

Practical Tips for Peaceful Living

(Volume V ... Sept 2016 – Sept 2017)



*... a collection of brief commentaries
on the meaning of real Peace, and
on the making of a Peace-filled Life*

via Scaughdt
an (i)am publication



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“Every moment of every day, it is you and you alone who decides what you believe and how you act on those beliefs. It is you and you alone who chooses who you become ... And no matter what you have learned in your past, and no matter what is happening to you in your Here&Now, you always get a second chance -- in every second anew.” ~ unknown

"Do more than belong: participate.

Do more than care: serve.

Do more than believe: practice.

Do more than be fair: be kind.

Do more than forgive: have compassion.

*Do more than dream: **DO.**"*

~ inspired by William Arthur Ward



“One of the great tragedies of life is that men seldom bridge the gulf between practice and profession, between doing and saying. A persistent schizophrenia leaves so many of us tragically divided against ourselves. On the one hand, we proudly profess certain sublime and noble principles, but on the other hand, we sadly practice the very antithesis of these principles. How often are our lives characterized by a high blood pressure of creeds and an anemia of deeds! We talk eloquently about our commitment to the principles of Christianity, and yet our lives are saturated with the practices of paganism. We proclaim our devotion to democracy, but we sadly practice the very opposite of the democratic creed. We talk passionately about peace, and at the same time we assiduously prepare for war. We make our fervent pleas for the high road of justice, and then we tread unflinchingly the low road of injustice. This strange dichotomy, this agonizing gulf between the ought and the is, represents the tragic theme of man's earthly pilgrimage.” ~ Martin Luther King Jr.

An Introduction to what Follows...

Being a Peace Pilgrim, it almost goes without saying that quite a few of my thoughts & writings from the past twelve+ years have to do with illuminating the profound “Inner Peace” that can be experienced by all those choosing to live the Way of selfless Kindness. Of course, it also almost goes without saying that this Way is more a practical manner of *living* than it is an abstract measure of philosophy or reason ...

And thus it makes significant sense that many of the aforementioned writings ended up describing several of the practical methods we humans can use to make real Peace a very real Reality in our everyday lives (as opposed to a mere theory, a mere hope, or a mere fantasy).

This is the fifth volume of my Blog’s collection of those written thoughts. May they inspire you to bring real, deep-seated Peace into the lives of others – and thereby rediscover that same Bliss in your own.

Amen ... Let it be so.

Scaughdt
(October 2017)



*“Out there, beyond all ideas of wrongdoing
and rightdoing, there is a field of Love ...
Go on ahead ... I'll meet you there.”
~ inspired by Rumi*

“Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of Love. And then, for a second time in the history of the world, we humans will have discovered fire.”
~ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

*“Better than a thousand hollow words
is the one word that brings Peace.”*
~ G. Buddha

The End of Enlightenment ...
(09/01/2016)

An escalation of dis-ease or discord in those around you
is a sign that you are walking The Way.

Keep walking anyway ...

Succumbing to fears of “not getting it right”
assures that you won’t get it Right.

Relax, and ***keep walking anyway ...***

Anything that comes to you smoothly
will leave you just as easily.

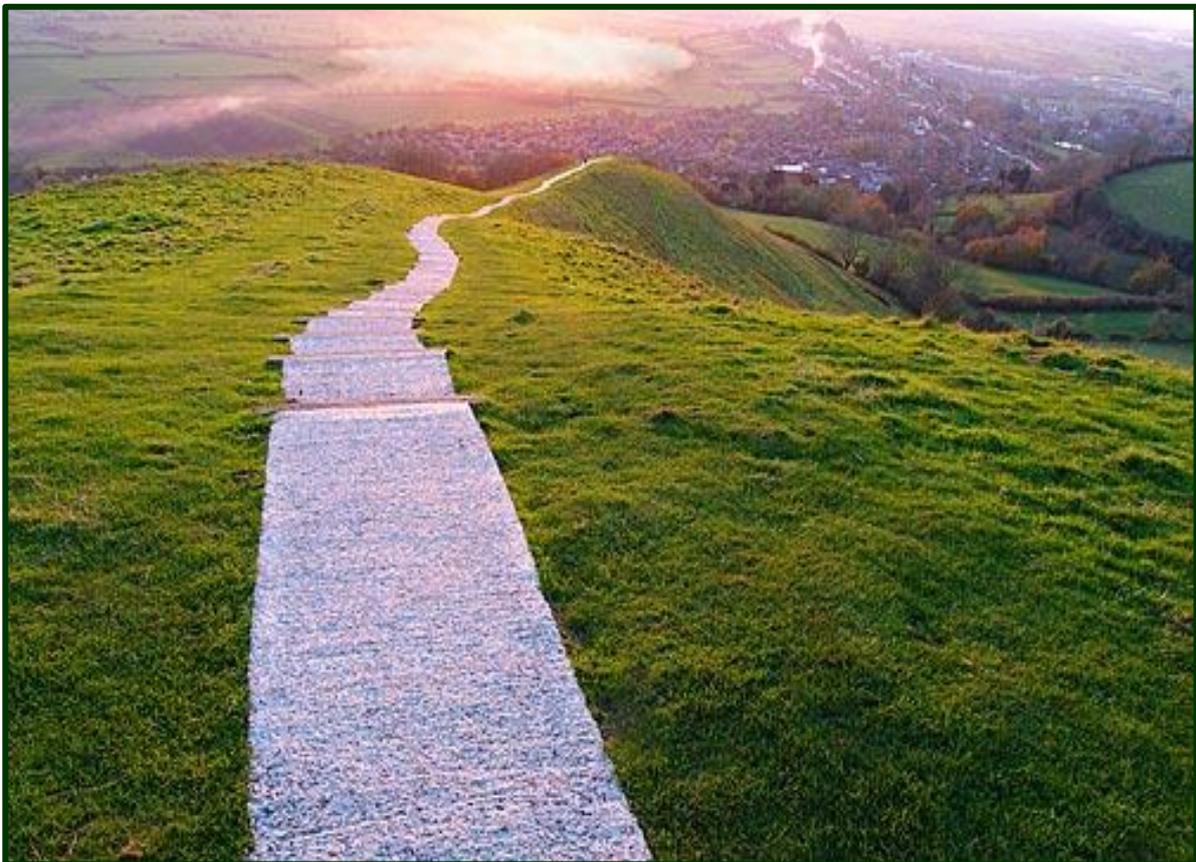
Keep walking anyway (it will come to you again) ...

The only way to “find your Self”
is to Care-fully choose to lose your self.

When feeling lost, ***keep walking anyway ...***

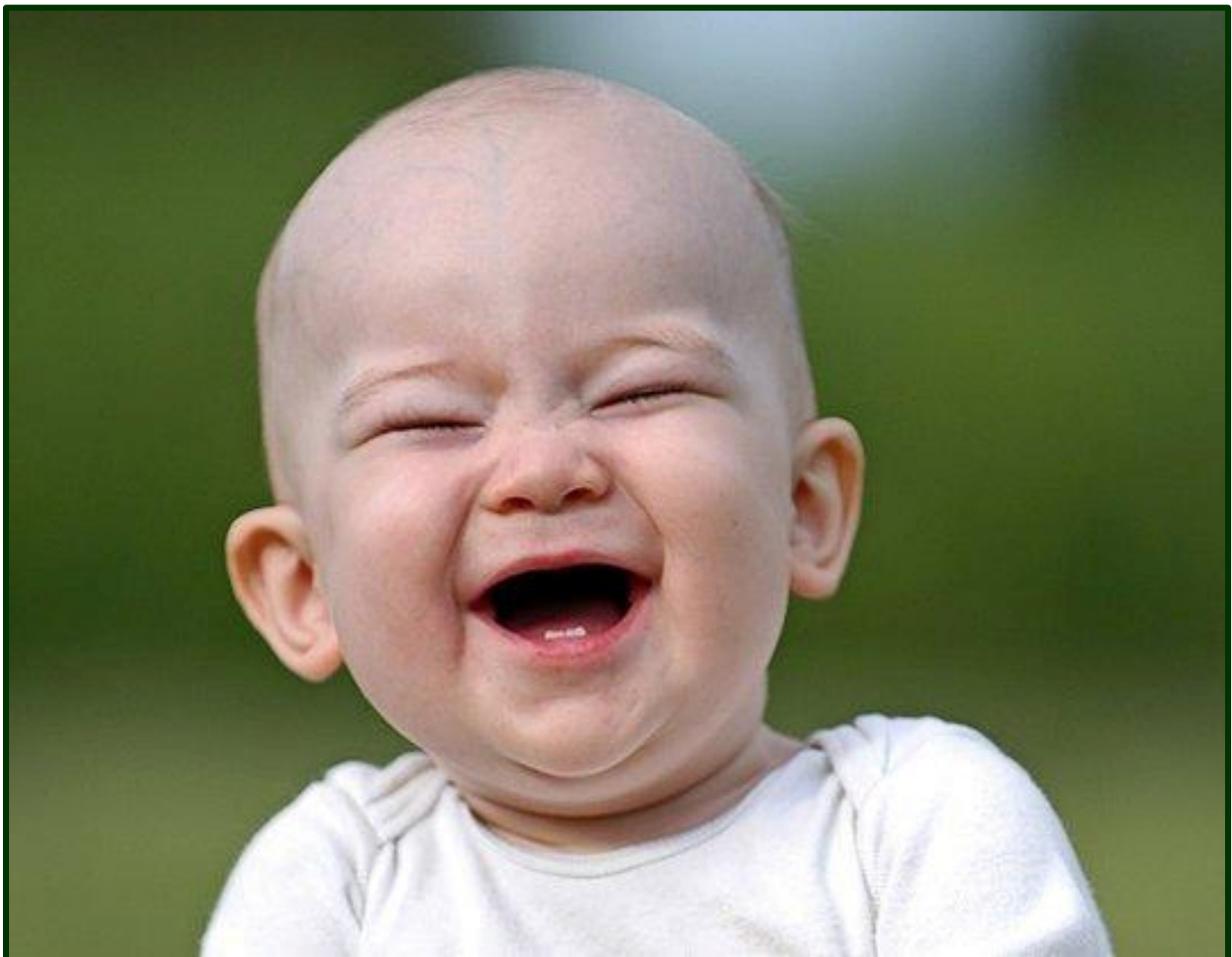
The only way to be Care-full, is to cease being careful.
So especially when times are dark and “dangerous”,

keep Loving anyway.



To wrestle with despair ...
(09/02/2016)

“We've forgotten that a rich life consists fundamentally of serving others, trying to leave the world a little better than you found it. We need the courage to question the powers that be, the courage to be impatient with evil and patient with people, the courage to fight for social justice. In many instances we will be stepping out on nothing, and just hoping to land on something. But that's the struggle. To live is to wrestle with despair, yet never allow despair to have the last word.” ~ Cornel West



Finding true enJoyment ... (09/03/2016)

“The modalities of awakened doing are acceptance, enjoyment, and enthusiasm. Each one represents a certain frequency of consciousness, and you need to be vigilant to make sure that at least one of them operates whenever you are engaged in doing anything at all – from the most simple task to the most complex.” ~ Eckhart Tolle



Actually, if we are speaking here of living a life of Meaning, as opposed to vacillating “purpose;” of living a life of Joy, as opposed to fleeting “happiness;” of living a life of Peace, as opposed to hollow comfort, then it is not enough to speak superficially of acceptance and enjoyment and enthusiasm. It is not enough to merely mention them in passing, as though everyone knows what these attributes entail.

In fact, for Tolle to do so is incredibly misleading.

Indeed, if we choose to “accept” a situation in order to merely tolerate it until it “gets better”, we will suffer. And if we choose to “enjoy” life only to experience its physical & emotional pleasures, we will suffer. And if we choose to be “enthusiastic” about life in order to “manifest wealth” or “be successful” therein, we will suffer as well ... No, my Friends, the only way Eckhart’s statement here bears the Good Fruit of real Peace and deep-seated Joy is when we redefine the ramifications of his terms — and then live accordingly ... We truly **Accept** situations by being grateful for them — especially those that bring us no immediate benefit. We truly **Enjoy** life by using our days to serve our communities. And we show true **Enthusiasm** for living by sacrificing our own wants in order to fulfill others theirs.

This is what it means to live a truly Awakened Life ... All else is but sleep.



Never giving up ...
(09/04/2016)

This one's for all the Warriors ... For all those fighting for justice for the oppressed ... For all those fighting for equality for the persecuted ... For all those fighting for freedom for the enslaved ... For all those fighting for humanity by fighting against corrupt politicians and crude-oil carrying pipelines ... For all those fighting for tortured animals against the forces of vapid ignorance and cold-hearted cruelty ... For all those who are choosing to make their lives a Beacon of Light in a world gone to shadow and to make their lives a Shout for Justice in a world going deaf ... For all those who are choosing to STAND UP to the wickedness of the "powers that be" in order to bring forth the true Power that we must one day soon Become ... For all you Noble Warriors who wake every day and struggle not only against the evils that have surrounded you and turned our world upside down, but also against the subtly selfish "imps" within -- the ones whispering constantly of the slippery inevitability of defeat and the ultimate hopelessness of even trying at all ...

To all of you I say: WE CAN DO THIS!

.....

Rise and shine, people ... It's 6:30am and the sun is not even up yet and your hand can't even make it to the alarm clock before the voices in your head start telling you quite clearly that it's "too early" and "too dark" and "too cold" for you to get out of your cozy bed ... And your sleepy, somewhat aching muscles -- like your drowsy, still groggy intentions -- lie motionless in rebellion, transparently yet insistently pretending not to hear your Soul commanding them to move, all while an entire chorus of voices are whispering in unison their permission for you to simply hit the snooze button and go back to sleep ... But on this day, you're not going back to sleep. This day you will do something different -- on this day you won't ask their opinion and you won't listen to that opinion when they give it to you anyway. Today, there is another voice within you to which you have chosen listen -- the voice of calm defiance; the voice that says there was a very good reason that you set that alarm in the first place. So it's time to buck up, sit up, put your feet on the floor, and don't look back towards that bed because you have important Work to do ... There are people in need out there and there are at least a dozen small ways that you can ease their pain, and you are going to get started doing so RIGHT NOW.

And this is the debate you engage every day of your life; for each day is a renewed series of arguments between the voices tempting us to walk the easy way and the Voice within reminding us that we can re-forged the Right Way instead ... And the voices of temptation are many -- with at least 10,000 tributaries spreading out into each instant; fanning out like the muddy rivulets of a river delta; each one slow & clogged with silt and sludge -- each one promising a path of cozy familiarity & least resistance -- a path of comfort -- a path of pleasure -- a path of ease ... And yet the thing is -- on this day you have already decided to return to the River; on this day you have already decided to return to a life that is not nearly as easy, and yet one that is filled with far more Power & Meaning & Purpose ... And now that you have made that choice, there is no turning back -- the current of Goodness is simply too strong. And your ego knows this is so, which is why so many refuse to ever make this leap in the first place -- why so many turn away and never engage the courageous re-immersion into The River it requires.

And yet you have done so -- and now that you have done so, now that you have made your life no longer about you & yours but about us & ours, you have finally arrived at Day ONE -- the day of your personal rebirth. And it is now, at this daring time of resolve, that you begin to feel truly fantastic; better than you have ever felt before ... Desire falls away and is replaced by Caring; fear falls away and is replaced by Service ... You are tempted to feel proud, and yet this is no time to dwell on the bravery you have exhibited or how far you have come. You understand now more than ever that you are in a fight against an opponent you cannot see, but one that you can always hear & always feel -- even always taste. Indeed, when you close your eyes you can hear that internal enemy you right there nearby -- close on your heels, breathing down your neck. And you know exactly who that enemy is ... That's right -- It's **you**; that other you; the you comprised of all your doubts and all your fears and all your insecurities; the you who wishes the real You had never shown up; the you who wishes You never had the guts to make a real Life out of your living -- the you that wishes you were still tucked away safe in bed ... It's always there, this altered-ego; you can never be rid of it. And yet be not discouraged. Though it cannot ever be fully defeated, it has a permanent & fatal weakness -- and that Achilles heel is your resolve to Care again ... & again ... & again ... & again ... This is what some call “the grind” -- the eternal battle between the you that wants only fun & comfort, and the You that wants to Live your life to the max before you die. There will always be this “demon” on your shoulder, and yet the more you choose to smile at him and Do Good Anyway, the quieter he gets ... The more you choose to get up out of bed at the break of dawn to go forth and serve others -- any others -- the less he has to say ... And this is the only way to beat the Darkness within you -- a raw, unadulterated, radical persistence of choosing to Live in the Light.

So today, choose to remember who you truly are ... Drown out the voice of doubt with your determination to make a positive difference in someone else's life; set aside your insecurities by remembering that your selfless deeds -- no matter how “small” -- always count & are innately potent; burn away the subconscious fears ladled over your Soul by instincts & upbringings & politicians & preachers. Simply keep getting up to go Do Good Anyway. Remember what amazing possibilities life holds; remember what profound Meaning awaits you in every moment; remember the deeper, noble reason why we are all here -- and remember that momentum has no power in the realm of a well-lived Life; that only this moment counts, and that -- no matter what we might have done or not done in the moment before -- we can always pause anew in this moment and choose to Love again ... For no matter how many times your other you tells you that You are bound to fail; no matter how many times it tells You that You aren't making a difference; no matter how many times it tells You that You are “not ready” or “too weak” or “too busy” or “too tired” or “only one” or “only human” -- no matter how many times it tells You to just hit the snooze button and go back to bed ... Get up and **Do Good anyway**. Even if only for today, choose anew to get up and BE who you truly Are ...

Choose to RISE UP & SHINE!

Amen ... Let it be so.



45 Lessons of Living ... (09/05/2016)

Recently I was sent a power-point presentation containing “45 Lessons of Life” ... After watching it, I felt inspired to add my own thoughts (in *italics* below) -- thoughts that reflect the difference between *having* a good life vs. **living** a Great One.

01) Life isn't fair, but it's still good. *Of course, life is good because it is always "fair" ... Our consequences are consistently commensurate to our choices.*

02) When in doubt, just take the next small step. *Of course, any step taken solely for yourself is always a step in the wrong direction.*

03) Life is too short to waste time hurting anyone. *Actually, life is only short while you are hurting someone.*

04) Your job won't take care of you when you are sick – and yet your friends and family will. Stay in touch. *Actually, letting another take care of you ensures that you will remain spiritually ill. Wholeness only returns to us in those moments when we set aside personal desires & actively care for another.*

05) Pay off your credit card bills each month. *Actually, you should pay off your credit cards once and for all.*

06) You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree. *Actually, you cannot win **any** argument. Agree to agree instead.*

07) Cry with someone, as it's more healing than crying alone. *Actually, crying ensures continued depression – double so when you cry with another. Smile &/or laugh with them instead.*



08) It's OK to get angry with God. He can take it. *Actually, it's completely counterproductive to get angry with God, seeing as how He only comprehends Love.*

09) Save for retirement starting with your very first paycheck. *Actually, it is wisest to save **nothing** for retirement. Instead, share everything you have in every moment you have it.*

10) When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile. *Actually, resistance is always futile, **and yet** succumbing is always a choice.*



11) Make peace with your past so it won't screw up your present. *Actually, we are here to make peace with our past to bring others Joy in our present.*

12) It's OK to let your children see you cry. *Actually, it's OK to let anyone see you cry. **Laugh anyway.***

13) Don't compare your life to others. You don't know what their journey is about. *And remember that analyzing others or gossiping about them is comparing them ... Avoid doing either.*

14) If a relationship has to be secret, you shouldn't be in it. *Actually, if a relationship is secret, it doesn't even exist.*

15) Everything can change in the blink of an eye. But don't worry – God doesn't blink. *Actually, everything **does** change in the blink of an eye ... and God is constantly blinking.*

16) Take a deep breath. It calms the mind. *Only take deep breaths to return to the moment – the only place where Kindness can blossom.*



17) Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful. *Of course, anything you own that doesn't help another is not truly useful, beautiful or joyful.*

18) Whatever doesn't kill you really does make you stronger. *Of course, self-centeredness always kills You.*

19) It's never too late to have a happy childhood, and the second one is up to you. *And remember: Children only know the Here&Now, the place where Happiness is always a choice.*

20) When it comes to going after what you want in life, don't take NO for an answer. *Of course, far wiser is the one who gently and courageously **refuses** to go after what they want in life – unless they want to fulfill the want of another.*



21) Don't save for special occasions. Today is special. *The only time today is truly special is when you use your finest to further another's Joy.*

22) Over-prepare, then go with the flow. *Actually, it is impossible to go with the flow while preparing.*

23) Be eccentric now. *Actually, real Honesty is never eccentric ... Just remember to be your Self.*

24) The most important sex organ is the brain. *Actually, seeing as how Love is the only thing that is truly Important, there is no such thing as an "important sex organ."*

25) No one is in charge of your happiness but yourself. *Actually, you cannot experience real Happiness until you fully let go of being in charge.*

26) Frame every disaster with the question "In f years, will this matter?" *It is actually far wiser to frame every disaster with the question "What good can I do in response to this tragedy right now?"*

27) Always choose life. *And choose to truly live by choosing to serve another.*

28) Forgive everyone everything. *And remember to do so by extending them acts of Kindness.*

29) What others think of you is none of your business ... *Others hear what you do, not what you say or what you think.*

30) Time heals almost everything. Give time, time. *Actually, only Love can heal (and it is impossible to Love while waiting to be healed).*

31) However good or bad a situation is, it will change. *Actually, every situation exists only in the moment – and as such never changes. Accept it in the only moment you can: now.*



32) Don't take yourself seriously – No one else does. *And remember -- the only way to not take yourself seriously is to honor your opportunities to serve.*

33) Believe in miracles. *See miracles in the “normal” -- & the “boring” -- & the “ugly” -- & the “enemy”.*

34) God loves you because of who God is, not because of what you did or didn't do. *Actually, God loves you because you are a potential agent of God's Love – a direct reflection of God Itself. So remember to act accordingly.*

35) Don't audit life. Show up and make the most of it. *Actually, when “showing up” is being actively kind to others, then “showing up” is making the most of life.*



36) Growing old beats dying young. *Actually, to the one who is selfish, a long life is extended misery – and to the one living for others, even the shortest of lives has lasting Purpose & Peace.*

37) Your children only get one childhood. *And in any given moment, your Love only gets one chance.*

38) All that matters in the end is that you loved. *Actually, nothing matters in the end. Your Love matters only in the moments it is given, and Now is the only time you've truly got.*

39) Get outside ... Miracles are waiting everywhere. *Actually, miracles are just as prevalent inside as out.*

40) If we threw our problems in a pile and looked at them next to the piled up problems of others, we'd grab ours back in a hurry. *Actually, if we all threw our problems to the side, we'd know where to start helping others with theirs.*

