

The Biggest Joke and the Biggest Challenge

Money. What distinguishes the printed bills of the popular board games involving imaginary purchase and sale of property and economic investments and expenses, from the printed bills we use at the grocery store to pay for our food? Beyond irrelevant and obvious objective descriptions, the principal difference is in the meaning we assign to each respective piece of paper.

If I print a particular number upon such a piece of paper, suddenly the paper can be exchanged for a certain quantity of food or perhaps even a new car. If the only change I make to the piece of paper is the particular number inscribed upon it, suddenly the same piece of paper is worth more or less (but not the same) as before. Considering how briefly the paper stays in our possession (if indeed it comes into our direct possession at all), humanity's individual and collective obsession with acquiring these pieces of paper is astonishingly absurd.

I recall reading of the Native Americans' befuddlement in response to the Europeans' obsession with the acquisition of gold, the peculiar yellow metal which wasn't really good for anything, due to its softness and scarcity.

It may take a few decades or even a hundred years or more, but I contend that humanity's evolution into a mature and intelligent form of life must eventually include a dismissal of economic concerns. The very action of endless record-keeping in relation to the handling, tracking, disbursement, and acquisition of economic values, works to keep our minds small and to blind us to values beyond the reach of money.

The greatest weakness of money is that it can reach no further than measured numbers can go. The greatest strength of life is that it is composed of things whose true value cannot possibly ever be measured this way.

The redemption of money within our current age, is the application of it to things which nurture and support personal and spiritual growth. As several different friends have told me over the years, money is simply energy-- something which is constantly changing form and which mostly serves to transfer resources from

one location to another. There is a sense in which it loses its value and even its reality, if it ceases to move.

Like an unending dance in which we are all invited to participate, we must both listen to the music and also move with all the artistry and commitment we have to offer. We receive money and know that it was entrusted to us (individually and collectively) for a reason (even if we don't know the reason). We choose a direction and like a fragile paper airplane, launch the monetary energy into the wind again, trying to accomplish the most good we can by the manner in which we launch our particular paper airplane. Turning around again, we find someone else's paper airplane coming toward us and we reach out to receive it, eager to continue participating in such vicarious flight. Soar high and far, my friends, and shine wherever you go!

Subscription Information:

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Do you know someone who might like to receive a copy of this newsletter?

A single sample copy is free and no "sales pitch" or repetitive offers will follow. Just tell me the address to which I should send a single copy.

Sister Who's Perspective

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Life is a collaborative effort, encompassing more than we know. In a time of abundant "information overload," news, communication, and travel across great distances, we often talk at each other without listening, communicating, or understanding. Humanity needs its icons, but also its iconoclasts to grow beyond the good and bad qualities that now limit and describe us. The essences of both God and us remain, in the midst of questions, to be discovered, experienced, and expressed. Please share in this ongoing dialogue, remembering to indicate whether and how you wish to be identified. Blessings, love, and peace to you.
---Sister Who

Musings and Metaphors from 10,000' up in the Mountains

I was working on removing some old paneling from my new home, the windows being open to let the dust out and the fresh air in, when I discovered something else had come in as well. Not being much of a bird watcher, I can only offer a guess that it was some sort of swallow, judging by the way it flew around, trying to locate the window through which it had inadvertently entered my house.

I stopped what I was doing and followed the bird from one end of the house to the other, again and again, knowing that when it had become sufficiently tired, I would be able to gently take hold of it and carry it outside. I did try to herd the bird toward any available window while all of this was going on, but to the bird I was no more than a large and untrusted aggressor.

It occurred to me also while all of this was taking place, that circumstances which may seem adversarial, sometimes have a similar role in our own individual lives. Something that seems big and frightening may in fact be simply herding us toward a particular open window, a window that leads to a larger and much less limited world. We believe our choices are necessary for survival when in fact our survival was never really threatened, much as I had no intention of harming the little bird but rather wished to release it from the confines of my house.

When the bird was finally tired enough that my hands were much closer and therefore more able to effectively herd it toward the nearest open window, the moment of release finally arrived. One moment it was fluttering its wings against

the glass, gradually but unknowingly moving toward the opening waiting just a few more inches to the right. I could see the opening clearly but the bird could not. Unfortunately I had no language or gift of telepathy by which to convey understanding to the bird so that it would realize how unnecessary the struggle was. Then suddenly it was as if the glass had disappeared and the little bird shot forward out of the house and into the larger world of mountains and forests and such. I watched as the bird faded into the distance, finally joined by a second bird who seemed to call out, "Where have you been? I've been looking all over for you." Sometimes our freedom is seeking us, every bit as earnestly as we are seeking our freedom and individuality.

Another metaphor I stumbled onto just a day or two ago, occurred when I was reflecting on the then-current task of resetting the anchors of my new home's "tie-downs."

(If I haven't already said so, my new home is a mobile home made in 1972, located on its own tenth of an acre in an area zoned for mobile homes but not a mobile home park in the usual sense, in that the property is owned and there is no monthly lot rent to pay. The mortgage I was able to assume is extremely low as well, so I'm hoping that my housing cost will be extremely low, once I have finished the remodeling, which includes double-pane windows and a significant increase in insulation.)

