know what is true

It supports our inner ability to self regulate

Which in turn increase flow, energy, chi, integration and wholeness

We need to go from being trauma organized

To trauma informed and eventually healing centered and coherent

When we are more coherent, we can access our true nature and live and act with flow and grace

Thomas says:

Everyone is a particle and a wave

Energy and manifestation

Form and content

Everyone is a unique cosmic address

Everyone has a code and is a

A special composition

Embodied presence helps you remember your unique code.

Day 103 6.26.2020

Today's topic is freedom

Many may pose that freedom is the goal of practice

Freedom from self-limiting ego

From the fear, scarcity and separation

Freedom from external circumstances that we feel define our choices, culture, from desires that aren't necessarily in our best interest,

Freedom from entrenched opinions, from habituated patterns of conditioning that keep us in bondage

These conspire to limit our evolutionary growth

But true freedom is not simply doing whatever you want

It is not freedom from but freedom FOR

There is a more evolved stage than freedom from something: it is freedom for something. It is the freedom to respond to our life purpose even when it isn't what our ego had planned for us. It is the freedom to create, to dance to the unique rhythm of our inner spirit. Living our potential to awaken, to self-express, to contribute our gifts, talents, skills as a beneficial presence on the planet fuels the heart of a free man, a free woman, a free being. When we gain our inner freedom we become contributors to the evolutionary thrust of the universe, to that which seeks to emerge in the human realm. Beckwith, Michael Bernard. Life Visioning (p. 31). Sounds True. Kindle Edition.

The inner work of practice brings us into contact with the

Freeborn Self – big S Self

The willow in the wind- increase inner flexibility

Notice where there is rigidity in the system

Replace with sturdiness

Underneath the rigidity may be a drive for healthy boundaries,

Finding our NO, standing our ground

Add buoyancy to sturdiness

Day 104 6.27.2020

We spend so much of our time individually and culturally protecting our conveniences, our comfort.

We have entire cultures focused on protecting this story, this lifestyle.

And it is this comfort that we have defined and over-coupled with as safety

and frankly - we will do anything to maintain this definition of safety, even at the risk of our soul

From the beginning of our presence on this planet, we have operated from our instinctual reptilian brain that focuses on greed and scarcity

Which has brought us to the brink of ecological and cultural disaster

Additionally - we remain fundamentally disconnected through convenience, through technology

Corona has forced us to look at this more deeply

To step out of our comfort zone

To lose things we have been accustomed to having

Our fundamental way of life is being challenged

The truth is – we will do almost anything to preserve it

And yet - in this mythically pregnant moment-

evolutionary consciousness is calling us

Is demanding that we stay awake

That we resist being lulled back to sleep

That we honor connection

That we stay vigilant and remain in conversation with the questions this pandemic forced into the forefront of collective consciousness

We know change is always hard but the BIG questions remain

What is essential?

What needs a course correction?

How will history remember us in this historical moment?

What do you need to let go of to be in integrity and alignment ?

This may be a phoenix rising moment

Day 105 6.28.2020 Gabriele

Day 106 6.29.2020

It has often been said that our greatest suffering comes from the mistaken belief that we are separate from source and therefore alone.

This mistaken concept creates dis-ease, chronic stress, and existential angst

Spiritual practices taught by enlightened beings, saints, and sages in all spiritual traditions have been passed down to their students as expressions of great kindness and compassion with the caveat that they are simply maps to awakening. As is said, once the destination is reached, the map may be tossed away. True spiritual wisdom reminds us that the map is not the territory itself. We can't feel the wetness of water by looking at photographs of water; we must immerse ourselves in it. We can't feel the ecstasy of awakened awareness through reading about it; we must find it in our innermost Self.

When we practice on the cushion and in the curriculum that is our lives – we see that we may not control what happens in the world at a particular moment in time – but we can learn to control how we respond to whatever is happening. That is choice, that is freedom... where every event, situation or condition offers us an opportunity to further awaken..

Life as spiritual curriculum..

Day 107 6/30.2020

Tonglen...

Offers a specific practice to touch into The places that scare you

To Lean and soften into

When we are willing to stay with an uncomfortable energy, we gradually learn not to fear it

It is the practice of learning to tolerate the uncomfortable

The painful, the aversive

We learn how to inoculate ourselves

And we begin to witness how pain is universal

It brings us closer to all of humanity

Pema Chodron talks about Welcoming the Unwelcome

In Somatic Experiencing – a therapeutic treatment trauma modality - there is the concept of working with ONE molecule of pain or trauma so as not to overwhelm the nervous system

We will incorporate this practice as well

Learning to self regulate and take in only a small manageable portion of pain

And metabolize that.

So in this Buddhist practice, I invite you now to presence something that disturbs you in this world... it can be a situation, a condition, a person....

And now imagine that you can take a small dose of what disturbs you into your heart –

a manageable dose

start small and imagine what ever dose you drop into your heart is like a drop of shadow energy -un-metabolized life

your heart receives it willingly and begins the process of cleaning this energy

metabolizing it so it can be sent back out to the world clean

trust any imagery that arises in service to this

I used to imagine a whole work crew of little guys who show up to scrub it clean

Or you can imagine it being burned off

Or whatever

You consciously take in a small dose of the world's pain and you clear it energetically and return it to the world...

Day 108 7.1.2020

I have begun a practice a while back which I call holding a seat at the table for grace. Invoking and inviting a miracle to descend.

We know that our consumerist culture is not sustainable for the planet

That our very lifestyle is harmful and has brought us to the brink of extinction

And yet, this knowledge

This awareness is not enough to stop us in our tracks

Is not enough to say we must do this differently

It is a peculiar human construct – our ability to deny

To avoid

To presence immediate gratification over long term health

I use the information gleaned from 4th stage cancer patients

We know that spontaneous remissions occur

It is documented worldwide

The earth herself can in fact be considered at a 4th stage cancer

When I hold a seat at the table for grace

I invite the possibility of miracle

To descend and help us make a course correction

Is it possible that the miracle came in the form of a tiny virus that stopped the world, that impacts everyone, that caused the great pause

As we have had to be home and sit with ourselves

What have we learned ?

What have we tolerated

And what should not be tolerated..??

Isn't that the message of the current uprising...

What should NOT be tolerated

Sometimes our teachers come in challenging forms to GET OUR ATTENTION

To break through the denial

The complicity

The comfort zone

What have you learned during this pandemic that can change your life ?

Day 109 7.2.2020

Leaning into the divine

Moving beyond an intellectual understanding of spirit to an intimate
and embodied one

To have an experience of the divine

A living breathing relationship

This is what the mystics of all the traditions have in common

Accessing the non dual state

Where we are no longer in separation

Can you trust god?

Trust that the divine has your back?

Can you lean in and allow yourself to be held?

Take a moment to invite an image of the divine to manifest now

The divine shows up in infinite form so allow your self to be surprised

Allow your faith to be strong enough to help weather the storms

The divine may show up as an element of nature, as mother mary,

as Buddha, jesus, the divine feminine principle of shekinah...

a totem animal, as silence

The 14th century Dominican mystic Meister Eckhart said:

There is nothing so much like God as silence.

However the divine shows up in this moment for you is exactly right, exactly as it should be Be with what is... not what you imagine it should be...

Day 110 7.3.2020

In her book – **Broken Open** – Elisabeth lesser cofounder of omega explores the difficult – the seemingly tragic . she offers

How can we **use adversity for awakening**? – betrayal, illness, divorce, the demise of a dream, the loss of a job, the death of a loved one – all of these can function as initiations into a deeper life. - **EL**

EL: Every shift in life comes as a courtesy of the friendly forces; every catastrophe can hand us exactly what we need to awaken into who we really are....There is meaning to be found in the shards of our most broken moments.

One of the ways we become sacred warriors is by learning to navigate the ocean of our emotions -**EL**

Learn the alchemy true human beings know. The moment you accept what troubles you've been given, the door will open. – **Rumi**

IN the difficult are the friendly forces, the hands that work on us – **Rilke**

Day 111 7.4.2020

Receive a gift from spirit...

GV- take a Pilgrimage to the mountain top to meet your spirit guide

Day 112 7.5.2020

In 1365 - Our relationship to time changed drastically

Time became formalized

The 60 minute hour came into being

To support the industrialized revolution

But time is once again going through a transformation

During COVID, time is more fluid

Blended

Bended

We have the time to listen more deeply

To move in greater alignment with our internal rhythm and with the rhythm of the planet

Peter Buffet's song for this period of time says

Now that time has broken , the seeds are safe to open

What is it that needs to germinate and is ready to pop

What little shoots may be springing forth ready for your care and love and attention

Take a moment and ask yourself : what is yearning to emerge?

"What is the biggest change I can make in the smallest circle" source unknown

Day 113 7.6.2020

One thing we have begun to presence in this time of Corona are some fundamental questions

The truly important ones that bring us past our comforts

Past our conveniences

Into what is most true

What is essential

What is core

What is a Non negotiable for your soul

What helps you thrive

What depletes you

When has your essence been touched

Been witnessed

Do you know that place of profound beauty and brilliance that is your essence

Your soul,

your being?

Do you let people see that divine spark

We have talked about the divine spark as an ember in the heart

What Clarissa Pinkola Estes calls the chispa

Take a moment and blow gently on your chispa

Be intimate with your essence

The Team provided coverage during my 8 day retreat with Thomas Hubl

Good Morning Sangha! Hope you had a wonderful week with the folks that Offered Seva. Welcome to Day 120 of our community meditation sit

I've been with Thomas Hubl all week and I'd like to bring back bits and pieces of his training to you... it is quite vast so anything I share will not in any way do his work justice – but nevertheless I will offer snippets.

Thomas really looks at and works with how trauma functions

In our personal lives

In our bodies

Relationally

Collectively and

Transpersonally – on the divine level

The wound of trauma can be seen as energy that is fixated or stuck or in freeze

With any kind of trauma – parts of self go off line

Healing trauma helps us move from fixity to flow

And any field of separation disrupts our evolution

All forms of healing including mindfulness and spiritual practice - accelerates evolution

Brings us back into union with ourselves and with creation

With the world and the world expands with us

Possibilities open up

We are NOT separate from the world

The world is us

Lives in us and through us and with us –

We can re-establish the Generative Impulse of evolution – which is always seeking to actualize

So lets tune in

Where is there aliveness in your body

Where is there absence

Bring loving awareness to both

121 6.14.2020

Continuing with my Hubl work

The biggest wound of trauma is the disruption of wholeness

How this disruption creates separation and isolation, fragmentation

I heard African American activist and Buddhist talk about this in regard to racialized trauma

And through the warmth of

compassionate

Loving

Witnessing and Connection to self, in community , with source

What has been frozen begins to melt

To thaw

And it can be hard, painful but there is restoration of aliveness

Of flow

Of energy

And vitality

Thomas Hubl uses the metaphor of the refrigerator freezer

It exerts energy 24/7 to keep everything frozen in the freezer

In fact we don't even think about it

But that energy – whether it is trauma, shadow material

Whether it is individual or cultural

Depletes the vitality of the system

That is energy not available for living

122 6.15.2020

In this time of corona – we are learning how to be with ourselves with less distractions, how to be with our family with less distractions and how to be with the world with less distractions.

Tolerating and learning to be with discomfort is necessary for this time

It is an individual and collective need that we have to actively cultivate

Thomas Hubl offers that

a much higher higher dimension is coming on line now

the future of psychology and medicine is moving towards a collective dimension

The resonance field

Healing can happen in a much more accelerated manner when held and witnessed in love and in community.

the Dalai Lama has said - the next coming of the Buddha is the sangha..

so for today – take something that is uncomfortable on a scale of 1-10

something that represents a $\frac{3}{4}$

it s in the $\frac{3}{4}$ range that the brains actually re-wires

After your presence something-

Image the love ,support, kindness and compassion of this sangha holding it with you...

And for today – I offer a different format: a blessing ritual

If you like – hold and name what is tender and receive our blessings

Day 124 6.17.2020 60

"As life becomes harder and more threatening, it also becomes richer, because the fewer expectations we have, the more the good things of life become unexpected gifts that we accept with gratitude"

~ Etty Hillesum, An Interrupted Life and Letters from Westerbork

The paradox that the less we have the more grateful we can become

Everything is a gift

a blessing

a light in the darkness

And conversely – is it possible that the more we have the less grateful, the more fearful, the more we actually enter scarcity thinking

needing to hold on...

The Buddhist concept of Dukka is chronic dissatisfaction

And in this culture we live with the myth of not enough

Not enough time,

Not enough love

Not enough to go around

And this becomes

I am not enough

Not tall enough

Not skinny enough

Not young enough

We cant get to the portal of enough through not enough

And of course, the truth is we are enough

We are perfect IN our imperfections

So I invite to take a moment and presence a place within you that believes you are not enough

And lets bring the truth of unconditional love that knows YOU ARE MORE THAN ENOUGH to shine grace and blessing on this place of scarcity.

Cup your hands....

Day 127 6.18.2020

Alive-ness – to be with or be in what Joseph Campbell calls the rapture of being alive...

There are so many ways we abandon our aliveness

We are hard wired to avoid what the Buddhists call the 10,000 joys and the 10,000 sorrows. Like a circuit breaker that can not tolerate the surge of both joy and pain – we shut down, get smaller, avoid, distract.

But these corona times are not letting us distract

These corona times are requiring that we become more intimate with discomfort...

"Sorrow and joy are woven inextricably together. When we distract ourselves from the reality of loss [and fear], we also distract ourselves from the beauty, creativity, and mystery of this ever-changing world." – **Tara Brach**

but the good news is that each time.... "Each time you meet an old emotional pattern with presence, your awakening to truth can deepen." – **Tara Brach**

Your awakening in general gets a bit stronger

The goal of a life well lived is not necessarily happiness but meaning, purpose, aliveness

When the aliveness of our hearts and the unique gifts of our soul meet the deep need of the world - awakening for all is amplified...

(this is a concept articulated by Malidome Some & Joseph Campbell

Day 128 7.19.2020

All of our practices are designed to grow our hearts

Our compassion

Our capacity to love and be loved

Heart warrior

How to grow hearts that are big enough to host anything and everything (tara brach)

The mind as expansive and wonderful as it can be is limited when it comes to bearing witness

The heart on the other hand is boundless

When it comes to compassion

Many years ago – a metaphor for my heart naturally arose in meditation

When I tune in to see what is the state of my heart now

I see a flowing river

Sometimes it runs strong

Sometimes it's a lazy river

Sometimes it's clogged up with debris and I have to clear it out

How is your heart today

Ask: my dear sweet heart:

What would you have me know dear heart???

Day 129 6.20.2020

Tara Brach: cultivating practices of radical compassion

Imagine one of those sunsets or sunrises that takes your breath away with its sheer brilliance: visualize that sky in its full glory

"When presence is full like the sky

It is luminous and boundless, and it provides nourishment for life

All kinds of weather systems pass through it – happiness, sorrow, fear, excitement, grief – but like the sky itself

Presence can hold them all

In memory to John Lewis and his invitation to get into good trouble, necessary trouble..

Day 130 repeat from previous entry 7.21.2020

The WE dimension during uncertainty is essential

Building and sustaining Coherence is essential

When we synchronize Heart, mind and body, Connection with self, relational connection – world connection and I would offer – divine connection – all this creates a coherent matrix for transformation.

And when we are in a coherent field – we are much less susceptible of causing harm in this world – through our thoughts, our words, and actions.. coherence naturally inspires love, generosity, altruism, connection and support.

It naturally moves us from being consumers of life –

We move from “what can I get” to being participants in care – where we give and receive with reciprocity in relationship.

And where we channel creativity into the collective

generating something innovative,

generating that which is not yet known

generating a miracle...

Let us each hold a seat at the table for a grace, for a miracle.

Some of the core skills required of this time -

adapt and innovate

Use your energy wisely

Work with the chatter

Don't paddle up stream, don't fight, judge or resist. Always Host and welcome with kindness, curiosity

Day 131 7.22.2020

So yesterday, we co-created and dropped into a beautiful resonance field that was quite palatable.

To continue growing our collective frequency – I want to offer the metaphor of an orchestra tuning.

So when we begin – each one of us brings our own music, our own energy which may be chaotic or not, and as we sit together and bring our awareness and attunement to ourselves and each other – in the WE space – we begin to (at)tune together.

And it is quite beautiful to behold and experience.

So imagine that magical moment – when the orchestra members take a breath together – breath together and become ONE single organism, One choreographed piece of collective poetry,

Let us breath together as ONE

And again let us bring in the ancestral line

Healing is available now in an accelerated form

Because of the extraordinary events of this time

As you heal more and more – you not only heal yourself, but you healing your ancestral line

This is one of the miracles available to us

So let's tune ourselves

By attuning with the next 3 breaths and then attune to the group

Day 131

Day 132 repeat of day 4

I am so disturbed by what's happening in Portland Oregon and I turn to great leaders to help me understand how to stay the course

To find courage and to stay in love

John Lewis in his podcast with Krista Tippett talks about how The civil rights movement was an act of love, Love in action

He says; We never gave up on anyone

We saw everyone as a spark of the divine

Love is strong

Love is powerful

Non violent revolution is love at its best

you beat me, arrest me, take to jail but I still love you

MLK used to say: just LOVE the hell out of everybody

Love as a Fundamental shift inside our own souls..

We need to Evolve to that point where are not ashamed to say

I love you, I am sorry please forgive me –

when we see each other as sparks of the divine, we can not hurt each other – we can only love each other..

And this reminded me of the powerful Ho'ponopono Hawaiian prayer

I'm sorry

Please forgive me

I love you

Thank you

John Lewis

My first non violent protest was against my parents who were getting ready to slaughter the chickens

I was Disciplined in love

The Civil Rights movement was Love at its best

Have a spiritual confrontation first with in yourselves and then with the world

You have to train and be taught the way of peace, non violence to know that in the bosom of every human being is the spark of the divine and no one has the right to abuse the divine

When faced with violence - Years ago that person was an innocent child - always appeal to the goodness of the human being in front of you; never give up on anyone..

Redemptive suffering lives alongside love

You also wrote "suffering can be no more than a sad and suffering thing without the presence on the part of the sufferer of a graceful heart, an accepting and open heart, a heart that holds no malice towards the inflictors of her or his suffering.

Were you able on that bridge to really internalize that accepting and open heart when you were beaten –and to know that was possible...

I thought I was going to die

Before I lost consciousness – I became deeply concerned

I have not had any ill feeling – I just don't have it

Its not part of my DNA and I trained my DNA

Coming in contact with great teachers

There comes a time when you have to put your physical body in the way of something that is evil, unjust, and you prepare to suffer the consequences but whatever you do - bring love, kindness, the innocence of faith, in my religious tradition, is this belief that it is going to work out.

Hate is too heavy a burden to bear

Love is a way of being, it is active, love disrupts, love in action, we love a country, we love a democratic society so we have to move our feet. When you pray, move your feet – African proverb

Day 133 7/25/2020

The practice of The Examen: the Examination of Consciousness

An ancient path to god that comes out of the Christian contemplative practices – the Ignatian School of thought

Living a life in dialogue with god

Rummaging for god as an end of day review

Christian based language – feel free to substitute if it doesn't resonate for you

1. ask god for light: looking at each day through god's eyes, not my own
2. give thanks: each day, each moment is a gift from god; be grateful for all lessons
3. review the day: how has the holy spirit guided the last 24 hours
4. face your shortcomings: where was I connected to god; where was I disconnected; where was I less skillful than I want to be; what has been most life giving and most life draining; where did you feel most connected to yourself, to others, to god; where least connected
5. look towards the day to come: I ask where will I need god in the day to come

ask for guidance– to lean on god for support

pay attention to where the divine is showing up...