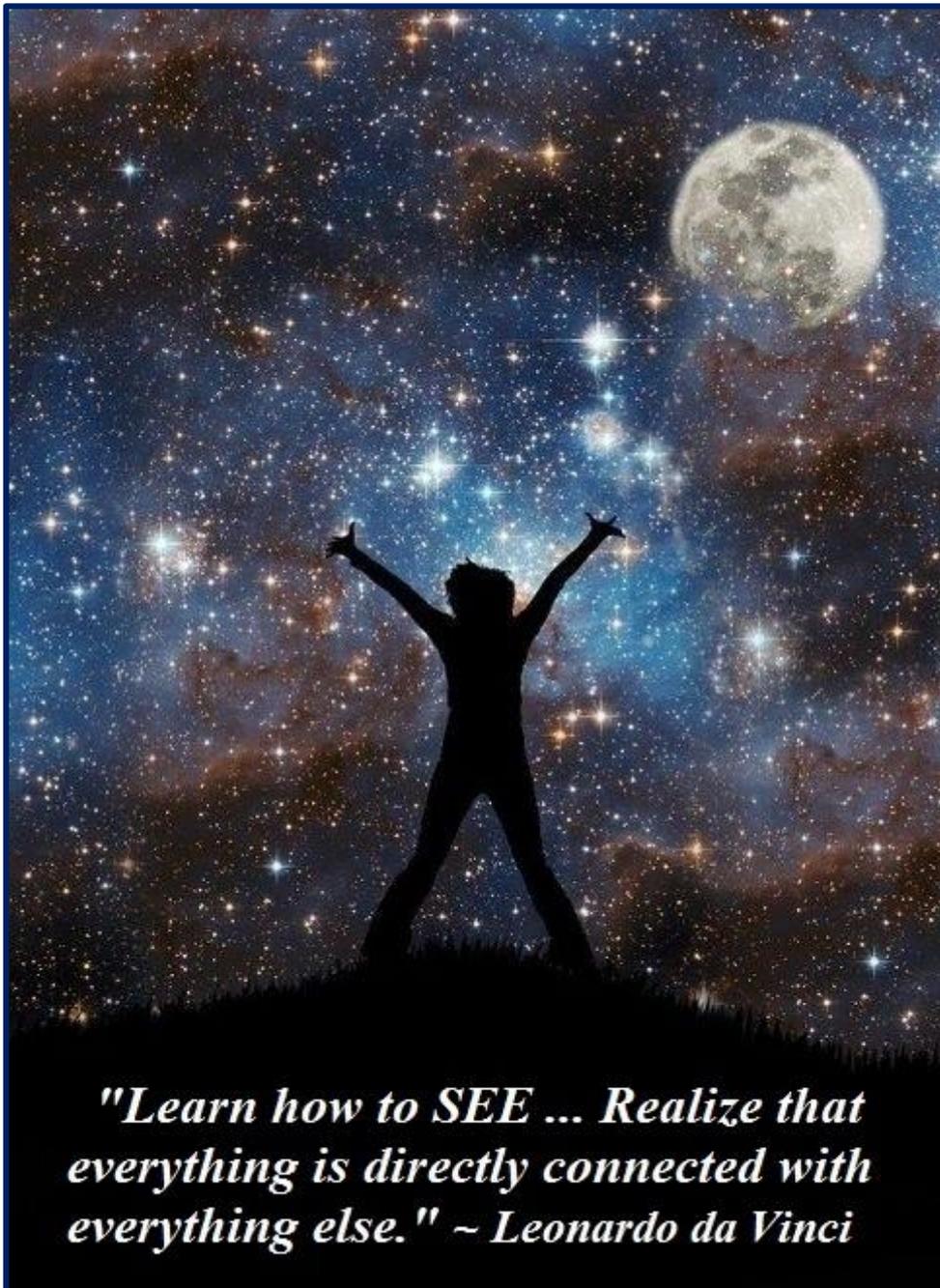
41) Envy is a waste of time. You already have everything you need. *Actually, all we need is the ability to actively Care – a choice which is always available.*

42) The best is yet to come. *Actually, nothing is yet to come. The best is already (& always) right here.*

43) No matter how you feel, get up & show up. *And remember -- especially in those moments when you feel most terrible, get up and show Love.*

44) Yield. *Actually, we are not to merely yield – we are to yield **actively**.*

45) Life isn't tied with a bow, and yet it's still a gift. *Indeed, life is always Wonder-filled – we just need to have the Courage to take a **Good** look.*

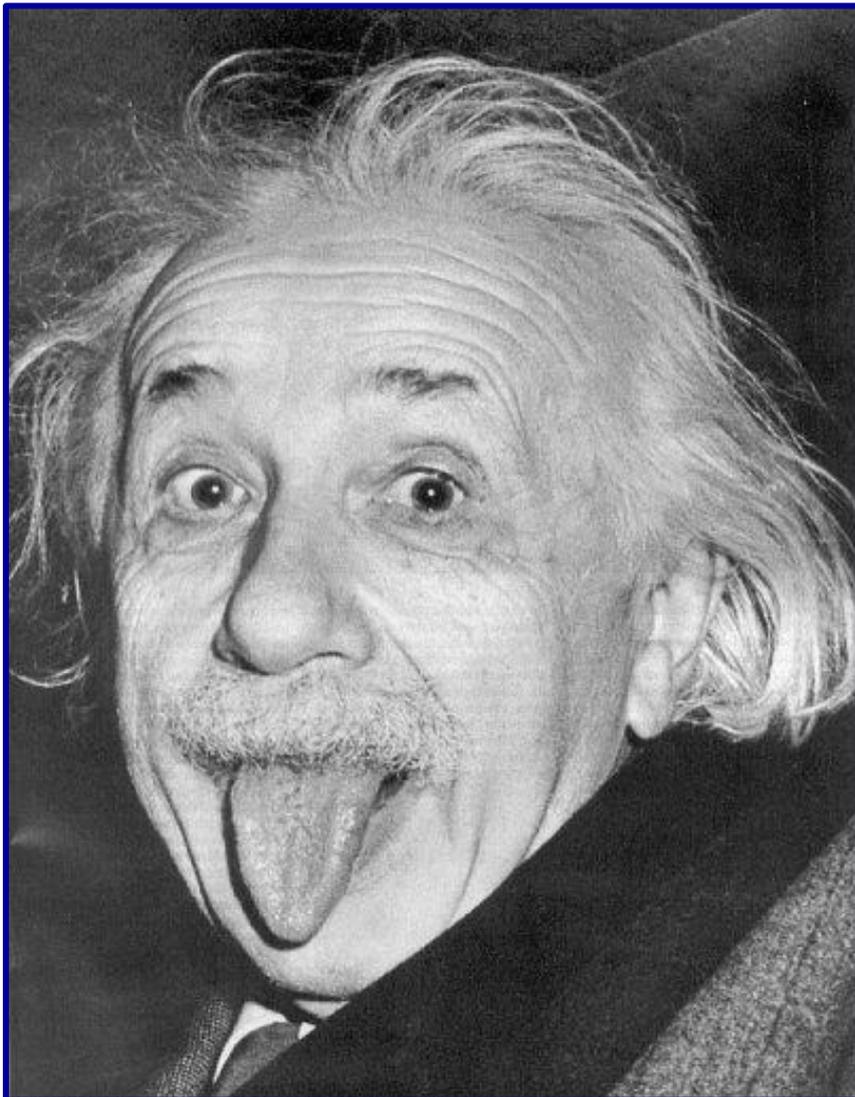


Einstein's Truth ...

(09/06/2016)

“He who joyfully marches merely to the music of rank and file has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him only a spinal cord would surely suffice. This disgrace to civilization should be done away with at once. How despicable and ignoble war is! I would rather be torn to shreds than be a part of so base an action. It is my conviction that killing under the cloak of war is nothing but an act of murder ... A human being is a part of a whole, called by us ‘Universe’, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest — a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison, restricting us to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by *widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures.*” ~ via Albert Einstein

Remembering that true Comprehension comes only when a concept is actively *experienced*, it is my wish that we all come to Comprehend this particular Wisdom.



To the Horizon ...

(09/07/2016)

Antoine de Saint-Exupery once said: *If you want to build a ship, don't drum up men to gather wood, give them orders, and divide up the work. Instead, gather those same men, and then teach them to yearn for the far and endless sea.*

So what is the “ship” we are building? It is a new world order of **Peace** — a Peace amongst nations, a Peace amongst religions, a Peace amongst individuals, a Peace within ourselves ... And how are we to teach others to yearn for this “sea” that is this Peace? By setting sail ourselves — **Peace-fully**.

Amen ... Let it be so.

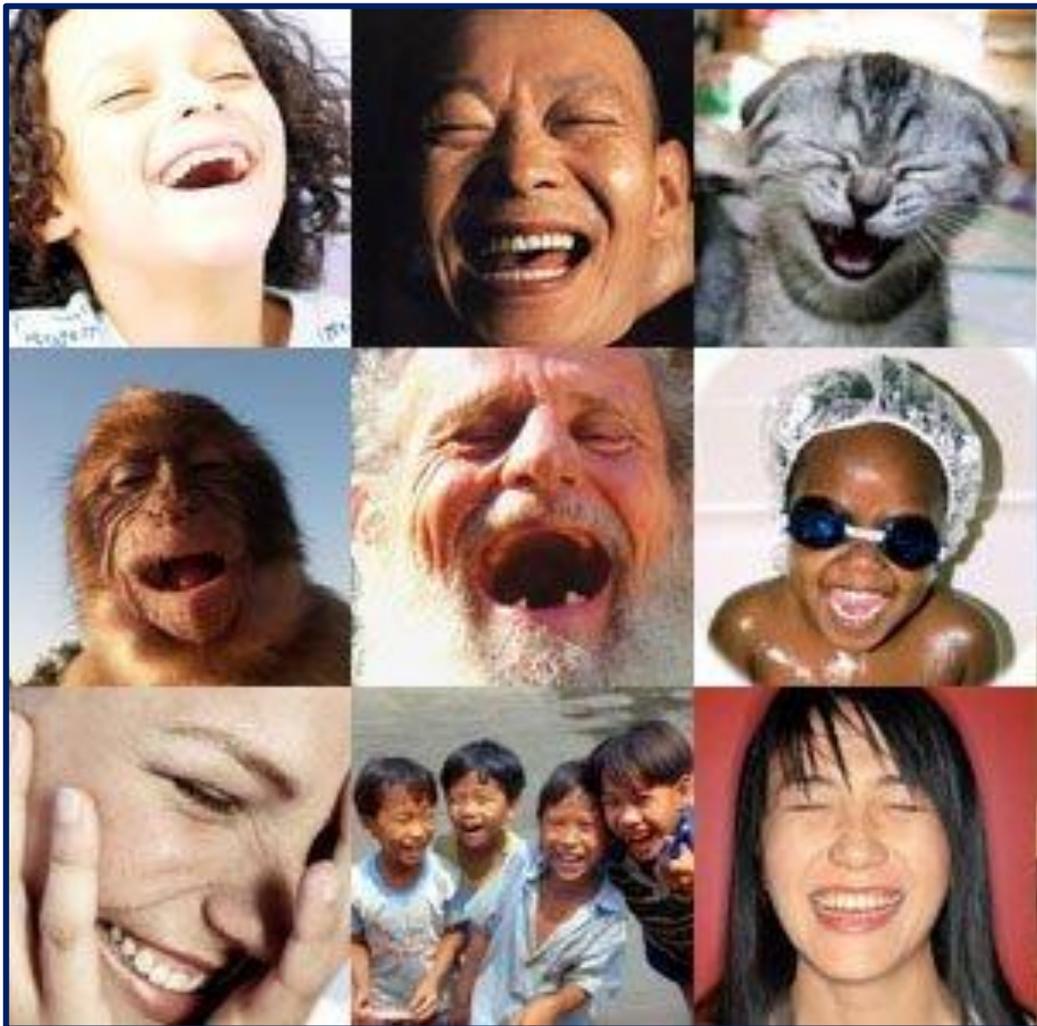


Joy of the Spirit ...
(09/08/2016)

“The influence of a vital person vitalizes, there’s no doubt about it. The world without spirit is a wasteland.” ~ Joseph Campbell

Of course, this is not to say that all those without a conscious appreciation of Spirit are unhappy or always suffer. And yet, it has been my experience that the droning life of the material & the mundane is truly a “wasteland” when *compared* to the scintillating and Meaning-full life one experiences when choosing to appreciate the Divinity of other beings &/or the Purpose that is innate to every happenstance.

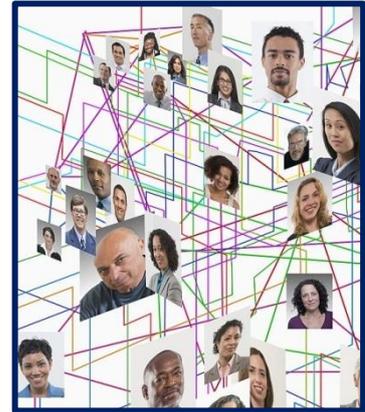
Those without such an appreciation may experience moments of “wealth” or “pleasure”, and yet they also remain ignorant of the far greater Abundance and the far greater Joy they *could* be experiencing — were they to but set aside their personal desires in favor of a life dedicated to relieving the burdens of others, bringing those others an enhanced sense of Joy, &/or immersing themselves into the Beauty that is ever surrounding them.



Repairing Reality ... (09/09/2016)

Here are five thoughts (with a little boost from William Cottringer) on what we can do to alter the “undesirable” segments of our lives ...

1. Realize that ***everything is interconnected***. It might be a cliché, and yet the real truth of the matter is that you can't un-connect the parts of something that are undesirable until you choose to see their intimate oneness with their more desirable parts. It's called Acceptance, and it's critical to attaining any measure of deep-seated Peace & emPowerment. The most important connection to notice is the one between your dualistic beliefs (seeing yourself as separate from your surroundings), the limitations of true awareness that those thoughts engender, and the painful results you get when you allow such self-centered delusions to guide your decisions.



2. Realize that ***our dualistic minds create our delusions***. The human brain continually divides things into “this and that”, “yes and no”, “truth and false” etc. Of course, the most insidious illusion of all is the one that separates “us” from the rest of everything; an “us” that is actually connected in the unity, wholeness and oneness of the Universal Totality. The most important step to make in re-enhancing your clarity of perception is choosing to see all opposites as just different sides of the same coin.

3. Realize that ***your emotions show you The Way***. The basic purpose of your positive feelings (all variations of love and peace and joy) is to let you know that you are moving towards wholeness. The basic purpose of negative feelings (all variations of fear and insecurity and desire) serve to warn us that we are headed away from that wholeness — and probably need to rethink our approach to what we are trying to do.



4. Realize that focused ***consciousness is only powerful when combined with courageous acts*** of kindness. It is not enough to focus positive thoughts and hope to thereby alter negative realities. To effectuate a solid shift in our surroundings, we must “pray with moving feet” in such moments — enlivening actions that are similarly Peace-full.

5. Realize that ***your outside is merely a reflection of your inside***. Everything that you experience externally is not so much your experience of objective reality, as it is your mirrored witnessing of your own internal ideas, beliefs and feelings. Pointing one finger out in judgment of another is simultaneously pointing three fingers back at yourself in discernment. Indeed, we can only witness those things that we recently were, already are, or very easily could be. This chosen awakening, when applied to any moment, will allow you to more humbly immerse yourself powerfully into its circumstances.



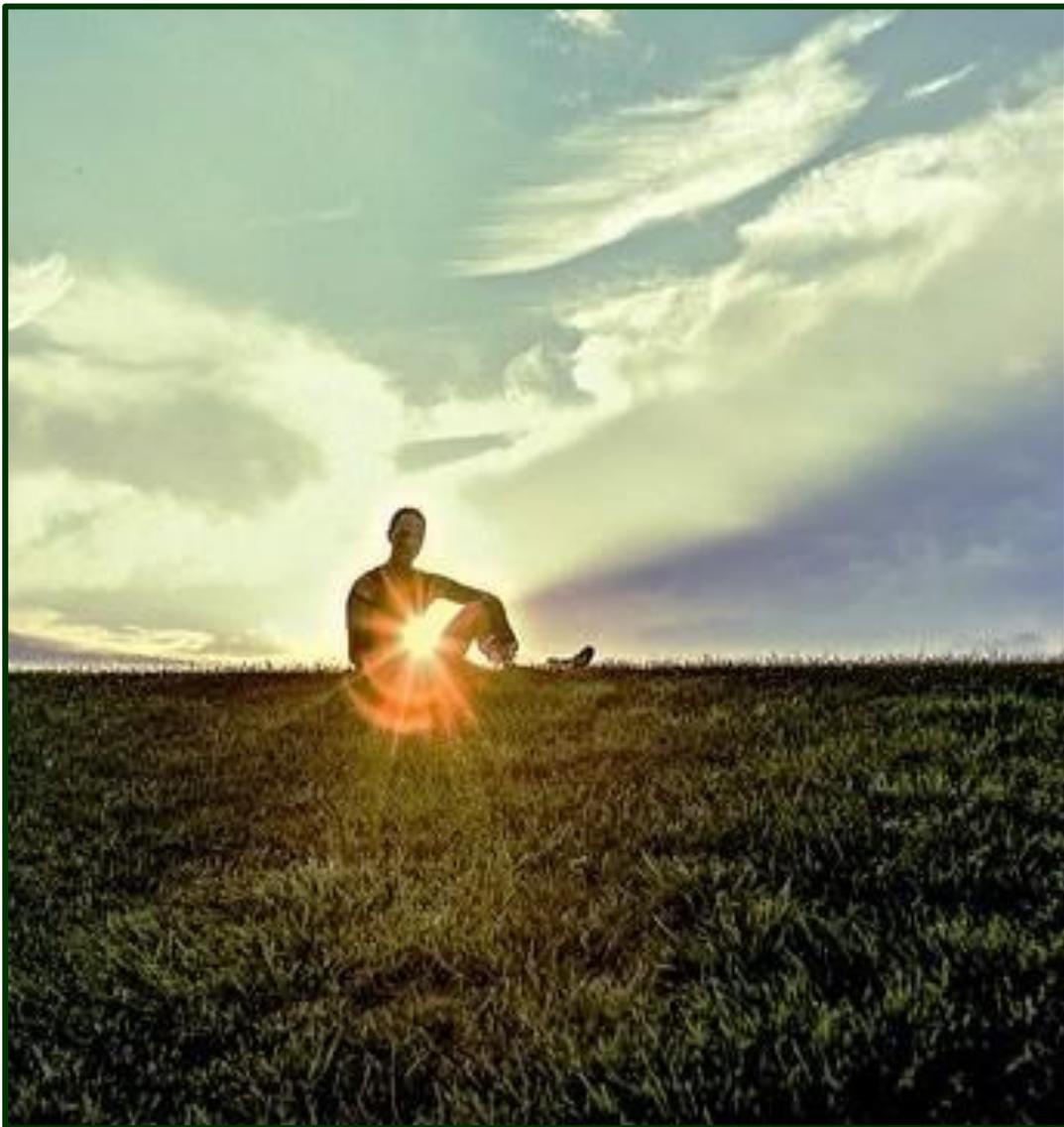
The Priceless Gift ...

09/10/2016

We have been given a priceless gift, my Friends. We have been given the chance to **WAKE UP** and become the Caring Stewards of our Earth -- Loving Caregivers of a gorgeous, global spaceship sailing through a Cosmic expanse of immeasurable Beauty.

We have not been called to gather for ourselves, but to *share with others* ... We have not been called to reap comfort, but to *sow Peace* ... We have not been called to "develop" the Earth, but to *gently tend* to the well-being of all her inhabitants ... We have not been called to accumulate wealth, but to *distribute Love* ... We have not been called to assert our own power, but to *uplift those in need* of the same.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Our LOVE is the River ...

(10/03/2016)

During our many months of journeying through life -- long chains of days composed of innumerable instants short yet sparkling; we are in touch with Death all along the way. And the reason we are ever connected with Death is because we have all known real LOVE. For we have all searched for Love -- and found Love -- and lost Love -- and mourned Love lost -- and let that mourning eventually fade -- And we all have risen thereafter to look for Love anew ... And the more we choose to do so, the more purely we do so -- the less we do so for our own pleasure or comfort or security, and the more we do so to bring Joy & Peace to the places where Joy & Peace are not.

And eventually, if we choose to Love enough, we come to know true, selfless **LOVE** -- and we sink into the reality that we *are* that Love -- and that we can manifest the same in every single moment of our lives; even in times of sadness -- even in moments of fear -- even in flashes of anger -- even when surrounded by death and suffering; especially when surrounded by death and suffering ... For it is in these moments -- moments when all seems lost and the Sun is gone and we feel as though it might never return and that a smile will never again touch our lips -- it is in *these* moments of darkness & shadow that our Love is both most precious and most powerful. For it is in these moments that we are most needed ... It is in these moments that we can bring real Hope to those in despair, it is in these moments that we can bring real Solace to those in pain, and it is in these moments that we can bring real Joy to those steeped in sorrow.

Indeed, it is in moments such as these that time stretches beyond the horizon and lengthens through the heavens ... It is in moments such as these when we choose to “**Love anyway**” that the regrets of the past & the worries for the future completely fade away, and we are left fully and completely in the Now -- fully and completely in this one, present moment; the one moment that is -- this one moment when time has no meaning and where Death holds no sway. In these moments there is nothing left to suffer, for there is nothing left to which to cling or for which to yearn. There is only Peace in the main current of life’s Great River, and our Love -- fully immersed within its flow ... This is the place where the walls we have built around our Souls shatter & tumble ... This is the time when we reach out through “healthy boundaries” barbed and “self-defenses” soured ... This is where we choose to **Care anyway** -- and thus this is where we defeat Death. For this is where we experience the Truth that Love is all there is -- that Love is the reason we are here -- that Love given purely cannot be dimmed or destroyed -- that Love given purely lives forever.

And it is then that we come to remember that it is Death & Loss that allow such a Love to be given; and that it is Death & Loss that allow such a Love to live ... So long live Death, my Friends ... and thereby longer live our Love.

(~ inspired by Naisah van Vliet)



Settling for Everything ... (10/08/2016)

"It's so easy for us to settle -- to settle for comfort; to settle for security; to settle for ease; to decry the courageous in favor of settling for the accepted or the familiar or the popular ... And this caving to convenience is understandable. After all, we are driven by eons-old instincts to find meaning & safety in 'connecting' and surrounding ourselves with those of like mind.

And yet when we settle for such settling, we miss out on the true magnificence that awaits us. For in reality, we are *all* intimately connected ... We are *all* Brothers & Sisters -- *all* co-travelers along the same River of Life. And if we settle for settling -- if we settle for excluding strangers and protecting ourselves from enemies and competing against our rivals and hoarding more than we need, then the far greater Victory is always lost. Because when we settle for such settling, we never take the leap of real Love -- and we thus never know what Love can be.

Real Love is always a risk ... Real Love is always dangerous ... Real Love is always a Leap of Faith -- always a verb; an act of Kindness done when we least wish to do it, especially for those 'least deserving' of the same ... Real Love means refusing to settle -- always requiring us to step outside of ourselves.



And yet we struggle to give so fully ... Instead, we come to Love's waters and meekly dip our toes into the same. We give where it is safe to give, and we love only those who are Loving us in return ... After all, we have already settled for warm & comfortable, so why bother leaping into the unknown? Why bother taking the risk?

Well, I'll tell you why we need to bother. We need to bother because settling for selfishness & settling for safety have brought us to the edge of disaster ... Look around you even now. Look at your Earth -- with her waters poisoned and her lands pillaged. Look to the animals -- confined and abused and murdered by the millions. Look to your neighbors -- many of them hungry and cold and afraid. Look at your Loved ones -- being tempted and teased and tormented by the corrupt from on high. We can no longer afford to settle, my Friends ... Your Loved ones need you to leap -- Your neighbors need you to Leap --- The animals need you to leap ... The Earth needs you to Leap.

The time has passed for apathy & and the age of selfish sloth has died. These are the days when True Warriors must rise ... Warriors who refuse to coddle the superficial -- Warriors who refuse to settle for injustice -- Warriors who refuse to sanction war. We can no longer merely serve us & ours ... We must awaken to the needs of our far greater Great Family -- and we must choose to boldly act accordingly. We must do so unconditionally, we must do so radically, and we must do so actively -- without holding back; without settling for anything but real LOVE.”

(~ inspired by Vanessa Curley)



LOVE will prevail ...
(10/08/2016)

Dark times are upon us, my Friends -- of that there can no longer be any doubt. The forces of greed & wickedness are more formidable than ever, and it can often seem as though they will overwhelm us all; as though they will swallow the Light and never let us see a new dawn of Justice & Compassion & Freedom ever again ... *And yet*, that dawn **will** one day come. Justice **will** triumph over capriciousness -- Compassion **will** triumph over apathy -- Freedom **will** triumph over oppression -- Love **will** triumph over greed & fear ... We may not live to see these great Victories, of course, and yet we can be assured that they are on their way. They may not arrive until the days of our children's children's children, and yet their arrival is as inevitable as tomorrow's rising sun.

Goodness **will** prevail, my Friends ... Now let us all go forth and let us walk its Golden Road; boldly doing our part to help make it so.



