

sister who's perspective

Sister Who's Perspective, Issue 208, November 2016, copyright

Overview

Life pitches curve-balls; that much has been obvious throughout the last couple years of my life. Within such moments, I usually begin by taking inventory of resources and options, while also trying to accept that ideal solutions may very well not be available. The inescapable question may be of how much one can do, with whatever one has left. Even then, one must remain hopeful if anything good is to follow.

When Nothing is Safe

As true as it may be that nothing is truly safe, perhaps because everything is always changing, the human mind and heart continues to crave safety and security. An obvious reason for that, even from a perspective of scientific evolution, is that it can drive us toward constructive, creative, and collaborative relationships. If humans were by nature solitary creatures, it is unlikely that most would have any hope of survival at all, specifically because the challenges which must be overcome require the collaborative energies of many in order to escape various forms of defeat and failure.

Additionally, creative accomplishments throughout human history which were only possible by uniting the time, energy, and strength of large numbers of people, validate any and all ideas of how recommendable working together always is. What our world would be without such accomplishments is absolutely tragic and depressing. In bringing this to ever greater consciousness, is all the reason any should need to continue working in a similar direction.

All that being said, it is specifically the flexibility of virtually every person and thing that simultaneously offers empowerment and vulnerability. It is only the development of our own intelligence and skill that allows us

to push things in positive rather than negative directions. That is why I remain convinced that life is primarily concerned (at least for humanity if not for all other species as well) with the growth of the soul.

So what does one do when nothing is safe? One continues to live, for as long as one can, in as beautiful and holistic a way as is possible. Living itself is a triumph over any negative circumstances otherwise present.

Even in the midst of living, however, I have never managed to forget the common maxim that "nothing is forever," so I strive to leave behind, everywhere I go, a body of work that will testify to a beautiful, wise, and loving person having been there. In many cases, my work is not appreciated and negated as soon as I move on to my next task. It is painful to realize that while I can create beautiful things, I do not have the ability to protect them from every adversary.

Yet nothing can deny that they and I really have existed and offered what beauty, insight, and healing we could, to the broken and confused world around us. As much as I strive to always leave every place better than I found it, in one way or another, I have not been blessed with any ability to ensure any aspect of any future. I can only make my best possible contribution now.

So when nothing is safe, if I have wings, I will fly; if I have only feet, I will run; if I am unable to even crawl, I will sing until there is no voice left within me; if I can neither move nor speak, I will close my eyes and immerse myself in prayer. I can only hope that That Which is Truly Godde sees fit to make something good of my humble offering. If my soul has learned anything good thereby, it would be presumptuous and ignorant to suggest that my life was ultimately a failure.

In refusing to fail, I earnestly hope that my life may also be a healing force for others.

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

When Nothing is Available

As much as I strive to always see emptiness as opportunity, attempting to build anything with no materials available, unavoidably includes a number of irritating limitations. Within those limitations, however, may be the means to discover and collect new resources--if one can find others who are willing to respond. Perhaps a peculiar blessing arising from humanity's overpopulation of this planet, is that one will never run out of new people to ask.

In truth, it is extremely difficult to find or create a situation within which nothing is available, because the situation itself could not exist without specific constitutive elements, any one of which might be utilized for new and different purposes. What feeds the perception of nothing being available is any inability to imagine new and different uses for whatever constitutive elements are available. If we think only in terms of how spaces and resources have been used in the past, we may honestly see no possibility for dealing with new challenges.

In mentally deconstructing and identifying the constitutive elements of one's current place and state, however, new possibilities can leap into view. Nothing is ultimately an intellectual construct composed of something (or some things) that is waiting to be identified. An open space may become a dance floor, a closed space may become a womb for new imagination and creativity, and an empty space invites us to look within ourselves and discover all that has thus far gone unnoticed and unappreciated.

Will anyone listen? Will anyone see the beauty, value, or potential of a work? What if the one who desperately needs the work, will arrive only within a future time--does that diminish the work's importance?

When nothing is available, we must remember that we ourselves are not nothing, but rather complex combinations of infinite possibility that can be utilized in a myriad of ways within an incomprehensible number of relational situations. Which are the ones that matter? That depends entirely upon one's perspective and none of us has the broader

perspective necessary to answer truthfully.

So when nothing is available (or so it seems), we are confronted with the need to trust life to be wiser than ourselves and to keep marching forward through the fog of our own personal and collective experiences.

Specifically because we are creatures of time, forever locked with a present moment of now, it is also easy to forget that a moment when nothing is available is equally only a moment and may soon be followed by innumerable moments when resources become available, that we never imagined would be. The present moment may be nothing more than a bridge between the past and the future, never intended to serve any other purpose than to convey us from a point of origin to a point of profound blessing and ministry, within which our contributions join with others to accomplish degrees of healing, within the larger human experience that surrounds us every day of our lives.

If at any point I am ultimately reduced to nothing because, as has been the case with many other artists and visionaries, I am simply ahead of my time, I can only hope that what I have left behind is helpful to others. I'm sure I would have done more, if I'd had more time and resources, but I seem to have no alternative but to trust a higher embodiment of wisdom and love to decide which part will be my contribution and which will be left undone in order to provide creative opportunity to others. Creativity, growth, and ingenuity being what they are, however, I am not particularly concerned that humanity will ever run out of new avenues to explore and develop.

I suppose when all is said and done, when nothing more is available, I earnestly hope that what has been done, will be remembered, valued, and perhaps even loved. That, however, depends entirely upon the choices of others is thus not something I have the ability to promise myself. I can phone a friend and leave a message, but if there is no response, the conversation may go no further--at least for now.

