

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

Overview

Living within a material world can be very distracting, if one attempts in any way to remember that the spiritual realm is every bit as real. Without necessarily intending to, the very existence of people of any kind of faith at all, offers bridges between the seen and unseen worlds.

A way of bringing this aspect into greater constructive use, of being in some way or another healers of humanity, is to call forth what cannot be seen in much the same way that an artist calls forth from within the self, the colors, shapes, sounds, and feelings which inspire awareness of realities beyond the material one.

In so doing, the universe becomes a larger and more magical place. My hope is that the articles of this month's newsletter will provide food for thought and empower your awareness and your ability to be a bridge of understanding for others.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

Calling Forth Humanity

Occasionally I hear the remark, "it's only human" as a recommendation that one should not be discouraged by mistakes, failures, and so forth. While I do think it's important to limit the influence of discouragements, mistakes, and failures to their initial moment of occurrence (instead of allowing the memory of them to continue to oppress ourselves long afterward), this statement captures only half of our humanity (if even that much, actually).

What must be remembered are our abilities to recover, to shift to more effective alternatives, and to devise completely new and original works. While it is wise to develop deeper understandings of the current systems, we disempower ourselves and everyone around us if we do not also support positive and constructive change. Even more important than facing who and what we are, is the task of embracing the best that we can become.

In calling forth our humanity, therefore, we might begin by giving ourselves the freedom to make mistakes, to stumble, to devise imperfect

solutions, and to misunderstand from time to time. The job is not done, however, until we have also used whatever transpires to build an even better launching pad for whatever follows. Traversing the road to that launching pad, it must be additionally remembered, may also include pushing aside a berm of debris left behind by previous struggles.

It is not that we must repress, deny, or in any way ignore what is unpleasant, but rather that we must recognize that our God-given humanity has been equipped (in one way or another) to deal with every challenge we will ever face. Dealing with a challenge may not mean that we will always win, but it could very well mean that we will always (in some sense or another) be winners.

Humanity has been defined in many ways. The truth remains, however, that there are as many ways to be human as there are human beings and that each new human that is born inherently brings along still more new and different possibilities. One could even say that in this way, humanity is one of the many possible illustrations of the infinite limitlessness of that which is truly God.

If God is also the embodiment of highest wisdom and greatest love, the ability to illustrate these qualities is present within each of us as well. In calling forth our humanity, therefore, we call forth that which can most effectively illustrate love and wisdom toward a world that is terribly wounded, broken, and confused. In calling forth our humanity, we can call forth our ability to be healing agents, servants of godliness, and overcomers of every obstacle and discouragement.

Today is an opportunity for each and every one of us. The variety of circumstances we encounter may be troubled in various ways. What needs to be answered, is whether we will leave circumstances better than we found them—whether the challenges will call forth the greatest possibilities within us.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

Calling Forth Love

The biblical text is well-known that instructs, "perfect love casts out fear," but, judging by the abundance of horror movies that have been created, it seems that many people actually prefer the fear. If I or anyone else has embraced the positive and beautiful intention of calling forth love, our effectiveness may be limited by the extent to which we understand why people would respond by running away.

A few of my friends have suggested that it is an unwillingness to change which inspires people to run away, because any contact with love, truth, or wisdom informs our minds (to varying degrees) and consequently requires us to change. More concisely, I cannot be whom I have been nor behave as I have behaved, if a new understanding reveals possibilities of undesirable implications or consequences. The corollary of this, of course, is that avoiding knowledge of negative effects or consequences does not make them less real. An adequate quantity of poison will still kill you, whether or not you realize you have ingested poison or believe in its ability to do so.

Calling forth love, however, is a step in the opposite direction. In much the same way that millions of people drive automobiles every day without fully comprehending how these machines work, you do not have to understand everything there is to understand about love, to understand that it is good and to encourage its presence within your own life or the lives of those around you. Within the bigger picture of everything that can be known about love, we should probably be honest with ourselves and admit that we actually know very little for certain. What we do know, however, is enough to allow love to have a healing and empowering effect upon everyone who is touched thereby. For the one who experiences love, the sun shines a little brighter, problems are not so overwhelming, and life is worth living.