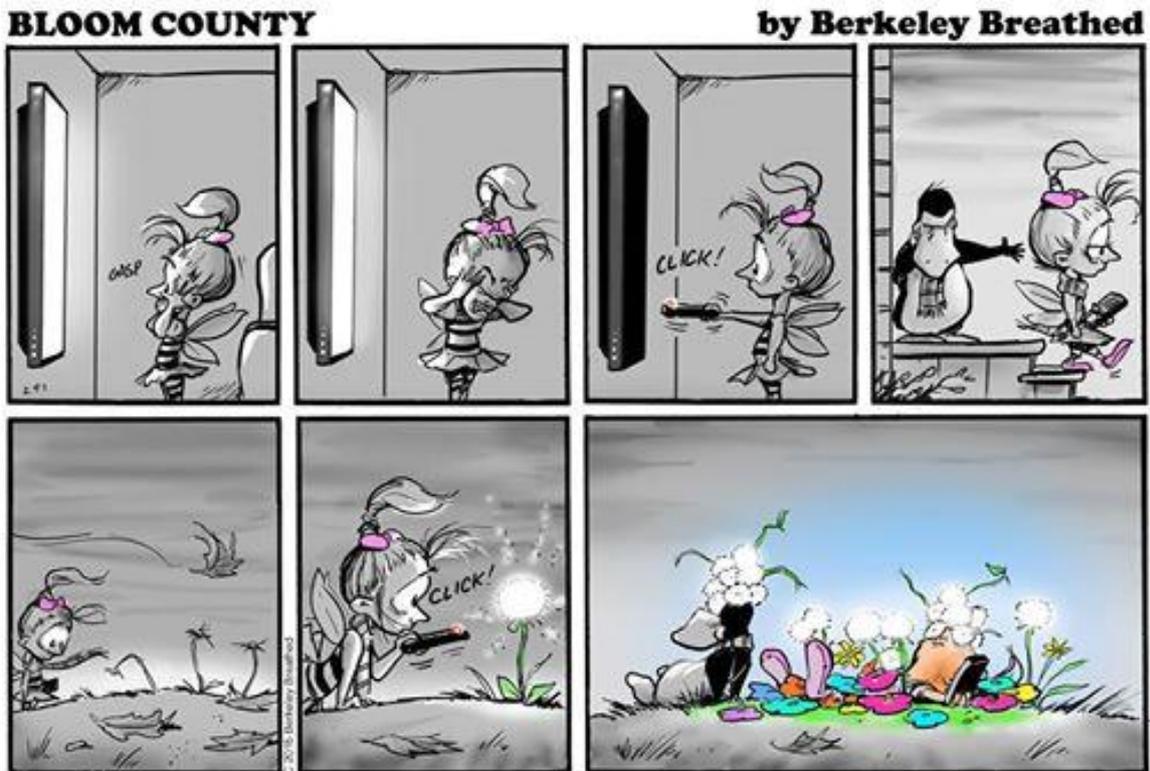
“The Lord is my shepherd, and I need never want or fear ... Even in times of hunger, I am allowed rest in green pastures. And even in times of drought, I am ever led to still waters. My Soul is repeatedly restored, and ever leads me onto paths ripened with opportunities to make peace where there is strife, and bring Love where there is mistrust ... Yea, even when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, still will I fear no evil. For *you* are with me and within me – your rod of righteousness & staff of solace are ever showing me The Way. *You* prepare a feast before me every morning, and do so even in the presence of my enemies. And *you* anoint my head with oil at every sundown, readying me to soon be born anew ... My cup runneth ever over -- and I bow my head in gratitude. Love and Mercy are the essence of all that is, and as such will follow me for all the days of my life. For I dwell in the House of the Lord – and pay homage for its amazing Grace with every moment, with every word, with every deed, and with every breath ... *Amen.*” (inspired by Psalm 23)

Turning life ON ...
(10/11/2016)

Hillary supporters championing their blatant war-monger candidate out of fear over an impotent blowhard ... The United States & Russia bombing the bajeesus out of innocents in Syria ... Political corruption and full-on full-shilled sell-outs infesting the current Congress (Yes, I am talking about you Elizabeth Warren -- and Al Franken -- and Bernie Sanders -- and John Lewis et al) ... Systemic racism having at least one unarmed Black American murdered by U.S. police every 30+/- hours ... A Nobel Peace Prize recipient giving literally tons of weapons and literally billions of dollars to a barbaric Saudi Arabian regime and a wickedly immoral pro-apartheid Israel, all while drone bombing innocent children in the Middle East on a weekly basis ... The United States – the wealthiest country in the world – currently having the highest child poverty rate of any developed nation

I could go on & on, of course, and yet I think I am going to do something different. I think I am going to **TURN OFF THE TV.** And then I think I am going to go outside into my community, and be a Light of Love instead.

Won't you please join me?

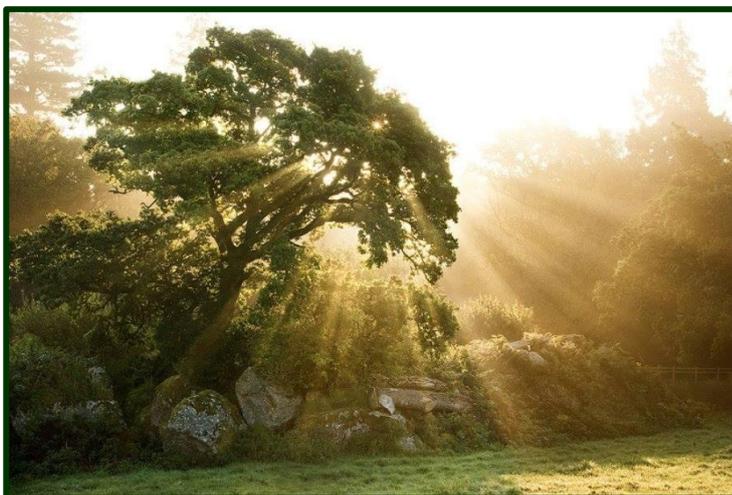


Lifting You Out ...
(10/24/2016)

"Everything I have written has been written for the express purpose of lifting you out of the common delusion that you are nothing more than a mere man or woman -- lifting you out into the greater reality of your real relationship to the Divine; lifting you into an awakened appreciation of your interconnectedness with everything around you; lifting you into a clear consciousness of what many call 'Oneness' ... This is the hallowed state of mind which every saint who has ever quested has sought & found, and the state of Soul to which every holy man that has ever lived has prayed.

Indeed, it is in this very state of mind that what many call 'God' intends for us all to live -- the state of mind that knows quite clearly that you are so much more than this mere 'person' you now believe yourself to be; this name -- this gender -- this race -- this nationality -- this profession -- this family history -- this religious dogma -- this political vehemence. For you are much, much more than any of these trifles, my Love. Indeed, what you are is an actual manifestation of the greater Cosmos -- a living, breathing, thinking, loving facet of 'God' Itself! Yes, my Beloved, you are to 'God' what a wave is to the ocean ... You are to 'God' what a leaf is to the tree ... You are to 'God' what a light is to every lamp ... You are to God what feet are to every pathway.

So read what is written here, my dear ... Read what has been written to See what there is to be Seen. And once Seen, once you remember that complete & unsurpassing Solidarity -- go forth to all around you and make that Oneness REAL --- Set the ocean into motion with your Kindness ...



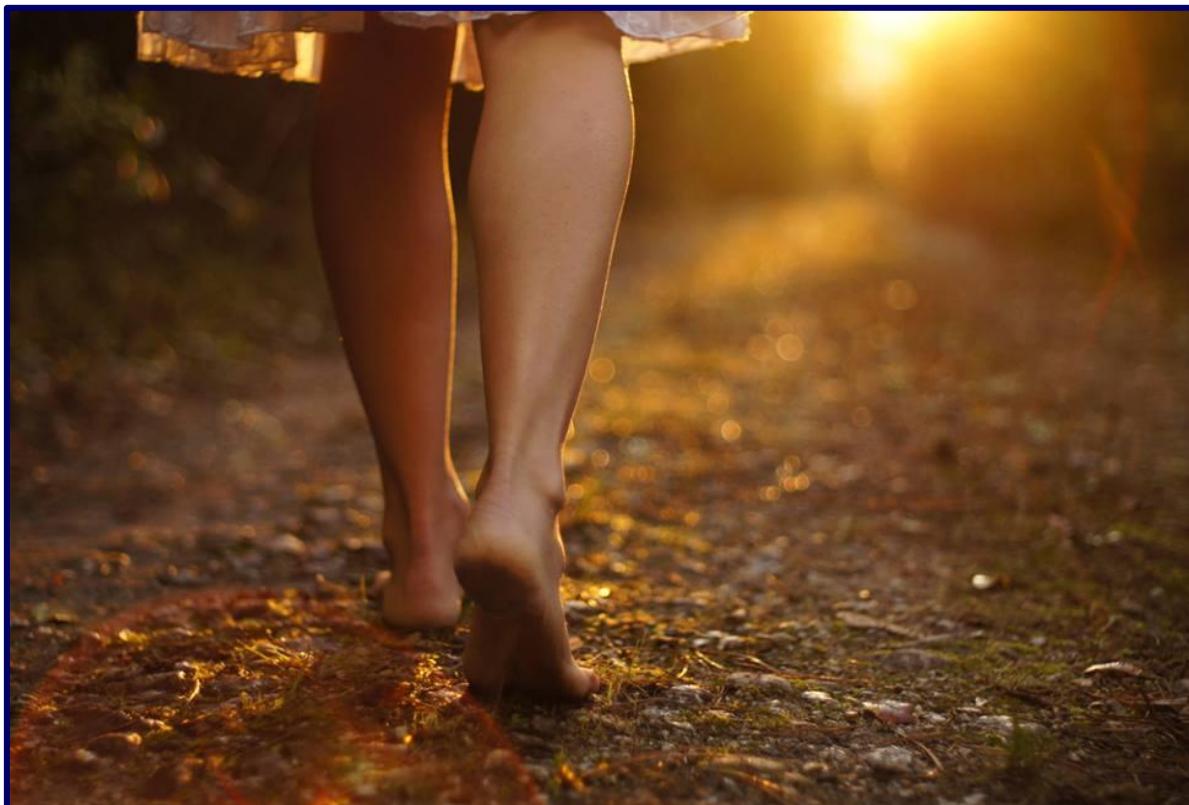
Nourish the tree of life with your Gratitude ...

Kindle the glow of others' inner
lamp with your Wisdom ...



And walk gently upon the path of our collective Soul with your Love.”

(~ inspired by Robert A. Clark)



Banksy & Star Wars ...
(12/29/2016)



Enough said ...
Truly; much more than enough.

A wish from the Heart ...
(01/11/2017)

When Love becomes a verb,
every discord becomes harmonious
and every chaos -- a symphony.



Walking ON ...
(01/17/2017)

Beauty is not what is seen by others as beautiful ...
Beauty is what is Done for others in Love.



“Was she simply too shallow to suffer indefinitely, or was she too wise to become attached to her suffering; too feisty to permit it to rule her life? She voted for wise and feisty and walked on, kicking leaves.” ~ Tom Robbins

Dancing is The Way ...
(02/01/2017)

“To live means to be creative, and to be creative means to be in love with life. You can be this kind of creative only if you love life enough that you want to enhance the Beauty of something nearby; you want to bring a little more music to a relationship, a little more poetry to a conversation, a little more dance to an interaction.” ~ inspired by Osho



Life is NOT a Journey ...
(02/02/2017)

As long as you see your life as a Journey, you will never get anywhere worth getting. For the only place ever worth getting to, of course, is the place you already are ... Awaken to this Truth; the Truth that your life is not a span of time in which you "improve" or "grow" or "get better" -- but rather is a collection of independent, fully complete, utterly priceless moments. Each moment you embrace fully; each moment you choose to live without fear with full emotional honesty & unfettered spiritual abandon -- these moments and these moments alone are the moments when you are truly alive. No matter what you choose to do with them, these moments and these moments alone are the ones worth living ...

Feel free to embrace this Truth –
and then feel free to act accordingly ... **Peace.**



Reinventing Life ...
(02/17/2017)

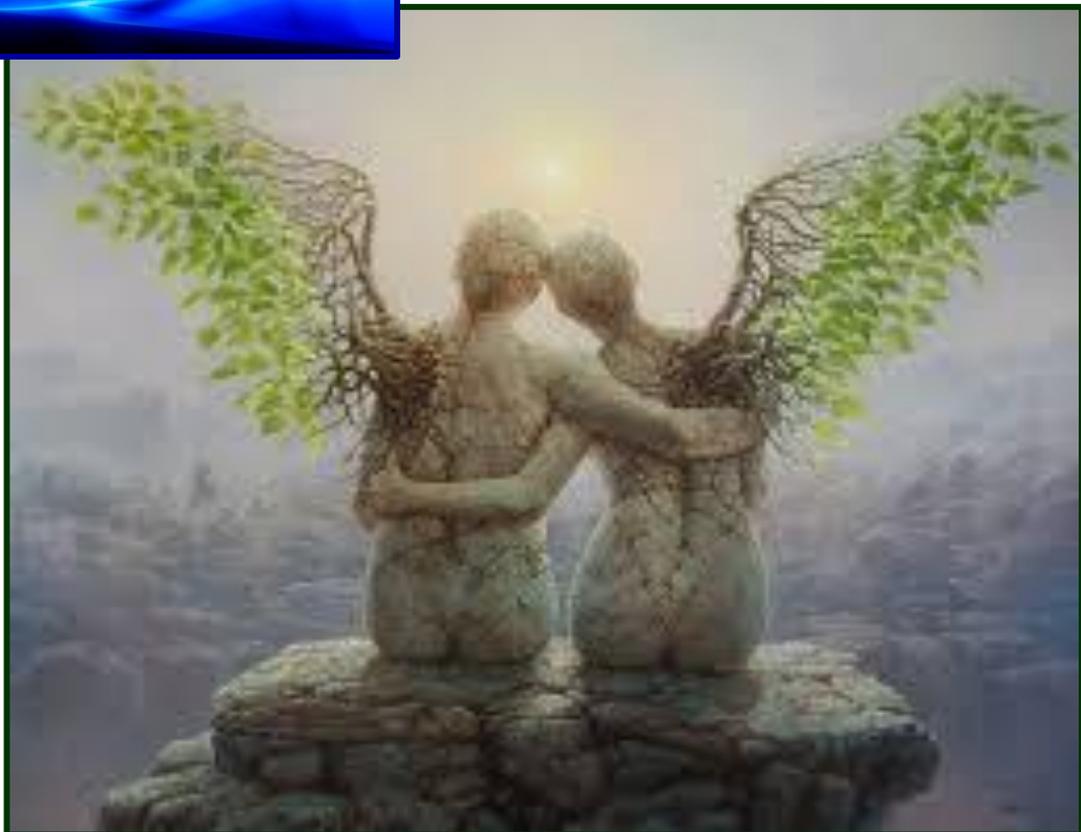
You can only reinvent your life when you reinvent your Self, and you can only reinvent your Self while you reinvent your Living -- when you reinvent what you do; not by reinventing how you do it, but by reinventing *why* you do it in the first place ... For as long as you are doing for you, no reinvention of what or how will ever take hold. And yet as soon as you reinvent your *why* -- as soon as you start to DO for others instead of merely doing for yourself; to DO for enemies & strangers instead of merely doing for friends & loved ones, then your life's reinvention happens fully & becomes complete without strife or effort ... **Peace.**



Sharing our Wings ...
(02/28/2017)



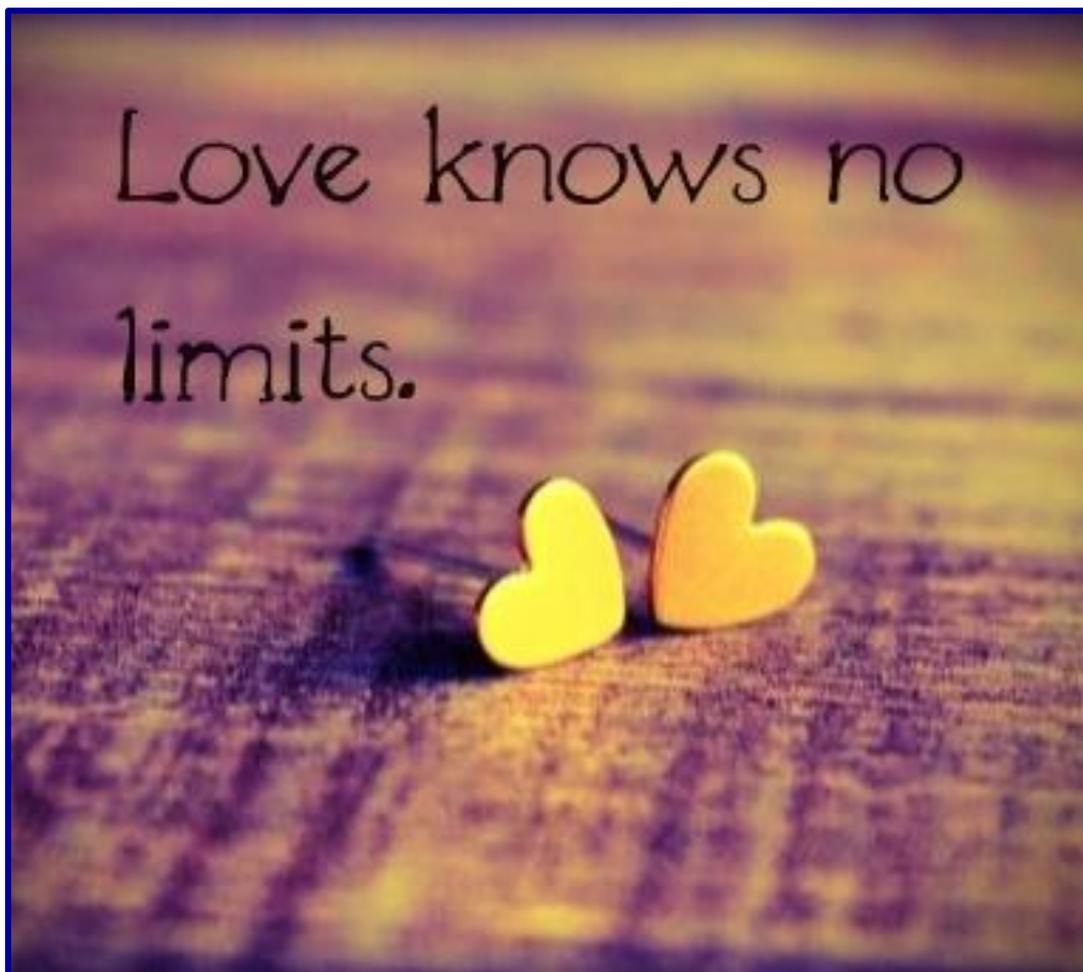
*"We are, each & every one of us,
angels with only one wing. And as
such we can only fly by fully &
completely embracing each other."
~ Luciano de Crescenzo*



True fan of LOVE ...
(03/01/2017)

"Constructive criticism" is not being a True Fan of LOVE ... Being "tolerant" of others is not being a True Fan of LOVE ... Heck, even being "accepting" of those with different beliefs or desires is not being a True Fan of LOVE. Being a True Fan of LOVE -- being someone who is going to do his or her part to truly make this world a better place -- means seeing others expressing their Love, and then enthusiastically celebrating that LOVE with them. It means cheering on those who are standing for Justice ... It means complimenting those who are showing the Courage to be openly true to who they truly are ... It means applauding whenever selfless LOVE is expressed (no matter how and no matter by whom) ... It means shouting with Joy whenever a chance comes your way to LOVE another yourself.

Dark days have once again descended upon many, my Friends, and what we need now truly more than ever is for you to ***become a True Fan of LOVE.***



Giving Smith the finger ...
(03/02/2017)

If you will remember "The Matrix", Agent Smith at one point makes an astounding observation -- essentially equating humanity not with its fellow mammals, but rather likening us to a virus. And the sad thing is, here "in the real world" he is for the most part exactly right:

*We have ready access to clean fuel supplies and yet remain attached to the dirty teat that is Big Oil and other fossil fuels ...

*We have ready access to biodegradable plastics, cleaner propulsion, more durable fabrics and higher quality paper in hemp, and yet continue to scorn this wonder-plant in favor of alternatives that are irreparably polluting our planet ...

*We have more than enough resources & wealth to supply every single human many times over with food and shelter and education, and yet the vast majority of this priceless wealth is being hoarded by the tiniest fraction of our global population ...

*And worst of all, we even now have the means to live far longer and far healthier lives by going vegan, and yet are still staunchly determined to confine, torture, butcher, and consume our innocent animal cousins instead.

In short, Agent Smith was right --- As it now stands, the vast majority of us are indeed acting just like a virus.

That having been said, ***YOU CAN LIVE DIFFERENTLY***. You can in effect give Agent Smith the finger:

You can -- with your actions (and your wallets) as much as with your words -- protest loudly against fossil fuel giants and demonstrate for the legalization of hemp ...

You can stand up to your "leaders" who are kissing up to the wealthy few and demand that they redistribute the world's wealth to those who are truly in need (and you can walk that talk with your own wealth as well) ...

And most importantly of all, ***you can*** champion Justice & Compassion & Decency by ***Going Vegan***.

Yes, it is true that we don't know where our species is headed collectively, and it is also true that we cannot right the ship by ourselves ... That having been said, just because we cannot fix everything does not excuse us from not rising up to ***do what we can***.

So don't give in to being a mere virus, my Friends ... Be a human being instead.

And don't give in to being "only human" ... ***Be Humane*** instead!



"I'd like to share a revelation that I've had during my time here. It came to me when I tried to classify your species, and I realised that you're not actually mammals ... Every mammal on this planet instinctively develops a natural equilibrium with its surrounding environment; but you humans do not. You move to an area and you multiply, and multiply until every natural resource is consumed and the only way you can survive is to spread to another area. There is another organism on this planet that follows the same pattern. Do you know what it is? A virus. Human beings are a disease, a cancer on this planet. You are a plague." ~ Agent Smith



Perchance to dream; perchance to Live ...
(03/03/2017)

Off to bed now once again -- once again to sleep, and once again perchance to dream; to dream of a better world; a World into which -- just maybe -- I will be blessed to awaken once more; first to be blessed to awaken therein, and then to be blessed with the chance to go forth to make it into a new World -- a World where the wishes of war-hungry politicians are gently smothered by the collective call of the people for Peace -- a World where the hunger for flesh & milk is replaced by a hunger for extending Compassion & Mercy & Goodness -- a World where oppression is replaced by Gentleness and where enmity is illuminated with Forgiveness.

This has been my dream for many a moon, and this my dream remains. And tomorrow -- if I am indeed so blessed -- I will wake anew and try again for one more day to make it all so.

Amen ... Let it be so ... Indeed, in-deed.



Ending it is not the End ...

(03/04/2017)

Depression hits all of us at some point in our lives, and suicide has touched almost all of us in one form or another as well. And yet what many of us do not realize is that -- unless you can directly save someone else's life by ending your own -- suicide is *never* a Right Action. Indeed, except in the rarest of instances, suicide is a selfish choice that not only causes others great pain but ends up causing the one committing suicide even more suffering than they are already experiencing.

Just as importantly -- far more importantly, actually -- what many of us also don't realize is that we can all help prevent suicides every single day of our lives, and that doing so is as simple as reaching out to the others you encounter each day with the smallest acts of caring -- reaching out to strangers with a warm smile and a gentle embrace; reaching out to friends & loved ones with anonymous gifts; reaching out to enemies and those who annoy with understanding eyes & forgiving words ... Suicide is almost always a travesty, my Friends -- and it is almost always preventable. Sp please do your part to stop the ones near you that have already been planned for today ... **Thank you.**



Rediscovering YOU ... (03/04/2017)

We hear so much these days about "self help" and "becoming enlightened" and "being a better person." In fact, we hear it so much that it can often be difficult to remember that we don't need any help whatsoever, that we are already as potentially "enlightened" as we will ever be, and that it is indeed impossible to become "better" than we already are ...