In any case, sometime during the last three decades but apparently not recently, the home had been hit by a very strong wind which had moved it about a

foot toward the east and relaxed the tension of the tie-downs attached to the frame in the crawl-space underneath the home. At first I thought I would just ignore the old ones and purchase and install new tie-downs. I only checked a couple of places, but it seemed the technology had changed and tie-downs appropriate to this particular style of home were no longer readily available.

So I accepted the unpleasant task of crawling into the two-foot high space, spending two hours excavating the old tie-down anchors with nothing more than a garden trowel, and digging a new hole for each of them, which was about as deep as my arm is long. Just before replacing the anchors and refilling the holes, I stretched their straps just as tight as I could, so that they would be able to do their job when strong winter winds returned.

I am reminded again and again of that scene in the movie, "Starman" in which the extra-terrestrial person says to the earth woman, "Do you know what it is that so fascinates us about your species? It is that you are at your best when things are at their worst."

Like the tie-downs of my new home, the tension with which I coexist day after day, is somehow essential to me being able to make my best contribution to the unfolding of life in which I am a participant. Though I may never get to see the rooms above my head, though I may spend my entire life in dark and dirty places, my contribution may nevertheless be absolutely essential to the continued existence of the unseen beauty above me.

To do my job, I must sink my feet, my roots, deep within the earth. I must be well-grounded. I must also reach as hard and as far as I can and maintain a firm grip on the beams above me, beams which sometimes reach much further into the distance than I can see, beams which have no ability within themselves to be grounded and which therefore might otherwise be destroyed by the next strong wind which comes along. Essentially, like the mobile home tie-downs, I am the link and

the bridge between one world and the next, maintaining the close and specific proximity of one to the other. On one side is the natural world of earth, tree roots, insects, and things as old as time itself. On the other side is the man-made world of floor beams, sheltered spaces, artistic expressions, and things which can be measured in no more than decades. By my intervention, the seemingly eternal and the current activity of life are joined. Is it too much of a stretch to understand this role of being a link, as being also a sort of divinely bestowed responsibility?

In a myriad of ways, each and every one of us is a bridge and the result is an interconnected web of life which goes way beyond the events and objects available to our first five senses and our memory. By the Divine spark living within each of us, by the interconnecting of this myriad of Divine sparks within all of us, life continues to unfold and to invite ever-greater beauty and love to bloom. May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

**"Dance with the lightning,
sing with the thunder,
and celebrate the seasons
which now and then
you've known.
In days and nights
and passing time,
these all become
the life that is
your own."**

Sister Who's Internet Emporium

As much as I wish to respect others' choice to avoid computers and eschew dependency upon such machines, I concede that an amazing amount of communication and interaction is facilitated by the Internet and I wish to invite the blessings of this new mode of interconnectedness into the lives of myself and others. Like television, the personal computer is a tool which must be used prudently and with moderation. Contrary to what most advertisements declare, one does not need to have the most current hardware and software, to possess a machine which will get your particular job done. Now, on to discussion of a particular element within my website.

One of the pages within my website (<http://www.sisterwho.com>) is "Sister Who's Internet Emporium." Even if you or someone you know does not own a computer and cannot momentarily borrow a friend's computer, nearly every public library now has computers available through which a visit to my website and/or to this page of my website could be accomplished.

What is offered within the website page "Sister Who's Internet Emporium"?

The first item on the list (which is obviously irrelevant to everyone receiving this newsletter already) is a subscription to Sister Who's Perspective, the newsletter you are now reading.

Next is a link to purchase printed and bound copies (hardcover or paperback) of my novel, Troll Steps, an allegorical fantasy somewhat akin to J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit, which deals with many aspects of identity, growth, and relationship.

Soon to be added is a link to another website through which one will be able to purchase t-shirts, coffee cups, and such other things, bearing photographs of Sister Who with corresponding and appropriate text. If Sister Who has been a blessing to your life or inspired you to new perspectives and understandings, perhaps the gift of a t-shirt or coffee cup would extend her ministry even further, into the life of someone else with whom you are acquainted.

Another pending addition is a link through which those seeking spiritual

counseling or the help of a Tarot reading will be able to connect with me by phone at a specified rate. The benefits of my intuition, my empathic and psychic gifts, my spiritual experience and understanding, and my fresh Sacred Clown perspective will thus be available to anyone who wishes to call upon them.

Finally, the remainder of items listed within the Emporium are older costume items which are rarely or no longer in use. The offer for sale of these items has two primary reasons. The first is to encourage funding of future activities and needs of Sister Who and the second is to allow others to share in Sister Who's history by becoming the actual guardians of Sister Who's artifacts (artifacts?! Sounds like something you'd say about someone who's been dead a thousand years already. Is "relics" a better word to use?).

The other item I sincerely hope to add to the Emporium's list by the end of this year is the book, Reinventing the Sacred Clown, essentially Sister Who's autobiography. The manuscript is about half-finished and I know there are a number of people eager to read the finished work, but I want to be sure the quality is good and the story is as complete as possible before releasing this book to the world.

It has been impressed upon me in so many ways during the last several years that the work of Sister Who is really what I was born to do. One of the logistical concerns of this current age is the creation of adequate and ongoing funding, to allow the work to go on and eventually to also allow for the construction of The Center for Spiritual Growth and Celebration.

Whether through the construction of such a retreat and conference center, through cable-access television programs, or through the distribution of a monthly newsletter or a particular book, the ultimate goal is the three-fold healing of the human race, the divine soul within each of us, and the universe which surrounds us. May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be!