Within the actions of calling forth love, this blessing is reproduced within those around us in much the same way that a candle flame can be passed from one to another, until the entire room is filled with light. Passing a candle flame first requires one who is ready, willing, and able to see another person without light and extend one's arm (or arms) in that direction. Equally important is that the other is ready, willing, and able to reach out toward the approaching light with a candle that is in every way ready to receive the flame.

If both persons are waiting for the other to act first, however, no light will ever be passed. Calling forth love therefore requires the willingness to take the initiative; to act rather than react; to make the first move whenever necessary. It is not about "just following orders," but rather about expressing one's self positively in service to the surrounding world and to everyone within it, without waiting for any command to do so.

Calling forth love is also an act of war upon hatred, ignorance, condemnation, narcissism (extreme selfishness), apathy, and hypocrisy. One cannot effectively and consistently call forth love within one's self, one's friends, or one's community without being willing to take a strong stand against such evils from time to time. Where such negative qualities are allowed to prevail, even the thought of calling forth love will be daunting and difficult—but absolutely essential.

Calling forth love within ourselves and others can begin with quietly looking and listening, allowing an opportunity for inner beauty to be both perceived and expressed. Being unaware of beauty within ourselves or within other individuals, does nothing to confirm that there is no beauty there. Specifically because I believe that every person has a soul—a tiny spark of the infinite Divine—I believe that beauty is everywhere present, if also frequently unnoticed.

Calling forth love is also an act of advocacy; an act of speaking on behalf of those who cannot (or will not) speak for themselves. I may take such actions because I see a world in desperate need of an answer of some sort, which I also see as abundantly present and available within a particular individual. In loving the individual, therefore, I am also loving the world and the relationship between the world and the individual.

In calling forth love, I exercise my faith and call forth the possibility of heaven on earth. Whether this manifests in ten years or ten thousand is quite unimportant. My current physical form may not be here to see the ultimate harvest of my positive contributions—this is also unimportant.

What is important is that I never give up loving humanity (which includes every individual) and pursuing the greatest manifestation of truth and wisdom. Within the larger picture of life on earth, no such effort is ever unnoticed, forgotten, or regretted. That we can do this, is a miracle.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

Calling Forth Wisdom

There's a certain paradox in how timeless true wisdom is, while being so contextual in its application. Using the metaphor of water, one could say that water is water is water. Whether liquid, solid, or gas (water, ice, or steam), it's still water. Similarly, as easy as it is to say that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," it becomes rather complicated when one tries to decide precisely how much and what kind of effort should be put into preventing problems within any particular situation.

Safety and security sound like worthy goals, but when taken to an unhealthy extreme, the pursuit of these two can result in suffocation, paralysis, constant paranoia, and a general inability to trust (and therefore to love) anyone at all—essentially the inability to have healthy relationships, because every healthy relationship has some inherent form or degree of risk.

Wisdom requires truth and truth can be found just as often within challenges and undesirable circumstances as within blessings and rewards. It is now common knowledge within the world of ecology and ecological studies, that a lack of diversity is generally a quick road to extinction. Without the ability to trust, most wisdom drifts out of our reach. In calling forth wisdom, therefore, we invite reconnection and better relationship.

An additional component of this interconnected configuration is choice. Calling forth wisdom is always a choice and virtually never happens without some sort of conscious action. Among those conscious actions, must also be openness to frequent questioning and re-evaluation. By its very nature, life grows. Specifically because life grows, change is inevitable and that means that precise applications of wisdom will change too. While the essence of wisdom generally remains constant, the expression must be allowed and even empowered to adapt to changing circumstances.

An uncomfortable aspect of this for many people is that the unseen world of spiritual realities

*"In every opportunity to be fair
is an invitation to demonstrate
genuine wisdom and love."*

--Sister Who

must also have the ability to grow and to change its expressions even while its essence and fundamental values remain constant. What communicates love and reverence to one generation may be an incoherent foreign language within the ears of the next. It is not as important that we speak and understand the same language, as that we each have some sort of comprehension or (better yet) experience of love, of wisdom, of sacredness, and so forth. To the extent that we are also able to learn others' "languages," we can also begin to empower each other toward even greater experiences of life.

In studying others' languages, we need never neglect or forget which language is our native language. There will always be an empowering contribution that our own native language can make, but there is no need to be insecure and overcompensate by making arrogant claims about the alleged superiority of any particular language. If there is a competition, its goal is not to determine which language is best, but rather it is a competition against misunderstanding rather than against each other. The winner is one who understands; the loser is the one who does not.