That's right, I said it, I meant it, and it's True. You don't need help from anyone – you need to get out there and help others ... You don't need to "become enlightened" – you need to be a Light in your community (and *thereby* wake up to your innate Enlightenedness) ... You don't need to become a "better person" – you simply need to go forth today and **BE** the perfectly Caring, perfectly Gentle, perfectly Courageous, and perfectly Loving person you already are.

Yes, it's true that none of us can do so over any significant period of time (our reptile-brains and the egos they have created will make sure that we regularly slip into the sins of selfishness and sloth and fear and fraudulence), but that kind of perfection is not what this Life is about. Indeed, life is not about being your perfect self over years or months or days or even hours. It's about being perfect in one moment -- *this* moment -- and then trying to string together lots of those independent beacons of brilliance over the course of every day. And this is what it means to be "born again" ... This is what it means to "Awaken" ... This is what it means to "become Enlightened" ... This is what it means to "rediscover yourself."

Doing so not a process of growth that takes lots of time and effort. It's an instantaneous reinvention of who you are by choosing to remember who you have always been -- and then having the guts to boldly *act accordingly*: to be kind to strangers, to leave anonymous gifts for friends, to openly forgive your enemies. It is to give when you have but little, to be thankful for life when in pain, to serve when exhausted, and to deeply Care when all seems lost. This is what it means to "know Peace" -- this is what it means to "find Purpose" -- indeed, this is what it means to be truly Human.



So forget about the rat race and the long, hard journey to "finding your True Self", my Friends ... Toss your self-help books and your New Age gurus into the rubbish bin and simply get out there today and **BE** who you were born to be -- **BE** who you were born to be by re-Membering who already **ARE**.

Rising into LOVE ... (03/05/2017)

When we talk about falling in Love, we often say "It's crazy." But don't you see, it *is* crazy -- crazy in the sense that "falling in love" has absolutely nothing to do with LOVE at all. And the give-away is the word "falling" ... Even though Love is the most majestic of choices -- even though it is by far the most noble of deeds and the most Joy-full of experiences, we mistakenly say that it requires a "falling" ... We don't say "rising into Love." There is always the idea of the Fall -- a dysfunctional concept that actually goes back to extremely fundamental things; to the most curious union in Judeo-Christian culture between the Fall and the Creation -- between sinning and being -- between being "only human" and being alive at all ...

Of course, there *is* a ghastly risk of falling tied to being truly alive, but it is most certainly **not** the risk to self present in any moment of "falling in love." Rather, it is the even greater risk that is known only to those who risk it all to rise into *loving* -- those who risk it all **not for** love, but risk it all *to* Love.

You see, for all of us, life itself is always an act of faith and always an act of gamble. We are always making choices based in uncertainty; always engaging acts steeped in doubt. The moment you take a single step you do so on an act of faith, because you don't really know for certain that the ground is not going to give way under your feet. The moment you take a journey -- what an act of faith -- you do so with only the hope that you will indeed arrive, though that arrival is anything but guaranteed ... And the same is true for any human relationship -- any human interaction, really. In every one of them we give ourselves up -- in every one of them we don't know for sure whether we are going to be attacked or ridiculed or rejected or ignored ... And yet quite often we leap into them anyway. After all, that is simply what humans tend to do; these are the social animals we have evolved to be.

The key, of course, to allowing those moments to bear Goodness -- the key to making them worthwhile at all, is to make those leaps for others -- and to do so regardless of what might happen to us in return. This is the only way to live a life of any worth -- the only way to know a life of any Meaning -- the only way to rise into (and thereby finally come to truly know) real LOVE ...

"Falling in Love" focuses on our own hopes and our own dreams and our own yearnings and our own pleasures. Rising up into LOVE, on the other hand, tosses all those things aside and concerns itself purely & solely in the hopes & dreams & peace of the other. And *that* is what it means to truly surrender -- *that* is what it truly means to Care -- *that* is what it truly means to Give -- *that* is what it truly means to LOVE -- and *that* is what it means to truly Live. (~ inspired by Alan Watts)



Doing the Work ...
(03/06/2017)

“From the quark to the supernova the wonders around us do not cease. It is our attentiveness that is in short supply; our ability and willingness to do the work that awe requires.” ~ John Green

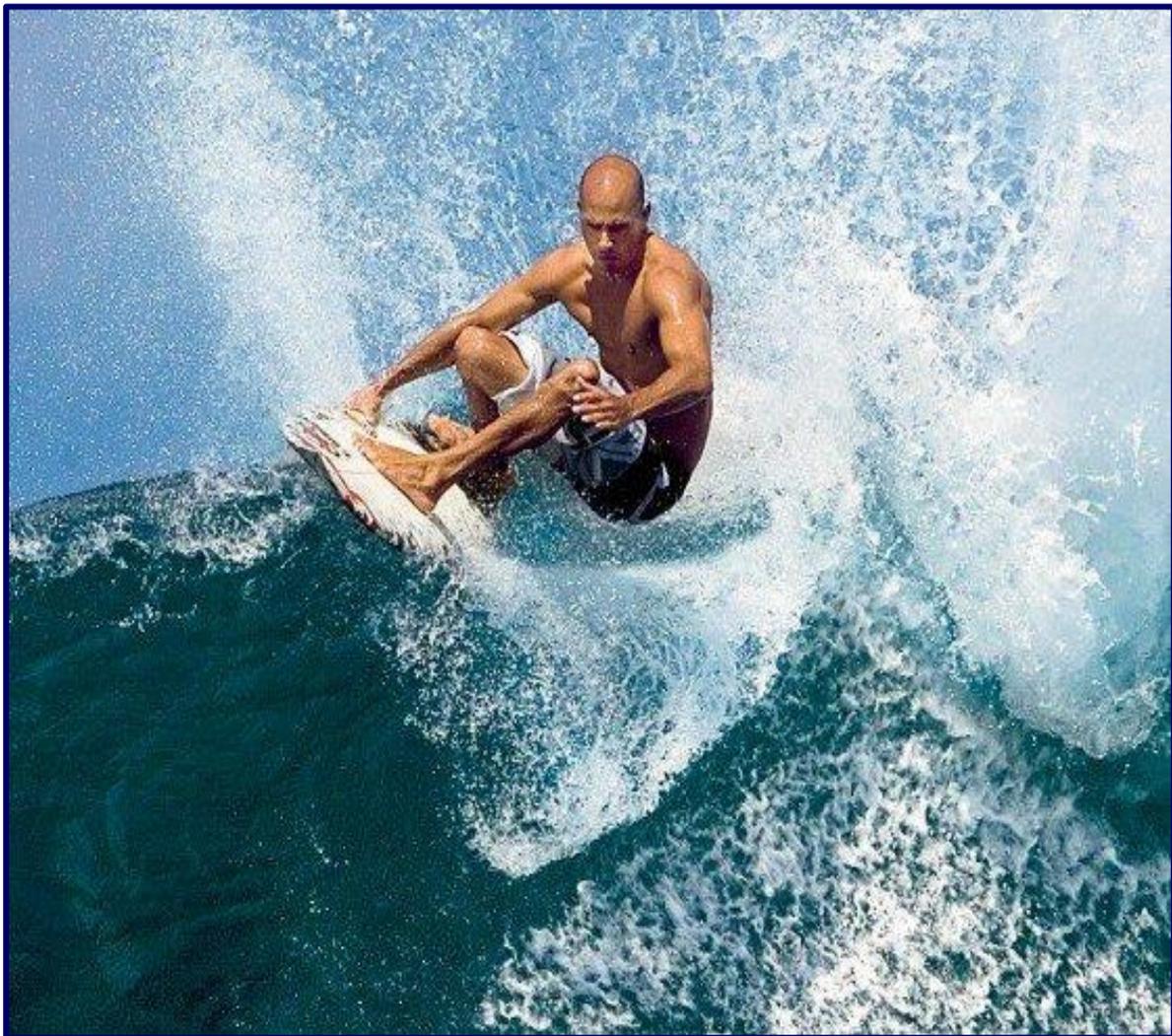
This quote is oh so True, my Friends -- so please ***Do the Work*** ... Pause for a moment right now and look closer ... Gaze deep into wherever you are, and keep gazing deeper until you finally See the Wonder ... And once you do, return to your life -- immersed in gratitude for the glorious life you have been given -- and go forth to start ***acting accordingly***.



Riding My Wave ...
(03/07/2017)

If you are going to try and drag me down into the depths of the cheap excuses you give for your bigotries, or the feeble rationalizations you offer for your acts of violence, or the hollow justifications you proffer for your vapid selfishness -- the brittle reasons you give for replacing real Goodness with personal pleasure -- the meek rationalizations you mewl for remaining "only human", then you can jolly well get the @#\$\$%* off my wave and go find your own ... Because I've caught ***The Wave*** of real Bliss -- I'm riding ***The Wave*** of Caring -- I'm flowing ***The Wave*** of selfless service -- I'm on ***The Wave*** of doing good even when it hurts; especially when it hurts -- I'm carving the wave of giving what I can when I can to whomever I can in every moment I can ... That's my ***Wave***, and I won't be getting off for any reason any time soon. Indeed, I plan on riding this ***Wave*** all the way to the beach, and this, no matter what you do or say to the contrary.

So I guess you can either hop on with me or get over it, but stop wasting your time trying to get me to hop off ... **Peace.**



Life is NOT a Journey ...
(03/08/2017)

As long as you see your life as a Journey, you will never get anywhere worth getting. For the only place ever worth getting to, of course, is the place you already are ... So awaken to this Truth; the Truth that your life is not a span of time in which you "improve" or "grow" or "get better" -- but rather is a collection of independent, fully complete, utterly priceless moments. Each moment you embrace fully; each moment you choose to live without fear with full emotional honesty & unfettered spiritual abandon -- these moments and these moments alone are the moments when you are truly alive. No matter what you choose to do with them, these moments and these moments lone are the ones worth living.

Feel free to embrace this Truth –
... and then feel free to *act accordingly* ... **Peace.**



Always time to Dance ...
(03/09/2017)

“To live means to be creative, and to be creative means to be in love with life. You can be this kind of creative only if you love life enough that you want to enhance the Beauty of something nearby; if you want to bring a little more music to a relationship, to bring a little more poetry to a conversation, to bring a little more dance to an interaction.” ~ inspired by Osho



The Loving Vastness ...
(03/17/2017)



*"For small creatures such as we,
the vastness is bearable only through Love."
~ Carl Sagan*

Measuring our true POWER ...
(03/21/2017)

“One of the great tragedies of life is that men seldom bridge the gulf between practice and profession, between doing and saying. A persistent schizophrenia leaves so many of us tragically divided against ourselves. On the one hand, we proudly profess certain sublime and noble principles, but on the other, we sadly practice the very antithesis of these principles. How often are our lives characterized by a halcyon constitution of creeds and a simultaneous anemia of deeds! ... We speak eloquently about our commitment to the humble principles of a selfless Christ, and yet our lives are saturated with the arrogant practices of selfish paganism. We boldly proclaim our devotion to democracy, and yet sadly practice the very opposite of the democratic creed. We talk passionately about peace, while we at the same time assiduously prepare for war. We make fervent pleas for the high road of justice for all, and yet at almost every mealtime tread unflinchingly the low road of cruelty & injustice ... This strange dichotomy, this agonizing gulf between the *ought to be* and the *is*, represents the tragic theme of our earthly pilgrimage – a pilgrimage that will never come to its fulfilled conclusion until we choose to walk its route a different way.”

~ inspired by Martin Luther King Jr.



"Nations need something, other than wealth or influence or military might, to measure their success ... Something like Peace." ~ via Anthony Douglas-Williams

The wondrousness of Whit ...
(05/31/2017)

Walt Whitman would have been 198 today ... How wonderful it is that, even though he himself could not live this long, his words live on far longer still:



"This is what you shall Do: Love the Earth and the sun and all the animals ... Despise all riches and longings for ease & comfort ... Give to all who ask, and give double to those who do not ... Stand up for all who are slandered as "stupid" or "crazy" ... Devote your wealth and your possessions and your time and your self to bringing others Joy ... Oppose all forms of tyranny and champion all non-violent expressions of Freedom ... Argue not concerning God -- and live as though you are an extension thereof ... Associate humbly with the uneducated and boldly with the powerful ... And again & again & again, re-examine all you have read in any book or been told at home, at school, in church, or at work -- and gently cast off all that contradicts the Love that still lives in your Soul.

Do these, my dear, and your entire being of body & spirit shall become a fluid poem -- every utterance will become a prayer, every word will become a blessing, and every movement will become a flowing dance."

(inspired by Walt Whitman)

Oh, the Greatness we will Be ...

(06/01/2017)

In times of darkness it is not possible to know the Sun, and yet the new morning is ever on its way ... In times of wind and rain it is not possible to know true Calm, and yet the sky always clears anew ... In times of violence and subjugation it is not possible to know Peace and Freedom, and yet Compassion & Justice always rise again.

And these are the days of darkness, to be sure -- when the weak are being enslaved and abused and molested and murdered ... These are days of obfuscation -- when the "intelligent" are spouting ignorance and hatred, and the "powerful" are spreading lies and fear ... These are the days of injustice -- when those of different race and gender and belief and species are being attacked and oppressed and denied their inalienable rights to fair Respect and basic Dignity.

And yet a new morning is coming, my Friends -- a morning when ***all*** will be cherished; a morning when ***all*** will be set free to build lives filled with Joy & Meaning; a morning when ***all*** will become equal citizens in this great Universe of Oneness; a morning when ***all*** will be welcomed Home to the Great Family we were in the beginning -- the Great Family we have actually been all along -- the one Great Family we must indeed become again.

This new morning is on its way, my Friends ...

... and oh how Great will be its rising!

Amen ... Let it soon be so.



When in doubt, DO ...

(06/03/2017)

The unknown breeds uncertainty -- creates doubt -- birthes anxiety -- and ultimately leads to paralysis. And the unknown is a constant; surrounding us in every moment of our lives. And this means that unless we are careful -- indeed, unless we are boldly Care-full -- we will remained essentially paralyzed; essentially dead to life; living to survive instead of venturing forth to thrive; striving for safety instead of risking comfort to Love and Care.

There is no escape from doubt other than to *Leap Anyway*, my Friends ... There is no escape from fear other than to face the terror, there is no escape from doubt other than to bravely **DO**, and there is no escape from uncertainty other than to harness the same in acts of faith-full boldness. You will be confronted ever anew by doubt -- ever immersed in anxiety about what might happen if we act and ever soaked in worry for what might be if we don't ... And whenever you find yourself in that place of inner trembling, remember to take a step anyway -- anywhere -- towards anyone; towards the one nearest by, and in any way that might -- just might -- bring them Peace or Joy.

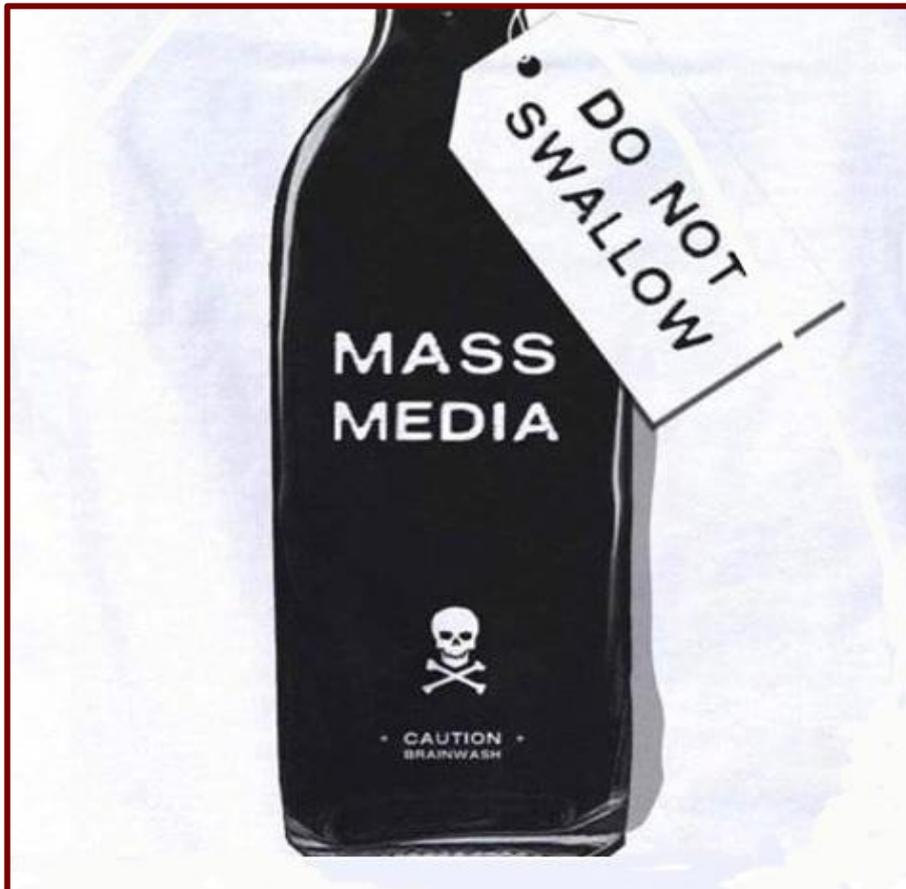
Just listen to the beat of your Heart and improvise in line with its rhythm -- saunter smoothly to its cadence -- bounce & bob along willingly with its groove. For in the end it doesn't matter what you do for others -- in only matter that you **DO** for them.



The barrage of Mirage ...

(06/08/2017)

These days one of the few things that we can be certain regarding the Truth is that the mass media isn't portraying any of it ... Being informed is only worthwhile when the source of your information is worthy, my Friends. So turn off your televisions, and do so post haste -- for all those who are working for "the news" are most certainly **NOT** working for you.



The corporate media tells us to love who we should fear, to fear who most needs love, to trust who is least trustworthy, and to doubt who is often most reliable. They tell us what to think by getting us to stop thinking, and they manufacture what we feel by deadening our feelings ... Stop listening to them, my Friends! ... Do your own research as to what is Real, what is Right, and what is True ... Free your mind from their obscurist clutches, and Peace is sure to follow thereafter.

Living the Good Way ...

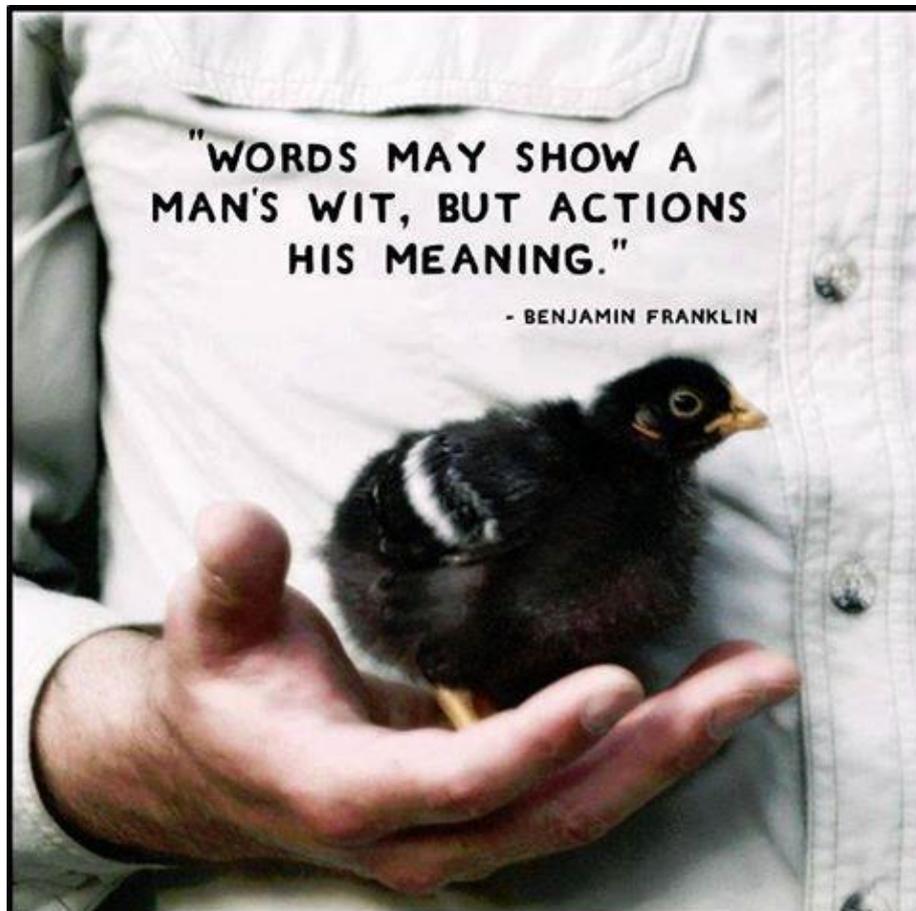
(06/09/2017)

Upon nearing the end of his long life, a venerable Master came to five of his most devout adherents and humbly asked for an audience ... After they had gathered around him, he smiled and softly spoke – “My time is drawing to a close, my Friends, and thus our time together has begun to end as well. And yet before we part ways forever in this lifetime, I would ask that you each offer a response to the following all-important question: What is the Good Way in which humankind should live?”

For awhile there was nothing but silence -- and then the first follower slowly stood and said “To hone a wise mind.” Then the second rose and said “To be a good friend,” and the third rose and offered up “To become a solid citizen,” and the fourth then proclaimed “To have a forgiving Heart” ... The Master smiled and was obviously pleased with these answers. Then he turned to his final pupil -- the one who had been with him the longest. "And you, my dear Companion, what would you say is this Good Way for which humankind has searched for lo these thousands of years?"

And the fifth follower remained silent for a time -- and then he smiled at each of them in turn, and said – “To serve those most in need.”

“Ahhhh,” said the Master. “This response is truly most fine, if for no other reason than it – at least in those moments when it is enacted humbly & sincerely -- encompasses and indeed enlivens the other four as well.”



Re-membering real Family Values ...
(06/14/2017)

Newsflash: If you are looking for Family Values that are worth emulating, the last place you will hear them is from the mouth of a politician, and one of the last places you will ever see them in action is in a dogma-deluded church ...

For if you really want to rediscover true Family Values -
- if you really want to remember what real Family looks like, you will have to go where real Family is being **LIVED:**

*You will have to go to the shelters that house abandoned animals or homeless humans ...

*You will have to go to the streets where the Kind are sitting down with the downtrodden ...

*You will have to go to the slaughterhouses where the marginalized are protesting on behalf of the murdered ...

*You will have to go to the hospitals where strangers are wholeheartedly Caring for the ill and the injured and the dead and the dying.



True FAMILY VALUES ...
Accepting & Respecting & Loving your family and your friends, and indeed all the members of your community – and this, no matter what color or nationality or religion or sexual orientation they happen to be.

And once you go to any one of these havens of hospice and witness others truly **being Family**, you can thereafter truly learn what Family Values really mean -- by reaching out to help them do the same.

Amen ... Let it be so.

