

# sister who's perspective

*Sister Who's Perspective, Issue 241, July 2019, copyright*

## Overview

I think it would be fairly impossible for any neurotypical person to endure the myriad of thoughts which go through my head every day, but I do at least try to select the best of them to share each month with readers of this newsletter. Within the integration of thoughts and the living of life, perspectives and understandings are hidden, which can potentially transform the ordinary into the extraordinary--at least for those who allow it.

## The Cost of Normal

It always seems a bit peculiar to me when I hear a neurotypical person talk about how insightful life became when s/he started to really notice details, because that is my daily experience. My version of that challenge is remembering that the things which are (in some cases) painfully obvious to me, are (for all essential purposes) invisible to most of the world's population. Therefore, if either of us wants to see all that there is to see, we must effectively talk and listen to each other.

"Normal," conversely, is concerned with minimizing and/or regulating any anomaly or change, thus censoring (to varying degrees) what is creatively, relationally, ideologically, or potentially, otherwise available. On the surface, this might be an attempt to reduce effort, expense, emotion, or investment in the current matter. In actuality, it may cost one a collaborative opportunity that, from one perspective, at least, one can't afford to lose.

In the case of my temporary New Hampshire home, being threatened with homelessness, financial victimization, and unwarranted oppression, ultimately deprived that community of everything I would have otherwise contributed. Their definition of "normal" was ultimately inseparably tied to unhealthy obsessions with power and control. My values, in contrast, persuaded

me to choose family and freedom over a particular address and physical structure.

Indeed, my heart aches to be able to truly go home again and my mind is unable to come to terms with being forced out of a home four times--as if the world has decided that I am simply too anomalous to be worthy of any such place.

In the first case, I left because neither the county sheriff nor any of the surrounding community was willing to deal with a man and his family directly across the street from myself, who had been not only implicated but actually caught in the very acts of burglary, reckless use of firearms, poisoning others' dogs, and vandalism of others' property.

This was followed by eleven years of residence within a more urban setting, throughout which every financial institution I contacted, refused to provide a fair and appropriate mortgage contract.

The third and sadly short-lived possibility was in upstate New York, within a house that had been sitting empty for more than five years, which introduced me to just how opposed the local population was, to "outsiders" moving in and repairing what was otherwise completely unwanted by anyone within the local community.

So I like to think that I know first-hand just how high the cost of both normal and the cost of being unique can be. Be that as it may, I persist with the unknown original author, that "I'd rather be punished for what I am than rewarded for what I'm not." In any other case, it could be argued that the one whom I truly am, never truly lived at all.

What makes the cost of "normal" most insidious, however, is that most people don't seem to realize that they're paying it. Forms of oppression have become so normalized, that definitions of true and intelligent freedom have been mostly forgotten. Yet the good news is that they can still be rediscovered.

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

## The Price of Extraordinary

In reflecting upon the struggles of the past four years, I am often reminded of a quote attributed to Albert Einstein: "I attempted to live a normal life, but found it was quite impossible for me." What often goes unnoticed when people reach for the word, "extraordinary," however, is that it often fails to immediately include being inspirational, affluent, or even just having all of one's basic needs met. At some points, living such a life may even be truly painful.

So why would anyone pursue or embrace "extraordinary," when "normal" is so much better at avoiding conflict of any and every kind? Should all such persons be written off as those who are impossible to please, never satisfied with anything, or chronically restless and impatient? Could it conversely be argued that they have seen something which others have failed to see--something so valuable that they would gladly sacrifice "normal" in order to embrace it?

I have often cited the words of the plaque attached to my desk, which continue to challenge any temptation toward stagnation: "For those who have had to fight for it, life has a special meaning which the protected shall never know." That meaning was, is, and always will be, absolutely worth any and all sacrifices made in the course of its pursuit, but this should not be misinterpreted as any protection from occasional doubts. I find within my battles with doubt, however, a significant sort of deepening of perception, understanding, and compassion.

All things considered, I would ultimately rather tolerate the doubts than embrace shallow answers unable to support me during times of difficulty. What is perhaps more difficult, however, is tolerating the absence of what I have long prayed for my life to include. If Highest Wisdom and Greatest Love has nonetheless decided that mine is to be a life of service rather than of enjoying more usual configurations of home, family, and community, my goal must be to find the wisdom within such a divine choice.

