

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

It has often been said that "life is a journey, not a destination" and this seems to be affirmed by the basic fact that we are each here in human form for a finite amount of time. Rather than obsessing about running out of time, however, we do well to accept this fact and then make as good of use as possible, of whatever amount of time we have.

By bringing awareness or consciousness to the fact that we are on a journey, we create the possibility of making better use of whatever amount of time we have. We serve this possibility even further by recognizing that there are many facets to this journey or—from another perspective—that we are simultaneously engaged in a number of different journeys.

My hope is that this month's newsletter will provide some thoughts which are helpful to your journey, no matter what it might include.

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

Journeys of the Mind

It seems my mind never shuts off, which I suppose is a mixed blessing. On one hand, I seem to notice and to be aware of a great many things that others apparently fail to see at all. I often see wondrous potential in others to which even they themselves seem oblivious. I see possibilities of collaboration that are so much greater than what could be individually produced.

On the other hand, because I am to some degree aware of what could be, it is sometimes more difficult to embrace the well-known "Serenity Prayer" and accept things I cannot change—or at least that I cannot change without certain examples of collaboration.

This is further confused by a certain fluctuation of categorization; things that seasonally or randomly migrate back and forth between possibility and impossibility, according to such basic considerations as whether I'm physically exhausted or an essential participant is busy elsewhere.

A New Age perspective insists that we are

spiritual beings who are having a physical experience. Similarly, a Christian perspective asserts that "we are all made in God's image." Agreement seems to be lacking, however, about the specific meaning or appearance of this.

On the other hand there does seem to be a good amount of agreement that humanity individually and collectively continues to fall far short of its divine heritage or potential, neglecting any aspirations of more than the most temporary substance.

While accomplishment may be possible, it rarely occurs in the absence of its pursuit.

The pursuit of a medal is meaningless, however, if that medal does not carry with it a certain communal validation. It is not the weight of medal itself, but the meaning it is given which makes it a worthy goal. In relation to the medals I received for my efforts in bodybuilding, I have found that I need to assign a meaning whenever the surrounding community fails to do so.

All that being noted, there is still a particular sort of pain that arises from the absence of validation after sustained hard work. An awareness of the interconnection of all things inherently pleads for acknowledgement from one's community of this interconnection—that I am an essential part of my community and not inescapably and perpetually an unwanted misfit.

This is not dysfunctional codependency; this is inclusive spirituality—manifesting itself through physical, psychological, emotional, and social forms. On a similar note, the biblical text of Proverbs 27:5 instructs "Better is open rebuke than love that is concealed." While I insist that love should never be concealed, I acknowledge also that there are those who because of their own brokenness cannot tolerate its expression.

The journey of the mind within each moment is to rediscover its interconnectedness with everything around it—visible and invisible. The aspirations, possibilities, and personalities of each thing wait to be discovered and celebrated; by the magic of love, we can do this.

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

Journeys of the Body

The biblical reference of the apostle Paul's letter to the Corinthian church includes a question, perhaps asked with astonishment, "or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?" The broader meaning of this is that the Divine lives within and expresses Itself through (to whatever degree It can) material creation.

As the pilots of our bodies, we make decisions on behalf of our bodies within virtually every moment, regarding fueling, maintenance, and movement. We engage or avoid certain kinds of circumstances, like an airplane pilot flying around (rather than through) a particular storm. We visit various ports, releasing or taking on passengers, cargo, fuel, and information.

When I embrace a period of physical training for a bodybuilding competition, I work hard to equip my body for specific and perhaps unusual challenges, but I generally find that I am thereafter better equipped for any other challenges as well.

Among these challenges are the transportation of my spirit to places where I can learn and grow. As many times as I have flown on an airplane from one country to another, however, I have yet to experience a single flight devoid of air turbulence somewhere along the way. Only by trusting the pilot and crew, can I remain calmly in my seat during such moments, waiting for the shaking and bouncing to subside.

In an similar way, I often pilot my body through experiences that produce strain, soreness, excessive perspiration, and even minor cuts and scrapes that damage my skin. I do not fear such times because I have learned to trust my body's ability to heal itself again, much like trusting an airline pilot to maintain or regain control of a plane that is bouncing from one pocket of air turbulence to the next. Avoiding such turbulence altogether is only possible if one decides against making the journey at all.