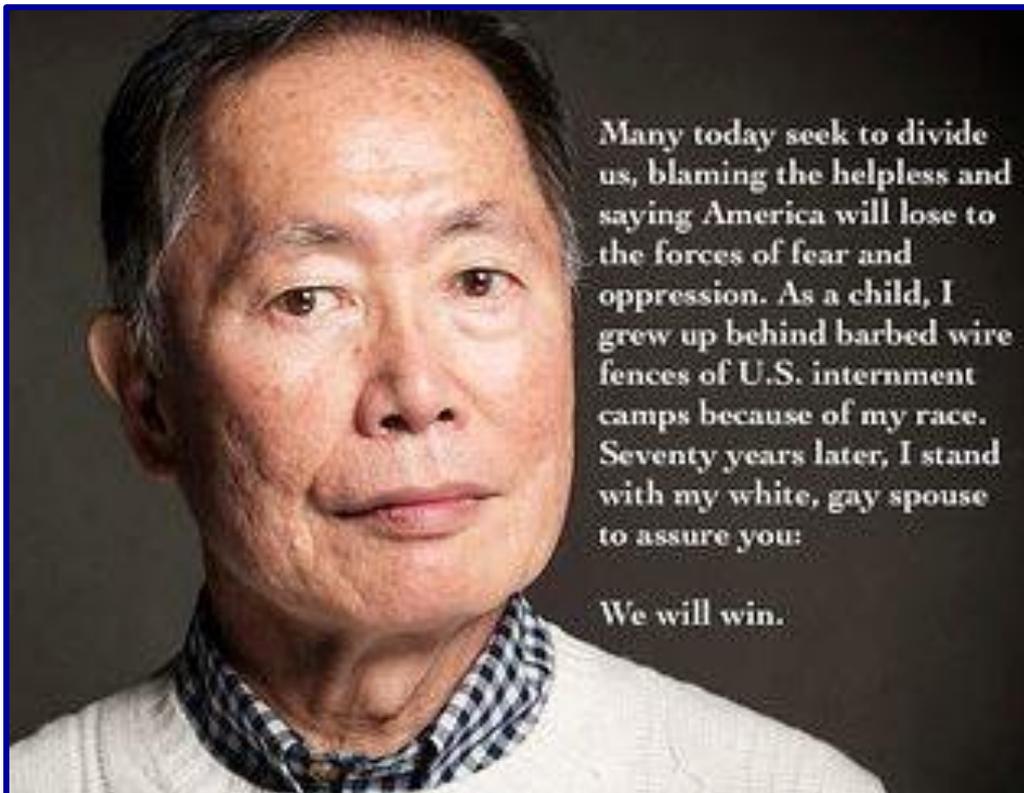
We (humanity) will WIN ...
(06/17/2017)

I happen to have been born a heterosexual male, and yet I don't have to be gay or bi or trans to stand with my LGBTQ+ brothers & sisters in their struggle for justice & equality ... In point of fact, I don't have to be anything to stand up for what is Right and I don't have to be any particular way to stand in the way of what is Wrong.

And when it gets right down to it, smashing ignorance and oppression is what we have *all* been called to do. Indeed, tearing down the pillars of ignorance and washing out the bogs of bigotry (be they vilifying others based on race or gender or sexuality or species) is the only way humanity will ever know any semblance of real evolution or experience even the slightest portion of real Enlightenment.

Rising up to take an often-uncomfortable stand against the embarrassingly normal forms of prejudice and discrimination and bullying and xenophobia that still plague our society is what we have *all* been summoned to do, my Friends. It is our greatest challenge to date, it is by far our most important task, and it *must* be addressed with volume and with vigor and with caring and with courage.

Feel free to join me in doing so today!



The current generation thinks it's cool not to Care ... Well, it's not.

**But I'll tell you what *is* cool:
Effort is cool -- Caring is cool --
Standing up for those who are
being ridiculed is cool -- Serving
your community is cool -- Being
Kind to strangers is cool -- Going
out of your way to forgive an
enemy is cool.**

**The old "cool" has never gotten
anyone anywhere worth going ...
It's time for us all to give the
New Cool a try.**



Always Power-full ...
(06/18/2017)



It is so True what Ms. Keller acknowledges in this quote -- so True that we are innately beings of great potency and magnificent consequence – so True that there is always Good to be done, and that said Good is always important to do – and so True that this is especially the case when believing the opposite.

My dear Friends, your LOVE is never deeper than when given during times of fear or hatred -- and your service is never more salient than when offered during times of greatest fatigue or poverty or hopelessness. So when you are feeling poor -- choose to GIVE ... And when you are feeling afraid -- reach out to LOVE ... And when you are feeling depressed -- choose to Be Grateful ... And when you are feeling alone -- reach out to CARE ... And remember: every "small" act of such Goodness counts immensely -- and every single being liberated from either enslavement or oppression is an enormous Victory for Peace & Justice.

May you choose to go forth today and *live accordingly*.

It is what it IS ...

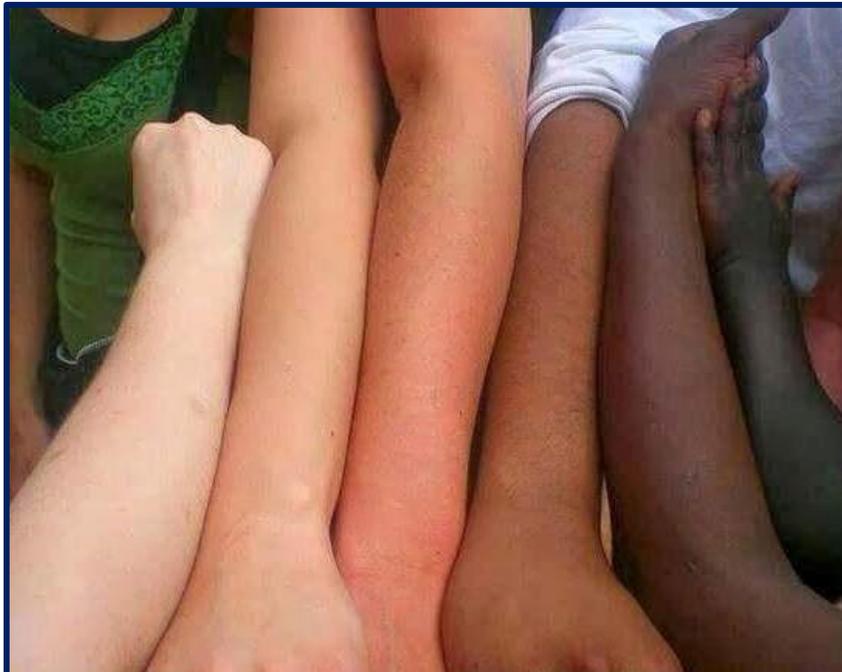
(06/21/2017)

Newsflash: If you live in the United States of America, you will *not* receive Justice -- neither from the highly militarized (and now uber-repressive) domestic police force there, nor from the highly corrupted (and now uber-politicized) domestic justice system.

And this inescapable Truth, which used to apply solely to minorities and the downtrodden, now applies to every member of the fading "middle class" as well. In essence, if you live in the United States of America, you reside in a fledgling police state; one where rights & freedoms are granted by those in power only when convenient -- a culture where equality and fairness only exist when they do not harm the profit-margins of the financially potent or the politically well-connected.

And this is no mere rambling lunacy from a concerned **rEVOLutionary** ... This is all backed up by historical facts and studies contemporary ... In essence, my Friends, you can keep your heads dunked in the suffocating sands of patriotic denial as long as you wish, and yet doing so will not change the fact that your government no longer cares about you, the fact that your police force is *not* serving you or keeping you safe, and the fact that you do *not* live in a democracy any longer.

Please **WAKE UP** and *act accordingly* ... Thank you.



"The principles of equality and justice, which are at the core of any democracy, have very little meaning in a society in which oligarchy has taken control; a society in which laws are upheld in favor of the wealthy and in which the police primarily protect and almost solely serve those in positions of power ... Ideed, in such societies, there is only one way remaining of preserving any semblance of fairness & decency -- and that is the reawakening of the Power of the People; the open nurturing of the far greater force that is self-sustainable solidarity." ~ inspired by Bell Hooks

The Source of all real Justice ...
(06/22/2017)

If you are looking for a solution to the evils of your world, you will not find the same in the words of your politicians or the prayers of your preachers ... Indeed, there is only one solution remaining for what ails us as a species, and the only place you will find that solution is in the mirror.



Every gardener knows well enough that when a plant doesn't fully bloom it is not the fault of the flower; that it is the environment in which it is growing that needs to be enhanced -- not the flower itself. The same is true for all the marginalized members of society who are struggling to blossom, and the same is just as true for all the bigoted denigrators thereof -- with the former striving with broken ladders to reach the same shining sky, and the latter using rusty saws of ignorance and mud-marked hammers of hatred to keep those darker-skinned mired in that painful pit of fear & shadow ... Every flower deserves an equal opportunity to greet the rising sun, my Friends, and it is we who must be the ones who make it so!

"If positive innovations connect before massive breakdowns reinforce one another, the system can re-pattern itself to a higher order of consciousness and freedom without the predicted economic, environmental, and social collapse ... We can evolve toward the positive just as quickly as we might devolve toward the negative."

~ Barbara Marx Hubbard

To be Worthy of Love ...
(06/23/2017)

Newsflash: *All* are Worthy of LOVE -- *all* are Worthy of your Respect, *all* are Worthy of your Kindness, and *all* are Worthy of your Generosity ...

Please *act accordingly* ... Thank you.

*"It's easy to walk by the downtrodden other -- to look away from his or her distress because we tell ourselves that we can't change their entire life in a single moment. And yet what we fail to realize in those moments is that one act of deep-seated Kindness **does** change their whole life in that single moment."* ~ inspired by Mike Yankoski



*Do not be fooled by appearances ...
A wealthy Heart lives under every
ragged coat; a radiant Soul behind
every scowling face.*

*While it might often seem otherwise,
all are worthy of LOVE.*

~ Scottish proverb

PLAY THIS AMAZING NEW INTERACTIVE GAME!!



- 1. PUT YOUR PHONE AWAY**
- 2. WALK AROUND YOUR TOWN**
- 3. FIND A HOMELESS PERSON**
- 4. BUY THEM A SANDWICH**

To Honor the Guest ...

(06/24/2017)

“The greatest purpose in which a man/woman can be engaged is the positive evolution of self – moving away from acts of arrogant self gratification designed to bring pleasure or comfort, and towards deeds of humble selfless service aimed at enhancing the peace of others and the harmony of one’s surroundings.” ~ inspired by Ufuoma Apoki



"The Guest is the most important visitor in our lives. He is not dependent on us; we are dependent on him. He is not an interruption of our Work; he is the very Purpose of it. He is not an outsider in our business; he is an integral portion thereof. We are not doing him a favor by serving him; he is doing US a favor by giving us the opportunity to do so." ~ via M. Gandhi

The Solution ...

(06/25/2017)

“You cannot truly *live* in any moment until you do something wholeheartedly for someone who cannot repay you.”

~ via John Bunyan



Problem(s): Boredom, Sadness, Anxiety, Despair, Meaninglessness

Solution: *Be somebody who makes everybody feel like Somebody.*

The Problem ...

(06/26/2017)

Fact: If you are determined to cherish what you own by harboring it for yourself instead of sharing it with others or giving it to those in greater need, you will ever remain the poorest of the poor.

Things over money -- Experiences over things -- People over experiences --
LOVE over all ...

That is *The Way*.



Priorities: You're doing it wrong ...

To get filthy Rich ...
(06/27/2017)

If you win the Lottery, you will become rich -- If you give to others before winning the Lottery, you will know true Wealth ... How ironic it is that so many strive for the former when it is almost impossible to attain, while so few engage the latter when it is ever available – and provides the far superior reward.



To those who insist they will help the homeless after they win \$900 million, please remember this:

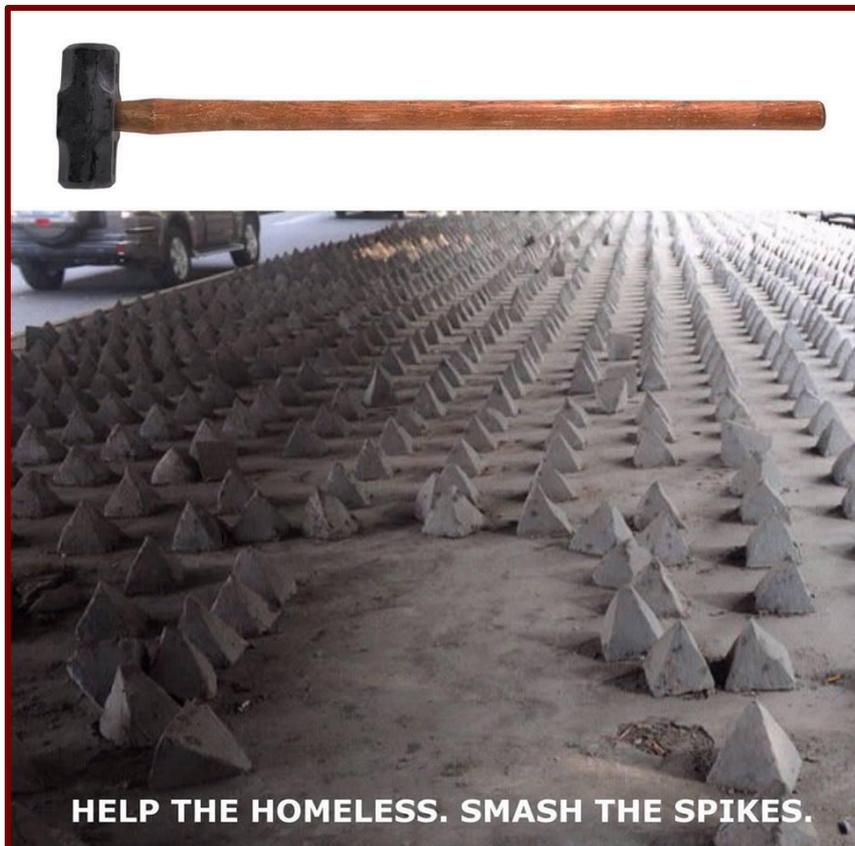
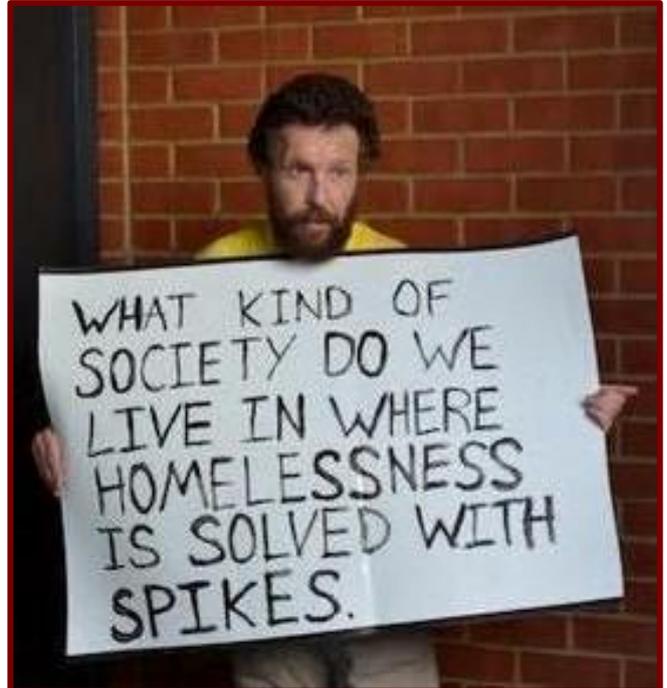
You can get a loaf of bread for \$1.79
Granola bars are cheap.
A warm pair of gloves could save a life.
You own a coat you don't wear.

You don't need to win the lottery to be generous.

Steve Gamlin

Many ways to The Way ...
(06/28/2017)

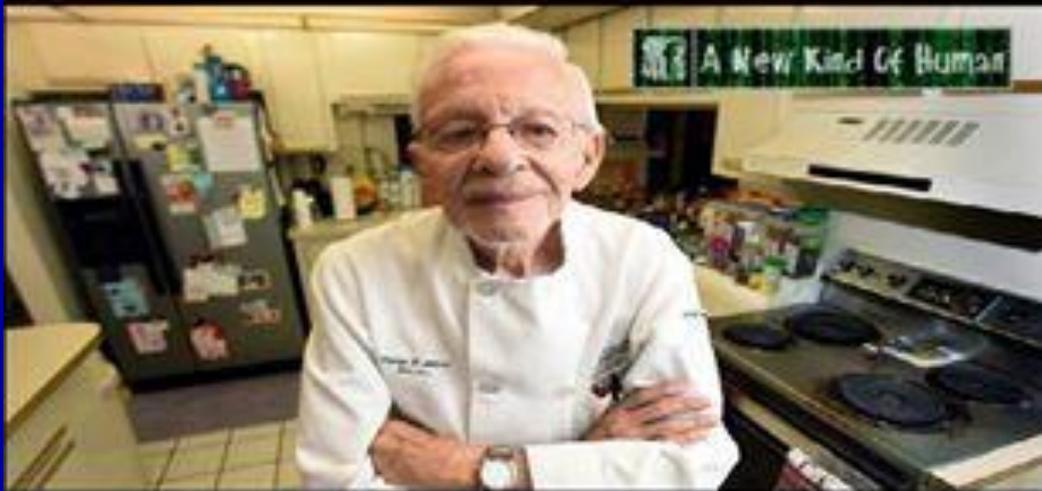
Sometimes LOVE takes the form of a smile and a hug, sometimes LOVE takes the form of a cup of a coffee, a blanket, and a bit of spare change ... and sometimes, LOVE takes the form of some courage and a sledgehammer.



LOVE ignores the non-Loving law ...
(06/29/2017)

"One has a moral responsibility to repeatedly & openly disobey unjust laws. Indeed, actions of resistance that extend beyond the law are not a departure from any just democracy, but are rather absolutely essential to maintaining the sense of justice and decency that sustain it." ~ inspired by Martin Luther King Jr. & Howard Zinn

This is Arnold Abbott



In 1991, Arnold created the "Love Thy Neighbor Fund" in honor of his late wife, which continues the work they did together of feeding the homeless.

In spite of this noble cause, Arnold has been arrested on more than one occasion for violating laws in the U.S. which prohibit feeding the homeless in public. But Arnold, who is now over 90 years old, refuses to back down, stating, "I don't have the slightest fear of being arrested" and will continue "as long as there is breath in my body... because these are my people".

His foundation has fed over 1400 homeless people a week since 1991.

What I want to Know ...

(06/30/2017)

Greatness has nothing to do with achievement or wealth or influence or adoration, and everything to do with the “Spiritual Fame” that only comes to those who gently give in wholehearted anonymity.



"I'm not interested in whether you have stood in the presence of the great and the noble. I want to know whether you have sat down humbly with those broken and forgotten." ~ unknown

"Whenever we take the focus off ourselves and move it outward, we benefit. Life's most fortunate ironies are that what's best for the long run is best now, and selflessness serves our interests far better than selfishness. The wider our circle of considerations, the more stable we make the world—and the better the prospects for human experience and for all we might wish. The core message of each successive widening: we are one. The geometry of the human voyage is not linear; it's those ripples whose circles expand to encompass self, other, community, Life, and time." ~ Carl Safina

To SEE, choose to Look ...

(07/01/17)

It is impossible to open our Hearts and give assistance without first opening our eyes to see where it is needed ... The ego will want you to look away from the pain; it will whisper rancid ridiculousness like "they chose to be homeless" or "they are not really homeless" or "they are just spending all their money on alcohol" or "your spare change won't make a difference" -- when the Truth of the matter is *far* different.

The Truth of the matter is that we are here to give others LOVE -- especially those our ego deems "least worthy" of the same. For indeed, it doesn't matter if they chose to be homeless; we can choose to be Kind ... It doesn't matter if they aren't actually homeless; we can treat them with Respect whether they have a roof over their head or not ... It doesn't matter whether they will spend our charity on alcohol or drugs; we can Give to them simply for the Giving ... It doesn't matter whether our money will make a difference in their lives; we can open up, reach out, and show them we Care. For in Truth, it is that same, simple, brave act of compassion (be it via money or not) always makes all the difference in the world.



To help, we must first choose to LOVE ... To LOVE, we must first chose to SEE ... To SEE, we must first choose to look.

“Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or the darkness of destructive selfishness.” ~ Martin Luther King Jr.

Love doesn't care; it simply Cares ...

(07/02/17)

It doesn't matter why someone is on the streets; it only matters that he or she is indeed on the streets -- and that you most certainly *can* do something about it ... So get out there and **DO SOMETHING** about it ... Thank you.



“The Oscar-nominated documentary *The Act of Killing* tells the story of the gangster leaders who carried out anti-communist purges in Indonesia in 1965 ... The film’s hook is that the filmmakers get Anwar -- one of the actual death-squad leaders, who murdered around a thousand communists using a wire rope -- and his acolytes to reenact the killings and events around them ... In the film’s most memorable sequence, Anwar plays the role of a victim in one of the murders that he in real life carried out. A little way into it, he gets a bit distressed and, when discussing it with the filmmaker, reveals that he found the scene upsetting. The off-camera director then asks the poignant question, “What do you think your victims must’ve felt like?” and Anwar initially fails to see the connection. Eventually, when the bloody obvious correlation hits him, he thinks it unlikely that his victims were as upset as he was, because he was “actually” upset. The director, pressing the film’s point home, says, “Yeah but it must’ve been worse for them, because we were just pretending; for them it was real.” Evidently at this point the reality of the cruelty he has inflicted hits Anwar, because when they return to the concrete garden where the executions had taken place years before, he, on camera, begins to violently gag – a literally visceral ejection of his self and a sickness at his previous actions, he literally gagged at what he’d previously done ... After watching the film, I thought: how can people carry out violent murders by the thousand without it ever occurring to them that it is causing suffering? Surely someone with piano wire round their neck, being asphyxiated, must give off some recognizable signs of displeasure, if not suffering ... What it must be is that in order to carry out that kind of brutality, one must disengage with the empathetic aspect of self and cultivate an idea of the victim as different, inferior, and subhuman. And the only way to understand how such inhumane behavior could be unthinkingly conducted is to look for comparable examples from our own lives. Our attitude to the animals we eat and the homeless people we ignore are apposite ... Indeed, it isn’t difficult to envisage a species like us, only slightly more evolved, being deeply appalled by our acceptance of animal cruelty en masse and homelessness en ubiquitous. “What?!? You had no need to eat them at all and knew you were causing them enormous suffering by doing so, and yet you just kept breeding them and murdering them? What?!? You had sufficient housing, it cost less money to house them, and yet you just ignored them anyway?” In truth, they’d be just as astonished by our own cold indifference as we are by the disconnected cruelty of Anwar.” ~ via Russell Brand



How to be Beauty-full ...
(07/03/2017)

“Beauty is not who you appear to be on the outside. Beauty is the wisdom and the time and the presence and the Love you give to raise up a struggling Soul.” ~ inspired by Shannon Alder



Life-Tip: A sandwich &/or a shower are always worth more than money, and a smile & a heartfelt hug are always worth far more than them all.



Life-Tip: Buy several 2nd-hand cloth purses from local thrift stores and fill them each with vegan snacks, a water bottle, basic toiletries, feminine hygiene products, and a small vial of lavender oil. Then simply drive around your community and give them to all the homeless women you see.