I brought you a boat...

Day 134 7/26/2020

Return to Classic mediation techniques of watching the mind

Blue sky

Breathing

Anchoring in place

Activating the witness self

Awareness that is aware of awareness

Day 135 7.27.2020

Continuing with the formal qualities of meditation

The Big S Self and the small s self – Jungian perspective

Small s self is steeped in fear, separation and scarcity

The BIG S Self – is universal, timeless, and has never been wounded

Notice, name, release

Allow yourself the longing to be in communion/connection with the divine

Silence as the fertile portal to the god of your understanding.

Day 136 7.28.2020

Flatscreen TV Visualization:

Turn down the dial on inner Voice

Turn down the dial on visual noise

This morning I want to share poetry as a balm for the soul

We give thanks to essential workers and this morning I give thanks to

The essential value of community

Dear Beloved community

When 2 or more are gathered

Why do we gather?

We gather because we must

We gather because the I needs the WE

We gather because we yearn for the wisdom of the collective

We gather to be a witness to our journeys

to share our sacred stories

and to offer the kind compassionate holding

Beloved Sangha –

Why do we gather?

We gather- because there are times when the world gives us more than we can handle gracefully and we may need our hands held when our hearts may tremble.

We gather because we know that we are stronger together

We gather

Because we need each other

To act as sacred mirrors reflecting our longing and our most radiant core

We gather

Because too often we forget who we really are

We gather to remember.

We come together to be challenged to show up in our authenticity

David Whyte:

Pilgrimage represents contact with a horizon that represents the inner symmetry of your own unknown horizon

Virus dream time

The inheritance of what has brought us here.

Settling into memory

A true settling into memory accesses the younger part of yourself

Day 137 7.29.2020

From Jack Kornfeld on the Bodhisattva path

Bodhisattva is the Sanskrit word for a being who is devoted to awakening and to acting for the benefit of all that lives. The way of the bodhisattva is one of the most radical and powerful of all Buddhist forms of practice. It is radical because it states that the deep fulfillment of happiness comes from serving the welfare of others as well as ourself. Our highest happiness is connected with the wellbeing of others.

The bodhisattva's path is a striking contrast with the excessive individualism of our culture. Every wisdom tradition tells us that human meaning and happiness cannot be found in isolation but comes about through generosity, love, and understanding.

The bodhisattva, knowing this, appears in a thousand forms, from scientist, to teacher, activist or nurse, from a caring grandmother to an engaged global citizen. Meditators often recite the bodhisattva vows when they sit, offering the benefit of their practice for the sake of others: "Sentient beings are numberless; I vow to bring liberation to us all." Like the ancient Hippocratic oath, the vow to serve the sick taken by every physician, the bodhisattva vows to serve the welfare of all. In a more poetic fashion, the Dalai Lama regularly recites bodhisattva vows based on the words of the beloved sixth-century sage Shantideva:

May I be a guard for those who need protection
A guide for those on the path
A boat, a raft, a bridge for those who wish to cross the flood
May I be a lamp in the darkness
A resting place for the weary
A healing medicine for all who are sick
A vase of plenty, a tree of miracles
And for the boundless multitudes of living beings
May I bring sustenance and awakening
Enduring like the earth and sky
Until all beings are freed from sorrow
And all are awakened.

Psychologically this is an astonishing thing to say. Does this mean that I am personally going to save seven billion humans and trillions of other beings? How can I do so? When we think about it from our limited sense of self, it is impossible. But when we understand that it is a deep intention of the heart, we can begin to fulfill it. To take such a vow is to set a direction, a sacred purpose, a statement of wisdom, an offering, a blessing. "We are not separate, we are interdependent," declared the Buddha. Without understanding this, we are split between caring for ourselves or caring for the troubles of the world. When the world is seen with the eyes of a bodhisattva, there is no I and other—there is just us.

Poet Diane Ackerman has created a modern version of the bodhisattva vow with these lines in her poem "School Prayer":

I swear I will not dishonor
my soul with hatred,
but offer myself humbly
as a guardian of nature,
as a healer of misery,
as a messenger of wonder,
as an architect of peace.

You can create your own Bodhisattva vow. Sit quietly for a time. Let your body and mind be at rest. Then, ask your heart, "If I were to make a vow, to set the compass of my heart, to give voice to my highest intention, what would it be?" And then listen for an answer. It need not be a poem. It might be as simple as "I vow to protect those in danger" or "I vow to be kind." Your heart will instruct you.

As you quiet your mind and steady your heart, you can set your deepest intention. It will help you be strong for the long haul. Then get up and joyfully plant seeds for a more compassionate future. Educate yourself about social justice. Stand up against racism and hatred. Give voice, time, energy, care to alleviate suffering and tend our collective well being. Your freedom empowers you to contribute to the world. And your love will show you the way to do so.

Day 139 living the question and manifestation

In the contemplative traditions - Silence is experienced as a path to god – to the divine.

The 14th century Dominican mystic Meister Eckhart said:

There is nothing so much like God as silence.

Day 140 43

Increasing inner flexibility

Adapt and innovate...

This is not simply adapting to a smaller box

But becoming nimble

Shine the light of fundamental consciousness and intention on somewhere you feel rigid, shut down

Becoming intimate with yourself

In this moment

Day 141 8.2.2020

Source unknown:

Let go off the shore

Know that the river has its destination

The elders say we must let go off the shore

Push off into the middle of the river

And keep our heads above water

We grow competency in this area

But practicing letting go

By trusting we will be held

We engaging faith

By staying alert and relaxed

By paying attention on purpose

So if you like – this morning- we will practice letting go of the shore

Allow yourself to drift and be carried by the current

If you like give your self a floatation device

Allow yourself to be carried by the current

Practice trusting

142 8.3.2020

A chakra balancing...

All 22 minutes

Day 143 8.4.2020

Maps of embodiment and wholeness

Yesterday – chakras

Today – Judith blackstone

Day 144 8.5.2020

Luna in the tree

Moving from anger to love

What would love have me do

What would love have me speak

How can love move you closer to your _____?

Act from love, generous and connection

Judy butterfly hill – luna

inspire to breath in spirit

when we breathe in spirit – something magical happens

it is scientifically impossible to not create an impact

in nature and in culture

every choice makes a difference

we do not live in a vacuum

a fractal

we are in an uprising

212 environmental activists have been killed in 2019

the link between environmentalism and uprising

350.org

Day 146 Friday 8.7.2020

wake up clean up show up...

147 8.8.2020 saturday

Naming Myself – Margaret Wheatley

from her book: Perseverance

Day 148 8.9.2020

This is a repeat of day

Jack Kornfeld talks about corona as a world wide initiation process with some tidbits of wisdom sprinkled in

human beings are not wired for uncertainty

it short circuits our system

the mind desperately wants to work things out

figure things out

and our deep desire to plan during in a pandemic is virtually impossible

this situation is an initiation

in every human life if we are to grow in consciousness and understanding

we will go through initiations

sometimes they are deliberate and sometimes they come to us as a blow

like a very extreme event - like a medical dx

and then you have to deal with that

Circumstances arise that force us to wake up

The Corona virus is a world wide initiation

If we do it wisely – consciously

There are things to learn that we almost cannot do any other way

Initiations as a rite of passage to help us wake up

Like the birth canal of a new consciousness

Embrace uncertainty and pass courageously through

Only when a person exposes themselves over and over again to initiation can they find that indestructible core in the spirit of true awakening

Where we can say with truth certainty:

Let me live up to my oath

Let me Grow in heart and spirit

Let me embrace

This invitation to something deeper

To something essential

Inner courage

To a place of Dignity and love no matter what

Let's continue to Do this wisely

Day 149. 8/10/2020

Be the still point in the hurricane...

BE equanimity

So you can access your deepest wisdom, biggest heart and clearest mind

Day 150 8/11/2020

Continuing with the storm imagery...

Growing our biggest heart - A heart capable of everything and anything

Today I offer a modified poem by Sally Atkins

Tell Me, She Said

Tell me, she said:

What is the story you are living?

What wild song is singing itself through you?

Even in this storm

Listen: she said

Can you hear

In the storm – there is silence in the music

In the spaces between the notes, there is a story, unfolding

It is happening right now in your breath,

In your heart beat still

Drumming the deeper rhythm

Beneath your cracking words.

It matters what you did this morning

And last Saturday night

Not because you are so important

But because it is your story and you are in it

We are all in this story together.

Pay attention:

We are listening each other's hearts into being.

We are loving each other into birth

We know the birth canal is a liminal place

A place of struggle

Find your song and Sing it loudly as you move on through

Sing as if your life depends on it...

Sally S. Atkins

Day 151 8.12.2020 (57)

So many of the corona lessons are about

Learning to let go

Some say – let go/ let god

Letting go of life as we have known it

Letting go of fear

What happens when we let of fear?

Day 54

FEAR

Khalil Gibran

It is said that before entering the sea
a river trembles with fear.

She looks back at the path she has traveled,
from the peaks of the mountains,
the long winding road crossing forests and villages.

And in front of her,
she sees an ocean so vast,
that to enter
there seems nothing more than to disappear forever.

But there is no other way.
The river can not go back.

Nobody can go back.
To go back is impossible in existence.

The river needs to take the risk
of entering the ocean

because only then will fear disappear,
because that's where the river will know
it's not about disappearing into the ocean,
but of becoming the ocean.

Day 152 Thaeda Franz

Day 153 equanimity 8.14.2020

From Jack Kornfeld: Equanimity of the peaceful heart

The practices of equanimity are taught as a compliment to loving kindness and compassion meditation because we tend to get attached to how things ought to be

Equanimity teaches us that change is inevitable and rather than struggle with the world, we look to see how we may serve the world..

Breathing into the three lower chakras

We tap into the Foundational core

How to oppose without being in opposition (Ram Dass)

A core teaching for me on how to NOT "other "

Breathing a heart into being that is as wide as you can make it..

Day 154 8.15.2020

Heart meditation

As human, we tend to flinch with any strong emotion

Let's tap into:

Ascendant and descendent current

Horizontal awareness

Fundamental consciousness

Ground, anchor, resource and now let us drop

1 molecule of pain

into our hearts

Drop it like a pebble in the heart of awareness

A homeopathic dose

Breathe and ground

Day 155 8.16.2020

Introduce the Felt sense language

Dialogue with a part of the body

Day 156 8.17.2020

How to cultivate Spiritual stamina

Staying the course

Day 157 8.17.2020

Learning to tolerate an uncomfortable emotion

Using The River Imagery

Imagine a small stream that after a rainfall experiences a surge

It swells in all directions and can become quite intense

Breathe and allow the intensity to move on through

Pick something that is in the 3/4 range of emotions

this is the zone where the brain is re-wired.

If any strong emotion can move on through – it is less likely to get

Stuck and stagnate.

Day 158 8.18.2020

Adapted from a Tara Brach practice

Cupping one hand on the other

Choose a challenging

feeling

thought

story or

A situation

In our families

In the world

Place that in your right hand

With your left hand, cup your right hand and

Imagine a shaft of light offering healing to what is disturbed

Bathe it in

Love

Grace

Beauty

A Power far greater than we can ever imagine

Group prayer..

beautiful

Day 159 – Robert Ferrell

...invitation to presence a poetry meditation.

Many of us are drawn to poetry. Poetry holds a special place of honor as a practice to dispose oneself to the divine presence. Like a mantra, it is verbal and very easily **synchronized to breathing in and breathing out**. Because of its use of metaphors and other figures of speech, it can go directly to our inner experience. Mirabai Starr has stated that, "Poetry is a gateway into unitive consciousness. It knocks on the doors of the heart and the heart opens. Poets speak truth in a very naked way that bypasses the rational mind. Poetry evokes, rather than describes." The power of poetry is its ability to connect us to our True Self, pressing through our ego's need for self-defense and justification.

Poetry creates the leap from mind to heart by the use of metaphor. Metaphor comes from the Greek meaning, "to carry across" as in to carry the reader across to the level of experience.

Poetic metaphor calls forth the divine within the ordinary and places it squarely in our consciousness. The well is deep and filled with living water.

James Finley writes, "We are to [encounter poetry] as the opening up of our hearts, that we might rest in this oneness and communion **in** each other and **as** each other. In your most childlike hour, you're asked to surrender to that oneness. And a transformative experience occurs. Love is transforming us into itself."

The poem for today is The Spiritual Canticle by the 16th century Spanish Mystic John of the Cross. It is a poetic conversation between lovers, between the soul and the divine, between bride and groom... to use a wonderful metaphor.

As I read this selection from The Spiritual Canticle allow your heart, your soul, to open that you might rest in communion with each other and **as** each other, with presence.

Let us drop in, center, and welcome the present moment. You're invited to sit comfortably, close your eyes if that's comfortable and bring awareness to your listening heart. 'Breathing in, I calm my body. Breathing out, I smile. Dwelling in the present moment, I know this is a wonderful moment!' X2

If the rhythm works for you, synchronize the phrasing to breathing in and breathing out as you listen to this poetic conversation between bride and groom.

Bride

In the inner wine cellar

I drank of my beloved, and when I went abroad

Through all this valley

I no longer knew anything,

And lost the herd that I was following.

There he gave me his breast;

There he taught me a sweet and living knowledge;

And I gave myself to him,

Keeping nothing back;

There I promised to be his bride.

Now I occupy my soul

And all my energy in his service;

I no longer tend the herd,

Nor have I any other work

Now that my every act is love

With flowers and emeralds

Chosen on cool mornings

We shall weave garlands

Flowering in your love,

And bound with one hair of mine.

You considered

That one hair fluttering at my neck;

You gazed at it upon my neck;

And it captivated you;

And one of my eyes wounded you.

When you looked at me

Your eyes imprinted your grace in me;

For this you loved me ardently;

And thus my eyes deserved

To adore what they beheld in you.

Do not despise me;

For if, before, you found me dark,

Now truly you can look at me

Since you have looked

And left in me grace and beauty.

Bridegroom

The small white dove

Has returned to the ark with an olive branch;

And now the turtledove

Has found its longed-for mate

By the green river banks.

She lived in solitude,

And now in solitude has built her nest;

And in solitude he guides her,

He alone, who also bears

In solitude the wound of love.

Day 160 8.21.2020

Prayer to the Shekinah by Mirabai Starr

Prayer to the Shekinah O Shekinah, yours is the feminine face of the Holy, the luminous moon who lights up the night as we travel from captivity to liberation, the pillar of fire who guides our way home, the cloud hovering over the mountain peaks, living sign that the drought is over. You are the indwelling presence of the Divine. Whenever we gather to praise the One you are here in our midst. When we cry out for justice you make our hearts tender. When we stand with those on the margins and you make our legs strong. When we create works of art and parent our children and harvest our gardens you guide and sustain us. You are the Sabbath Bride, the Beloved, returned from exile. You restore balance in our relationships and wholeness to our fragmented souls. You infuse our lovemaking with honey. You fill the cup of our hearts, which tremble with longing, with the wine of your answering love. You are the song of our homecoming. You are the Sabbath Queen, the Great Mother, who sits at the heart of the table tearing off hunks of the secret bread that contains the exact flavor each of us loves best. You feed us all, the proud and the repentant, the believer and the skeptic, from your own hands. Your unconditional forgiveness dissolves otherness. O Shekinah, we are the vessel for your inflowing. Your radiance requires the clay of our embodiment. Your flame burns at the core of the earth. Your warmth penetrates the seedbed and animates the seedlings. You bless the head of every animal and kiss the tear-streaked face of humanity. You are the vision that builds community, and you are our refuge when the fabric of community unravels.

Be with us now as we navigate this landscape of mystery where your most cherished attributes— wild mercy and boundless compassion, righteousness and wisdom— seem to be cast aside and trampled by imperious world powers and we are paralyzed by helplessness. Help us. May we remember you and lift you up

May we recognize your face and celebrate your beauty in everything and everyone, everywhere, always. AMEN.

~ Starr, Mirabai. Wild Mercy . Sounds True. Kindle Edition.

Day 161 8.22.2020 Saturday

When all is said and done - all that will matter in the end is how have you loved?
How have you given love ? offered love? Been love??

Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you.

— L.R. Knost

Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh shared:

When the crowded Vietnamese refugee boats met with storms or pirates, if everyone panicked all would be lost. But if even one person on the boat remained calm and centered, it was enough. It showed the way for everyone to survive.

We practice together to be that person.

Love is contagious

Calm is contagious

Inner steadiness paves the way and increases our response-ability

So as we drop into our practice today let us come back to the heart

Please get comfortable

Say hello to your heart

Place a hand on your heart

TB:

To that seat of wisdom and capacity that can bear witness to all that is

We are in heart warrior times

Where we need both a strong back and a soft heart

My dear sweet tender heart

Where would I be without you

Where would the world be without you

We need you now more than ever

Let me vow to keep you strong

Let me vow to remember that kindness and love are the only answer

Let me vow to not abandon you when fear and worry will naturally arise

Let me vow to be bigger than my fears

Bigger than any pain

Bigger than my discomfort

Only YOU dear heart are capable of bearing witness

Only you know how powerful unconditional love and compassion can be

Only you dear heart can save us from our mistakes

From our ignorance and complacency

Let me vow to keep you strong

My dear and tender heart.

Please take a moment to make a vow to your sweet and tender heart.

162 8.23.2020

Sufi practice of polishing the heart

163 8.24.2020

It can be said that The spiritual journal is full of obstacles to presence

what gets in your way

what impedes your direct intimate experience of the divine

we humans are masterful at leaving, distracting, numbing

Rather than berate ourselves for falling short, for mistakes made or poor judgments acted upon. We bring compassion because WE know that the spiritual journey is full of detours. That the human condition is such that we forget, we fall off the wagon, we get distracted.. that is our nature. That's why settings like this or sanghas or congregational settings are so helpful because they help us remember who we are- they help us to come home..

So over time, we can practice not being so surprised when we fall back asleep- oh look at that I fell back asleep – oh look at that –I could have been more skillful here - but simply inviting our fundamental selves to come back again and again.

11th century Persian Poet Rumi speaks to this in his poem Caravan- he writes:

"Come, come, whoever you are. The caravan has no despair. Even though you have broken your vows – perhaps 10,000 times. Still come again come --

Wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving home. Come again , come whoever you are. It doesn't matter. Ours is not a caravan of despair.

Come, even if you have broken your vows a thousand times. Come, yet again , come , come."

So the practice of coming home again and again... and being loving kindness to ourselves – to the lover of leaving - parts of ourselves.

And one way to do this is to invite the witness self, the big S self that can witness our journey with compassion, curiosity and kindness.

Dsy 165 8.25.2020

The Wisdom Within

Tuesday, August 25, 2020

Author Valarie Kaur is a Sikh activist and civil rights lawyer who writes about social change through the metaphor of childbirth—both are acts of “revolutionary love.” Richard Rhor states - In her words I find a powerful description of contemplation and action, of how we endure the pain of Disorder until we find the courage and grace to enter Reorder. We listen and act, rest and respond, until our work is informed by deeper wisdom.

Kaur: The final stage of birthing labor is the most dangerous stage, and the most painful. . . . The medical term is “transition.” Transition *feels like dying* but it is the stage that precedes the birth of new life. After my labor, I began to think about transition as a metaphor for the most difficult fiery moments in our lives. In all our various creative labors—making a living, raising a family, building a nation—there are moments that are so painful, we want to give up. But inside searing pain and encroaching numbness, we might also find the depths of our courage, hear our deepest wisdom, and transition to the other side. . . .