It is at this point that I wonder if there might be a significant amount of resonance

between being extraordinary and being real, in the sense described by the skin horse within the timeless classic, "The Velveteen Rabbit." In both cases, once one has taken even just the first steps in that direction, it is impossible to ever return to pre-existing states of being. As phrased by modern terminology, "Some things can't be unseen" (after having been seen).

All of that having been noted, I have yet to hear anyone express regret about being extraordinary or being real. To genuinely and truly wish to be less than one is or has become, is quite unthinkable. Perhaps life would be simpler, but it would be less alive.

A significant challenge to this within every age of human history, are those times and places within which the societal environment has become so oppressive, that a wide variety of self-destructive addictions and distractions have become so common as to be described as epidemics. More directly, when the world becomes a place unfit for habitation but one has no means (other than death) of leaving it, killing one's awareness--a little at a time--may seem like the only available refuge. The alternative which is often overlooked, perhaps because it is a lot more work, is embracing new ways of being.

Yes, the price of extraordinary is high, but I've never heard anyone regret paying it--just as I've never heard anyone who reached a summit of Colorado's highest mountains, regret making the climb. What cannot be seen from that mountaintop, however, are all of the ways that life will be different ever afterward, for both the hiker and every life that hiker's life subsequently directly or indirectly touches. Trivializing the hiker's accomplishment, sadly, may limit those subsequent positive effects.

Within costs of embracing extraordinary, is letting go of superficiality and casual regard. When every moment and creature is viewed as potentially sacred, all of life is blessed with potential transcendence. Yet specifically because one can only build the bridge halfway, the other must recognize potential sacredness as well.

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

## The Sacrifice of Time

Perhaps the most obvious characteristic of time that is nonetheless commonly overlooked is that once given, it can never be taken back again. That being the case, use of one's time could always be equally viewed as investments in future possibilities of various descriptions. A current example of such within this unconventional ministry, is the probability that I and an enhanced outdoor version of my portable chapel will be making an appearance at the Pride events in Pueblo, Colorado, on August 18.

On one hand, I think it is important to note that my time and energy are being given--even sacrificed, one could say--in order to make such events happen. I could just as easily be home watching a movie or out hiking a mountain somewhere, which would be far less personally taxing and even--in a selfish way--more enjoyable. To do so, however, would be inconsistent with the deepest truth of who I am--which makes me wonder how often the things that I see people do, are specifically being done in order to avoid giving time to the development of deeper self-understanding.

The difference between giving one's time and sacrificing one's time, is not so much a question of emotional manipulation or any painfulness that may accompany the event or experience, but rather the question: what exactly does this investment of time mean? I have often given my time to things which were not all that important; things which were perhaps essential to daily functioning, but had no particular spiritual or philosophical repercussions. Conversely, in sacrificing my time for the sake of another or for the sake of a societal goal, I am aware of striving to create a positive effect upon the physical, emotional, or spiritual life of another.

This is more reliably accomplished if my

*"The darker it gets,  
the more important  
the light becomes."*

-- Sister Who

gift of time is not trivialized by the recipient--like a toy or a tool one receives as a holiday or birthday present, which is never used for play or work. This could even apply to those times during which the investment of time is given to one's self. Taking time for self-care or for recovering from an exhausting period of intense engagement with others, should not be construed as narcissistic activity.

Giving up time with others--occasionally--may be the only way to reestablish essential and true communication with one's self. It is within such times of personal retreat, that internal strength essential to future success is built. Time spent escaping from such deeper awareness, conversely, is negatively sacrificed, specifically because of the ways that essential growth does not occur.

For myself as a writer, this has always been a bit of a conundrum, because while I recognize that time must be taken from other activities in order to get important writing done, I often find that I cannot write beyond a certain point, until certain experiences of living have occurred. In all honesty, I don't think I had the ability to write the most recent chapters of my autobiographical work about being Sister Who, without the influence of years of intense struggle. If I could not get past surface appearances, I would have no deeper understanding of the person, the forms, or the events which are central to the complex and multi-dimensional story.