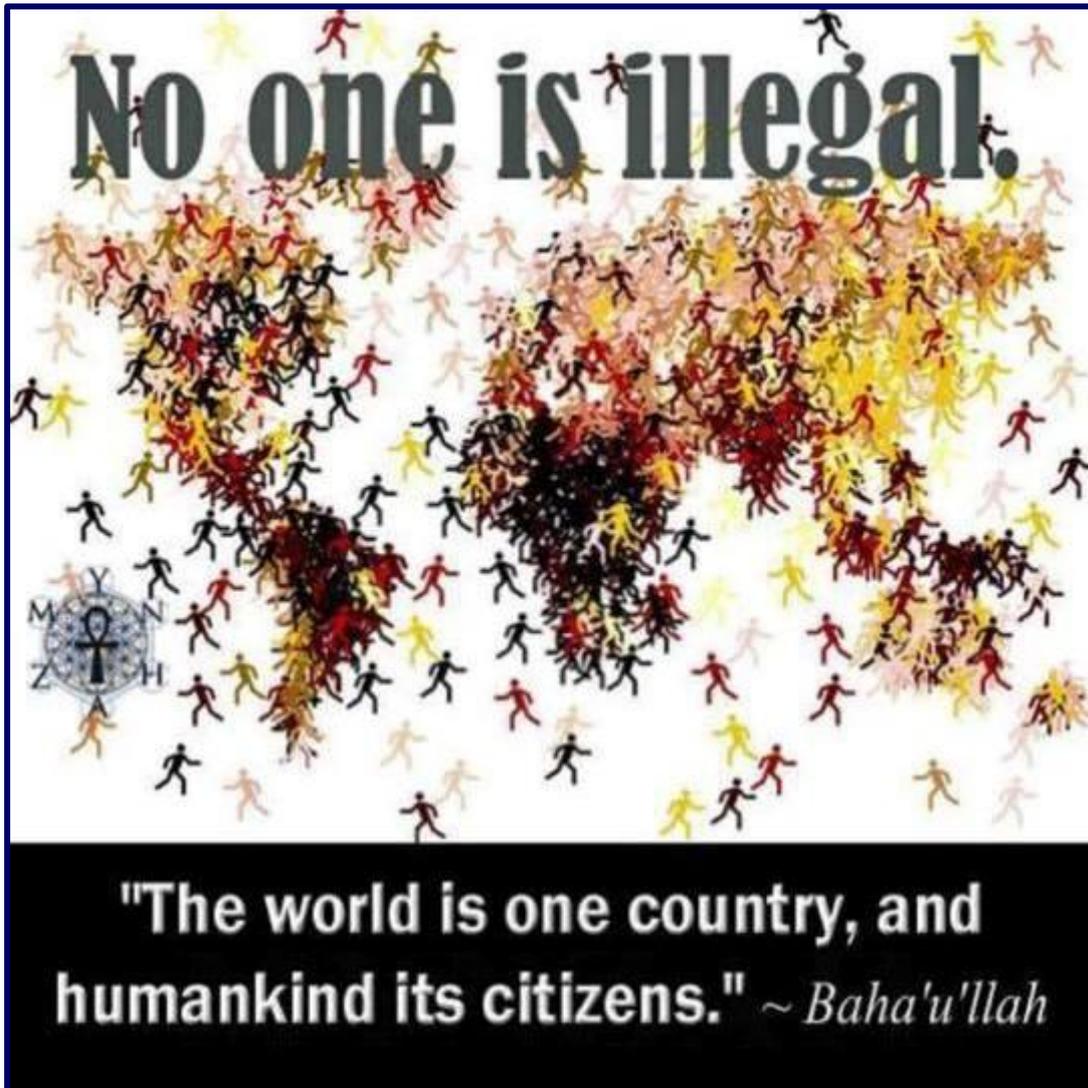
A simple Re-Quest ...
(07/04/2017)



“My request today is simple: Find somebody, anybody, who is different than you – somebody who has made you feel ill-will or even hateful – somebody whose life decisions have made you uncomfortable – somebody who practices a different religion – somebody who has been lost to addiction – somebody with a criminal past – somebody who dresses “below” you – somebody with disabilities – somebody who lives an alternative lifestyle – somebody without a home – somebody who you, up until now, would avoid, almost always look down upon, and quite often be annoyed or even disgusted by ... Now reach your arm out and put it around them. And after you do so, tell them they’re all right. Tell them they have a Friend. Tell them you Love them. Tell them you Care ... For if you & I want to make any real change in this world, that’s where we’re going to have to do it. That’s where we’ll need to start.” ~ inspired by Dan Pearce

The bigger, better Picture ...
(07/05/2017)

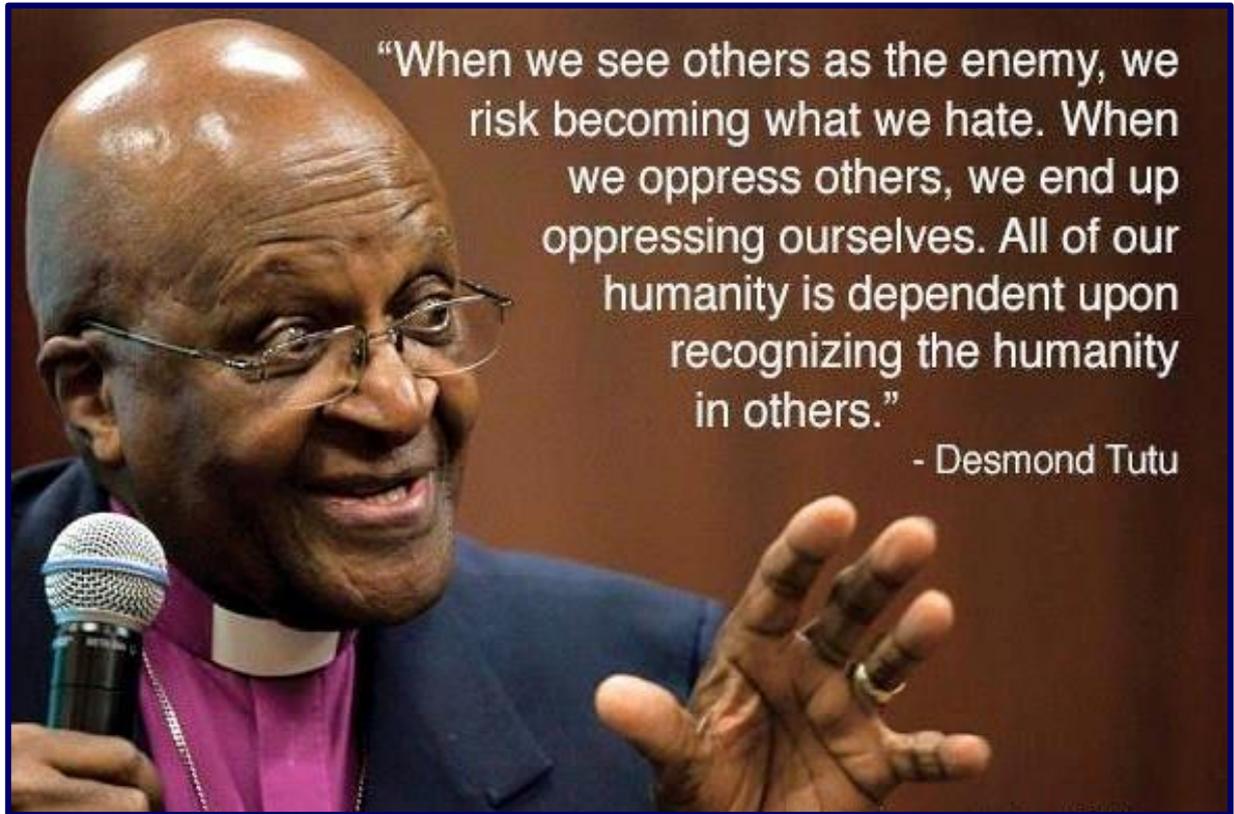
“I don’t call it immigration, I call it migration. As a species it’s very healthy for us to get up and move around the planet, and sometimes certain groups of people choose to do so for very important reasons. Nobody’s doing it just to be spiteful. After all, everybody loves the idea of a homeland. I used to, but I’ve kind of got the bigger picture these days. It’s all a home planet to me now.” ~ via John Lydon



We may never be one nation,
and yet will always be One Family.

Please *act accordingly* ...
Thank You.

Becoming what we LOVE ...
(07/06/2017)

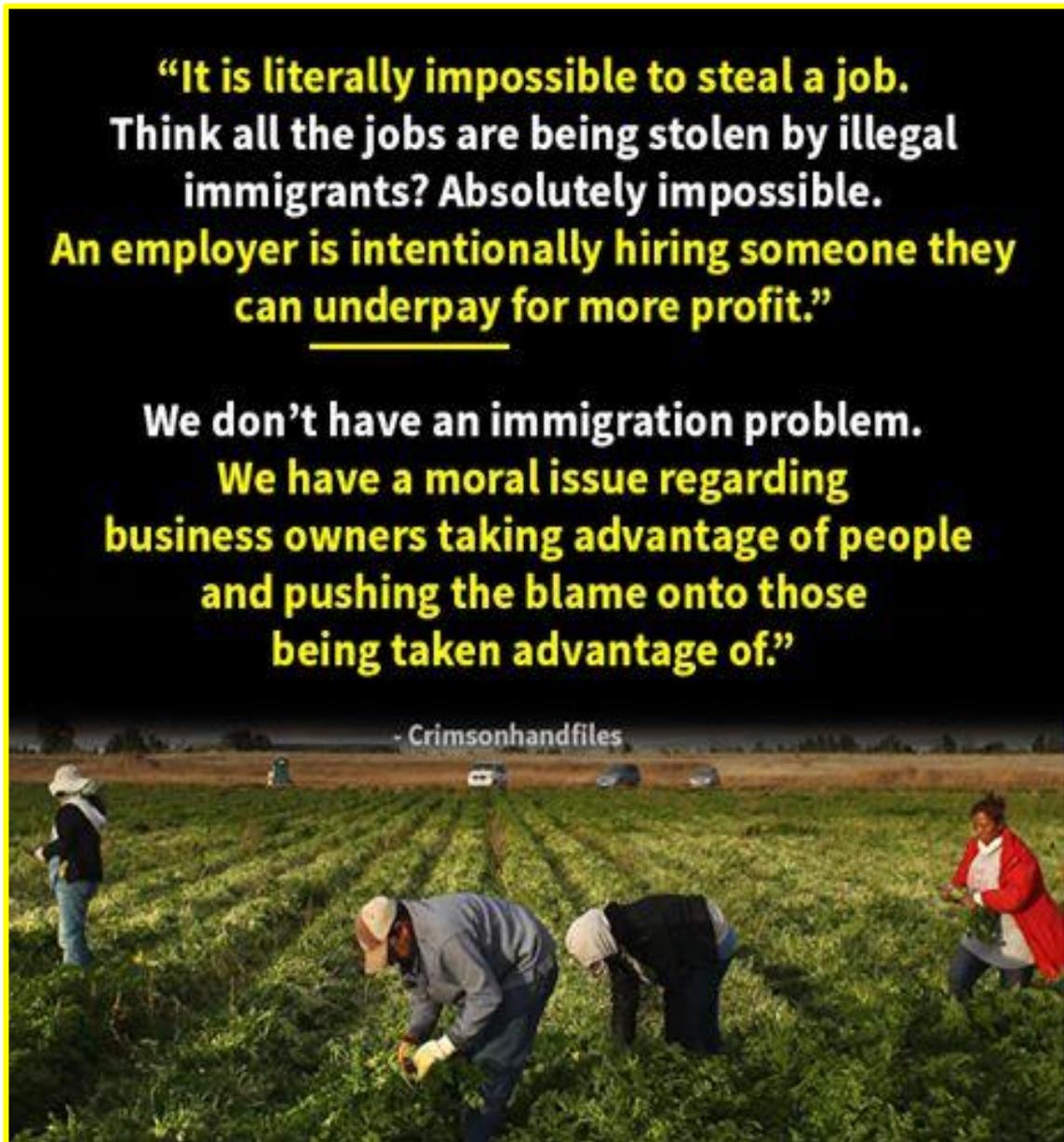


He's right, of course ...

We will never transcend the mistakes of our past
by repeatedly repeating them in the present.

Seeing the Human; acting humanely ...
(07/07/2017)

“*Nihil humanum a me alienum puto*, said the Roman poet Terence: 'Nothing human is alien to me.' Indeed, the slogan of the Immigration and Naturalization Service could have been the just the reverse: To us, no aliens are human.” ~ via Christopher Hitchens



The Source -- and the Solution ...

(07/08/2017)

A powerful Truth: When trying to alleviate any condition of pain or discord or suffering, it is wise to do so by alleviating what caused the same, not by attacking what it might have caused ... (Think about it)

Now I realize that this particular Wisdom has been hammered out of us all since our youth -- I realize that we have had other, far colder, far more insidious, and far less effective propaganda shoved into our brains over & over & over again since then: by our teachers, by our preachers, by the government, by the media ...

And I realize that these massive psychological forces would much rather have you fear the immigrants in your midst than Care for them; would much rather have you remain safely at home and shun them from afar than welcome into your country &/or your communities.

Well, I am here to gently remind you that you are *much* better than that, my Friends --- and that your "much betterness" is desperately needed these days.



WHAT TO DO IF SYRIAN REFUGEES RELOCATE INTO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD:

BRING THEM FOOD, CLOTHES, COOKING UTENSILS, HYGENE ITEMS, BOOKS, TOYS OR SHOES. THIS IS PROBABLY WHAT THEY'LL NEED MOST — APART FROM YOUR FRIENDSHIP.

(YOU HAVE A CHOICE TO BE THE SAMARITAN OR SOME OTHER GUY, DON'T BE THE OTHER GUY — HE'S NOT THE HERO OF THE STORY.)



If you export armaments.

EXPORT

Don't complain about importing refugees!

IMPORT

ERL



If you don't like refugees coming to your country, then stop voting for politicians who love to bomb the shit out of other countries.

What it always has been all about ...

(07/09/2017)

“When Europeans arrived on any new continent they were colonizing, they blew it every single time -- plowing over the indigenous peoples there, taking as much as they could of their land and their valuables, and respecting next to nothing of their native cultures. And as such, European societies have quite clearly lost the wisdom of those indigenous peoples -- wisdom about the land and the animals and our innate interconnectedness to the great Web of Life ...

Well, now we have another chance with this newest wave of war-displaced refugees; a chance to make at least a small portion of our past right again in our present ... Immigrants land penniless but not cultureless. In fact, they bring us great gifts with every arrival. And if we would just get down off our privileged pedestals long enough we could see this Truth -- we could see their great worth as fellow humans, and start to synthesize the best of our traditions with the best of theirs. We could teach and learn from each other instead of dominate or submit to each other ... We could truly make a better world.” ~ inspired by Mary Pipher



What part of "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" is so difficult to understand?

Snarfing Skittles ...

(07/10/2017)

On more than one occasion during past conversations about Islamic immigration, after I had pointed out the fact that Islamic fundamentalists comprise a very small percentage of all Muslim immigrants (and indeed all Muslims in general), I heard the comeback: "Sure, but if you were given a huge bowl of Skittles and knew that only three of them were poisonous, would you eat them?" ... Well, even though I did have a good response every time I heard this small slice of abject ridiculousness, my return volley was never half as good as this one.



"If I gave you a bowl of Skittles and three of them were poisonous would you still eat them?"

"Well, are the Skittles in your hypothetical representing human lives?"

"What?"

"What I mean is, is there a chance that I would be helping to rescue someone from a war zone and thereby save their life if I ate a Skittle?"

"Well sure, but the point is ..."

"I would eat the Skittles."

"But what about ..."

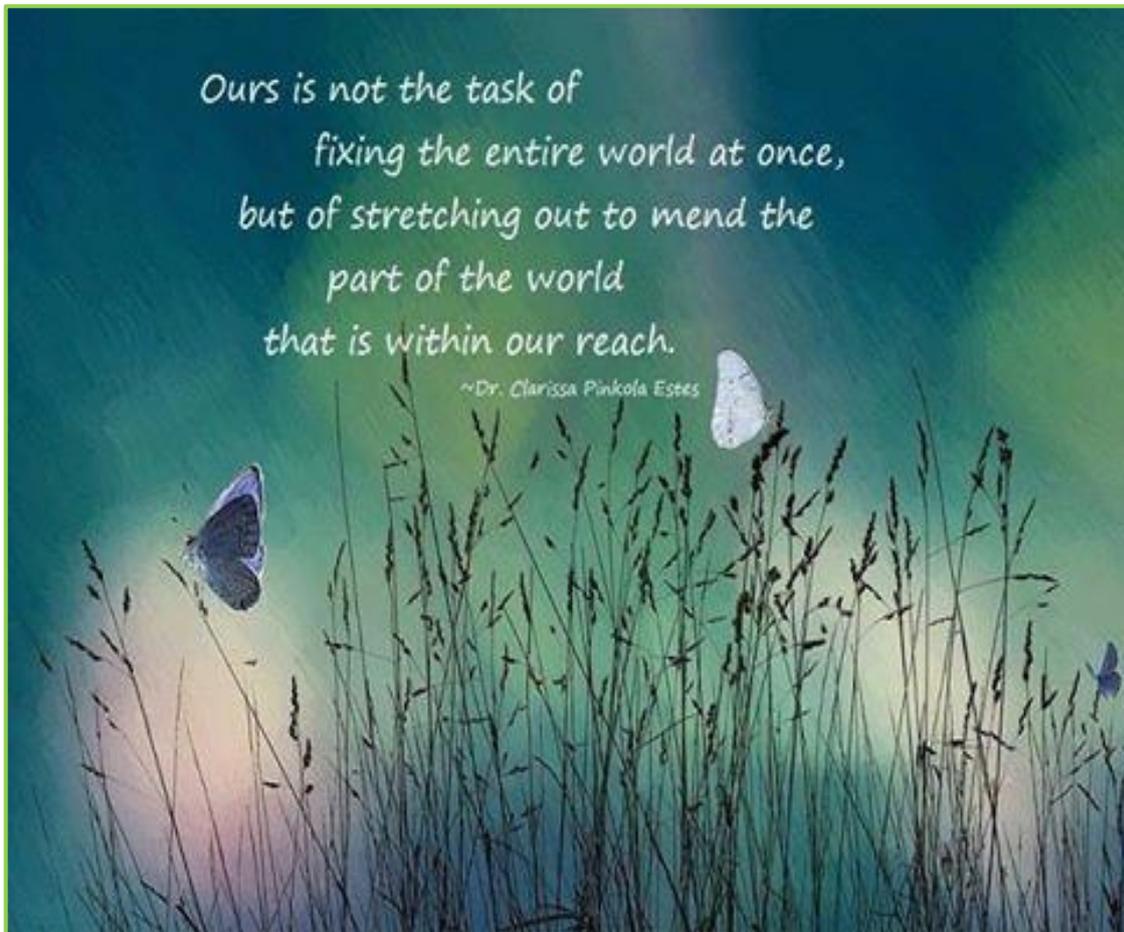
"I would actually eat as many Skittles as I could ... I would in fact GORGE myself on Skittles ... Heck, I would eat every single Skittle I could find ... And when I came across a poison Skittle and died from eating it I would leave behind a legacy of children and friends who honored my life by also eating Skittle after Skittle after Skittle -- and we would all eat Skittles until there were none left to be eaten. And a small handful of us would die, no doubt, and we would weep for those who did so. We would weep for our loss, and we would weep for their noble sacrifice, and we would weep for the fact that they had the courage to do the Right Thing -- that they did not let themselves succumb to fear-based bigotries, but instead made the world a far better place -- made the world a far better place by having the guts to Care -- made the world a far better place by choosing to eat those Skittles ... Because the REAL question here, my Friend -- the question you hid behind this blithely inane, ridiculously inaccurate, and embarrassingly insensitive candy metaphor -- is this one: *Is my own life more important than than the thousands upon thousands of terrified men, women, and children who are suffering and dying right now?* And what kind of person could ever think that the correct answer to that question could ever be **Yes?**" (via Eli Bosnick)

*There is no reason, not one single reason, why I deserve shelter, food, stability, safety, health, or your regard any more than any given Syrian refugee. **Not one reason.** My home, my education, my business; the way I look, the way I talk; the fact that I come home to a safe, whole, healthy family every day--every one of those things is a privilege that I fell into by random circumstance ... I, or you, could have just as easily been born in Syria, or Burkina Faso, or Afghanistan. Do you really think that you're a different kind of human being than the refugees? Do you think your privilege is earned? ... I know: you've worked hard for what you have. I have, too. But have we worked harder than the refugees worked for the lives that were destroyed? Do we love our children more than they do; **would we grieve harder** if a civil war took them away from us? And how long do you believe it would take for a bomb to destroy everything safe about your life? ... Compared to most people in the world, you and I are rich with privilege, much of it just because we were lucky enough to be born in a country fat with it. I woke up early this morning and made organic, whole-grain muffins for my son, then dressed him in warm clothes, put sunscreen on his little face, strapped and buckled him into his bike seat and rode along peaceful streets to deliver him at his warm, nurturing preschool. There were so many levels on which I was able to protect him. Every breath of this morning was a privilege. Meanwhile millions of children who months ago had bedrooms and dinner tables and doctors and schools are sleeping directly on the ground, their parents unable to secure shelter or food for them, much less healthcare or education ... And no, **that is not our fault. But that's not the same as it not being our responsibility.** We have everything we need and then so much on top of that, and we can choose to exemplify to our own children one of two courses of action: we can open our clenched fists and share with our fellow humans all the abundance that exists here--or we can hoard it, greedy and bloated and fearful ... These are families like yours. Thinking they might have connections to terrorist factions is as rational as thinking you might be a terrorist because Timothy McVeigh was American. **Half of all refugees are children.** What is it in you that can close your eyes to other human beings, especially human beings that are small and hungry and cold? ... I'm not asking you to give half of everything you have to help them, or to turn your backyard into a tent city, or to donate to causes that support efforts to protect these very vulnerable people. I'm asking you not to hate them because they need something you have. I'm asking you to recognize that the fear being built around the refugees is less about American security and more about American greed. **I'm asking you to be a human being** who understands every human being has basic needs and that the lucky among us can afford to share our luck to ease suffering. I'm asking you to stop thinking, posting, politicizing around the idea that we just can't help before we've taken care of our own ... Because **there is no such thing as "our own."** Every human is our own. Every hungry child, grieving mother, frightened husband, weary grandmother is our own. Nobody gets to pretend our world is a different world from the world that creates civil wars and bombs and hunger. We are all toeing this same precarious, shifting tightrope of a life. Anyone can fall at any time. All there is to catch us is each other.*

~ Lorelle Saxena

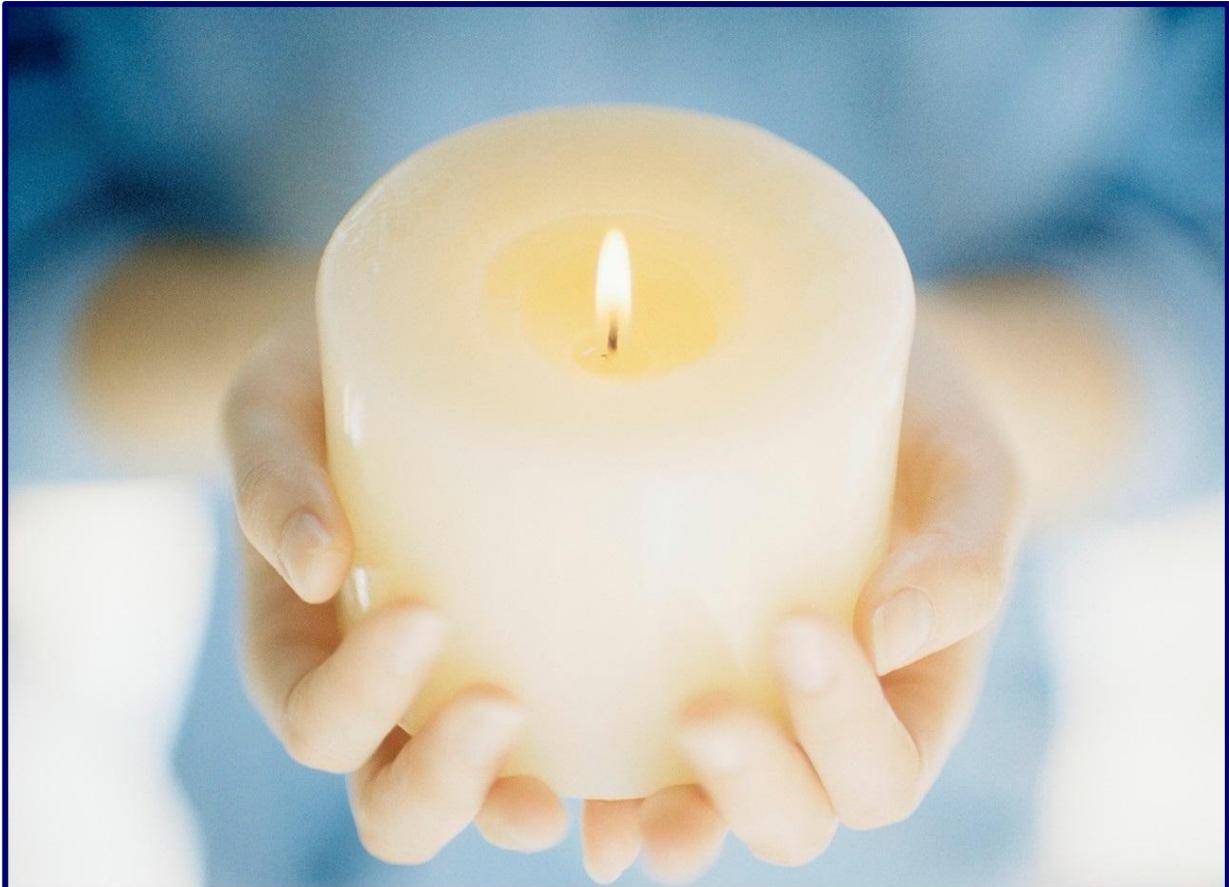
To DO what we can ...
(07/11/2017)

“This is what you shall do, my Friend: Love the Earth and all the animals upon it, despise riches and give generously to everyone who asks, stand up for all those considered “stupid” or “crazy”, devote your time and labor to others, protest tyrants and resist all tyranny, argue not concerning God, have patience with others and indulge them with acceptance and respect, go freely with uneducated persons and with the young and with the mothers of families, read the leaves of Love in the open air every season of every year of your life, re-examine all you have been told at school or church or in any book – and then fully dismiss whatever insults the Knowing in your Soul ... Do these things and your body shall become a walking poem, your mind shall revel in the Calm of Truth, and your Heart shall soak deeply in the richest of lives.” ~ inspired by Walt Whitman



*“Everybody can be great ...
because anybody can serve.”*
~ MLK Jr.