“We can learn to mother ourselves!” Audre Lorde [1934–1992] once declared. [1] So I decided to *practice* listening to the Wise Woman in me. I got a simple blank journal, carried it with me, and wrote in it every day . . . and simply let her speak.

And so Valerie Kaur began a practice of listening to the quiet still voice within which she called listening to the Wise Woman

. . . Listening to her voice, literally every few hours, is how I began to *practice* loving myself. Here's what I discovered about Wise Woman: Her voice is quiet. . . . I have to get really quiet in order to hear her. How do I know when I am hearing her voice? She is tender and truthful. She is not afraid of anything or anyone. She does not give me all the answers, but she does know what I need to do in this moment—to wonder, grieve, fight, rage, listen, reimagine, breathe, or push. She helps me show up to the labor as my best self.

I believe that deep wisdom resides within each of us. Some call this voice by different sacred names—Spirit, God, Jesus, Allah, Om, Buddha-nature, Waheguru. Others think of this voice as the intuition one hears when in a calm state of mind. . . . Whatever name we choose, listening to our deepest wisdom requires disciplined practice. The loudest voices in the world right now are ones running on the energy of fear, criticism, and cruelty. The voices we spend the most time listening to, in the world and inside our own minds, shape the way we see, how we feel, and what we do. When I spend time listening to people who are speaking from *their* deepest wisdom, I can feel understanding, inspiration, and energy nourish the root of my own wisdom. But I must not lose myself at the feet of others. My most vigilant spiritual practice is finding the seconds of solitude to get quiet enough to hear the Wise Woman in *me*.

How do you access and listen to your most intuitive and deepest wisdom?

RHOR: Gateway to Action & Contemplation:

What word or phrase resonates with or challenges me? What sensations do I notice in my body? What is mine to do?

Prayer for Our Community:

O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world. [Please add your own intentions.] . . . Knowing you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God, amen.

Day 166 8.26.2020

Recently I came across the African word, Ubuntu which I have heard Desmond Tutu reference: Ubuntu means, simply, "I am because you are." It speaks to the fundamental inter-connectedness of all beings and that we need each other to survive, to become, to BE

Some African tribes have a very specific practice around Ubuntu with regard to forgiveness or to when we fall of the wagon..

From Steve Ferrell of Humanity's Team: Anytime a member of the tribe does something "bad"—breaking a tribal law, insulting or deliberately harming another member of the tribe, stealing, or even lying—rather than punishing them, the rest of the tribe gathers around the person and they all spend the next two days telling stories and reminding the person of all the good things they've accomplished in their life—both large and small.

They remind them how they've been a good friend, father, mother, brother, sister, hunter, gatherer, cook, builder, etc., and they offer the person forgiveness and encouragement to get back on track to being a valuable and respected member of the tribe.

They remind them of who they truly are – in their essence, in their wholeness.. That is the power of a restorative community, a sangha, a beloved community

Day 168 8.28.2020

The Companion Suit is the Energetic suit

Discovering your animal ally in each of the chakras

Let your inner critic take a "time out". Send him or her to the kitchen for a cup of tea or outside for a walk.

Close your eyes when you are readytake three deep breaths. With each breathe relax more and more, deepening gradually into a light trance (pause).

Now breathing normally again, let yourself feel any tension or tightness loosening and slipping away and out of your body. Breath and relax. Deeper and deeper (pause).

Beginning with your toes and feet.... Then moving up to the calves of your legs and your knees.... Then on to your thighs. So now feel both legs and become more and more relaxed.... (pause)

Move on to your buttocks and your back..... and also to your lower abdomen and stomach. Breath and let tension slip away.

Now move up to your chest area and upper back and then to your shoulders... feel the burdens you are carrying slip off for the moment. Breath and relax.

Now focus on your arms beginning with your upper arms... and then the elbows and lower arms... and finally your hands.....Again let the tension drain away. Breath and relax.

Now moving to your neck and to your face... relax all the little muscles around your mouth and around your eyes. Even feel the muscles in your scalp, in the back of your head – all letting go. Breathing and feeling relaxation throughout your body. There is nothing you need to accomplish right now. Just stay aware and open.

If there is any place in your body that still feels tight, tend to it for a moment more, breathing into that place and relaxing. (pause) Good.

You are now entering a deep space within yourself, a relaxed space that your intuitive self recognizes and is happy to visit.

Your wise inner self wants to give you a very special gift today... Stay alert and stay open to receive it – in whatever form it comes. Spirit has infinite forms of guidance. Stay open and curious.

Imagine a warm, golden energy streaming down from above your head. This energy, in the form of golden light, streams into you through the 7th chakra, the energy center just above your head. The light is streaming down and around all of your body. Let yourself feel it like a warm blanket or cocoon; what would it be like to allow yourself to nestle into it right now?

Rest in this space, let it widen and open into a vastness that connects you with all of existence. Breathing and relaxing. (pause).

Now the golden light is streaming down from this seventh chakra to your third eye, the 6th chakra. Here is your intuition and your wisdom. This space contains your vision both into the future and back into the past. It is a far-seeing place. Breathing into this sixth chakra, feeling it open. (pause)

Now letting the golden light stream down from this energy center into the fifth chakra in your throat. Feeling this place receive the vitality and warmth of this light and letting it open wide. Here is your ability to communicate what you deeply know; here is also your ability to receive what you choose to receive from outside yourself, and to let it serve you. Relax and breathe into this energy center in the throat.

Now allowing the golden light to stream down from this energy center into the fourth chakra, your heart. Feeling your heart center receive the light and opening to it. Breathing and relaxing. Feeling the vast openness of our heart. This is your place of compassion. It is the place from which you both give and receive deep and abiding love. Breathing into this heart energy.

Now letting the golden light stream down from this energy center into the third chakra, your personality center. Feeling power and vitality swirling in this center and breathing into it. In this place lies your ability to set boundaries and maintain them as you need to. It is a powerful place from which to act and to compete when that is useful. Breathing deeply into the third chakra.

Now letting the golden energy stream down from this energy center into the second chakra, your place of creativity, your vital sexuality, your creativity, and your passionate likes and dislikes. Here also are residual energies from your ancestors. Feel this chakra's energy flowing freely. Breathing into it.

Now letting the golden energy stream down into the first chakra, your root chakra. Here the energy from above meets the energy coming up from the earth; they are mingling and blending right here in your foundation center. This is the place of material well-being, your ability to survive and thrive in this world. Breathing into this chakra and feel it opening.

From the first chakra, imagine gazing up along your spinal column and seeing all your chakras glowing and opening. Breathing and relaxing. (pause)

Now letting yourself ride this energy upwards and it will naturally rest on one of the chakras that wants your loving attention today (here name the chakra you choose to visit this time unless you choose to explore the first chakra or you can give the counselee permission to go to any chakra that is calling for your attention).

Stop here, enter into this energy center and be still in it for a few moments.

Look around and see what the landscape is like....

Breathing... waiting... (pause).

Now allow the animal or being who lives in this chakra, for you, to make itself known. Stay alert - watching and listening. You may see it or you may hear it, or you may feel its presence (pause).

Let the sense of this animal become clearer and clearer (pause).

If no animal or being comes right away, stay open - waiting and watching. If several animals come in, let them show themselves until one of them seems to be the primary being living here. One of them will have more energy for you , so stay with this one even if it is surprising and not the animal you might have chosen. Trusting the divine in all her forms to bring what you need for healing and transformation.

If you are sensing or seeing an animal, if it feels right, gaze into this animal's eyes if it will permit you. Then, reach out and touch it if it allows. Use all your senses. (pause)

Now allow yourself to imagine actually entering the body of this animal and, through its eyes, look back at yourself (pause) Allow yourself to imagine moving within the actual body of this animal... if it runs, run with it. If it flies, fly with it... if it crawls, crawl with it... if it swims, swim with it... if it walks, walk with it. Experiencing this movement as deeply as you can in the cells of your imaginal body. (longer pause).

Now return to your own body and again look deeply into your animal's eyes, ask it three questions:

- What do you have to give me? (long pause)
- What do you want from me?
- What symbolic gift can you give me to help me remember? (long pause)

Now taking a moment and thank the animal of this chakra for appearing to you. Bless it and asking for its blessing. Say goodbye, promising to make a soulcollage® card to honor it (or another form of honoring – miniature/symbol on your altar for example).

Promise to visit it again, and to nurture its energy and to use it in the world as a messenger of consciousness.

If no animal or being has appeared to your during this meditation, allow that to be all right. You can visit this chakra another time. Perhaps the being is not ready to reveal itself.

Day 169 8.29.2020

Basic review of meditation techniques

Activate the witness self

Attune to the language of sensation

Become more intimate with yourself

Pay attention on purpose

Notice the universal archetypal patterns of the mind

Become less attached, it's less personal

The mind is hard wired to be very active

Day 170 8.30.2020

Continuing the practice of meditation

Addressing the obstacles to presence

The habitual patterns of the mind

Notice, name, release

With neutral curiosity and compassion

Kindness is the essential ingredient to substantive transformation

Notice the patterns of your mind

Where your mind likes to go

Notice with kindness

These are the very human pathways of distraction

Keeping us from presence

Right here

Right now

Day 172 8.31.2020

Poem by Yvonne lucia on mary....

Day 173 9.1.2020

Obijway prayer for In Beauty may I walk

Day 174 8.2.2020

Clarissa pinokola estes

My friends, do not lose heart. We were made for these times. I have heard from so many recently who are deeply and properly bewildered. They are concerned about the state of affairs in our world now. Ours is a time of almost daily astonishment and often righteous rage over the latest degradations of what matters most to civilized, visionary people.

You are right in your assessments. The lustre and hubris some have aspired to while endorsing acts so heinous against children, elders, everyday people, the poor, the unguarded, the helpless, is breathtaking. Yet, I urge you, ask you, gentle you, to please not spend your spirit dry by bewailing these difficult times. Especially do not lose hope. Most particularly because, the fact is that we were made for these times. Yes. For years, we have been learning, practicing, been in training for and just waiting to meet on this exact plain of engagement.

I grew up on the Great Lakes and recognize a seaworthy vessel when I see one. Regarding awakened souls, there have never been more able vessels in the waters than there are right now across the world. And they are fully provisioned and able to signal one another as never before in the history of humankind.

Look out over the prow; there are millions of boats of righteous souls on the waters with you. Even though your veneers may shiver from every wave in this stormy roil, I assure you that the long timbers composing your prow and rudder come from a greater forest. That long-grained lumber is known to withstand storms, to hold together, to hold its own, and to advance, regardless.

In any dark time, there is a tendency to veer toward fainting over how much is wrong or unmended in the world. Do not focus on that. There is a tendency, too, to fall into being weakened by dwelling on what is outside your reach, by what cannot yet be. Do not focus there. That is spending the wind without raising the sails.

We are needed, that is all we can know. And though we meet resistance, we more so will meet great souls who will hail us, love us and guide us, and we will know them when they appear. Didn't you say you were a believer? Didn't you say you pledged to listen to a voice greater? Didn't you ask for grace? Don't you remember that to be in grace means to submit to the voice greater?

Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach. Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this poor suffering world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts or by whom, will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good.

What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts, adding, adding to, adding more, continuing. We know that it does not take everyone on Earth to bring justice and peace, but only a small, determined group who will not give up during the first, second, or hundredth gale.

One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Soul on deck shines like gold in dark times. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires, causes proper matters to catch fire. To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these - to be fierce and to show mercy toward others; both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity.

Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it. If you would help to calm the tumult, this is one of the strongest things you can do.

There will always be times when you feel discouraged. I too have felt despair many times in my life, but I do not keep a chair for it. I will not entertain it. It is not allowed to eat from my plate.

The reason is this: In my uttermost bones I know something, as do you. It is that there can be no despair when you remember why you came to Earth, who you serve, and who sent you here. The good words we say and the good deeds we do are not ours. They are the words and deeds of the One who brought us here. In that spirit, I hope you will write this on your wall: When a great ship is in harbor and moored, it is safe, there can be no doubt. But that is not what great ships are built for.

By Clarissa Pinkola Estes

American poet, post-trauma specialist and Jungian psychoanalyst, author of *Women Who Run With the Wolves*.

174 8.2.2020

175 8.3.2020

176 8.4.2020

everything begins with prayer mother Teresa

Carol 8/27/2020

Good morning, Carol Asiaghi here. Firstly, I would like to thank you, the Sangha for being a place of solace and support to me last week during a time of grief.

I have chosen an excerpt and guided meditation today from the Jeshua Channelings by Pamela Kribbe. I have found it be profound and simple, as a way to call back those parts of ourselves that have been lost or forgotten.

In Shamanic terms this can be called Soul retrieval, retrieving our scared or powerful aspects of our soul that perhaps were not allowed or given the space to be seen. However, as we move into this new phase of consciousness, both for ourselves and the world it is exceedingly important to integrate all aspects of ourselves or transcend duality.

As is channeled by Pamela Kribbe:

We belong to the most creative, advanced and courageous part of God (All-That-Is). We are explorers of the unknown and creators of the new. Our explorations through the realm of duality have served a purpose far beyond our imagination. ... we have created a new type of consciousness, one that did not exist previously.

The purpose is not to transform dark into light, or evil into good. Dark and light, evil and good are natural opposites; they exist by the grace of one another.

The true purpose of our journey is not to have Light conquer Dark, but to go beyond these opposites and to create a new type of consciousness which can maintain unity in the presence of both light and dark.

True spiritual alchemy introduces a "third energy," a type of consciousness which embraces both polarities through the energies of love and understanding.

Now, let us go into this guided meditation of welcoming back an aspect of our true self:

Take a moment to relax the muscles in your shoulders and neck, sit straight up and put your feet flat on the floor.

Take a deep breath.

Picture yourself walking on a country road under a wide open blue sky. You take in the sounds of nature and you feel the wind through your hair.

You are free and happy.

Further down the road, you suddenly see some children running toward you. They are getting closer to you. How does your heart respond to this sight?

Then the children are in front of you. How many are they? How do they look? Are they boys, girls or both? You say hello to all of them. Tell them how happy you are to see them.

Then you make contact with one child in particular who is looking you in the eye. She or he has a message for you. It is written in the child's eyes.

Can you read it? What does it want to tell you? It is bringing you an energy that you need right now.

*Name the energy that this inner child has come to bring you and don't judge it.
Simply thank her or him and then release the image.*

Feel the earth firmly under your feet again and breathe deeply for a while. You have just contacted a hidden part of yourself. You can go back to this scene anytime you want and perhaps talk to the other children there as well.

Now enter into a silent meditation with the message you have received.

By going within and making contact with the hidden, parts of yourself, you are becoming more present. Your consciousness is rising above the fear-motivated patterns of thought and behavior that you have taken for granted for such a long time. It is taking responsibility for itself. It takes care of the sorrow, anger and hurt inside, like a parent takes care of its children.

THE JESHUA CHANNELINGS: Christ consciousness in a new era . Pamela Kribbe.

177 9.5.2020

maragaret wheatly on clarity

zhati 'smemorial – prayer for her soul's transition

day 178 9.6.2020

"what if mind" – obstacle to presence, waiting for life, a part of life remains on hold –
I will be happy when... waiting for the ducks to line up,

Suffering - being in an adversarial relationship with life as it is; acceptance is not resignation rather it is the portal – the way and the paradoxical way out - Embodied presence –

mind, heart, body = spirit

DAY 179 9.7.2020

IN times of great fear and uncertainty, our conditioning is to run away from our vulnerability. We go into fight, flight freeze and fall asleep. All the statistics show that addictive behaviors are up, domestic abuse, divorce, depression etc.... there is a spike in fear, worry – and so our work continues to be about how to be with our concerns – our fears – in a way that allows us to open our hearts, to be more kind, more compassionate, more loving...

Fear naturally cuts off our empathy and increases our separation. That is how fear functions. But practices like meditation builds empathy, builds greater capacity to respond to the world with heart and intelligence, innovation and adaptability.

Research shows that 20 minutes a day of meditation for 6 weeks shows up as a structural change in the brain via pect scan imaging technology. 20 minutes a day. That was the inspiration for this sangha.

So if fear is present, invite fear in, offer fear a cup of tea, befriend fear and let fear be the portal that invites you into a greater relationship with yourself and with humanity..

Day 180 9.8.2020

After watching again True Justice – the documentary on Bryan Stevenson – - I want to offer this morning I offer a prayer for those incarcerated wrongfully convicted, for those properly convicted but unfairly sentenced, for those doing time, for children as young as 13 who are doing time in adult prisons

How we treat the most condemned, the most dis-favored says something about us – who we are as a nation.

Bryan Stevenson in his profound humility says that it is the broken among us that show us compassion; it is the broken among us that can teach us how mercy is supposed to work, it is the broken that can show us the power of redemption and justice.

Bo Zoloff – says we are all doing time

There are so many ways we imprison ourselves

Especially when we Live lives that are much smaller than our potential

Day 181 9.9.2020

Continuing the theme of yesterday the multitude of ways we play small

Jung has been known to say that the un-lived life of the parents is what

Is most difficult for any child...

The part that plays small is what Jung called the small s self – the ego self that is typically steeped in fear, separation and scarcity. When un-evolved - This small s self is like a petty dictator unaware of the magnificent world beyond its limited domain... but The Big S Self – known by many names – is bigger than our wildest imagination, it carries the blueprint of unconditional love, radical compassion and acceptance, generosity – it is the part that has never been wounded, is fully intact and whole no matter what

No matter the circumstances.... Can you locate this fundamental wholeness NOW?

183 9.11.2020

The unbroken by Rashani

There is a brokenness out of which comes the unbroken

A shatteredness out of which blooms the unshatterable

There is a sorrow beyond all grief which leads to joy

And a fragility out of whose depths emerges strength

This is a hollow space too vast for words

Through which we pass with each loss

And out of whose darkness we are sanctioned into being

There is a cry deeper than all sound

Whose serrated edges cut the heart as we break open

To the place inside which is unbreakable and whole

While learning to sing...

184 9.12.2020

In Sanskrit, the term for spiritual practice is

sadhana

which literally means

burning. In the medieval stages of alchemy, the blackening phase is also about burning away that which no longer serves. It can be a hot and brutal process but sadhana can clear the path for what is seeking to emerge, for the phoenix rising, for new life.

How shall we practice this gratefulness: Stop, Look, Go

- We know that Spiritual growth can't happen without struggle and many have already offered that this this pandemic can be seen as an excellent time to deepen our spiritual practice so we can be of service for a world in desperate need of our loving attention.
- Here 's a version of the prayer of St Francis slightly modified by colleague Lester Strong
- May I be an instrument of Divine peace.

Where there is hatred (in me), let me sow love.

Where there is injury (in me), pardon.

Where there is doubt (in me), faith.

Where there is despair (in me), hope.

Where there is darkness (in me), light.

Where there is sadness (in me), joy.

May I not so much seek to be consoled, as to console

To be understood as to understand,

To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

May the suffering we feel and witness serve our greater awakening

Day 185 9.13.2020

Ubuntu !

Day 186 9.14.2020 (from day 55)

It is the great mother who holds the tears of the world and lets her heart be broken open – she knows that when we allow ourselves to be cracked open – we are forever changed by the both pain and beauty of this world.

Dear sacred mother

Help us to abide in the holy darkness without fear

In the radical not knowing

Teach us To stand in the liminal space between duality and non duality

Between what has been and what is yet to come

It is you dear mother who can teach us to choose union with the holy

To be both lover and beloved

There is no time left for a life that is not steeped in love, for love, with love

There is no time left to be out of integrity with you dear mother

We are being called to stand in wholeness

With the best of the divine masculine accompanying the medicine and wisdom of the divine feminine.