When I do make such journeys of development or transportation, it is because of the promise of new experiences, new people, and new possibilities waiting at my destination. By means of reports or direct communication, I have been given enough faith to believe the journey to be potentially a valuable and rewarding one.

Living earthly life within a body is therefore a matter of faith—faith in ourselves, faith in those

around us, and faith in that which is greater than us also.

In selecting which clothing to wear or take with me whenever I leave my house, I have faith that environmental conditions will remain within acceptable parameters. I trust that unexpected disasters such as tornadoes or floods will not occur. Such faith is obviously disappointed from time to time, since weather-related environmental disasters are common throughout the larger picture of human history. Somehow this does not discourage humanity from moving forward, just as soon as the particular disaster has subsided.

When I was asked quite some time ago how I thought I would do within the bodybuilding competition for which I was preparing, I answered that the outcome was entirely dependent upon the characteristics of other participants who would be present. I had forgotten, however, that the outcome was also dependent upon the administrators and judges—their decisions, actions, and communication with participants. When my faith in them was disappointed, I was devastated. As time passed, however, like people returning to their homes after a flood, I accepted the tasks of cleaning up the mess and rebuilding.

In journeying with my body to mountain summits, I generally accept certain disagreeable conditions to occur and I generally accept that there will be a time of recovery afterward, specifically because I have hiked a good number of mountains already and have never regretted a single hike I have ever made. The purity, clarity, and perhaps even spirituality inherent within being high above tree-line is consistently easily worth the effort required to make the journey.

Although it may be more often wrapped in mystery, I continue to find that the experiences, insights, and development that come from fully involving myself in the living of my life add up to a deeper and more expansive sense of self and relationship than I had previously imagined to be possible. It is the journeys of my body which have put feathers into the wings of my spirit and it is the invisible love which has passed between myself and others, which has secured those feathers in an orderly and effective arrangement.

Everything is interconnected: the journeys of the body empower the journeys of the spirit and the journeys of the spirit empower the relationships by which the interconnection persists.

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

Journeys of the Heart

I remain (some would say unfortunately) a person more inclined to trust and to try than to be cynical and to die. Life has never been a safe place in which to live, because the greatest forms of safety require protection that disallows opportunities for growth. Risks must be embraced, or no growth will follow. The heart, by its very nature, cannot remain still without the entire surrounding body consequentially dying.

At various times in history, love between non-heterosexual people was called "the love that dared not speak its name" and was horribly punished. Specifically because that unique and genuine love was divinely bestowed by the ultimate Source of all love, however, the hearts of such people were, are, and always will be irresistably drawn to make their respective journeys. In the words of Oscar Hammerstein II, "A bell is no bell til you ring it. A song is no song til you sing it. And love wasn't put in your heart there to stay. Love isn't love til you give it away."

Forbidden to speak its name and disallowed from making its journeys, love nevertheless found itself unable to remain at home.

So it is that I continue to open my heart to the possibility of love with another and that I tolerate times of heartbreak and of mending my broken heart, in order to sustain better possibilities. So it is that I continue to open my heart to the possibility of accomplishment and that I tolerate times of disappointment, in order to embrace potentiality. So it is that I continue to open my heart to truthful and honest being even in the midst of a world more inclined toward deception for the sake of momentary advantage and that I tolerate the existence of selfish and immature agendas, in order to stand with the guardians and servants of humanity's individual and collective future and beckon to heaven to manifest itself on earth.

Journeys of the heart are ultimately the bridges by which little pieces of heaven are able to

*"Imposing one's ambitions,
displaces one's relations.
Embracing one's aspirations,
inspires one's relations."*

-- Sister Who

enter our world here on earth. Each loving moment is rope or a brick, combining to make a way where there otherwise would be none, to join things which are as unlike as things can be.

The ancient Asian philosopher Lao Tzu advises, "Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength; loving someone deeply gives you courage." In both cases, there is a bridge to cross from one world to another and a reward for doing so. In both cases, there is the suggestion of empowerment which we can give to each other.

In 1996, my former life partner and I journeyed to Germany and returned with a wirehair dachshund puppy whom we named Ludwig. Fourteen years later, it appears Ludwig is nearing the end of his life. His heart has been loving and brave through a myriad of canine adventures, providing unconditional love to every human person around him as well. Soon he will be making his final journey and I remain convinced that the best way we who love him can empower him to make that journey in as good a manner as possible, is to surround him with love and with reminders of all of the love his life has included.