The Way to Be ONE ...
(07/12/2017)



There are essentially two ways to think about the people who come to you only when they need you -- either you can feel arrogantly insulted that they have the gall to abuse your goodwill, or you can feel humbly privileged; honored that your Kindness shines like a candle for them when they are lost in times of gloom and darkness.

Recognize the former; then choose the latter.

on choosing Gentleness ...
(07/13/2017)



"Nothing is ever lastingly won by force or profoundly transformed by aggression, and so it is that I choose gentleness ...

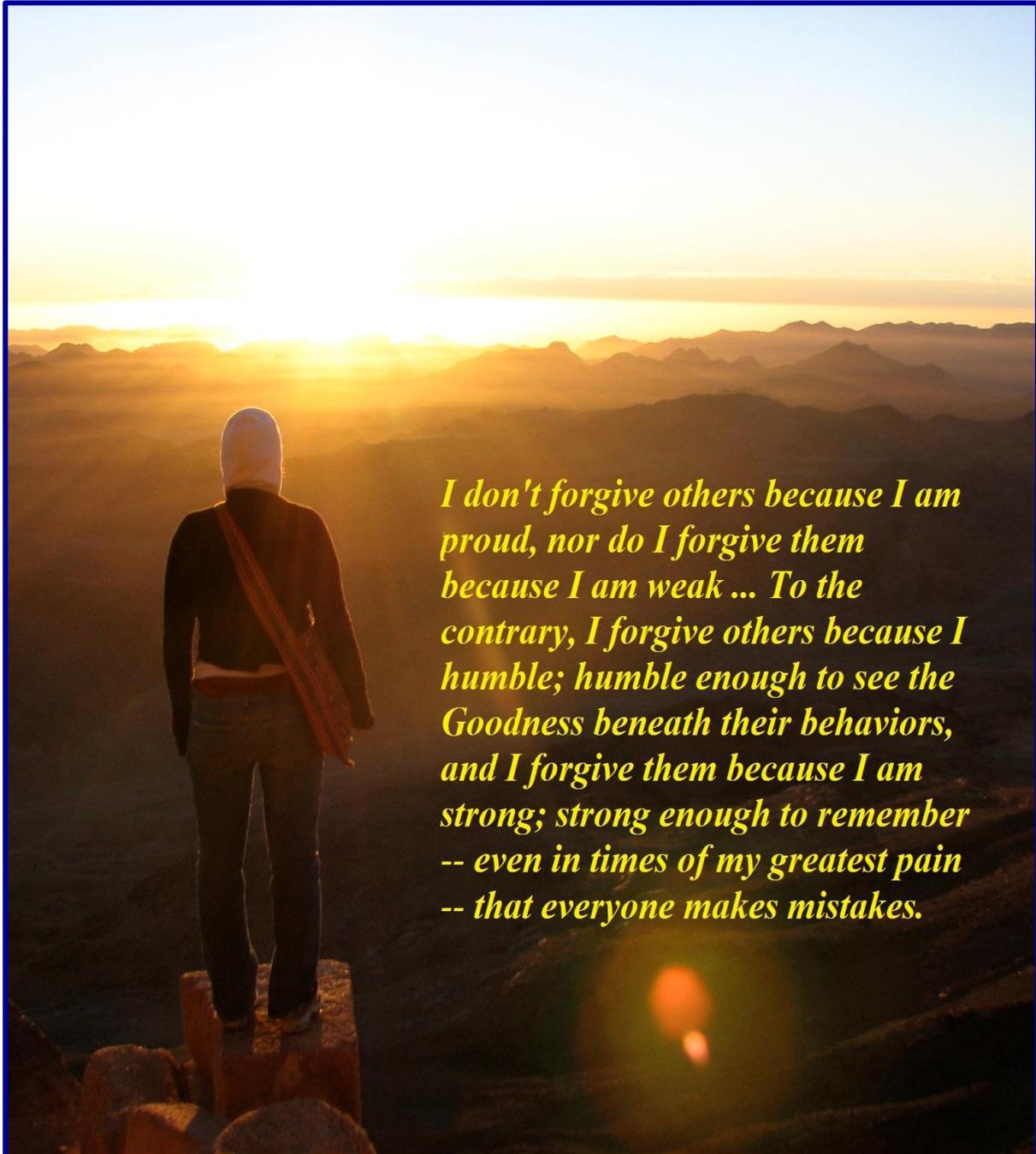
If I raise my voice, may it only be raised in praise ... If I clench my fists, may they only be clenched in prayer ... And if I make a demand, may it only be made of myself." ~ via Max Lucado

to EVERYONE ...
(07/14/2017)



So you want to be tough.
You want to be rebellious.
You want to be a badass.
Then show your Heart to everyone ...
EVERYONE!

on showing real Strength ...
(07/15/2017)



I don't forgive others because I am proud, nor do I forgive them because I am weak ... To the contrary, I forgive others because I am humble; humble enough to see the Goodness beneath their behaviors, and I forgive them because I am strong; strong enough to remember -- even in times of my greatest pain -- that everyone makes mistakes.

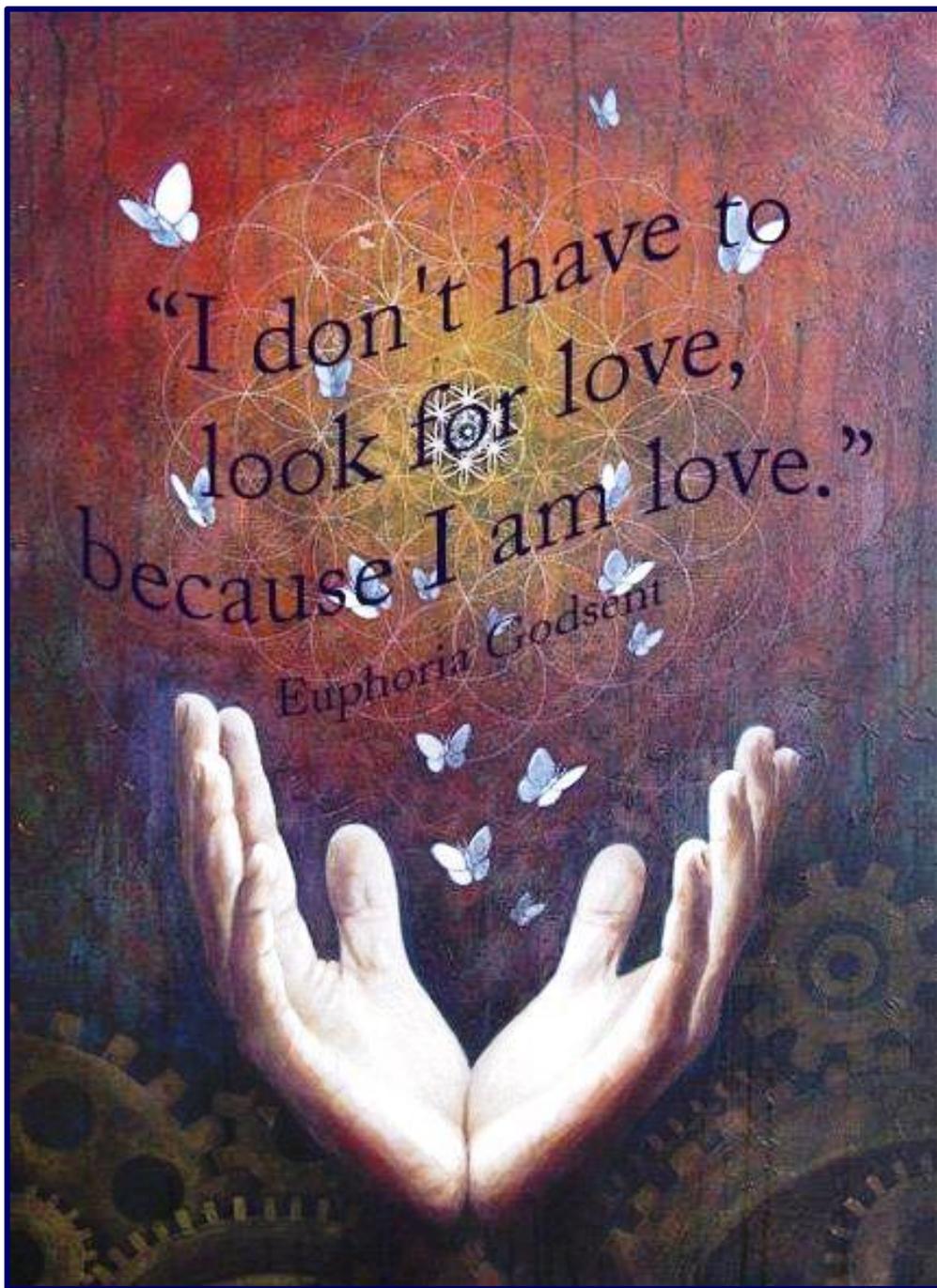
Steering towards the nearest Storm ...
(07/16/2017)



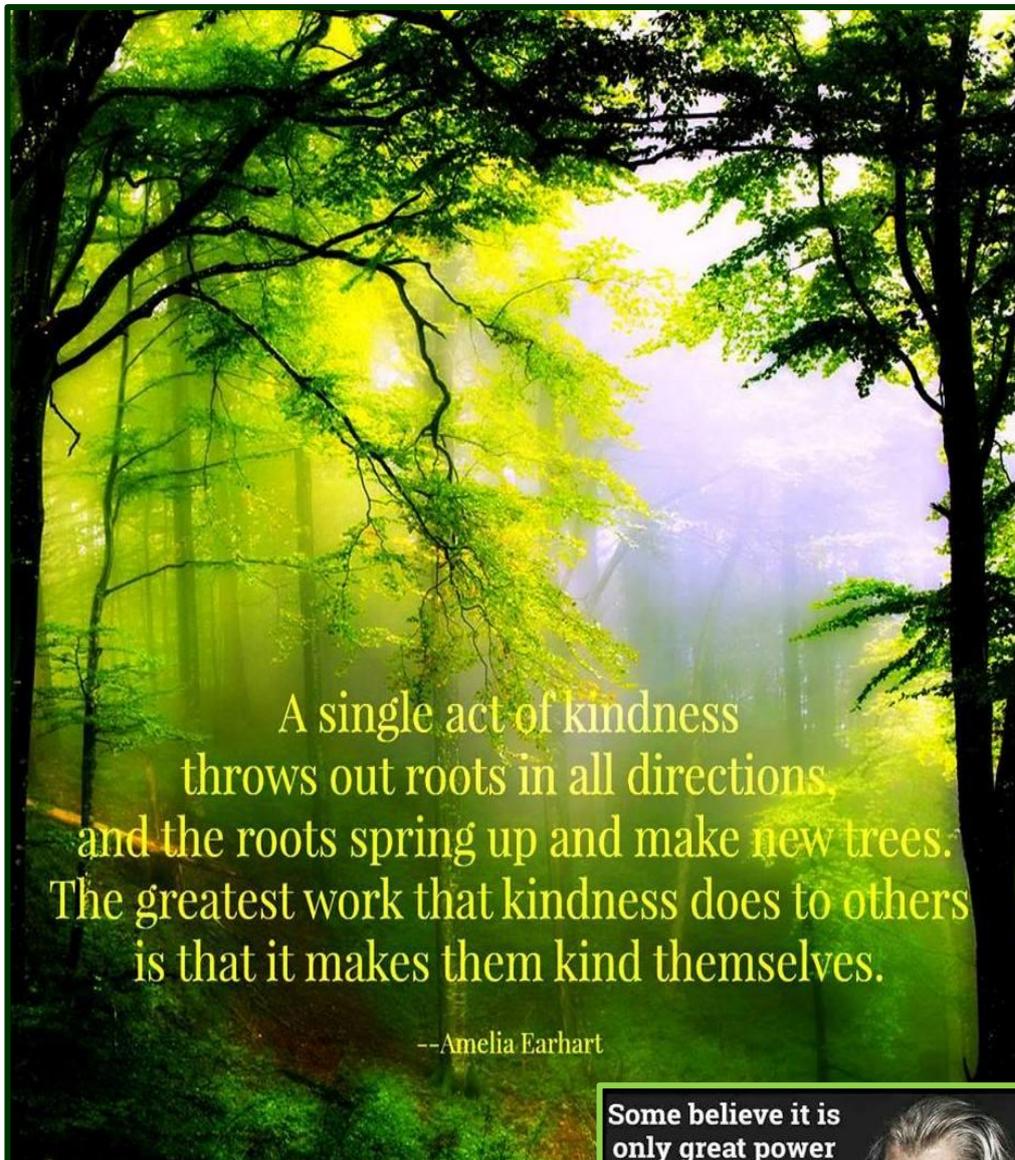
Some people say, "Don't cross oceans for those who won't cross a puddle for you." Well, I say that is exactly the people for whom we actually *should* set sail ... For our task in this life is to Love people; *all* people; especially those people who are quite difficult to Love. We are to do so fully & we are to do so completely & we are to do so without any strings attached -- and this, whether they seem worthy of our Love or not; indeed especially in those moments when they seem least worthy of the same ... For in truth, Life is not about keeping our ships safely in the harbor; comfortably in the company of friends & family. No, a Meaning-full Life is about how often and how daringly we set sail towards its shining yet potentially stormy horizons; about how often we have the courage to Care for strangers and be Kind to enemies.

on finding LOVE ...
(07/17/2017)

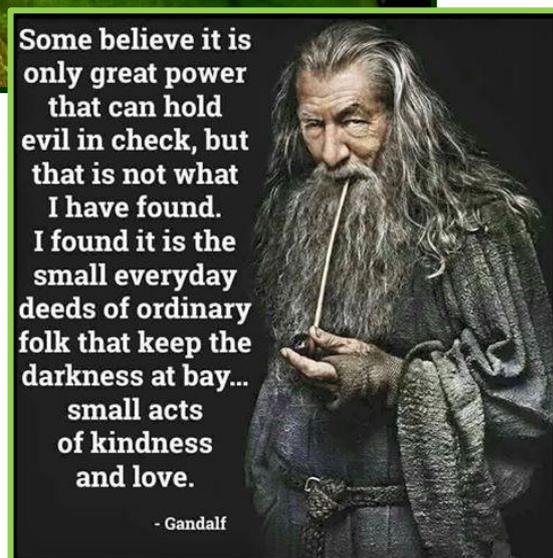
*“Love can only be found
through the act of loving.”
~ Paulo Coelho*



Roots in all Directions ...
(07/18/2017)

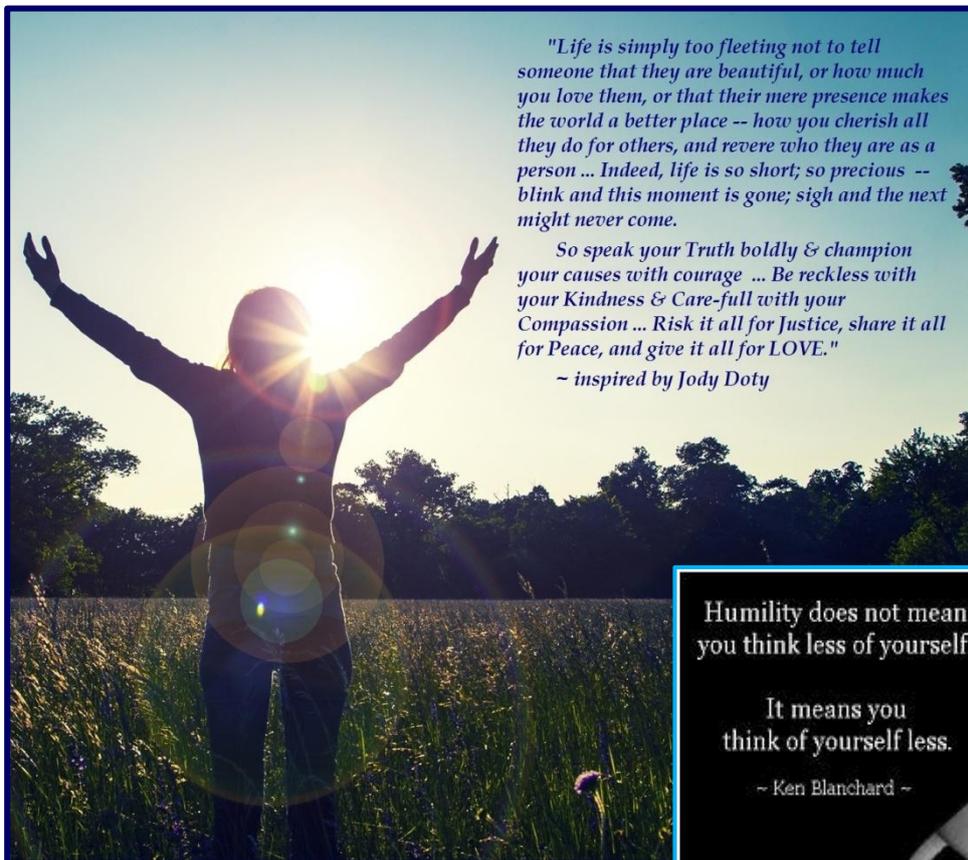


“Reach out and help others. If you have the power to make someone happy, **do it**. Be a vessel, be the change, be the difference, or be the inspiration. Shine your light as an example. The world needs more of that.” ~ Germany Kent



on Speaking UP ...
(07/19/2017)

“I am going to die, sooner or later, whether or not I have spoken. My silences will not protect me, just as your silences will not protect you.... So what are the words you do not yet have? What are the tyrannies you swallow day by day and attempt to make your own, until you sicken and die of them, still wrapped in suffocating silence? ... Yes, your speaking out will irritate some people. It will get us called bitchy or arrogant or hypersensitive. It will no doubt disturb some workrooms and it will no doubt disrupt some dinner parties ... And yet our speaking out will inspire others to speak, and speak they will – and ignorances will be enlightened and laws will be changed and lives will be saved and the world will be altered forever for the better ... So next time, ask yourself: What's the worst that will happen if I stand for Justice? What's the worst thing that can happen if I speak up for Truth? What's the worst that can happen if I demand Compassion? And then after you ask yourself those questions, have the guts to do something about them --- have the guts to push yourself a little further than you previously dared ... True enough, once you start to speak up, people will yell at you. They will interrupt you, they will scoff at you, they will put you down, they will turn their backs on you, and they will take offense and suggest it's personal – and even when they do these things, the world won't end – and you will still be left standing; though just a bit taller than before. And thereafter the speaking will get easier and easier. And then you will find you have fallen in love with your Vision ... Yes, you will lose some friends and lovers, and then you will soon realize that you don't miss them – you will realize that the Vision and the Truth and the Struggle are far more important. And it is at this point that at last you will know that it has all been more than worth it; indeed it is at this point that you will know with surpassing certainty that only one thing is more frightening than speaking your Truth -- and that is not speaking it.” ~ inspired by Audre Lorde



"Life is simply too fleeting not to tell someone that they are beautiful, or how much you love them, or that their mere presence makes the world a better place -- how you cherish all they do for others, and revere who they are as a person ... Indeed, life is so short; so precious -- blink and this moment is gone; sigh and the next might never come.

So speak your Truth boldly & champion your causes with courage ... Be reckless with your Kindness & Care-full with your Compassion ... Risk it all for Justice, share it all for Peace, and give it all for LOVE."

~ inspired by Jody Doty

Humility does not mean
you think less of yourself.

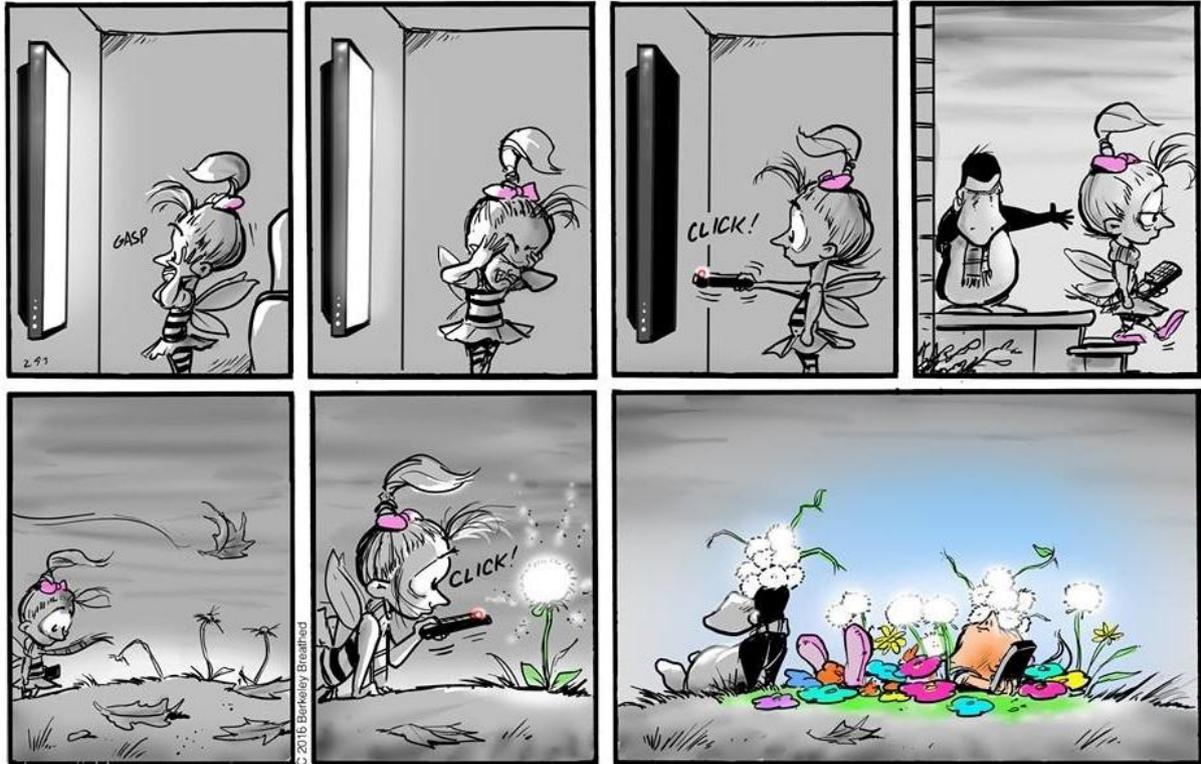
It means you
think of yourself less.

~ Ken Blanchard ~

A distant Second-Best ...
(07/20/2017)

BLOOM COUNTY

by Berkeley Breathed



In these hyper-challenging days of drear & dismalness, turning off your TV is indeed a must ... And even though reaching out to Care for the downtrodden in your community is by far the best way to usurp your despair and reinvigorate your Joy, immersing yourself in Nature is indeed a fine choice that is a distant second-best.