Two wings beating together

The wing of compassion and the wing of discernment

As we end and enter silence – **this from Mirabai Starr**

Please feel free to close your eyes

take a moment and

Gather your burdens in a basket in your heart

Cast them at the feet of the great mother

Crawl into her broad lap and nestle into her ample bosom and... rest there

When you awake – the basket will be lighter

She will transmute your worries but

Only if you offer them to her freely and sincerely

Day 186 9.15.2020

As we continue to live with profound uncertainty

Unpredictability

Change

Impermanence

we begin anew each day to presence that which will be the rudder to the ship

to lean into our core, our foundation

Each day , each moment,

we seek anew any source of firm ground that we can stand on

We activate pathways of remembrance

By tilting a light to shine within

And even as it reflects the shards of our broken hearts

It also captures the essence of our beauty, our radiance , our power

I offer this poem Inspired by Mirabai Starr

These days we must learn to abide in holy darkness

In the great mystery

In not knowing

Can we become the root growing in the dark, in the underneath world

The root That is not yet formed

That does not know what is to come

The root that is gestating into a version of itself not yet known

Are we not abiding in the liminal space that is sacred ground

Holy time

That invites deep rest during the great pause

Let us activate The fertile wisdom of the dark unknown, the wild feminine, the untethered soul of wild mercy

Let us learn how to gracefully speak truth to power,

This kind of grace is essential for what's to come

As we navigate the birth canal

Become the dark root that is not fully formed but which is guided by its deep essence – encoded with purpose

Bring forth the gifts that only YOU can bring

Become the joy, become the love that you wish to see in a world that is scared and hurting.

Let us bring VOOOOO to the dark root that is gestating...

Day 187 9.16.2020

In the Jewish tradition – we are entering a time of intentional, deep reflection, contemplation where we bring transparency to ourselves and to a universe that supports our transformation - regarding where we have missed the mark, where we feel short, where we have not acted with as much grace as we like.

This practice of naming our mistakes, our regrets is best done with compassion and kindness so we can do better. The assumption is we do make mistakes, we do hurt the people we love – this is part of the human condition if you will

So we look at both intentional and unintentional ways we have contributed to the pain of the world. And this year – the themes of racial justice are huge and our awareness of how complicit we all are in maintaining systems of privilege and oppression have reached a level of national discourse that brings great hope.

So for now - to begin this process of introspection we can focus on very

Basic questions can frame this introspection

Have I been a good person?

Am I living a good life

What is a good life?

How do you define that for yourself?

Day 189

in essence – our practices all lead to the same invitation

how can we Widen our circle of compassion

Can you see the divinity in the other

Can you embody this phrase offered by the dalai lama

My friend, the enemy – dalai lama

The book – The Sunflower

The Sufi Gates of Communication:

Is it kind

Is it true

Is it necessary

Is it necessary now...

Day 190 9.19.2020

Richard Rhor says: All of spirituality is about letting go

There is the expression

Let go

Let god

But one place we can be quite tenacious in letting go is in blaming ourselves

Where we have not forgiven ourselves for mistakes

A deep practice of forgiveness has three parts;

Asking forgiveness of others

Forgiving yourself and

Offering forgiveness

This morning I would like to invite you to begin the practice of offering forgiveness to yourself. When we acknowledge our mistakes with a deep and open heart, taking responsibility for the impact of our choices conscious or unconscious – we begin the process of liberating the energy of self loathing, the bitterness of self judgment. Self forgiveness allows us to take responsibility for times when we were confused, lost, not anchored in our essential core – we embrace our humanness and we liberate the energy that binds us and imprisons us.

Jack Kornfeld offers this:

Offering Forgiveness to Yourself

Recite: "There are many ways that I have hurt and harmed myself. I have betrayed or abandoned myself many times through thought, word, or deed, knowingly and unknowingly." Feel your own precious body and life. Let yourself see the ways you have hurt or harmed yourself. Picture them, remember them. Feel the sorrow you have carried from this and sense that you can release these burdens. Extend forgiveness for each of them, one by one. Repeat to yourself: "For the ways I have hurt myself through action or inaction, out of fear, pain, and confusion, I now extend a full and heartfelt forgiveness. I forgive myself, I forgive myself."

Let yourself gently repeat these [three] directions for forgiveness until you feel a release in your heart. For some great pains you may not feel a release but only the burden and the anguish or anger you have held. Touch this softly. Be forgiving of yourself for not being ready to let go and move on. Forgiveness cannot be forced; it cannot be artificial. Simply continue the practice and let the words and images work gradually in their own way. In time you can make the forgiveness meditation a regular part of your life, letting go of the past and opening your heart to each new moment with a wise loving-kindness. [1]

Day 191 9.20.20

Here is an example of directed imagery for the purposes of expanding our capacity for compassion and forgiveness by Thich Nhat Hanh. Often, people need some guidance in how to move towards forgiveness with regard to their parents. That's a big theme in our culture. This guided meditation is geared towards healing the parent adult/child relationship.

From his book: "The Energy of Prayer: How to Deepen your Spiritual Practice"

Please take a moment to get comfortable and centered.

This can be applied to parents who are alive or deceased..

Breathing in, I see myself as a five year old child.

Breathing out, I smile to the five year old child.

Breathing in, I see the five year old child, who is myself, as very fragile and vulnerable.

Breathing out, I smile to the five year old child in myself, with the understanding of compassion

Breathing in, I see my father as a five year old child.

Breathing out, I smile to my father as a five year old child.

Breathing in, I see that five year old child who is my father as very fragile and vulnerable.

Breathing out, I smile to the five year old child who is my father, with understanding and compassion.

Breathing in, I see my mother as a five year old child

Breathing out, I smile to my mother as a five year old child.

Breathing in, I see my mother as a five year old child, fragile and vulnerable.

Breathing out, I smile to the five year old child who is my mother, with understanding and compassion.

Breathing in, I see the suffering of my father when he was five years old

Breathing out, I see the suffering of my mother when she was five years old.

Breathing in, I see my father in myself.

Breathing out, I smile to my father in myself.

Breathing in, I see my mother in myself.

Breathing out, I smile to my mother in myself.

Breathing in I understand the difficulties of my father in me.

Breathing out, I vow to transform my father and myself together.

Breathing in I understand the difficulties of my mother in me.

Breathing out, I vow to transform my mother and myself together.

Please journal for a few minutes. I love the simplicity of this meditation.

Note from TB: It almost slips below the radar but it captures a few great principles of forgiveness work: one being, when we are in touch with our own vulnerability, we can get in touch with the vulnerability of others. And from this perspective, we can begin to feel and know compassion even for those who may have harmed us, as they too were vulnerable children at one time. This meditation gently opens a door.

Day 192 9.21.2020

Recently I have been brought into relationship with

The art of the pivot

Being able to assess, discern, shift in alignment with or in conversation with the divine will.

The art of being nimble, adaptive is being called into being – big time... and it is a necessary part of our growing resiliency.

Adapt and innovate

The shadow side however is our willingness to adapt to situations that are not healthy or sustainable

That adaptation is more about surviving than thriving...

First chakra vs perhaps the second and third chakra which access innovation and agency

Day 193 9.22.2020

Soon fatalities from corona will reach 200,000 in this country as a new surge is beginning to rear its head... as we officially enter fall, we all sense the diminishing days of warmth that have supported at least some outdoor socializing. There is a weariness a foot and the challenge before us – how do we keep the faith, how do we maintain our higher self frequency in the midst of ongoing suffering and challenge...

I find myself thinking about the jews wandering the dessert for 40 years. Someone descried the task moses was gives as :

Life asked the impossible of him—walk out from everything you are and know and go into a place of uncertainty and discomfort and spend your life there guided by the intangible.

What are the lessons we can derive from our ancestors... clearly they have experienced great difficulty and have survived, have perhaps even thrived. We know that the

The hardest struggles we face have the greatest potential to teach us patience and endurance, profound compassion, as well as extraordinary love and grace.

It is our turn now to find that grace within and shine that light as brightly as we can so we can find each other in the fog...

Presence for a moment a time when you were able to effortlessly shine your light bright, big, bold, fiercely in the world. The world is not served when we keep ourselves small... source unknown

Day 194 9.23.2020

The development of wisdom according to neuro scientists is expanding the human window of tolerance

Expanding our capacity to stay present and intimate with the fullness of our humanity – the full depth and breath of our emotional life

Nothing gets exiled or left out

And when we practice any form of somatic intelligence

When we learn to listen to the body wisdom

We grow our embodied presence

And this gives us access to our strength, our resilience, and our vulnerability

Vulnerability as a required ingredient for being in authentic relationship with oneself, with others – in leadership

When we are able to presence and tolerate our own uncertainty and vulnerability.

We come into contact with what Oscar Wilde calls The tainted glory of our humanity.

Somatic intelligence and Embodiment is the key to a coherent and well anchored resiliency.

Take a moment to presence – what is happening in your body right now.

We are cultivating the skills of the felt sense

The subtle realm

And ask yourself:

Is there anything that is in the way of me being fully present in this moment

And presence THAT

Knowing what may be in the way – IS the way to presence

James Baldwin: People cling to their hate so tightly because Once hate is gone - they will be forced to deal with their own pain.

Day 196 9.25.20

When we do the work of healing

The practice of growing embodied intelligence

Somatic wisdom

We move from healing to restoration

From trauma to transformation

One definition of healing is moving from fixity to flow

Thomas Hubl says

The more we restore our past, the more we can access innovative options in the future

And we are certainly being called to adapt and innovate

To lean into ways of being individually, with our partners and children, within community and in the collective that demand presence, authenticity, transparency and the highest ethical codes of connection

This IS what can save us

This IS the medicine

WE are the remedy

And we are being called in ways – perhaps – we have never been called before

To find our deepest capacity for life

To lean into our most courageous selves as the storms continue to roll in.

Cup courage with love

Cremaster – butterfly anchor

Day 198

Being vs doing

not being defined by our to do list

by what we accomplish or get done

but by who we are

in our essence

being is actually the life force

the generator of energy

without a fluid energy pathway of being that is activated and nourished

doing becomes unsustainable and lacks heart

fundamental consciousness is not bound by conditional love

fundamental consciousness does not require that we be something other than who we are to belong.

when do you begin to sacrifice your being for belonging

hope is the place that remembers our essential being....

that calls us into further awakening and deeper connections

that relies on BEING as the energy pathway of remembrance

how can we - how can you make awakening a central focus of your life

with trauma - time and space are distorted

its like working with a smaller map

Day 200

The more we practice - the more refined our inquiry

Presence goes hand in hand with perception of higher consciousness

More coherence

More congruent

All the information we need is already here

This is the process of arriving to what is already here

2 wings of western spiritual traditions:

1) State awareness - where we practice

Mystical transformation leads to insights which leads to powerful practices

2) Process awareness: how can I be more aware of what is here-
embodiment; when we align these two - we activate coherence and our thoughts
and words mirror and manifest our greatest good

The energy and consciousness behind the words is the healing and awakening tool

Listening with the eyes, ears and heart of the divine

not tomorrow

not yesterday

but right now.

What if I listen with my whole body

Meditation to Connect to our Au'makua

October 8, 2020

Carol Asiaghi

Good morning, I'm Carol Asiaghi, happy to be leading today's meditation.

In the Hawaiian tradition, it's understood that when we come into life, we come in from the

Great Beyond, from the upper world of Spirit where our Higher Self, our immortal soul

which does not die, divides. It divides itself and sends in a bowl of its light, a seed of its light, which takes up residence in a new embodiment for a new lifetime. This seed of light coming into this lifetime is kind of like a hologram in the sense that it contains within itself everything which is recorded in your Higher Self field, in your Oversoul. The Hawaiians call this our Au'makua. Au' meaning "of" and "Makua" meaning parent.

We can also translate the word Au'makua into English as utterly trustworthy ancestral spirit. Ancestral spirit because all of our former selves, are archived into our Higher Self field, as known as our Akashic records.

The oversoul enters the body with its first breath, it's HA. That breath is your own personal Godself which is who and what your Higher Self is, a God in-becoming.

Because this like God-like self is us, and we are an aspect of this Oversoul, we can make connection with it, for guidance, advice, self-divination, support and personal empowerment.

Our personal Oversoul or Au-makua is a direct descendent of God, The Great Creator. I have experienced this multi-faceted energy as a Warrior, who described himself to me as Immoveable Strength, and as my own personal Angel, watching out and guiding my life choices and comforting me in times of sorrow. And I have come to understand, that in this lifetime, my relationship to this presence, my own godlike aspect is the single most important relationship to nurture and grow. In so doing, I and we become more and more aligned with our personal destiny, or purpose in this lifetime and more. As Hale Makua told us we must become Sovereign unto ourselves.

Our Au'makua is in service to us, to nourish and sustain us as we pass through life. It communicates best with us, through intuition, in prayer and by sending us dreams, visions, hunches, ideas and synchronicities in response to our need to know.

It sits within your heart in meditation and it forms an open circuit with your Higher Self. like an open mic to your Oversoul. So in order to talk to your Godself, your capital S Spirit self, the Kahuna, or Shamanic practitioner goes into an expanded state of awareness using intention and imagination as the driving force.

Humans for millenia have used drumming, rattling or monotonous rhythm to create Theta waves in the brain, allowing us reach that expanded state of perception more readily.

With this in mind, I propose that today we take the opportunity to make connection and

communicate with our Au'makua/Spirit Teacher/Oversoul to feel the undeniable love it

Rather than playing you drumming, I am going to play an Ocean song, called Wavepool by

Robert Rand which will enhance your ability to perceive.

Using your conscious intention ask for this most benevolent force that exists within you to

make itself known. See what you perceive about your Oversoul, how does it communicate

with you? mine often uses metaphors. How does it represent itself to you, feminine, masculine or both. Like a Goddess or Angel or Animal?

PLAY WAVEPOOL.

Now, we will continue in silence. You can take this time to ask your Au'makua for guidance

you may be seeking, knowing that this is a source of infallible knowledge.

As your return to your rooms, spaces and morning, thank your Oversoul for any information brought forth.

I will end with the 3 Kapus, or mandates that the Hawaiian Elder, Hale Makua taught for

living a spiritually centered life:

- 1) Love all that you see with Humility.
- 2) Live all that you feel with reverence.
- 3) Know all that you possess with discipline.

Day 201

Something wants to live

life wants to actualize

there is a dynamic force

a movement towards evolution

that has been and will always be

Thomas talks about how:

Our body is thousands of years old

We are a product of hundreds of thousands of years of evolution

Individual consciousness is a sculpture within the nervous system

But the nervous system has been around a long time

Its not about my path, my awakening – there is a collective field.

The nervous system is like a Bio computer with so many functions that aren't even used by us – or known yet ... but we are being called now to activate and bring on line capacities that have not yet been seen, witnessed or coded. This time calls for

Day 204

This morning I want to evoke Kali

the mother goddess archetype who is

full of bold, fierce and unyielding presence

unapologetic

she is a trinity archetype of creator, sustainer and destroyer

best known in her destroyer aspect - kali is often depicted wielding a big sword

one interpretation is that she cuts through illusion and deceit and bullshit -

We need a kali force now to cut through the fake news, the profound amount of lying and distortion

and yet even in her most dramatic and frightening aspects, I offer this interpretation from an article I wrote many years ago on Kali:

Kali reminds us that even in our darkest manifestations where we so desperately want to distance ourselves from the heinous actions of "others", *we are all one*. All of these polarities exist in the human consciousness and in the collective unconscious. "The Mother is only terrible to those who, living in the illusion of separateness (which is the cause of fear), have not yet realized their unity with her" (Woodruff, 2001). Clearly the Kali lessons are big. She is a provocative archetype who challenges us to confront our most distained shadow material, but she is also "the bud on the spring branch and the metamorphosing magfly." Under Kali's guidance, there is no separateness; Kali does not allow simplistic, formulaic interpretations.

kali invites us to each carry and wield our own swords

she is no longer wanting to be a one woman act but rather she is joining the sisterhood of strong divine feminine woman on the planet now along with male allies - we stand stronger together and she is no longer the out of control righter of wrongs on her own....

Day 205

A Practice for Transforming Suffering: Tonglen Practice

Tonglen is a Tibetan Buddhist Practice. Last time we did this practice – we offered Tonglen – which is an act of Seva to a place of suffering in the world – it was a gift.

Today we will practice tending to our own suffering in a more personal way as part of our Tonglen Practice.

Take a moment to arrive.

Sit quietly, and for a few cycles of the breath, follow your inhale and exhale and let your breath slow down. Practice bringing the inhale breath into your belly, breathing in to the count of 3, holding for 3 and then exhaling for 3. Do this mindful breathing 3x's at your own pace.

Now take a moment to resource yourself. You can do this by tuning into your feet imagining big beautiful roots sprouting out from the sole of your feet going deep and wide into the earth.

Allow the roots to descend and feel the anchoring they provide. Like big straws – let the roots draw sustenance from deep within the earth and infuse your whole being with this nourishment from the earth element.

You can also resource yourself by bringing on board any guides – spiritual, personal, ancestral - and imagine these guides are gathered behind you. These can be spiritual figures, animal allies, heroes etc. This is your spiritual back up team – allow yourself to feel the support, feel how they have your back. Breathe into that. Lean into that.

Now bring gentle loving awareness and attention and allow these gentle forces to gather in your heart, Let them take up residence. Tune into that place of wholeness and luminosity that exists in all people regardless of circumstance – this is the inner divine self that is always ready to radiate out from your heart to bless and heal the world.

Draw your awareness into that place in the very center of your being where there is light - a source of radiance, a presence of healing energy that lives in your heart and is ever shining.

Let yourself experience that center of perfect light, like a big beautiful sun shining in your heart. This is the presence of Divine Love, and it is ever present within you. It is this presence IN YOU that blesses, that heals, that transforms all suffering and all darkness into light. Allow yourself to be touched by this profound truth. In every tradition – this is a universal principle. You are a carrier of this divine light. Feel it. Know it.

Now imagine that each member of your spiritual back up team is holding your heart; allow your big beautiful heart to be held; our hearts are being stretched so much these days; take a moment and abide in divine support. Breathe into the support, abide and rest..

And if something is blocking you from accessing this place of unconditional divine love this morning– simply “act as if” you could find and access that divine light.

There are times when we are more in contact with the dark clouds that block the sun but never forget - the sun is always there.

(Now imagine your spiritual back up team holding your heart; holding the tenders

From that centered place, within your own light, breathe those dark clouds into yourself, and allow them to be dissolved and dispelled by the light in your heart. Watch them dissolve for this moment in time. And act as if...

We will continue today's practice by healing the place of suffering that exists in the human condition – that exist in our own hearts. This is the mistaken belief that we are separate from the divine; That we are separate from the light in our heart. The illusion of separation brings with it great suffering and a profound sense of existential aloneness.

On your next exhale – breathe blessing, healing and light right into your heart. Continue to breathe in the suffering of being separate from your true self - breathe it directly into the light in your heart, and see this particular piece of suffering dissolve or burn off. And if any other image emerges to support this healing – go with that. Let yourself be guided and held as you attend to this human wound. Stay awake, stay present as you continue to breathe in light and exhale light, as a gift and a blessing to yourself.

Now imagine a loved one standing before you, and allow yourself to see how this loved one also suffers from the illusion of separation.

