



*Living in Relational Wholeness*

**Coalesce Podcast**

**Episode 009 – Bias from the Bottom**

**Note, terms, scripture, practice**



[Deuteronomy 7:7-9](#)

[Exodus 3:2](#)

[Exodus 3:5](#)

[Exodus 3:9-10](#)

[Luke 4:18-19](#)

[2 Samuel 12:13](#)

[Genesis 17:15-19](#)

[Genesis 30:22-24](#)

[1 Samuel 1](#)

[Matthew 20:16](#)

[1 Samuel 16](#)

[1 Samuel 17](#)

[1 Corinthians 1:27](#)

[Ephesians 4:23](#)

## **Practice: Standing in Solidarity**

Tim Shriver, Chair of Special Olympics, wrote about this theme of “bias from the bottom.” As you read his words, imagine how you might stand in solidarity with someone “on the edge,” someone who has been excluded, and see that individual through God’s eyes.

Throughout Scripture there is a call for social justice—meaning social equality, inclusion of those on the edge. It is a deeply spiritual call, and yet it has a powerful and important political function. Those on the edge hold the key to healing and uniting the whole system. To unite with those who are the most vulnerable, the most excluded, is the critical social dimension of unitive consciousness and community.

You cannot believe in or practice unitive consciousness as long as you exclude and marginalize others—whether it is women or people of different sexual orientations or people of religious or ethnic minorities or, in my experience, people with intellectual disabilities.

For 20 years I have been mentored by these same people. Some might not be the best-spoken, the most articulate writers, the most celebrated thinkers, the fastest runners. And yet, despite all of that, I have met person after person who emanates a kind of radiant light. After a while, even the densest of us may have our eyes opened to that something which transcends all superficial distractions of disability: the unimaginable beauty of every person. That beauty is ours for the seeing if only we have the eyes to see, if only we pay attention.

Many times I’ve watched, for instance, as a person with Down syndrome stands with a gold medal around her neck, arms raised high to a cheering crowd. I can’t look at that child, at that human being, without slipping out of dualistic thinking. Those moments are a kind of sacrament of unitive consciousness. They are “both-and” moments where shadow and light coexist in the same experience. Divine energy shoots vertically through me like a force, and says, “See! Look! Pay attention to what is right in front of you! That is all you need to know!”