A final consideration of sacrifices that sometimes is overlooked, is that they are not always voluntary. In some cases, they may even be synonymous with theft. Religious abuse encompasses a great many examples of this--dogmas that require giving beyond what is recommendable for a person who is experiencing too many limitations already.

As much as I should have the freedom to give more than seems reasonable, the moral tone of my gift is altered when it is no longer my choice, but rather a demand from my community, that determines the size and quality of my gift. Additionally, it may not be that I actually want to give, but rather that something important will be lost if I don't.

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

## The Investment of Love

It seems that self-sacrificing love has become quite rare within the modern world, regardless of being a common theme within much of the world's folklore and religious history. The general moral lesson is nonetheless that such sacrifices will be rewarded in some way or another. Actual experience, of course, often seems less so.

All of which is why I try to remind myself each day, not to judge any particular moment of life while standing too close to it. I have often been inspired by a lesson drawn from Thornton Wilder's play, "Our Town," to know that one lives while doing it, but the unfortunate qualifier of that is that even such knowledge is unable to make the moment last any longer than it does. What makes such moments worth remembering, however, are investments of love--no matter what emotion one might have felt at the time.

There have in fact been numerous times when I was very frustrated and angry about the adversity of a particular challenge, but too stubborn to walk away from overcoming it--realizing only later that the commitment I demonstrated to the particular context was evidence of loving the home or situation enough to refrain from giving up on it. Sadly, the extraordinary amount of love I showed, was in most cases not rewarded by allowing me to linger within the context I'd built. My interpretation is that because I was not "normal enough" or easy to manipulate and control, local administrators wanted me gone--no matter what lies they had to create to accomplish that.

What couldn't be erased were the many hours I spent investing love by repairing or improving particular homes. Those many moments are eternally inscribed within the scope of human history on this planet, just as much as Camelot, people dancing on top of the Berlin Wall, or any other pivotal event. I can be forgotten, but my life can never be erased, specifically because of the love and determination I have invested within others.

Life filled with love, cannot be destroyed.

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

## On a Personal Note

Even during times of oppression when the general environmental encouragement is toward cynicism, it remains all the more essential to nurture every positive possibility, yet without over-reaching in ways that allow dishonesty or hypocrisy. I am thankful for all of those who were willing to contribute letters of personal reference/recommendation for last month's interview for a graduate-level teaching position, but all indications at this point are that personal bigotry tolerated by that administration will ensure that I am not selected. What a very peculiar hypocrisy, that an institution expressing a commitment to higher education would indulge deplorable examples of small-mindedness.

Through an unassuming but essential encounter, however, I am now investigating a different possibility of completing a doctoral degree. It is unknown at this point, whether efforts in this new direction will be rewarded, but it seems to be another example of how circumstances may seem quite stuck during certain periods of time, only to change at an astonishing speed when one least expects. I am striving to remember the truth of myself throughout such oscillations, however, and to regard them as seasons of life which are uncharted and unanticipated, but ultimately empowering--suggesting the possibility of a larger and wiser divine plan for my life.

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

### **Subscription Information:**

"Sister Who's Perspective" is a free monthly newsletter. If you appreciate this newsletter, please consider supporting the ongoing work by either a check payable to Denver NeVaar or an online donation through [www.PayPal.com](http://www.PayPal.com) to the email address of [dn@sisterwho.com](mailto:dn@sisterwho.com). Comments, questions, and suggestions are always welcome.

*Sister Who a/k/a Rev. Denver NeVaar, MTS*

*POB 16074, Golden, CO 80402*

*email: [dn@SisterWho.com](mailto:dn@SisterWho.com)*

*Internet website: <http://www.SisterWho.com>*

### **Additional Informational Internet Websites:**

*[www.GodSpaceSanctuary.org](http://www.GodSpaceSanctuary.org)*

*[www.DenverNeVaar.info](http://www.DenverNeVaar.info)*

*[www.YouTube.com/DenverNeVaar](http://www.YouTube.com/DenverNeVaar)*

*[www.SpiritusErosqueIntertexti.org](http://www.SpiritusErosqueIntertexti.org)*