Place this loved one in your left hand and then cup your left hand with your right hand and imagine that your right hand is bathing your loved one with unconditional love, with god's grace and deep radical compassion. Bathe your loved now and allow yourself to be a channel for this infinite source of love and mercy.

This practice was adapted from Rev. Diane Berke, inspired by imagery from Joan Borysenko and modified by Therese Bimka

Day 207

as we practice more embodied presence

we begin to feel more

to be more alive

to be more in our authentic truth and that means feeling more

its the good news and the bad news

more joy

more gratitude

more pain

more discomfort

all of it lives in teh same place

its a package deal

you cant access more joy and exile the difficult emotions

what we can do however is continue to find the resources within oursel

to presence and bear witness to the pain and suffering of the world

This is a practice of arriving more and more into the innate wisdom of your inner sanctum

Day 208

more from thomas hubl

he talks about the elevator of consciousness

for example

crawling is the highest function for a particular stage

until the child looks up

inspiration wasnt available until a fundamental moment

where the "I" has more spaciousness

The old perspective is needed and gets included but we also need a new way of of being

Ken Wilbur describes this as include and transcend on both the micro level and the macro level

when one way of being is no longer helpful or won't go the distance and a new way of being is not yet on board

this can be experienced as a crisis

but it is a healing crisis because the system is always geared towards growth and development

The only factor really impeding this is trauma which creates frozen-ness, contraction

but the good news is we can always move from fixity to flow which is one definition of healing and transformation...

Day 210

In short, **Samatha** meditation is focused on calming the mind, while **Vipassana** meditation is focused on insight or clearing the mind. Both meditations have their uses but which one you should practice depends on what your goal is.

Larry Ward from Lotus Talk

The systems of the world are inside of us

Samsara is internal - chronic dissatisfaction

My own dissatisfaction with being a human being

Society lives in us

Nature is IN us

The liberation of my heart and mind as an individual is the stepping stone to the next

Liberation

Being calm is not enough

Equanimity is the first step, not the last step

Liberation beyond the personal

First step is self regulation

Then comes the practices of enhancement so we becomes capable of handling a global reality – the whole earth

Beyond self regulations

Beyond the Practice of Shamatha

First comes the practices that establish States of equanimity

It doesn't mean you are comfortably numb

You are capable of holding your own suffering in a clear open hearted place

Equanimity is not absence

Day 212

between the stimulant and the response is a pause and in that pause

there lies freedom

conscious choice

From Tricycle:

Years ago, I learned that in Chinese the same character is used to convey "heart" and "mind," and that the two are seen by the Chinese as one inseparable "heartmind." Thus in the Chinese understanding, there exists no separate thought without accompanying feeling, no separate feeling without thought, no compassion in the absence of intellect—in short: no heart without mind or mind without heart. As messy with potential contradiction and uncertainty as this coupling of heart and mind might seem to those with a Western propensity for analysis, the realization of heartmind is actually a radical simplification with a capacity to gather bundles of complications into a single dharma

Were "heartmind" a word in the English lexicon, it would be designated as a noun, but in its origin it's both noun and verb, and the Chinese, who make no distinction between what you are and what you do, would never understand the separation of the two. What you are *is* what you do, what you do *is* what you are. Heartmind is simultaneously both being and doing, an inherent coupling that arises on its own volition and does so everywhere and at all times.

Mind and heart is the same word in the buddhist teachings

Examination of my mental thoughts and emotions without being overly

Identified with them

The real sword of de-conditioning

Inner violence to one's self

Relentlessly judgemental

Regulated my nervous system

Alice walker study group with POC with jack Kornfeld

Th buddha specialized in suffering

Why not bring it to racial distress

How do we relax into an investigation of freedom

In the inner suffering and distress

Clear seeing

Fierce heartedness

Develop a heart muscle that becomes curative for a pain pattern

The fruits of meditation

With mindfulness - We don't always see the results or the change

It can be subtle over time...

Day 213

judith blackstone meditation

embodiment as the portal to the divine

accessing fundamental consciousness

Day 214

CENTERING PRAYER

CHOOSE A WORD

AND DROP IT IN YOUR HEART

A WAY TO DROP THE MIND IN THE HEART

3 fold levels of consciousness

self reflective consciousness (subject / object perception)

human doing not being

contemplation is the next step up- DROPPING INTO BEING WITH SELF

between you and god - being to being in this undifferentiated sphere of love
where you and god co mingle un-mediated by the ego

Felt sense perception of what happens when the heart is engaged

This is the energetic signature of consciousness

What you learn when you can really stabilize non dual consciousness

is that You draw help from the saints

Those who are attending to our planet

When the consciousness gathers – it flows down to where ever it is needed

Non dual people are more Useful, flexible, attuned cosmic servants

The planet is requiring this new consciousness

There is force but no kickback

YOU LEARN TO Walk like dancing between the raindrops

with an Alertness to what is happening

Coincidences emerge- the third force

The element of surprise and effortlessness

when a certain number of people become conscious – the world changes

it seeps through the whole structure

when human beings say yes to the divine

help drops from the heavens

god delights in our genuine efforts

our insights or [transmissions] can happen any time,spontaneously,

don't fill the decks she warns....

leave room for god

Day 215

Abraham Heschel

rabbi, mystic, good friend of MLK

in fact MLK was due to be at his passover seder right before he was assassinated

I offer these words of inspiration from Heschel...

Say hello. Imagine your heart being infused with deep kindness and boundless compassion to BATHE your beautiful and aching heart. Pause.....

Imagine for now that all of our hearts are connected across time and space..... Breathe into the connection ... into the profound knowing that we are not separate – that we are all connected..... Now extend this heart circle to our nation – to Washington... and let us breathe as one heart, one love, one heart, one love.

Prayer can not bring water to parched fields, or mend a broken bridge

Or rebuild a ruined city but prayer can water an arid soul, mend a broken heart and rebuild a weakened will.

Prayer is meaningless unless it is subversive, unless it seeks to overthrow and to ruin the pyramids of callousness and hatred. In any free society where terrible wrongs exist, some are guilty but all are responsible.

For many of us the march from Selma to Montgomery was about protest and prayer . legs are not lips and walking is not kneeling. And yet our legs uttered songs. Even without words, our march was worship. I felt my legs were praying.

Our goal should be to live life of radical amazement.... Get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted. Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to amazed.

Day 216

Tara brach- please teach me about kindness

May I remember to be more kind

Kindness is my religion

We are more open

More vulnerable

More off balance

Imagine being at your

End of your life looking back

What would matter most

What is most essential

That we live in a loving way

Ron Seigal psychologist: The development of trust leads to brain growth

Tara Brach: When we reflect on what we cherish, it's intimacy with others, creativity, wisdom, wonder, living fully—and all of them are sourced in an embodied presence. This is why I call the book *Radical Compassion*: If compassion is just mental, an idea about somebody suffering that's not grounded in that feeling of tenderness in our hearts, it doesn't motivate us to actively express our care. Radical compassion is radical because you go to the roots, because it's embodied.

All of us have a kind of degree of dissociation from the body, to avoid that raw intensity that lives in our bodies. Often we hold the emotional wounds we've experienced in our bodies, "our issues in our tissues." It really is a deep part of the spiritual path to, with gentleness and awareness, come into the body and reopen to what we have been avoiding. There is even more disassociation if there's been trauma versus a safe, kind upbringing where it is safe to be in our bodies.

Disassociation is also amplified by being in a speedy high-tech culture. So it's very pervasive.

If there's something in us that feels difficult to feel, we just say: I'm here. If there's fear, I sometimes invite people to sense the fear sitting next to them on a park bench, and then gradually let yourself feel how it's living inside you. Re-associating to our bodies is a gradual path.

Loving presence, for example, is a basic capacity and it can be cultivated and strengthened. In order to strengthen it, we need to find pathways, ways of paying attention that wake up our feeling of warmth and openness, and it really helps to use all our senses.

TB: There's a phrase, "if only" mind. Without actually saying it to ourselves, it directs our way of moving through the day: "If only this would happen, if only I lost the 10 pounds, if only I could get a promotion, if only so and so would treat me differently."

We don't realize how many moments of our life, on some level, are being driven by this sense that we want life different; we're hoping the next moment will provide what this moment does not. It happens both on the larger landscape of our life —"If only I could have the right partner"—and also happens during the day, "If only I could get a cup of coffee, or get finished with all my emails," and so on. This is so powerful because it's a trance, we're leaning in the future, we're on our way somewhere else.

A big realization we can explore in this practice is that when we're suffering, it's because in some way we feel like something's wrong or missing in the present moment; we're at odds with reality. Thus recognizing "if only" mind helps us come into relationship with the present moment.

"Let me be awake and kind through the day."

We need each other. One of the big illusions on the path is that I'm a separate self trying to wake myself up. The only way we can realize our non-separateness is to realize our mutual belonging is it.

The development of wisdom according to neuro scientists is

Expanding the human window of tolerance

Expanding our capacity to stay present and intimate with the fullness of our humanity – the full depth and breath of our emotional life

Nothing gets exiled or left out. We stay present. It means we are able to tolerate our own uncertainty. Rilke -- Ultimately it is on your own vulnerability that you depend.

We depend on each other to survive

Obama at John Lewis' funeral

A man of pure joy and unbreakable perseverance

We are born with instructions

To form a more perfect union

Each generation is tasked with taking up the vision and mission

To take us further

Day 219

DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL:

Life has always been intensely challenging on planet Earth, but it's hard to imagine another time when the stakes were so high. We may feel anguished by what's happening. None of this is outside the Dharma. The intensity of our times is pushing, squeezing, and pummeling us. The image that comes to mind is of a birth canal. It is as if we are being born into a different way of understanding everything. We are being called to be midwives of consciousness as it evolves out of a dualistic perspective.

Kittisaro And Thanissara. Listening to the Heart: A Contemplative Journey to Engaged Buddhism . North Atlantic Books. Kindle Edition.

ram dass for today....

Ram Dass says the goal of practice is to access and find the I am

I am loving awareness

Then you start to drop the I Am and just become loving awareness

Which brings you into the spiritual heart

There is a veil to the next plane of consciousness

And this plane of consciousness is soul land

When your soul is in soul land – it is a being, a light

And the soul abides in love, compassion, wisdom, peace, and joy

All individual souls come from the one

This plane of consciousness –this soul land-

is right between the ego land And the One....

Its where we all dissolve into the One

And that is our final goal

The ego doesn't like this because it disappears when you go into the One

The soul goes back to the one

And it s so wonderful

The soul goes back to the one consciousness

The ocean of love...The Names of the ONE

God, Krishna, Ram, Buddha

Loving awareness is the name of the soul

I am loving awareness

I am loving awareness

Day 220

"...it is not always easy to feel compassionate in response to another's needs... When our hearts harden in defense, it does not mean we are failing as bodhisattvas. It just lets us know that we need to befriend what is happening inside us before compassion for others can naturally arise." [p. 235]

Compassion is the medicine we most need as individuals and as a species to heal suffering and free our spirits. And while we each have the capacity for love and compassion, it is by intentional practice that we develop a truly wise and caring hearts. Soften the heart... a soft heart is a wise and resourced heart.

Day 222: Page 40 Caroline Myss - Defy Gravity: Why would a benevolent god allow tragedy to occur...James Finley responds...

With regard to being asked this question, Myss writes in her most recent book - Defying Gravity: "I recall so clearly one of those extraordinary moments. It occurred in a seminar at my CMED (Caroline Myss Education) Institute when a student asked a profoundly emotional question of my guest speaker, James Finley. A former Trappist monk whose spiritual director was Thomas Merton, Finley offers instruction in contemplative living with that rare combination of mystical wisdom and common sense that characterized Merton's writing. This seminar took place shortly after a tragic event in Baghdad in which terrorists had allegedly used two mentally handicapped women as suicide bombers and directed them to walk into a mosque during prayer time. More than a hundred people were killed, including, of course, the two women, who probably had no understanding of what they were doing. "How could any God allow such things to happen?" the woman asked Finley. "How are we supposed to make sense of that?" The room became silent in a way that told me everyone had at one time asked this question. Clearly moved, Finley composed himself and then replied in his characteristically steady, gentle voice - "We can't make sense of events such as that - nor should we. We can never reason away the reality of evil and it is a mistake to try. Evil exists. Unreasonable cruelties happen and some may even happen to you." He paused, and I thought he had completed his answer, but then he continued. "The next level of that answer is that you take what cannot be changed on the outside and you transcend it on the inside. You use the external crisis to transform you, past the point at which crises of evil, despair, or destruction can destroy you. You must become stronger within by building a capacity inside of you that can respond to the world around you with much greater power, the power of love."

Day 223

Dan Seigel's FACES

Note: Dan Seigel 's definition of wellness might be a good fit here as it attempts to define wholeness in an open and inclusive manner: "Wellness is the integration of differentiated parts to make One whole" Health in all areas can be identified as the ability to be: Flexible, Adaptive, Coherent, Energized, and Stable (FACES). The "C" in FACES: Coherence: Connected, Open, Harmonious, Engaged, Receptive, Emergent, Noetic Compassionate, and Empathic. (Noesis – deep sense of knowing; Emergence – something fresh is alive and new)

Day 227

- During challenging times we are asked to stretch in ways unfamiliar, not yet known, to move beyond complacency, beyond what is comfortable
- to become friends with discomfort
- and to let discomfort be our teacher

The demands of our time are requiring that we become more intimate, more willing to engage our own discomfort as we navigate the turbulence of our times...and can we do this work of stretching beyond what is comfortable and remain true to our core values- to be a loving presence in a harsh world. For this morning's meditation - I offer this modified st francis prayer:

May I be an instrument of Divine peace.

Where there is hatred (in me), let me sow love.

Where there is injury (in me), pardon.

Where there is doubt (in me), faith.

Where there is despair (in me), hope.

Where there is darkness (in me), light.

Where there is sadness (in me), joy.

May I not so much seek to be consoled, as to console

To be understood as to understand,

To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Day 228

Back to meditation basics

blue sky

cloud of awareness

even breaths

tip of nose

ascendent and descendent current

string of pearls

Day 229

Joanna Macy: 91 year old environmental activist and buddhist

we should act our true age

4 billions of years old

everything we are comes from the sacred living body of the earth

the air, the food

I know we are impermanent

We are both the ripples on the lake but our true nature is the water that pours itself

- the water that pours down

its always invigorating to know our true age

as we face the collapse of environmental and financial structures

when we are faced with something that demanding of our attention and requiring and exploring who we really are and what we want in the center of our being

it involves working with the earth as a living being. - the earth is alive

the rainforest is protecting herself through this part of humanity

conceptual thought is so often a rear view mirror bringing language to what we already know

the sense of vigor that you feel is a living connection to the larger earth

how can you sustain more aliveness and not more despair

Hope is not something you have - its something you Do

HOPE is a verb

to continue to uphold what we hold so dear

no matter what

I want to flourish in those parts of myself that can stay aligned with life

life is always inviting us to find and invent new ways to solve our problems

the GREAT TURNING is happening

the truly creative response to the current situation

three stories of our time

The GREAT TURNING - - we are re-inventing our world - this is happening everywhere but the media is not focused on this., this is destroying everything, stories of resistance and creativity and a shift in consciousness. our world not simply as a supply house of sewer but as a living body.. first years of third millennium- scientists and mystics are agreeing that the earth is alive, indigenous and contemporary folks and the evolutionary psychologists, gaia theory..

The GREAT Unraveling - heading to extinctions

Business as Usual - maintain the status quo, everything is ok, we will grow our economy and more military, make america great again

we don't know which story will prevail

but we have a real story to inspire us

i dont feel optimistic either in this country

as americans we presence optimism much too much

active hope - its not something you have but something you do

hope is a verb

acting even when you feel hopeless

apathy as the the refusal or inability to suffer

etymology - - choosing not to suffer

how do we deal with something that is painful

we have the choice of where we put our attention

Day 230

how to care for our huge and magnificent hearts

to grow hearts big enough to bear witness

as we enter time of chaos, collapse and disorientation

our hearts can see and feel clearly

what we are going through

and others are going through

that there is light in the darkness and darkness in the light

we are not avoiding pain but recognizing that

love is bigger than our pain and from there

then we can be with things in a very different way

we practice

to understand that a range of responses is open to us

to find our values and to presence what we really care about

The healing is in the return, not in getting lost

learning how to let go more gracefully is the point

how to be compassionate for our selves

course correction

pick ourselves up every day.

we cant always change our circumstances

but with compassion for ourselves and others

we can move forward - even without an immediate result

Day 234

the pain and the suffering of the separate self

the false belief that we are separate from the divine

we are witnessing the acceleration of this human dis-ease

the profound belief of separation

that we are alone

disconnected to the world

to each other

to creation

this is the core fear

and the core opportunity

we are seeing this profound disconnection

polarization amplified in mythic proportions

when a dis-ease

an imbalance needs correction

it can get worse before it gets better

that we die alone

is the core pain

the core fear

and yet we know

we are not alone

we are not separate beings

we are cells in the body of creation

we are particles in the waves of consciousness

we inter -are

there is no I

there is only us

WE

the interconnectedness of all life

all consciousness

all creation

all sentient beings...

we inter -are

and this profound isolation

and separation is a the core of our profound pain, and contraction and it is the source of alll that is NOT life affirming

Every action must now be in service to the next 7 generations

that is what we are facing

there is no other way if we are to survive

we are facing the music

NOW

Eisenstein: The Coronation

when you lose things - you become aware of what has been lost

to value the things that have been lost..

that do we want to reclaim

that can we let go of..

we are being asked a question we have never been asked before

we are being shown a preview

what are we willing to sacrifice

more healthy

immunity requires interaction with our species

medically examined every time we travel

handling over final sovereignty of our bodies

do we want every event to be a virtual event

covid 19 persists

its not hard to imagine that new viruses will continue to emerge

teh disease will never run its course

Day 235 november 2

repeat of day 3

The waves on the surface of the ocean may be turbulent and rocky but if you drop a plum line just 6 feel below – you drop into the vast stillness of the sea. Anchor yourself here. Allow yourself to be surrounded by stillness as you witness and observe the turbulence above. Become the vast ocean.

Daan van kampenhout (Dutch shamanic practitioner also trained in constellations

Everyone of us comes from ancestors who survived all kinds of disasters. Wars, famines, revolutions, colonization, new illnesses, persecutions... Many of our ancestors saw their world fall apart, faced with events they could not control or even understand. Let's sense into the ancestor field and connect to the strength and dignity behind us. Some of the ancestors may not have known how to cope, but many of them did. We all come from people who have went through what we either are facing or ,maybe facing soon, so let's invite their wisdom now, feel their dignity, feel their presence. Feel their strength.

Let's pray that the ways that they managed their fears and challenges reveal themselves in us as we face this crisis together.

And with their help - let us all be the role models we are seeking

The light we need

The hope that holds our hand

11.16.2020

back from Thomas Hubl Retreat

WE Enter our work through the personal dimension

Looking at What are the building blocks that are shaping me and how is msysticsim begin pressed and expressed through that container.

With Thomas – his whole program of training is based on this:

We do the deep personal work to clear the channels

So the light of the divine may enter unencumbered

We do the personal work

To lighten and metabolize the density fields created by trauma, by pain, by wounds
unhealed

This is where the light of the divine gets stuck

We do our personal work

To bring coherence to the fragmented parts, the exiled parts, the parts that are split
off, frozen, shut down

With love and through relational witnessing

We heal

We are wounded in relationship and we heal IN relationship

So lets take a moment to attune

To notice where in your system you may find it hard to be in presence

A part may be off line

A bit shut down

Lets simply bring loving awareness

As if you could hover near by

And simply witness without judgement. Without assessing, without analyzing

Just being with

Lovingly

Affectionately

Holding the parts of yourself tenderly – the parts that need your love

Personal work lays the foundation and brings the attunement necessary for the spiritual practices that require silence and contemplation

11.17.2020

Day 250

looked at some of thomas' earlier teachings this morning...