Considering how much there is which we do not understand, however, we must also remember that losing is not a judgmental condemnation or devaluing of ourselves, but rather an invitation and an opportunity to continue striving against the absence of understanding in other ways.

Wisdom is the prize of all such pursuits—not just the acquisition of knowledge but the development of understanding about how to constructively use whatever knowledge is gained.

Calling forth wisdom is the honor of ringing the starting bell, signaling to all participants the moment to begin running toward the finish line against the malevolent challengers named Ignorance, Oppression, and Narrow-mindedness.

The race is also run within us, just as much as around us, and every good runner knows that one's eyes must be fixed upon the goal rather than distracted by other competitors. It is not that we are avoiding Ignorance and all the rest; we are pursuing wisdom and understanding, making life the most joyful and empowered reality it can be.

There will unfortunately be those who shun the exertion and the work of the race, but they will be similarly ignorant of the true meaning of victory.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

Calling Forth Divinity

"Wholeness" derives from the same source as "holiness." In seeking wholeness or holistic health, therefore, I am (perhaps unconsciously) seeking to reconnect with the spiritual or divine part of myself or of those around me.

Calling forth divinity within myself is thus no more than tending to the health of my soul and does not need to be regarded as some massively difficult or metaphysical conjuring of divine presence, attended by loud drumming, wailing, or other grandiose drama.

As much as I appreciate the contribution that theatrical tools can make, I also know that many people mistake the tools for the goal; the material for the spiritual. The loudest and most enthusiastic performance of the most sacred hymn does not force God to be present. The decision to manifest in any particular way, is for the Divine alone to decide. I can only provide the invitation.

Providing an effective invitation, however, is very important work indeed. Among the many ways of doing this, is the adoption or regular practice of a spiritual discipline. For some this takes the form of daily prayer or meditation. An absence of any daily spiritual practice suggests that I have become too busy to tend to my spiritual health, but it is never too late to suspend this neglect and to reawaken the music of my soul.

When I finally begin to attend to such music, I may find the steps of my life beginning to do a new dance, to walk upon the earth in a very new and different way than I previously walked.

I may also find that my dance is so beautiful that God decides to reward my participation with greater awareness. Like an innocent child's game of hide and seek, I may finally notice things that were actually there all along. "How could I have not seen it," I might wonder in astonishment; it's as if I have new eyes.

As phrased within the chorus of a song within my third album, "Your fingerprints are all around me, as we play hide and seek; Your smile I can see just over yonder, framed by each mountain peak."

Calling forth divinity requires no more than an open heart and a willingness to see and hear things which previously went unnoticed. Ultimately, it is not so much what I do, but what I finally give myself permission to be.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be!

On a Personal Note

Another doctoral paper has been completed. For anyone who is interested in receiving a copy (or copies), the list of completed papers now includes: (1) "The Development of Symbiotic Community" and (2) "The Development of Symbiotic Individuality." Within the next few weeks, I will hopefully begin composition of the next paper, "The Development of Global Mutual Respect," basing initial understandings and definitions upon the writings of Seneca, Howard Thurman, and the Dalai Lama.

Six more episodes of "Sister Who Presents" are scheduled for production within the next few weeks and if one additional day of production can also be scheduled, the total count of shows will reach 199. The 200th episode will obviously need to include summary and reflection upon the symbols, experiences, and developments this unconventional ministerial work has included since its humble beginnings, nearly twenty years ago.

I am still attempting to locate a producer for a twentieth anniversary television special, but have thus far been unsuccessful. If no collaborator can be found within the next six weeks or so, it would seem that whatever celebration is done will have to be significantly less ambitious than any of my original ideas. There are times when I wonder whether I am the only one who truly believes in this unconventional work, but I am encouraged by occasional encounters with viewers of my ongoing television series and with readers of the monthly newsletter, who speak very highly of the significance that these creative works have within their lives. It is a remarkable thing, I think, to have a verifiably good effect upon the world during the many or few years of one's physical life, which at the end always seems to have been far too short.

God Space Sanctuary continues to develop as well, inviting greater awareness of ways in which spirituality begins within each of us and not only within religious institutions.

May God's blessings, love, and peace be with you now and always, *Sister Who*

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