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

When Nothing is Expected

Positively viewed, this could also be described as openness. It is equally true, however, that having no expectations tends to include degrees of detachment within which all of the most empowering actions of love are prematurely dismissed. One cannot participate to any degree in a relationship of love without being affected thereby.

This obviously raises the question of to what degree, if any, it is possible to truly love without having any expectations. In contrast, those who have expectations without truly and unconditionally loving, create a shell unable to grow or adapt to all of the diverse changes that life will unavoidably include. A distinction between the two is that love with expectations accepts occasional realities of disappointment and finds ways to recover from such setbacks, whereas expectations without love more often evolves into a mirror revealing the cold and painful relational truth.

An important but perhaps overlooked consideration, however, is that love's expectations are not only sometimes spared disappointment, but also exceeded when the actual outcomes are better, more beautiful, and more empowering than anything one might have imagined. It is in this way in particular that I strive to hold expectations very loosely; always inviting outcomes to surprise me with something even better than anything I imagined. Sometimes I have been disappointed, but, thankfully, disappointment is generally not fatal and may even ultimately turn out to be empowering.

Yet especially because of being autistic, my inclination is to carefully plan my sequential responses to whatever lies ahead, in order to effectively prepare and thereby encourage the best possible outcome from any and every situation I encounter. So living without any expectations at all is extremely difficult for

me. Spontaneity sometimes feels too much like chaos and I need to know that I can trust myself and anyone else present, to manage as effectively as possible, any chaos or adversity that is encountered.

In contrast, if I veer in the opposite direction, striving to make everything predictable and planned, I strip life of any and all ability to transcend my knowledge, imagination, and past experience. Life can ultimately be no more than it has been, unless it goes beyond what I have the ability to expect. In a very real sense, I become the reason that my life remains metaphorically very small and insignificant.

When nothing is expected, the world may persistently regard me as having been no better than nothing. At the same time, however, when nothing is expected, life may decide to make me bigger than I ever consciously aspired to be. In striving to be the poorest of the poor, for example, Saint Francis of Assisi became a name and an archetype that is still remembered all over the world eight hundred years later.

Did he have any expectations? We can only speculate, but it seems unlikely. He did what he could and the world has responded in a myriad of ways, both good and bad.

It seems reasonable that the same will be true of each of us--some ways in which we will be remembered as virtuous and some in which we will each be remembered as being in some way or another trouble-makers. If I have ever caused trouble for anyone, I ask forgiveness and request that they consider my contribution as an attempt to bring out the best and weed out the worst of whatever I had in my own limited way perceived. My intention has always been to apply the most difficult lessons of life with the greatest possible gentleness and understanding, but considering the generally adversarial nature of the world within which we all live, it may be that such an intention would have been the last thing anyone expected.

So ultimately when nothing is expected, love may find a brief opportunity to shine.

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

"Very little offends me more than indifference to suffering."

-- Sister Who

When Nothing is Withheld

It is from a certain perspective a very perplexing experience to withhold nothing as one not only faces but embraces whatever challenges each day of life contains. Along with greater freedom can also come an extreme and complicated sense of loss. If one relationship ends, another may begin, but the transition between the two is rarely a smooth and uneventful path.

When nothing is withheld, I embrace an openness that allows any and all good things to enter and infuse my life. When I begin to withhold what I imagine myself able to protect, everything within my tightly clenched fists begins to stagnate, to become rigid, and to forget any ability it ever had to dance. I don't know how long or under what circumstances my life will last, but I do know that I don't ever want to forget how to dance, as long as I remain alive.

When nothing is withheld, life remains magical because it remains now and always far larger than any individual within its vast circle. To the extent that diverse individuals find each other during their respective times within that vast circle, a fleeting sort of magic leaps into view--creating manifestations greater than any the constitutive pieces.

To the extent that individuals withhold themselves from each other, however, they experience the circle as being much smaller than it actually is. Even a circle as large as the physical earth is tiny in comparison to the circle that spirit is able to encompass. The spirit of life within each person, creature, and thing, however, can neither breathe nor live in the truest sense of those words, if the primary concern is that such life be in any way withheld from any good work that could otherwise be done.

Will humanity ever fully understand? As a whole, perhaps not for a very long time, but hope for humanity remains within those individuals willing to rise in consciousness, embrace greatest wisdom and love, and withhold nothing while doing so. I have always chosen to be one such individual.

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

On a Personal Note

Adversarial persons here in Berlin, New Hampshire, have managed to disqualify me from receiving any more food assistance and severely threatened my ability to remain within my house. I received notice today that I have until November 10 to either resolve matters to their satisfaction or, I guess, just leave--if only I had anywhere else to go.

I grew up with the notion that owning a house provided stability and security, but that is one more idea that's been destroyed by various life experiences here. Specifically because I am willing to be neither a bully nor a victim, it seems I have no choice except to leave, taking as many of my resources with me as possible, but I'm afraid this is going to be one more experience of tragic loss--especially if I cannot find someone to drive the moving truck while I drive my car, pulling my utility trailer and motorcycle.

Times of prayer and meditation have consistently encouraged me to remain positive and hopeful, but circumstances are marching forcefully in the opposite direction.

As has been the case for so many displaced persons around the world during the past few years and in spite of whatever ingenuity and past experience I may have, I simply don't know what more I can do.

So just in case this is the last newsletter I ever get to write, I wanted to say thank you.

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

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