He talks about Spirituality as a Deep connection with the living universe

Wisdom traditions and deep trauma work come together

You could say both are about re-establishing coherence with the whole system – unitive consciousness...

And he references the evolutionary development of the vagus nerve – which came into being 200 million years ago – what he calls the third leg and this aspect strives for safety through bonding and attachment

It is the on going experience of co- regulating through relationship

As when we receive attuned connection we move from From fixity to flow (internal regulation) which is a definition of healing and transformation

That gives us access and freedom:

We have choice

To connect to others

To stay with myself

A state of inter-being

And in this state we touch

the souls impulse to incarnate into life

251 11.18.2020

one of the stories Thomas hubl likes to presence is what happened at Mount Sinai – which he calls a mass awakening

Thomas says:

after 40 years in the dessert, The voice of god spoke. The highest universal truth spoke not just to mooses but to everyone assembled. Everyone who was there said – GOD spoke to me personally and this activated a mass awakening of consciousness. That you could have a direct experience of god not mediated by the pharoh – that each one of us can access god in a personal and intimate way.

And so this time we are in – perhaps we have begun our own 40 years in the dessert. How will we stay the course? How will we remain faithful? How will we resource ourselves for the long haul...

One way Thomas says is by building intelligent community networks where we invest our time in group presencing. He adds that we are witnessing a global reset but in that reset, we need to create structures strong enough to contain the growth potential of this time.

11.19.2020 day 252

in many ways – I most identify as a mystic – a mystic engages god and the divine directly – intimately..

Mirabai Starr offers that mystics go into an archetypal place where deep rejoice and deep grief inhabit the same space.

We learn to dance that dance of joy and sorrow..

a deep drink from the wellspring of hope and courage

a place of refuge for your own suffering heart in these difficult times

anchoress: Julian of Norwich

how to shelter in place

anchorite – small enforced seclusion as an opportunity for spiritual practice and spiritual growth so when we are released back in the world rejuvenated and serve

Friday – 253

enforced seclusion in many monastic traditions is an opportunity for spiritual practice and growth. And as we facing another winter in this time of pandemic,

becoming intentional with the sabbath – a Sabbath offers a pause and gives us a chance to see what are imprisoned to; what we are chained to...

we are entering another Sabbath –

in 1606 – shakespeare's theatre was forced to close due to the plague so he wrote – king lear, macbeth, Anthony and Cleopatra

how will you remember this time

what is longing to be expressed...

Rabbi Sacks

to make time for what is important but not urgent.. what is urgent gets our attention but what is important is what needs our attention to manifest our deep values

the antidote to violence is conversation – when we are listened to deeply – we can transform

when you begin to feel your opponents pain – you begin the path to reconciliation (in response to the 10 plagues and we shed a tear with each drop of wine...) passover

Day 239 nov 6th

Thomas Hubl says

I believe we are Literally at the door step

at the threshold of waking to and walking into a new era

The bells are ringing already (loudly)

Everything is pointing towards a different kind of global collaboration

Whether its Covid

Climate change

Enormous inequality around the world

There are things that can't continue

There are those who invite us to take the long view without negating the historic implications of this moment.

Krista Tippett says this moment with a capital M may last a century

And we can lean on those who have done the work of repair, reconstruct and reconciliation in highly polarized places like northern Ireland – they can teach us how to understand and work with the highly charged level of polarization we are experiencing in our country.

WE must find a way to know, to see, to witness and touch our common humanity... We are more alike than we are different although that seems so far away at the moment but it is the truth. There are universal feelings, universal needs, universal fears... Universal dreams.. we are all part of the alchemical soup of humanity with an inherited archetypal DNA library that comprises the human story.

And so for today – I invite to presence this question :

What is the contribution I can make to repair and reconciliation regardless of who wins the presidency?

11/7/2020 day 240

The Facts of Life

Written by Padraig O Tuama

Listen

That you were born
and you will die.

That you will sometimes love enough
and sometimes not.

That you will lie
if only to yourself.

That you will get tired.

That you will learn most from the situations
you did not choose.

That there will be some things that move you
more than you can say.

That you will live
that you must be loved.

That you will avoid questions most urgently in need of
your attention.

That you began as the fusion of a sperm and an egg
of two people who once were strangers
and may well still be.

That life isn't fair.

That life is sometimes good
and sometimes better than good.

That life is often not so good.

That life is real
and if you can survive it, well,
survive it well
with love
and art
and meaning given
where meaning's scarce.

That you will learn to live with regret.
That you will learn to live with respect.

That the structures that constrict you
may not be permanently constricting.

That you will probably be okay.

Imagine the image of a whole web of beings who are waking up together.

Shelter in love

Meditations from Robert Ferrel's Sangha Offerings: On Silence

Listening to the bell, I feel my afflictions begin to dissolve. My mind is calm, my body relaxed, a smile is born on my lips. Following the sound of the bell, my breathing guides me back to the safe island of mindfulness. In the garden of my heart, the flower of peace blooms beautifully. Listen, listen. This wonderful sound brings me back to my true self. "Body, speech and mind in perfect oneness, I send my heart along with the sound of this bell. May the hearers awaken from forgetfulness and transcend all anxiety and sorrow." ñ Thich Nhat Hanh

Which is worth more, a crowd of thousands, or your own genuine solitude? Freedom, or power over an entire nation? A little while alone in your room will prove more valuable than anything else that could ever be given you. ó Jelaluddin Rumi

Silence lies at the heart of all the great spiritual traditions and pilgrimages. It is the vehicle that encourages us to dive beneath words, ideas, chatter, and concepts to discover the unspoken truths and the unfathomable mystery of being. The variety of forms of contemplation, prayer, and meditation meet together in their reverence for the act of silence. Through them we learn to still the clamor of our hearts and the competing voices that cascade through our mind and to discover a place of profound stillness and receptivity. We soon begin to understand that silence is not a vacuum or a barren desert of the heart, but the source of creativity, love, compassion, and transforming wisdom. ó Christina Feldman

<https://www.amazon.com/Silence-Find-Inner-Peace-World/dp/1930485034>

Silence is the universal language. It is a common human experience that the deepest communication occurs when nothing needs to be said: in silence, one hears the language of lovers or close friends and senses the understanding that flows between people and their pets or between parent and child. According to Native American teachings, we can have this quality of silent communication with anyone, with any place, and with any aspect of nature. ó Kenneth Cohen

When we pause to attend to the silence beneath our thoughts, it's easier to find a wellspring of deep joy and quiet confidence within. ó Carl McColman

The silence of God is empty of content but full of intent. In that silence you grow silent. In that silence you let go of all you think and know about who you are and what you are to do. And in that place of not-knowing, you experience yourself being asked: Why are you here? The answer? To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly. And, in the case of the prophets, to call others to do the same. ó Rami Shapiro

Saint John of the Cross taught that interior silence is the place where Spirit secretly anoints the soul and heals our deepest wounds. Make time during the day to be alone ó not to read or watch TV ó but to be quiet. Garden, sit outside, walk mindfully, go into nature, meditate, be with music. Most of us will give our time and energy away to others, leaving little for ourselves. The disbalance that occurs when you squeeze yourself out of your own life creates new stress that prevents the healing of old pain. Save time to let silence be a partner in your healing. ó Joan Borysenko

Throughout his life, Mahatma Gandhi affirmed the unshakable power and creativity of silence. Gandhi counseled all his followers to adopt periods of voluntary silence and to find the power and fearlessness within it that would be needed to overturn the might of the occupying British army with all its forces. ó Christina Feldman To be in solidarity with suffering is a natural outgrowth of practicing silence. The more we still ourselves, the more we become aware of the huge context we are in and the more we cannot ignore the suffering around us. ó Gunilla Norris

Without silence around us, the inward stillness in which God educates and molds us is impossible. ó Evelyn Underhill Silence and stillness are also important to the leave-taking we are trying to accomplish in meditation. We are trying to leave the world of unfocused chatter and constant, compulsive, reactive movement. Silent, we find ourselves entering a deeper, more tranquil world.

Still, we step outside the stimuli of our lives; we stop reacting to them for a moment and so become able to see them. We can't see the picture as long as we are in it. Silent and still, we step out of the picture. What movement is necessary should be careful, quiet, conscious movement. ó Alan Lew

Drawing attention to the heart focuses the mystery we are entering. As the physical organ and spiritual-imaginative center, the heart is the only true organ for perceiving Silence. ó Robert Sardello

When the lips are closed, then the heart begins to speak; when the heart is silent, then the soul blazes up, bursting into flame, and this illuminates the whole of life. It is this idea which demonstrates to the mystic the great importance of silence, and this silence is gained by repose. ó Hazrat Inayat Khan

When I am liberated by silence, when I am no longer involved in the measurement of life, but in the living of it, I can discover a form of prayer in which there is effectively, no distraction. My whole life becomes a prayer. My whole silence is full of prayer. The world of silence in which I am immersed contributes to my prayer. ó Thomas Merton

Silence and hope. They do belong together. Only in the silence of hope can we find our deepest communion. "We are all one silence" says Thomas Merton, "and a diversity of voices." ó David Steindl-Rast

The power of quiet is great. It generates the same feelings in everything one encounters. It vibrates with the cosmic rhythm of oneness. It is everywhere, available to anyone at any time. It is us, the force within that makes us stable, trusting and loving. It is contemplation contemplating us. Peace is letting goóreturning to the silence that cannot enter the realm of words because it is too pure to be contained in words. óMalidoma Patrice

Some Silence is not an absence of sound, but rather a shifting of attention toward sounds that speak to the soul. In a moment of silence you may feel your heartbeat or hear your breathing. Silence is a positive kind of hearing that requires turning off the knob that tunes in to active, literal life, and turning on the one that amplifies the movements of the soul. ó Thomas Moore

Silence is the royal road to spiritual formation. Without silence, the spoken word can never bear fruit. Moreover, only through silence can the word descend from the mind into the heart. As long as our hearts and minds are filled with words of our own making, there is no space for the word to enter deeply into our heart and take root. ó Henri J. M. Nouwen

The embrace of silence and solitude cannot begin to address all the conflicts and problems spawned by our noisy, hectic lifestyles. Nonetheless, we can enlist them as creative allies in a personal campaign to create simpler, more balanced, less frenetic lives. When used effectively, even a little silence and solitude can go a long way toward restoring vibrant health and a strong sense of well-being. ó Richard Mahler

Spiritual silence . is a scalpel. It slices our souls open. It cuts through the layers of our fears and insecurities and our reliance on ourselves instead of God. It lays open to spiritual diagnosis our lack of trust and faith. Just as surgery can be scary, so, too, can silence. ó J. Brent Bill,

Holy Silence It is good to listen to the silence that surrounds each day. In the same way that music is made alive by the silence that surrounds the notes, a day comes alive by the silence that surrounds our actions. And the dawn is the time when silence reveals herself most clearly. ó Kent Nerburn

We won't hear our spirit's call if we constantly drown it out with incessant activity. We need moments of absolute stillness to quiet our mind's chatter and let our souls stretch and speak to us. ó Susan Skog

Our awareness of God is a syntax of the silence in which our souls mingle with the divine, in which the ineffable in us communes with the ineffable beyond us. It is the afterglow of years in which soul and sky are silent together, the outgrowth of accumulated certainty of the abundant, never-ebbing presence of the divine. All we ought to do is to let the insight be and to listen to the soul's recessed certainty of its being a parenthesis in the immense script of God's eternal speech. ó Abraham Joshua Heschel

L'infinito Always dear to me has been this lonely hill, and this line of trees which, from so much of the furthest horizon, hides my view. Yet as I sit and gaze, in my thoughts I conjure up boundless spaces far beyond it, and superhuman silences, and deepest quiet ñ until my heart almost grows afraid. And as I hear the wind push through the trees, I cannot help setting its sound against that infinite silence; and the eternal envelops me with the thought of seasons long past and of the living present and all its sounds. Then in this immensity my thought goes under, And sweet it is to me to drown in such a sea. óGiacomo Leopardi (1798-1837)

Deep silence leads us to realize that prayer is, above all, acceptance. When we pray, we are standing with our hands open to the world. We know that God will become known to us in the nature around us, in people we meet, and in situations we run into. We trust that the world holds God's secret within and we expect that secret to be shown to us. - Henri Nouwen

We choose to retreat from the bustle of the world to find our own "space." Here silence has a healing effect. Here solitude helps bring my fundamental sense of who I am into focus. In silence and solitude we find both the time and space to enjoy in tranquility, the timeless wonder of consciousness: the miracle of, say, a bank of wild garlic or a greater spotted woodpecker in flight. As Ronald Blythe observes, noise causes us to hear very little; silence makes us hear wonderful sounds. ó John Lane

Befriending Silence Contemplation is not something we do, but we can discern some of its signs and foster its growth in our hearts. What is the still voice inside calling you toward? Is there an interior intention for a different quality of being, and for a more simple, holy life? Try to listen to that quiet voice that enters like an old friend coming by for tea. Give yourself time each day for a period of silence. Let the silence fill your being and overflow into your mind and your heart. No matter how little time you have to devote to silence, keep up the practice. óExcerpt, Beverly Lanzetta,

A New Silence: Spiritual Practices and Formation for the Monk Within Lao Tzu tells us that silence is the great revelation. What does it tell us? Well, many things along the way in daily transformation, and eventually it reveals the Self. When we come to know this True Self, we come to know who we are. ó Elaine MacInnes

Silence is not the absence of sound, but the absence of self. ó Anthony de Mello
Wisdom lies in not contending. Sensitive to the inner nature of self and other, Lao-tzu's Way leads through mystery, by returning to the core of life. When you let be, circumstances stop being a problem. They go through their cycle. Allow matters to take their natural course, and the struggle of resistance lessens. Everything is then taken care of by its own patterns of activation and rest. Yin and yang represent the natural polarity that inevitably arises. By encouraging the natural, the sage permits Tao to become manifest. Thus, wisdom is found in silence, in quiet, in letting be. ó C. Alexander Simpkins

To be alone by being part of the universe ó fitting in completely into an environment of woods and silence and peace. Everything you do becomes a unity and a prayer. Unity within and without. Unity with all living things ó without effort or contention. My silence is part of the whole world's silence and builds the temple of God without the noise of hammers. ó Thomas Merton

Perhaps the most important thing we bring to another person is the silence in us. Not the sort of silence that is filled with unspoken criticism or hard withdrawal. The sort of silence that is a place of refuge, of rest, of acceptance of someone as they are. We are all hungry for this other silence. It is hard to find. In its presence we can remember something beyond the moment, a strength on which to build a life. Silence is a place of great power and healing. Silence is God's lap. ó Rachel Naomi Remen

Talking takes away the precious time we share here. We are not depriving ourselves of the joy of talking or imposing silence on ourselves so that we can become a Buddha. We need the silence to enjoy our own presence and the presence of our Dharma brothers and sisters. This kind of silence is very alive, powerful, nourishing, and transforming. It is not oppressive or sad. Together we can create this kind of noble silence. Sometimes it is described as "thundering silence" because it is so powerful. ó Thich Nhat Hanh

When we make a place for silence, we make room for ourselves. This is simple. And it is radical. A room set apart for silence becomes a sanctuary ó a place for breath, for refreshment, for challenge, and for healing. It is helpful to keep the space plain and simple: a few cushions, a rug . Simplicity allows the senses to rest from stimulation. ó Gunilla Norris

The discovery and reclaiming of silence is a path and an art. We are discovering what it means to be at peace with ourselves. Calming our minds, we begin to calm our world. ó Christina Feldman

It takes time to rediscover the treasure of silence. In it we can be found again. But we learn this only by learning. By being present, moment to moment, we may discern the richness of silence in ourselves and in each other. Through silence our days are illumined ó like rooms filled with light ó so we may inhabit our lives. ó Gunilla Norris

To learn the secret of the Unseen is only fitting for that one who can seal her lips and keep silent. ó Jelaluddin Rumi

Sharing silence with others creates a bond that cannot be compared to ordinary exchanges. It helps us know that each of us is essential: a vibrating essence. We can sense that vibration. We can feel it singing in our cells. ó Gunilla Norris

Observe the wonders as they occur around you. Don't claim them. Feel the artistry moving through, and be silent. ó Jelaluddin Rumi

Speech is the organ of this present world. Silence is the mystery of the world to come. ó Isaak the Syrian We won't hear our spirit's call if we constantly drown it out with incessant activity. We need moments of absolute stillness to quiet our mind's chatter and let our souls stretch and speak to us. ó Susan Skog

Prayer speaks its truth in silence. And the silence is understood and enfolded back into the silences of space, where its energy is not lost, but transformed. We pray when the words fail and only silence suffices. ó Margaret Silf

Consider that silence is a particular form of speech. In Jewish mysticism we find the contradictory expression, "silent speech," referring to a prayer known as the royal path to God. The divine economy of this two-dimensional prayer is illustrated in an old Jewish proverb: "speech is worth a penny, silence is worth two." ó Edward Hays

We sense the presence of Silence and, after being with Silence over a period of time, we find distinct changes in our body that contribute to our capacity to enter and stay with the Silence, Thus the practice of entering Silence itself forms the instrument that gives us access to the Silence. ó Robert Sardello

Silence and spaciousness go together. The immensity of silence is the immensity of the mind in which a center does not exist. ó Jiddu Krishnamurti

Silence reveals itself in a thousand inexpressible forms: in the quiet of the dawn, in the noiseless aspiration of trees toward the sky, in the stealthy descent of night, in the silent changing of the seasons, in the falling moonlight, trickling down into the night like a rain of silence, but above all in the silence of the inward soul ó all these forms of silence are nameless. ó Max Picard

Silence is therefore important even in the life of faith and in our deepest encounter with God. We cannot always be talking, praying in words, cajoling, reasoning, or keeping up a kind of devout background music. Much of our well-meant interior religious dialogue is, in fact, a smoke screen and an evasion. ó Thomas Merton

The power of silence gives us breathing room. There is wisdom in the silence. It can alter our perceptions and ability to see what is happening. It can give clarity in the midst of apparent chaos. ó Kay Lindahl

Modern humanity finds silence particularly irksome. We find it hard to sit still with ourselves. We are always itching to be up and about, to do something, to say something; we cannot act, and so most of our activity is not free, creative, dynamic as we like to think it is; it is compulsive. When you acquire the ability to sit still and be silent, you will be free to act or not, to speak or not, and then your speech and your activity will take on new depth and power. ó Anthony de Mello

We are called to enter into the hiddenness and the silence of God. Do we think we know what that means? Words are only the threshold of the mystery and the silence of God's love, selecting a soul for this strange life hidden in Himself, is too vast an ocean to be lapped up by the human tongue. ó Thomas Merton

Quakers describe what they experience in the prayerful silence as a "centering down" to spiritual depths, below the chatter and buzz of our normal preoccupations, and they speak of the insights that come to them, the words that rise out of the silence, as "openings." ó Scott Russell Sanders