Love is, was, and always will be, greater than humanity; more transcendent, expansive, enduring, and omnipotent. The journey each heart is invited to make within this life, is to touch and to embody that transcendence, expansiveness, perseverance, and omnipotence to whatever degree becomes possible. It is ultimately the journey of the heart which makes life worth living.

A magical aspect of this journey of the heart, however, is that in daring to pursue that transcendence, expansiveness, perseverance, and omnipotence, we ultimately find ourselves face to face with a mirror of what our souls have become by their engagement in the journey.

None of this, however, is required. Without a positive choice within each and every moment, the journey of the heart can be one we never take. Without enough faith to at least try, the journey of the heart can be the report that describes someone else's life and never our own. Without daring to love the unlovely, to befriend the unfriendly, and to polish the dirty pebble, we will never be the mirrors by which the light of heaven is reflected to shine upon all those who yet dwell on earth—and to remind them that by the magic of love, the journey of the heart from earth to heaven and back again is really not very far at all.

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

Journeys of the Soul

I often joke that I've never been normal, but I seriously do recall wrestling with the question of the meaning of life before I was even ten years old. I also understand that all answers must be held tentatively so that they can be measured against any new information that is received, which also stands up to extensive questioning and cross-examination. The one answer to the above question which has withstood every test for me thus far, is that life is primarily about the growth of the soul. The discomfiting question which follows, of course, is "how does the soul grow?"

There is no shortage of people who can describe how misfortune and hardship have created strength, wisdom, and maturity. I do not, however, recommend plunging one's self recklessly into adversity in order to provoke personal growth. For most of us, life will provide sufficient challenges without our assistance, if we simply keep our eyes and ears open to whatever opportunities come along.

I have also encountered many who recommend this or that spiritually focused experience because of the growth it will supposedly produce. I have yet to encounter any experience or workshop, however, that produces the same expertise or experience for all participants, no matter what promises are made.

We are all at different places along our spiritual paths, all approaching from different directions, and all carrying with us different combinations of experience, personality, and ability—which is why I am very glad that the Divine is willing to reveal Itself in so many diverse ways.

What I consider most important, therefore, is not what degree of commonality one's spiritual path or practices may have with another, but rather whether one is constructively engaged in a spiritual path at all—whether there is a soul journey.

Without a soul journey, we have left behind, some essential part of ourselves. Without some form of prayer (whether words, meditation, or ritual), we reach for nothing beyond ourselves and our current limitations. Without some form of individual spirituality, it becomes difficult to prove that we are even genuinely alive.

Each journey of the soul is unique; the one that is yours, cannot be done by anyone else, but every living thing will be rewarded if you do it well.

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

On a Personal Note

Having submitted three new episodes to a local public broadcasting station, in hopes of reaching a wider audience with "Sister Who Presents," I finally received a rejection by email a few weeks ago. I had previously offered the show to this same station in the mid-1990s and at that time received the most amusing rejection I've ever heard: "We don't know what to put it between." Apparently that is still the case.

Nonetheless, the fourth appearance of the portable chapel at the Labor Day metaphysical Fair was a complete success, judging by the depth and number of dialogues and conversations that occurred within its peaceful inner space.

A couple of weeks after that, I thoroughly enjoyed serving an annual fundraiser of the Second Wind Fund (www.swfmd.org), which provides remarkably effective teenage suicide prevention. Of over eighteen hundred youth who have been referred to and gone through their program, not a single one has thereafter committed suicide. Programs which are one hundred percent successful are obviously few in number. Many good conversations occurred at this event also.

With regard to ongoing video production, employment changes for staff members have temporarily stalled active production. Anyone wishing to fill this gap by providing volunteer camera operation is invited to contact me by whichever means are most convenient.

A recent Internet radio interview with Maureen Meegan was also a complete success, including responses to callers from New York and Wisconsin and dealing with the general topic of finding and celebrating one's true self, no matter how unique one may be (<http://www.voiceamerica.com/voiceamerica/vshow.aspx?sid=1777>).

Regarding the interfaith ministry of God Space Sanctuary, tax-exempt status as a religious non-profit is pending and construction of its spaces continues (www.GodSpaceSanctuary.org).

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

Subscription Information:

"Sister Who's Perspective" is a free monthly newsletter. If you have appreciated this newsletter, please consider making a donation to empower the work to continue. (Make checks payable to Denver NeVaar).

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