An Excerpt from Sacred Dying: Creating Rituals for Embracing the End of Life by Megory Anderson In this very useful book on bringing out the sacred dimensions in the dying of a loved one, Megory Anderson describes one use of the spiritual practice of silence. "One family whose elderly father was dying read that in Muslim tradition, families gather around the bedside of the dying person, reciting prayers and portions of Scripture. As the dying person is near death, they encourage him to recite the final prayer of faith, after which they keep total silence. This family very much liked the idea that those in the room should be prayerful and quiet. They asked everyone to participate in silent prayer until their father took his last breath. Even the nurses in the skilled nursing unit respected the silence, and they all agreed it was a very powerful experience for everyone involved." "Don't speak!" is an often repeated admonition found in the most diverse traditions of mysticism. At its most basic level, it calls for a preparation, a becoming silent so that a voice other than one's own may be heard. But the admonition goes much beyond this practice. In mystical silence, as Rumi often calls it, there is a phase in which the mystics so leave themselves behind that it is no longer they who speak their prayer but God in them. óDorothee Soelle

Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing. ó Arundhati Roy

The power of silence is the power to slow things down, to give us a chance to reflect on what is happening, to listen to the collective wisdom, and to be present. What we need most in order to make progress is to be silent before this great God with our appetite and with our tongue, for the language he best hears is silent love. óJohn of the Cross

The important thing in contemplation is not enjoyment, not pleasure, not happiness, not peace, but the transcendent experience of reality and truth in an act of a supreme and liberated spiritual love. The important thing in contemplation is not gratification and rest, but awareness, life, creativity, and freedom. In fact, contemplation is man's highest and most essential spiritual activity. It is his most creative and dynamic affirmation of his divine sonship. ó Thomas Merton

In the end the monk learns that God speaks by silence and can be heard in silence. And that nothing really needs to be said. Silence is enough. ó Basil Pennington

There is in each one of us an immense silence which beckons us into itself.
ó Meister Eckhart

Called to Silence Mining of the sacred from the seemingly mundane required a bodily assimilation of the totality of life experiences. As a temple of the holy, my body and all bodies ó animal, insect, plant, human, mineral, water ó were a cipher of the unity of spirit-flesh, the mysterious vulnerability of being born. In and through the body ever more subtle, sensuous, and intangible levels of consciousness were encoded, the entire creation possessing the holy power to transform, heal, reconcile, redeem, and liberate. Precisely this embodied aspect of contemplation was both exhilarating and difficult to perform. How much easier to be ascetic, to strip oneself of everything, than to be life-affirming, becoming an empty vessel through which Spirit or Allah or Buddha-mind could live and work in the world. This was my rule: Love the world, be the eyes and ears and heart and feet and hands of the divine. ó Beverly Lanzetta,

Nine Jewels of Night: One Soul's Journey into God The only way to gain power in a world that is moving too fast is to learn to slow down. And the only way to spread one's influence wide is to learn to go deep. The world we want for ourselves and our children will not emerge from electronic speed but rather from a spiritual stillness that takes root in our souls. Then and only then, will we create a world that reflects the heart instead of shattering it. ó Marianne Williamson

Silence is the language spoken by solitude. Perhaps at first reckoning, we might consider silence merely the absence of sound. But silence is not something that begins only when sound ends. There is something awesome and breathtaking about real silence; it is numinous, pulling us out of our self-containment and calling us towards the invisible. Religious seekers "home in" on silence as homing pigeons return to their roost, because therein lies the language for personal communication with the sacred. ó Peter-Damian Belisle

Here are some of the most frequent observed associations with quiet alone-time. What would you add to this list? ï Freedom to fantasize. ï Development of the imagination. ï Cultivation of abstract thought. ï Heightened awareness. ï Healing during stress, mourning, or other trauma. ï Improved concentration. ï Access to religious, spiritual, or mystical experiences. ï Better problem-solving abilities. ï Liberation from unwanted distractions. ï Effective pain management skills. ï The rich company of one's mind, body, and spirit. ï Expanded self-understanding. ó Richard Mahler True intelligence operates silently. Stillness is where creativity and solutions to problems are found. ó Eckhart Tolle

One married man told me that he and his wife spend an hour each morning in the form of contemplation facing each other with eyes closed. As a result, after each hour they experience a union of hearts and a love for each other that far exceeds anything they had ever known before, even when they were romantically in love. I must add these two have become experts in the art of contemplation and of silencing the mind. óAnthony de Mello

I weave a silence onto my lips. I weave a silence into my mind. I weave a silence within my heart. I close my ears to distractions. I close my eyes to attractions. I close my heart to temptations.óCeltic Traditional It is only in the intentional silence of vigil and meditation, or in the quiet places of nature, that we encounter the song of the universe. Like the wind through the telegraph wires, this song echoes along the pathways of the cosmic web: it includes the celestial spinning of the planets, as well as the hum of insects and the dancing song of the grass; it includes the song of all the ancestors and spirits as well as the beating of our own hearts. ó Caitlin Matthews

Which is worth more, a crowd of thousands, or your own genuine solitude? Freedom, or power over an entire nation? A little while alone in your room will prove more valuable than anything else that could ever be given you. ó Jelaluddin Rumi
No spiritual exercise is as good as that of silence. ó Saint Seraphim of Sarov

While our existence is noisy, our essential being is silent: beneath the clamor of our chaotic lives there is a resonant ground of silence. In this rich silence ó the silence of God ó we taste the sweetness of our own souls, the peace of our own hearts. Take every opportunity to feed on this silence, soak it into our bones so that we might hear the divine One say in us: "I am." ó Kathleen Deignan

In the sweet territory of silence we touch the mystery. It's the place of reflection and contemplation, and it's the place where we can connect with the deep knowing, to the deep wisdom way. ó Angeles Arrien May you grow still enough to hear the small noises earth makes in preparing for the long sleep of winter, so that you yourself may grow calm and grounded deep within. May you grow still enough to hear the trickling of water seeping into the ground, so that your soul may be softened and healed, and guided in its flow. May you grow still enough to hear the splintering of starlight in the winter sky and the roar at earth's fiery core. May you grow still enough to hear the stir of a single snowflake in the air, so that your inner silence may turn into hushed expectation. ~ Brother David Steindl-Rast

Silence means no repetitions, no affirmations, no denials, only a conscious acknowledgement of God's allness. In the silence, one is beyond words and thoughts. ó Hawaiian elder Nana Veary Can we change or improve the world from the perspective of silence? Can mystics build or improve civilization? Words change the world, but only silence changes us. Any reform that is not born of silence will be short lived. ó Pablo D'Org

May you be encouraged to spend time in silence, for it is in silence that you will hear the world's weeping and God weeping for them. ó Chaim Bentorah

The only path to serenity. He who clings to his work will create nothing that endures. If you want to accord with the Tao, just do your job then let go. People must be so empty of all things and all works, whether inward or outward, that they can become a proper home for God, wherein God may operate. The Spirit operates in us and actually becomes the work we do, so long as we are willing to let go and allow Spirit in. When we do our emptying, God is self becomes the place wherein God wants to act and people attain the eternal being that they once were, now are, and will eternally remain. Authentic work includes silence and mystery and through it we become instruments of light and finders of peace. BG The person who in his or her work finds silence, and who sees that silence is work, this person in truth sees the Light and in all his or her works finds peace. Do you find silence and mystery, light and peace in your work? Do you find God, Spirit, the Tao at work in your work, both inner and outer? In silent listening, one soul is able to meet another without the noise a garrulous and superficial world to drown out what is trying to be said.
óJoan Chittister

Silence is the best response to mystery. ó Kathleen Norris

**In the deep silence, wisdom begins to sing her unending, sunlit, inexpressible song:
the private song she speaks to the solitary soul. óThomas Merton**

Pythagoras said, "Learn to be silent. Let your quiet mind listen and absorb the silence." Silence is autonomous. It is beyond us; our task is to coordinate our being with the greater Silence. The traditions have always recognized the autonomy of Silence. Silence is not something that we do, nor is it a personal capacity. We can become quiet and by doing so the door to Silence opens. ó Robert Sardello,

In Simple Zen In the attitude of silence, the soul finds the path in a clearer light, and what is elusive and deceptive resolves itself into crystal clearness.

Our life is a long and arduous quest after truth, and the soul requires inward restfulness to attain its true height. ó Mahatma Gandhi

Silence illuminates all things, bringing into relief our fears, anxieties, harsh words, and unholy thoughts. ó Beverly Lanzetta

Be quiet and clear now like the final touchpoints of calligraphy. Your name has been erased from the roaring volume of speech. ó Jelaluddin Rumi

To have nothing to do but abandon yourself to God and love God! It is the greatest of luxuries. Silence and solitude are the supreme luxuries of life! ó Thomas Merton

The highest form of prayer is to stand silently in awe before God. ó St. Isaac

the Syrian Prayer is sitting in silence until it silences us, choosing gratitude until we are grateful, and praising God until we ourselves are an act of praise. ó Richard Rohr

Now be silent. Let the One who creates the words speak. He made the door. He made the lock. He also made the key. ó Jelaluddin Rumi

May you find again within yourself the deep life-giving silence which is genuine truth and the source of truth: for it is a fountain of life and a window into the abyss of eternity and God. ó Thomas Merton

In a noisy world, seek the silence in your heart. And through the power of silence, the energies of chaos will be brought back to harmony ~ not by you, but through you, as all miracles are. When we visit this silence regularly, particularly in the morning, then the days of our lives become lit from above. ó Marianne Williamson

In the silence by Jack Fowler
In the silence there is peace
In the silence there's unspoken joy
In the silence there's release
From a world full of chaos and noise
So I wait. for these precious moments
When I hear. all that can never be said
And right here. in this holy silence I find God. I find myself
If you're quiet enough, as still as that mountain, you can hear in your heart a silent "thank you."
The whole universe, if you listen in your heart ñ every blade of grass, each bird, each stone ñ it is all "thank you."
We are born into "thank you" . every step of the way is "thank you." ó Cynthia Bourgeault

What, then, is the value of silence beyond its obvious calming effect ó its gift of tranquility? I would say it can be described as something that brings us into living contact with the mysterious depths of ourselves, the creative spirit, the mysteries of love. I would say that silence is the foundation of love, for love requires clarity, reflection and a focused awareness. ó John Lane In a world of noise, confusion and conflict, it is necessary that there be places of silence, inner discipline and peace. In such places love can blossom. óThomas Merton

I .no matter how deeply I go down into myself my God is dark, and like a webbing made of a hundred roots that drink in silence. I know that my trunk rose from his warmth, but that's all, because my branches hardly move at all near the ground, and just wave a little in the wind. óRainer Maria Rilke

My desire for silence should not be construed to mean that I want these conversations to end. I do not. Rather, I recognize in this longing for silence something which, for lack of a better way to say it, is the ground of my own experience. I know, deeply and experientially, that there are things we cannot know through words alone. In fact, faith and practice do not really submit themselves to discourse and discursive forms. There is something more ó something about silence and careful attention to it. ó Amanda Millay Hughes

Meditation practice, according to the literal meaning of the Tibetan term, is "mental stabilization." In order to develop a stable mind, it is necessary to begin by abandoning attachment to sense objects and distracting activities. To do this, we enter into retreat, restraining our desires and learning to be satisfied with what we have. We sit down in the meditation posture and observe perfect silence; this way the mind can learn to abide in single-pointed concentration, whether on lucid emptiness, absence of fixation, the coming and going of the breath, contemplation of an aspect of Buddha, seed syllables, points of light, or other objects of meditation. ó Kyabje Kalu Rinpoche

Solitude and silence are ways to get to the heart because the heart is the place where God speaks to us, where we hear the voice which calls us beloved. óHenri Nouwen In the desert of Egypt, silence was described as the daughter of patience, the mother of watchfulness. When all words are abandoned, a new awareness arrives.

Silence awakens us from numbness to the world around us, from our dullness of vision. For the early desert dwellers, silence is a requirement of life, the first duty of love. Silence is a way of waiting, a way of watching, a way of noticing ó and not ignoring ó what is going on in our heart and in our world. It is the glue that binds our attitudes and our actions, our belief and our behavior. Silence reflects our surrender to God as well as to new patterns of learning and living. ó John Chryssavgis

While our existence is noisy, our essential being is silent: beneath the clamor of our chaotic lives there is a resonant ground of silence. In this rich silence ó the silence of God ó we taste the sweetness of our own souls, the peace of our own hearts. Take every opportunity to feed on this silence, soak it into our bones so that we might hear the divine One say in us: "I am." ó Kathleen Deignan

Perhaps the most important thing we bring to another person is the silence in us, not the sort of silence that is filled with unspoken criticism or hard withdrawal. The sort of silence that is a place of refuge, of rest, of acceptance of someone as they are. We are all hungry for this other silence. ñRachel Naomi Remen

A calm mind releases the most precious capacity a human being can have: the capacity to turn anger into compassion, fear into fearlessness, and hatred into love. Ordinary people like you and me may not be a Gandhi or Saint Francis, but to the extent we can quiet our minds and light the lamp of wisdom within, we too can add a little light to the world around us instead of feeling helpless in the dark. ñEknath Easwaran

if you become silent after your laughter, one day you will hear God also laughing, you will hear the whole existence laughing ó trees and stones and stars with you ó Osho A man once asked Rumi, Why is it you talk so much about silence? His answer: The radiant one inside me, has never said a word, take my soul to that place where I may speak without words. ó Jelaluddin Rumi In the sweet territory of silence we touch the mystery. It's the place of reflection and contemplation, and it's the place where we can connect with the deep knowing, to the deep wisdom way.

ó Angeles Arrien What could be more natural than silence? What could be more sacred? What could be more simple? Silence is the universal language of the soul. True inner silence is unpolluted by anxieties, habitual preoccupations and refrains, noisy internal static, innuendos, or agendas. Inner silence speaks directly to inner peace, which is beyond the dualism of noise and quiet. ó Lama Surya Das

God [Love] is not what you think or even what you believe, because God [Love] is a word unspoken, a thought unthought, a belief unbelieved. So if you wish to know this God [Love], practice wonder, do what is good, and cultivate silence. The rest will follow. ó Meister Eckhart The holiest of all holidays are those kept by ourselves in silence and apart; the secret anniversaries of the heart. ó Henry Wadsworth Longfellow A room devoted to silence honors and invites the unknown, the untamed, the wild, the shy, the unfathomable ó that which rarely has a chance to surface within us. ó Gunilla Norris Silence is something that comes from your heart, not from outside. Silence doesn't mean not talking and not doing things. It means that you are not disturbed inside. ó Thich Nhat Hanh *Silence* A day of Silence Can be a pilgrimage in itself. A day of Silence Can help you listen To the Soul play Its marvelous lute and drum. Is not most talking A crazed defense of a crumbling fort? I thought we came here To surrender in Silence, To yield to Light and Happiness, To Dance within In celebration of Love's Victory! ó Hafiz More important than a positive mind is a silent mind. We have to learn to go beyond both a positive mind and a negative mind to become a silent, nonjudgmental, nonanalytical, noninterpretive mind. ó Deepak Chopra When I am liberated by silence, when I am no longer involved in the measurement of life, but in the living of it, I can discover a form of prayer in which there is effectively, no distraction. My whole life becomes a prayer. My whole silence is full of prayer. The world of silence in which I am immersed contributes to my prayer. ó Thomas Merton It is in silence that we hear the sounds of our better angels calling us to rise above our lesser selves.

It is in silence that we arm-wrestle our picayune selves to the ground of truth. óJoan Chittister

True intelligence operates silently. Stillness is where creativity and solutions to problems are found. ó Eckhart Tolle

Silence needs to be understood in a larger way than simply a lack of audible noise. Whenever emptinessówhat seems like empty space or absence of soundóbecomes its own kind of fullness with its own kind of sweet voice, we have just experienced sacred silence. óRichard Rohr

Silence is the inaudible echo of the voice of [the Divine] which is heard with the ears of the heart. It is not simply the absence of speech but a state of being. ó Peter Fingesten

Silence is the paper on which the ink of human consciousness is printed. And silence, more than anything else within us, is the doorway to the presence of God. óCarl McColman May you find again within yourself the deep life-giving silence which is genuine truth and the source of truth: for it is a fountain of life and a window into the abyss of eternity and God. ó Thomas Merton

Silence is the universal language of the soul. True inner silence is unpolluted by anxieties, habitual preoccupations and refrains, noisy internal static, innuendos, or agendas. Inner silence speaks directly to inner peace, which is beyond the dualism of noise and quiet. ó Lama Surya Das

In the silence of our longing We are together as one. But as soon as we start talking, We separate back into two. So be silent. There is honor in silence For you and me. ó Jelaluddin Rumi

In the sweet territory of silence we touch the mystery. It's the place of reflection and contemplation, and it's the place where we can connect with the deep knowing, to the deep wisdom way. ó Angeles Arrien

THANK YOU ROBERT FOR THESE WONDERFUL REFLECTIONS ON SILENCE!

From Rev. Susan Nason

Beloveds, it's so good to be with you today, the sun is shining here in NYC, and I'm just back from a twelve day vacation with my daughter, her husband, and my two grandchildren in Ghent, NY, on their 30 acre farm. We spent most of our days gardening, watching the hourly miracle of plants growing taller, flowers blooming, weather changing dramatically. We ate delicious food loving prepared by my son-in-law, and spent many evenings in song – aided by a karaoke app they like to use. Idyllic, right? We also played wordle. My daughter, niece, who is also my Goddaughter, and my granddaughter play daily. We all start with the same word and send each other our results. Sometimes we text while we are playing – with encouragement, comments, and, sometimes saying we are stuck. Hints are offered if requested. I bring up this activity because I'm fascinated by how our brains work. We start with the same word, and more often than not, we each come up with different words from each other. Sometimes we “twin” on a word or too, but that's rare. Another thing our minds do is tell us we made a stupid mistake, or berate ourselves for taking too many guesses, or – worst of all – completely failing. My ego is quick to berate me – during wordle, during a conversation, even while thinking about what I might offer in these mornings meditation. When this happens, I remember this story I'm about to share with you. You might have heard it before, it's called the Rabbi's Gift. I will read it to you now, and when it ends, please move into meditation until you hear the sound of my voice once again.

THE RABBI'S GIFT written in 1979 by the much-loved hermit, Francis Dorff, O. Praem. A monastery had fallen upon very hard times. Once a great order, but over time it had been reduced to only five monks -- the abbot and four others -- all well into their seventies. The order was dying.

Deep in the forest surrounding the monastery, there was a little hut which a rabbi from a nearby town used occasionally for personal retreats. The old monks had developed a sixth sense about the presence of the rabbi and always could tell when he was in the forest.

On one such occasion, the abbot, who had been agonizing over the demise of his order, decided to visit the hut to ask the rabbi if he could offer any advice. The rabbi welcomed the abbot into his hut, but when the abbot explained the purpose of his visit, the rabbi could only empathize with his plight and commiserate with him. "Yes, the spirit seems to have gone out of the people. It's the same in my town. Almost no one comes to the synagogue anymore." So it was that the abbot and the rabbi spent time that day talking of deep things. Finally, the time came for the abbot to leave. The men hugged and the abbot said, "It is wonderful that we could meet and talk after all these years, but I have failed in my purpose for coming here. Is there no advice at all you can give me that would help me to save my dying order?" "I'm sorry," said the rabbi. "I'm afraid I have no advice to give. All I can tell you, though, is that the Messiah is one of you." Upon his return to the monastery, the abbot was joined by the other monks who asked, "Well, what did the rabbi say?" "He couldn't help," the abbot replied. "We just sat and talked. And as I was leaving, he said that the Messiah is one of us. I have no idea what he meant." In the days and weeks and months that followed, the old monks pondered this and wondered if there could be any possible significance to the rabbi's words: The Messiah is one of us. Do you think he meant one of us, monks, here at the monastery? If he meant one of us, he surely must have been referring to Father Abbot. He has been our leader for more than a generation. On the other hand, he could have meant Brother Thomas; he is a holy man. Everyone knows that Thomas is a man of light. Certainly, he could not have meant Brother Eldred! Eldred gets crotchety at times.

But even though he can be a nuisance, when you look back on it, Eldred virtually always has a valid point to make. Perhaps the rabbi did mean Brother Eldred. But surely not Brother Phillip; he's so passive, a real nobody. But then, almost magically, Philip has this knack of appearing at your side just when you need him the most. Maybe Phillip is the Messiah. But of course, the rabbi wasn't referring to me. I'm just an ordinary person.

Yet what if he were? What if I am the Messiah? Please, God, not me; I couldn't mean that much to You, could I? As they reflected in this manner, the old monks began to treat each other with extraordinary respect on the off chance that one among them might be the Messiah. And on the remote chance that each monk himself might be the Messiah, they each began to treat themselves with extraordinary respect as well. Because the forest was so beautiful, people still occasionally came to visit the monastery to picnic on its tiny lawn, to walk along its paths, to sit quietly in the chapel. As they did so, without even being conscious of it, they sensed this aura of extraordinary respect that seemed to surround each of the elderly monks and which permeated the atmosphere of the whole place. There was something compelling, empowering about it. Without knowing exactly why, they began to come back to the monastery more frequently to visit, to play, to pray. They began to bring their friends to share this special place. And their friends brought their friends. In time, some of the younger men who came to visit began to talk more and more with the elderly monks. After a while, one asked if he could join the order. Then another. Then another. Soon, the monastery once again housed a thriving order, and, thanks to the rabbi's gift, became a beacon of peace, love, and hope. As we come to the end of our time together I'd like to share this poem and then a Rumi quote. The Well - A Spiritual Poem About the Ego and Awakening In the endless depths of every mind, there is a well.

Black water over-pouring, ripples upon ripples to nowhere. I reached for a bucket, but only drowned. Thus, was I reborn, my essence revealed. Those who love their minds only drown in emptiness, yet those who love the Beloved gently glide on the water's surface.

No stone or metal is heavier than the ego. Godspeed to those who swim under its weight.

~ Najim Mostamand And, a reminder from our beloved Rumi: Instead of fighting the world, kill your ego. Thank you beloveds for sharing this time in meditation together.

Thank you Susan!

From Sara Kahn- Gearity

Morning Meditation, Wednesday, May 18, 2022 (Excerpt) -Rev. Sara N. Kahn-Gearity

On Silence: I first came to experience the depth and voice of silence in the stillness of a summer afternoon about 18 years ago, in what was then our second home, now our primary residence, in the beauty and grace of Columbia County, in the Upper Hudson Valley region of New York – A piece of heaven on Earth. Before this, I grew up in Brooklyn and Queens, then lived as an adult in Queens, then Yonkers, for a number of years. My teenage home in Queens was in the flight path of JFK airport, in the deafening sound of airplanes so close I felt I could touch the underside of the plane as it passed overhead and wave to the passengers. Then, as an adult, the Queens apartment Peggy and I first lived in was 1 ½ blocks north of the LI Expressway - in the flight path of LaGuardia airport. Our place in Yonkers was absent air traffic, but sandwiched between the Sprain Brook Parkway and NY State Thruway – the hum of car and truck traffic permeated our living space 24 / 7. I had no idea at the time what silence was or that it was possible to know and rest within Silence within sound; that Silence wasn't the absence of sound as in our physical world or experience, but inner Stillness and Emptiness. The absence of Sound has nothing to do with the Silence I speak of – there are times we can find the experience of certain kinds of physical and audible sound a resource for leading us into the Silence – music or the sound of the ocean, for example. My understanding and experience of Silence through Emptiness began in a single moment, without intention, devoid of thought. I was in the kitchen, cutting vegetables or some such, and there it was – in the glow of the summer sun – the overwhelming presence of absolute Stillness – Silence that came from within, rather than from the absence of audible, physical sound. In the inner stillness was external sound – the song of a bird, the breath of a breeze, the hum of the refrigerator, the tick of a clock.

The key to my discovery and experience was Emptiness – I understood, perhaps for the first time in this extraordinary moment, that Emptiness allowed for Silence and awareness of profound Presence. I don't always find the practice of coming to inner Silence easy. I'm sure most of us find it quite difficult at times. As we know, the chatter that fills our thoughts can impede us, "steal the thunder" so to speak of our ability to be present and connected to Presence and, our very Essence.

Morning Meditation, Thursday, December 10, 2020 (Excerpts) -Rev. Sara N. Kahn-Gearity Day 273. Let's begin our practice with a deep breath in, and out – and to awareness of the presence of Light and Spirit in our midst – among us, between us, in us – here, now, always. The Precious Present. - To remember and be present to who we are, and to Whom we belong. Spencer Johnson, in his book, The Precious Present, shares: When you have the Precious Present, you are Perfectly Content To Be Where You Are. You Already Know What The Precious Present Is. You Already Know Where To Find It. You Knew It Best When You Were A Small Child. You Have Simply Forgotten." Whatever the push that makes me unable to be present in the present moment, wasn't always so. – Something happened, something changed – many "somethings" happened, many things have changed for all of us, and those twists and turns on the road of living, from birth, through childhood, through adulthood – through LIFE, bent the human heart and memory of our origins into forgetfulness, the beginnings of which I think starts for us as children in feelings of having failed, or not exceled, or disappointed another. We start at an early age to doubt ourselves and our goodness and our wholeness as living and loved beings of the Creator. Adulthood often brings more of the same and the Blessing, and Beauty, and Richness, and Wealth, and Happiness, and Gift in being Present and perfectly content to be here, right where we are, right now – not in yesterday, not in tomorrow, but in today, in this hour, in this minute, in this second... Let us journey together to The Present ... Become aware of your breath – as it is, just the natural rhythm of your breath. Let us remember, again, that each breath is an invitation from the Holy ... Receive breath, Give breath.

Morning Meditation, Wednesday, February 16, 2022 (Excerpts) -Rev. Sara N. Kahn-Gearity Welcome to Wednesday ... As we begin our time together, I present the flame and light of a candle – to set an outward sign; a marker for conscious awareness of the presence of Spirit, of Universe, of Love, of Light in and among us. One morning last week I stumbled across the live streaming of the Romemu (roh·meh·moo) Community morning prayer service. The Romemu community, founded in 2008 by Rabbi David Ingber, has its home in NYC. The community, as it shares on its website, "...is a welcoming, experiential, irreverently pious, intergenerational Jewish community that elevates and transforms individuals and communities into more compassionate human beings. Committed to powerful prayer and transformative spiritual practices, Romemu attempts to engage the heart, mind and body in everything we do, helping us to foster greater levels of compassion. We believe that Judaism offers spiritual seekers and skeptics alike a path that celebrates our wholeness and provides practical, grounded ways to heal our brokenness. We are committed to helping to birth a post-denominational Judaism that transcends ideologies and labels, that is joy-based and contemplative, ecstatic and reverential, connected to our tradition, yet open to truth, wherever it is found." The prayer experience of Romemu is based on Five basic Freedoms, described as follows: 1. Movement : Space to stretch, dance and find the natural movement of your body that opens you to prayer. 2. Voice: Safety to find many forms of voice, including singing, speaking, crying and laughing. 3. Thought: Thinking is both critical and analytical. Both spirituality and intellectual honesty flourish together. 4. Silence: Freedom to be silent, to quiet the mind and nurture the soul through time-honored contemplative practices. 5. Commitment: An invitation to commit, to be bound to a community that expects and relies upon your active participation, both as members of the congregation and as socially conscious and aware citizens of the world.

[We] Romemu believes that these five freedoms provide the foundation to live more meaningful lives; lives full of loving kindness, Spirit, peace, joy, and commitment.

" So, with Freedom of Silence as backdrop to our practice of silence and contemplation this morning, I share with you just a few of the words held in the Romemu community morning siddur, the morning prayer book, to bring us into our own Silence. Take space to pay attention to breath gently moving in and out. How good is the tent of the body. Take time to be fully present to what is unfolding here and now. How good is the sanctuary of the moment. Make space within yourself to let love arise within. Take a breath. Release the breath. Make room for a divine spark, a holy emptiness. You are your prayer: this body, this moment. This is the right time and place. Take a breath. Fill yourself with love, with the world, with all that is real. The soul you place in me is pure, the soul is pure. My God! You create, form, and breathe in me. Meditate in your heart the Breath of Life is divinity. -SILENCE-
CLOSING: • As we come to the close of our time, take a moment to come back to breath, in this space and time.

Receive breath, Give breath The Divine Holds you Receive Breath, Give Breath Spirit embraces you Receive Breath, Give Breath You are in the Divine and the Divine is in you Receive Breath, Give Breath Holy is this Present moment Receive Breath, Give Breath The Divine Holds you Receive Breath, Give Breath Spirit embraces you Receive Breath, Give Breath You are in the Divine and the Divine is in you. Receive Breath, Give Breath Holy is this Present moment Holy am I Let us continue our journey in silence, in this Holy moment There is nothing more than the holding of the Divine in this Precious Present. Shared Silence: Closing: Receive breath, Give breath The Divine Holds you Receive Breath, Give Breath Spirit embraces you Receive Breath, Give Breath You are in the Divine and the Divine is in you Receive Breath, Give Breath Holy is this Present moment Holy am I A Closing Prayer: A Prayer Upon Rising to a New Day -Rev. Sara Kahn-Gearity In this new day, may you, may I, be at peace In this new day, may our brothers and sisters be at peace In this new day, may Creation be at peace In this new day, may you, may I, recognize and know the Spirit of the Divine in all things May we be open May we be grateful May we trust the path we travel And the companions, known and unknown, That you, the Divine, bring to journey with us. Amen. **Thank you Sara!**

03/30/2022 Morning Sangha By Catherine Coates We are Loved by an Unending Love YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?> As I began to love myself I found that anguish and emotional suffering are only warning signs that I was living against my own truth. Today, I know, this is Authenticity. As I began to love myself I understood how much it can offend somebody if I try to force my desires on this person, even though I knew the time was not right and the person was not ready for it, and even though this person was me. Today I call this Respect.

As I began to love myself I stopped craving for a different life, and I could see that everything that surrounded me was inviting me to grow. Today I call this Maturity. As I began to love myself I understood that at any circumstance, I am in the right place at the right time, and everything happens at the exactly right moment. So I could be calm. Today I call this Self-Confidence. As I began to love myself, I quit stealing my own time, and I stopped designing huge projects for the future. Today, I only do what brings me joy and happiness, things I love to do and that make my heart cheer, and I do them in my own way and in my own rhythm. Today I call this Simplicity. As I began to love myself I freed myself of anything that is no good for my health – food, people, things, situations, and everything that drew me down and away from myself. At first I called this attitude a healthy egoism. Today I know it is Love of Oneself. As I began to love myself I quit trying to always be right, and ever since I was wrong less of the time. Today I discovered that is Modesty (Humility). As I began to love myself I refused to go on living in the past and worrying about the future. Now, I only live for the moment, where everything is happening. Today I live each day, day by day, and I call it Fulfillment. As I began to love myself I recognized that my mind can disturb me and it can make me sick. But as I connected it to my heart, my mind became a valuable ally. Today I call this connection Wisdom of the Heart. We no longer need to fear arguments, confrontations or any kind of problems with ourselves or others. Even stars collide, and out of their crashing, new worlds are born. Today I know: This is Life! Keep your Heart Wide Open. YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5LJ11HGuzo&list=PLVrMrw6mHMDv6WZnANYws5KFeYFwxfPnt&index=15&ab_channel=thisisL

03/16/2023 with Catherine Coates: Morning Sangha ~ Holy Mystery we turn to you in gratitude for this sangha. We are particularly grateful for this third year anniversary, and for each one of us who have been blessed by this time together.

And for each of us I pray, Let It Be a Dance By Catherine Coates "Whosoever knoweth the power of the dance, dwelleth in God. Without love, all worship is a burden, all dancing is a chore, all music is mere noise." Rumi Holy Spirit, Sacred One. As Your light dances in our hearts, may we continue learning the steps to dance with You in our lives. Sometimes awkward with splats abounding. Sometimes exuberant, wild with ecstasy, our feet barely touching the floor. Sometimes exhausted, barely moving, like at the end of a dance marathon. The waltz, the whirling dervish, the Virginia Reel, the jitterbug, the mashed potato—however the Spirit moves. May we dance in Your arms this day, remembering to let You lead. Dea Gratias. Blessed be Hope is hearing the melody of the future; faith is dancing to it today. Ruben Alvez in Molly Fumia, ([2003], 2012 Safe Passage: Words to Help the Grieving, San Francisco: Conari Press imprint of Red Wheel/Weiser LLC.

Blessing of Holy Mystery By Catherine Coates ~ May the light of Holy Mystery shine within you and through you. May her healing spirit fill your heart. May his wisdom guide you. May her love embrace you. May you revel in their grace which is ever present; and, may their peace bless you all the days of your life. Namaste, Amen, Ameen, Ashe, A-Ho, Om, shanti shanti shanti. And so, it is. Blessed be.

Thank you Catherine!

From Dawn Reddick- Umoja Architect I am Architect Exemplar From the school of
Ancient Infinite Design Specializing in open concept

Open air

Convertible roofs

And rooms

In a word:

Expansion!

Drawing from gifts and talents

Of those who choose to collaborate

Communicating coherent concepts

Enabling master builders

To bring our fruits to fruition

Be it home

Fortress

Marketplace

Temple

This design team operates

in Oneness

Ideas and concepts

Expressed

Freely and Easily

From conception

Through Labor

Deliver a product

That adds ambiance

Adapts to elements

Regenerates itself

In accordance with Divine Order

Our collective toolbox

Allows

Boundless creative Potentiality

Design values

Benefit clientele

And Practitioners

Alike

This architectural movement

Is fluid

Drawing from wells of inspiration

As our school recruits

The finest

Like-minded artists

Craftsmen

Engineers

Guided by master teachers

Guided by our mission Statement

Open enrollment

Continues

Throughout all aspects of time and space

You are officially invited to attend

Contribute

Plant seeds

In our respective and collective gardens

Producing Prolific properties.... Enkindled (AKA) Dawn Reddick-Umoja

Sister Breath

Come through, sister breath

Familiar as my name

Automated impulse

Illusive as essence, un-embodied

Commanding focus and intention

The Spirit of Holiness

Gifted (to) me at inception

Coursing through my veins, cells, systems

Long before my first conscious inhale

Vehicle of oxygen intake

Vessel of monoxide release

Sacred Sister Breath

Come through

As inspiration

To create, dance, sing, birth

As innovation

Expanding physical an ethereal mind in all directions

Known and unknown, seen and unseen

Cleansing, calming, clearing

Breath of beingness

Continually, come through.... EnKindle (AKA) Dawn Reddick-Umoja

The Veil:

Between dreams and creativity

Lies a tapestry

A 'veil' between two worlds

The sleep-time/pseudo wake side

Backed by the day dreaming, trance-inducing creative states

Living ecologies of connection at work

Blurred lines between dreams and visions

The images of this tapestry

Are etched by the steps, the spinning

Of the dance to discern if there really is a difference

Projections of the borrowed dreams and hopes

Of those who support and guide us

Build bridges within us

Between us

When we feel like we have no raw materials

No strength with which to labor

These weavings depict

How organically nature provides us with inspiration

Showing up as fuel,

As building blocks

As blueprints

To mold the malleable material of the atmosphere into our realities

Materializing into beautiful displays

Of the rhythms of death and life

Of loss and thrive

These drapes

Drawn across all aspects of time and space

Mirror the web of life;

Indra's Net

A mosaic of cosmic connectivity

Tiny jewels of light, we are Microcosms of the omniverse

Megaverse

Multiverse Universe

Of the expanse of the elements

Of each other

Blown about yet held in place

By directional winds

The Sacred, holy breath of life Is our animating force

Representative of our embodied essence

As we expand and contract

To branch out and be pruned

Appendages on the tree of life

Yes, this ornate hanging

Portrays infinity cycles of

The All Perpetually coercing us into Into dissolving delusions of division

Crystalizing co-ops of congruity

Honing holistic reasoning Warmly welcoming our one-ness, our we-ness

We invite you to feel into this fluid formation To engage in its evolution To marvel at its magnificence - Dawn Denise/Ahan Ajith (AKA Dawn Reddick-Umoja)

Thank you Dawn!

How shall we practice this gratefulness: Stop, Look, Go

See Carol Asiaghi's contributions on pages: 221 and 249 **Thank you Carol!**



An Offering on Trees March 10, 2021 from Thomas Brown: Five days from now will be the one-year anniversary of this meeting place. In the year I have been dazzled by the different pathways to the human heart and Spirit that have been offered, but they all have same great goal... So today we are going to talk of trees. First a bit on context. At the bottom of this Ridge there is a small city and traffic noise wafts up this hillside almost all the time... but under that noise, here, now, and in the room where you sit, now, there is a deafening quiet. Here, rising out of that silence, there is a north-south ridge shaped like a wave cresting west at one inch per year... and surfing on that wave are communities of trees, dancing. It's quite a feat. And the trees offer some predictable wisdom of the forest: send your toes deep down into the dirt and listen to Gaia. Hold your hands high in the Light, and then make the Light manifest in the material world. And listen, really listen, to the wind as it blows past the Other. New learnings about trees are that they actually are in community. So when you find sweet water, nurture the other. And on some mornings here, when the wind is gone, the trees don't dance. So, for those of us who are unceasingly seeking the heart of Spirit, there's a lesson there about rest... Misquoting Ferlinghetti one might say that, even in heaven, they don't dance all the time. But you don't have to come here to hear these lessons. We are all immersed in an ocean of life and the geese are flying overhead now in their vees and in their pairs. Three kilometers under us there are living microbes in the rock, we are all mid-strata dwellers in a sea of life. In your home, if it's framed with wood, you are housed in a sheaf of trees. Now. A hike down your hallway is a walk in the woods. And if you are in some towering building made of cast concrete, that concrete is made of billions of bivalves that lived millions of years ago and swam, they did, and lived and loved and are baked into the concrete that holds you now. They hold you, not with their hands, but on the half-shell, like Venus. It's quite an honor.

And wherever you are, in every house and hut and igloo and adobe structure, all of us, as we breathe, are breathing ecstatic oxygen from astronomical numbers of single-celled algae that swim in the sea. And loving lichens. And mosses. And trees. Some of them Oak and Sassafras. Now. Where you sit. With every breath. As we swim in this sea of life, let us each, according to our own practice, school now into amazement at this mystery. Let us now join in silent meditation.

Gently return to notice your hands and your feet... and awaken in your room of shell or wood. And if you were blessed to hear the deafening silence, or ever are in any practice, Therese teaches the leaving of breadcrumbs, so you find your way back. But there's another truth: if you leave a trail of breadcrumbs, sometimes, the wild and wonderful things will follow the trail... and find you.

May it be so.

On another note: One Spirit ministers Thomas (OSIS '22) and Kindle (OSIS '12) first met in the morning Sangha on Zoom. Years later, the two are happily living together at ElderSpirit, an intentional interspiritual community in southwest Virginia. Life is good! 💕



A sunset over a body of water with many birds flying in the sky. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with the sun low on the horizon. The water is dark with some ripples. Many birds are silhouetted against the sky, flying in various directions.

**Thank you for being
part of this wild
experiment. with love
from all of us.**

**3/16/2020- 3/16/2025
- 5 year anniversary.**