*“Be kind to people... Maybe it will be unappreciated, maybe it will be unreciprocated, and maybe it will be ignored, and yet **spread Love anyway**. The only way we rise is by lifting others.”*
~ via Germany Kent

“The spirit of service is the heart of humanity and the source of any and all real Peace.” ~ via Laila Akita

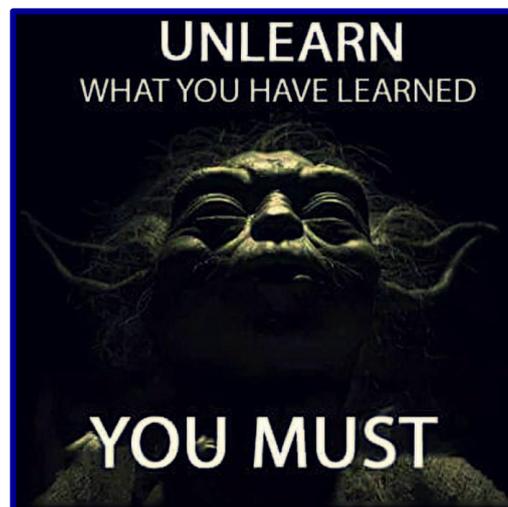
Enlivening Integrity ...
(07/21/2017)

Integrity comes from one who has the courage
to act from the wisdom of their heart.

~Harold W. Becker



*And the Wisdom of the Heart ultimately offers us but a single
summons -- to Love those most who merit our love the least.*



Peace, Frogs! ...
(07/23/2017)

“When I say it's you I like, I'm talking about that part of you that knows that life is far more than anything you can ever see or hear or touch -- that deep part of you that allows you to stand for those things without which humankind cannot survive. Love that conquers hate, peace that rises triumphant over war, and justice that proves more powerful than greed.” ~ Fred Rogers



Be a **PEACE FROG** today -- not only feeling Peace-full whenever aggressive nonsense happens to infiltrate your life's Lily Pond, but also having the cool & collected Courage to actively bring Peace directly to the source(s) thereof.

Our one true Job ...
(07/24/2017)

**“It’s not our job to toughen
our children up to face a
cruel and heartless world.
It’s our job to raise children
who will make the world
less cruel and heartless.”**

- L.R. Knost



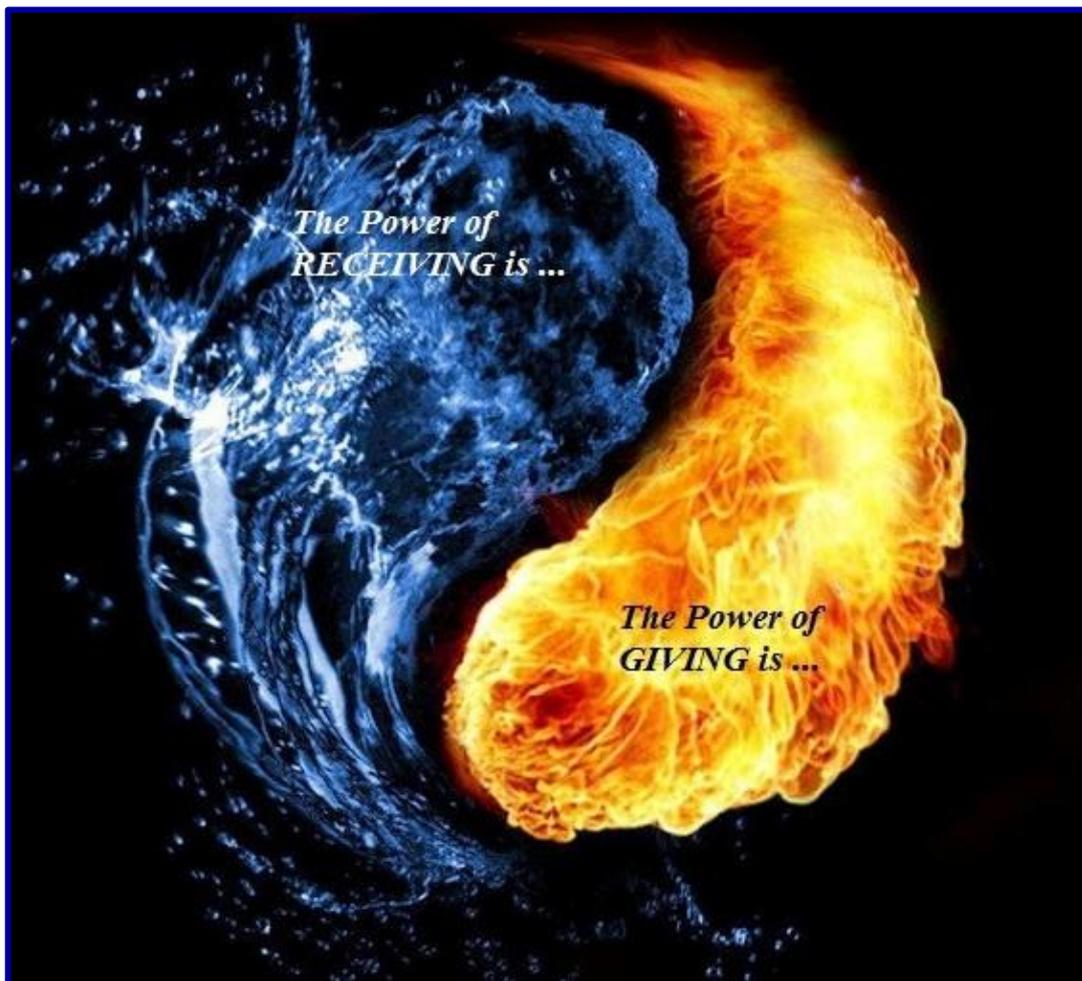
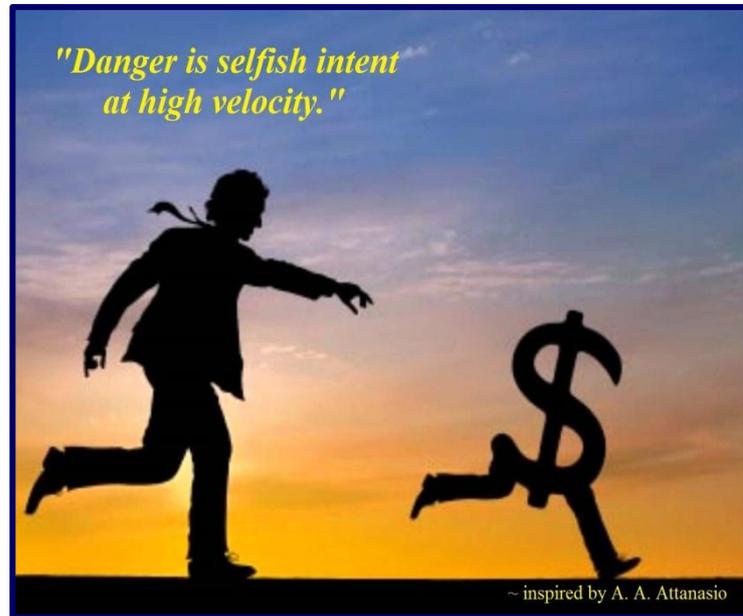
“We don’t make children happy when we simply enable them to be *receivers* of kindness. We escalate their feelings of happiness, improve their well-being, reduce bullying, enrich their friendships, and build peace by teaching them to be *givers* of kindness.” ~ Marilyn Price-Mitchell

Teach your children well

(The quality of one's Wisdom & the depth of one's Understanding both expand in direct proportion to one's interactions with one's community -- and both shrink in direct proportion to how much time one spends on social media.)

Empowering true Giving ...
(07/25/2017)

“Practice giving things away, not just things you don't care about, but things you care about a great deal. After all, it is not the size of a gift that matters, but rather its quality and the amount of mental attachment the giver must overcome during its giving ... And of course, most important of all, remember that you give but little when you give of your possessions. For it is when you give of yourself that you truly give.” ~ via Robert Thurman & Kahlil Gibran



the Great Beauty just beneath ...
(07/26/2017)



Even the "prickliest" people have Great Beauty waiting just beneath their deeds; waiting calmly and without hurry to burst forth from within in acts of radiant Goodness ... So set your judgments of the mean and the arrogant and the annoying aside -- at least long enough to reach out to them in Kindness, and let their Beauty awaken anew.

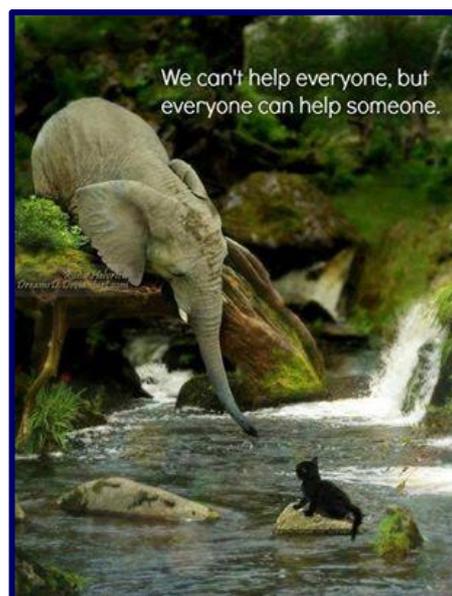
How LOVE awakens ...
(07/27/2017)



"Love has no desire but to fulfill itself ... To melt and be like a flowing stream that sings its melody to the night ... To wake at dawn with a winged heart and give thanks for another day of Loving." ~ Kahlil Gibran

“Love is the condition in which the Happiness of another person is essential to our own ... Indeed, we have each been endowed with a truly beautiful heart. We may not always see it, and we may not even believe it’s there. And yet it’s a gift that came with our birth and, at least in those times we act selflessly, ever reawakens a little more.”

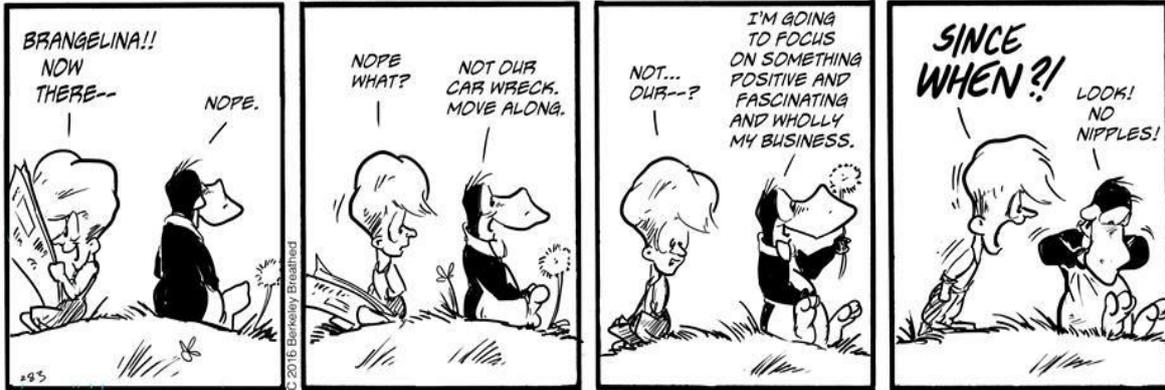
~ via Robert Heinlein & Steve Goodier



Keep it UP or keep it shut ...
(07/28/2017)

BLOOM COUNTY

by Berkeley Breathed



Gossip -- be it directed towards everyday associates or distant celebrities -- is a complete waste of an otherwise perfectly wondrous moment.

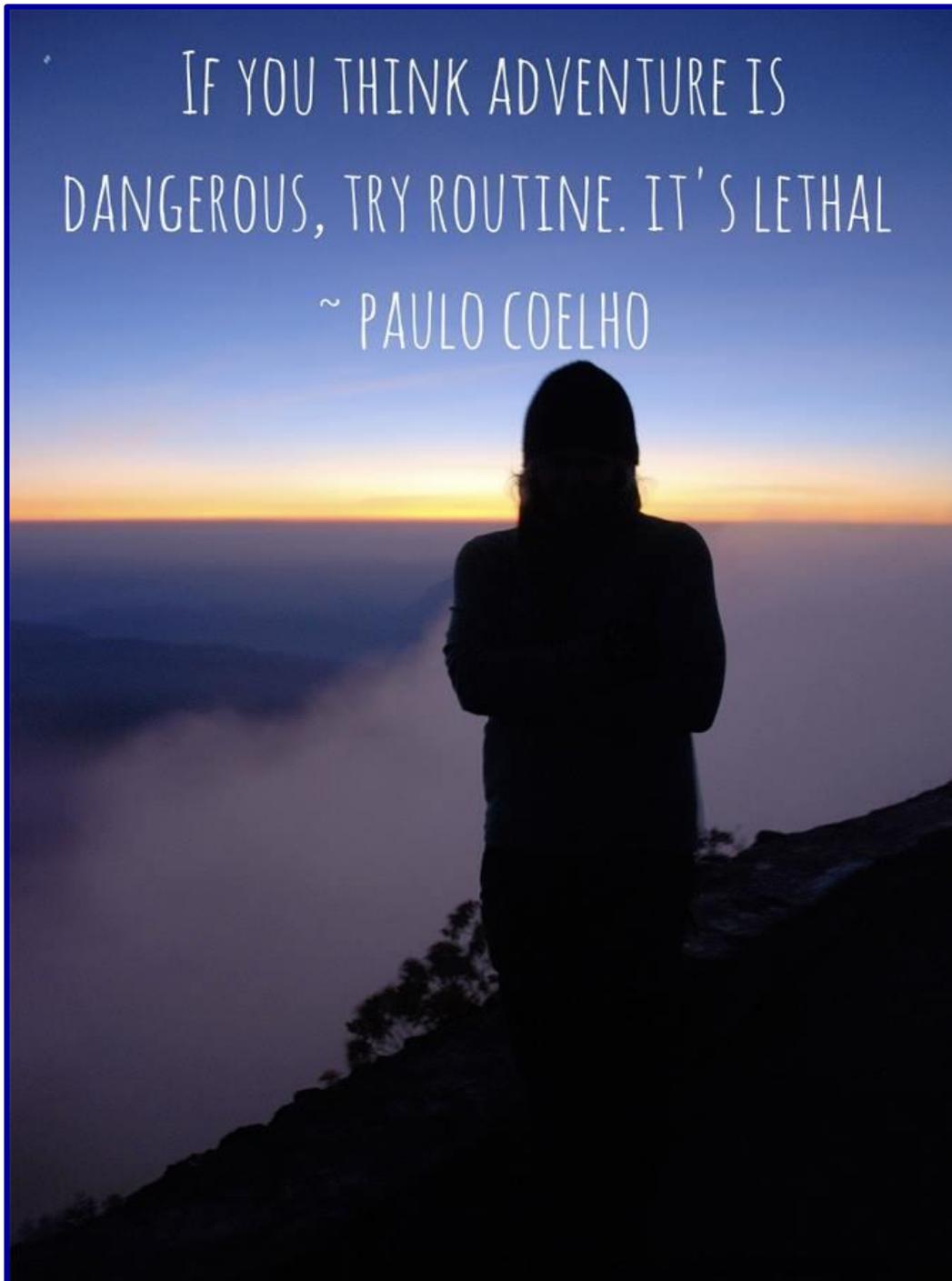
“These are treacherous times, and I know how easily perceptions can be twisted by a single word spoken with malice into an impure ear. Impugn a man's character to those eager to see him fall, and everything that man does thereafter is made to seem underhanded, suspect, fraught with double motives ... How dramatically our lives would shift if one day we simply decided to walk away from all gossip and verbal defamation ... Let us allow that day to be today. Let us speak only the good we know of other people, and encourage all nearby to do the same.” ~ via Paul Auster & Steve Maraboli

on Following LOVE ...
(07/29/2017)



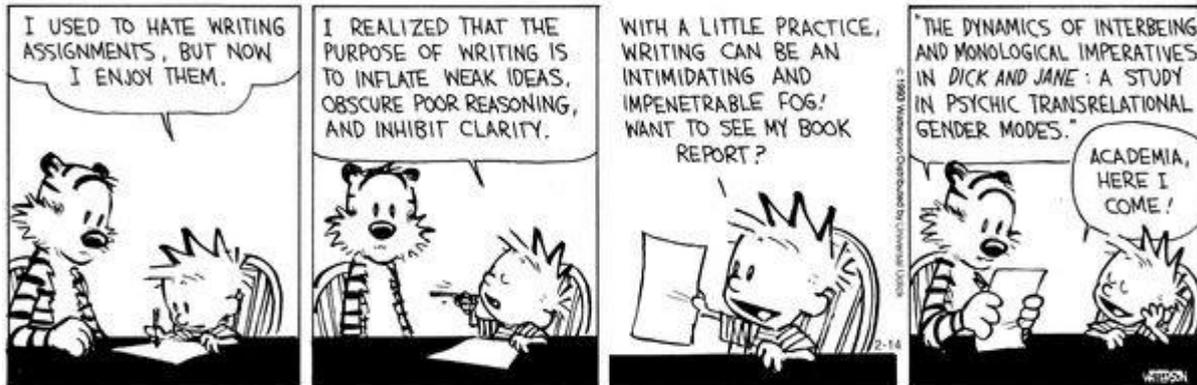
Whatever your lifestyle might have been and whatever your lifestyle might still be, you must understand one thing above all others: The moment you allow yourself to be moved by selfless LOVE -- the moment profound Gratitude wells up from within you and inspires you reach out in acts of reckless Kindness or irrational Generosity, then that is the Path you must follow for the rest of your days ... For no matter how tempting the alternatives might be, LOVE is always the Right Choice.

Another way to kill Death ...
(07/30/2017)



“Rest and comfort are two completely different things. Rest is a planned temporary time of recuperation to refresh and refocus the mind and body. Comfort is when you settle into unproductive routines and blandly accept their satisfactory or unsatisfactory results.” ~ via Gary Rohrmayer

Minding – and crossing – the Gap ...
(07/31/2017)

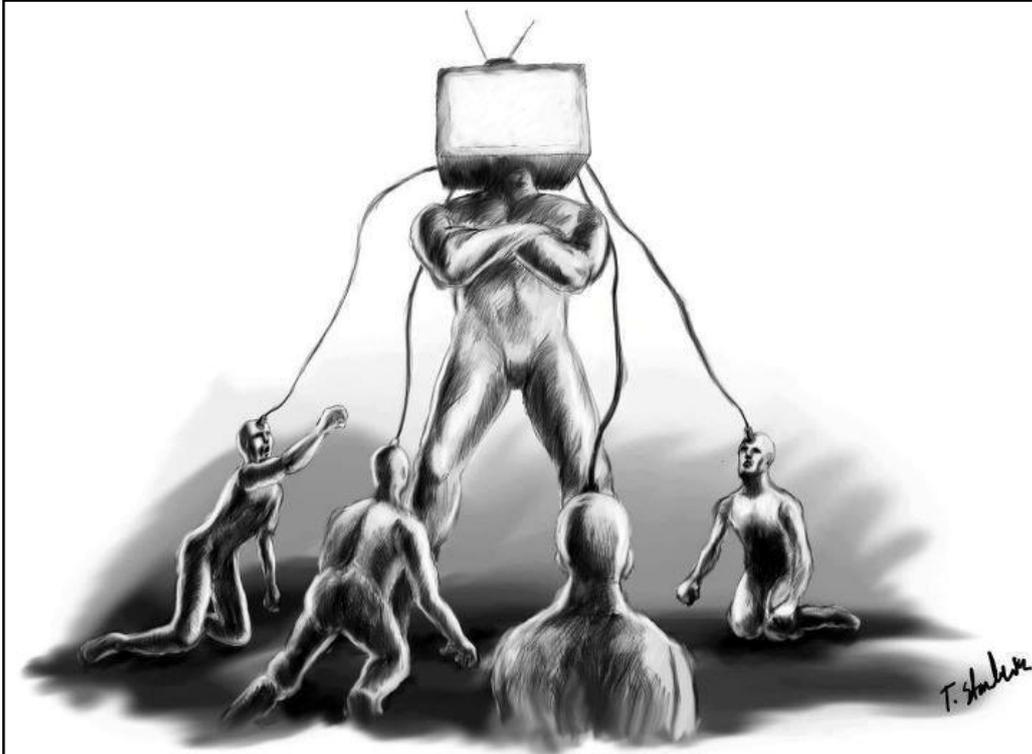


Only write if you can improve upon the emptiness;
Only speak if you can improve upon the silence.

“The greatest enemy of clear language is insincerity. When there is a gap between one’s true and one’s declared aims, one turns instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, and one’s writing becomes frightened and muddled -- like a cuttlefish spurting out ink into once clear waters.” ~ inspired by George Orwell



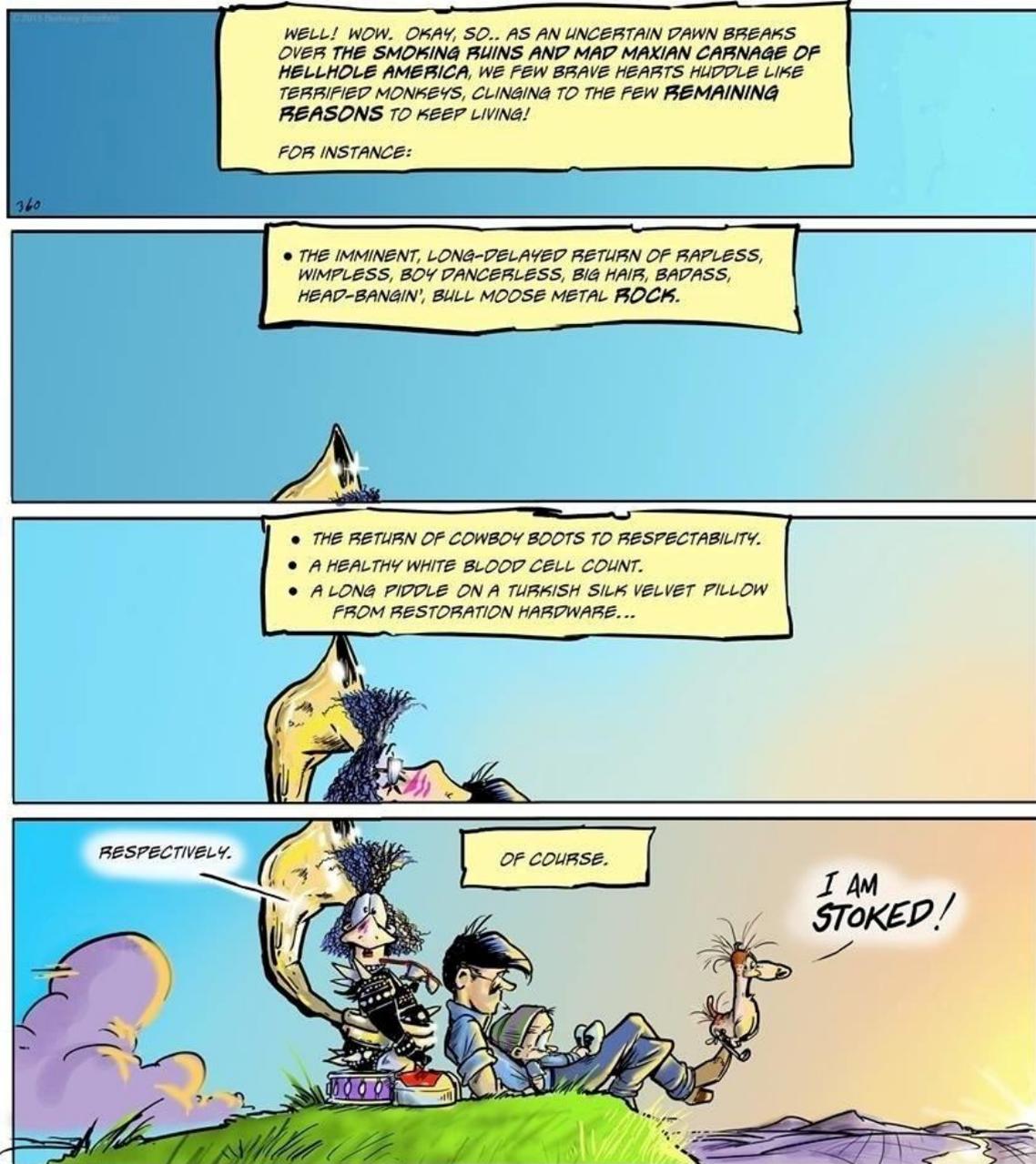
How to Know ...
(08/01/2017)



How to tell if you've been BRAINWASHED ...

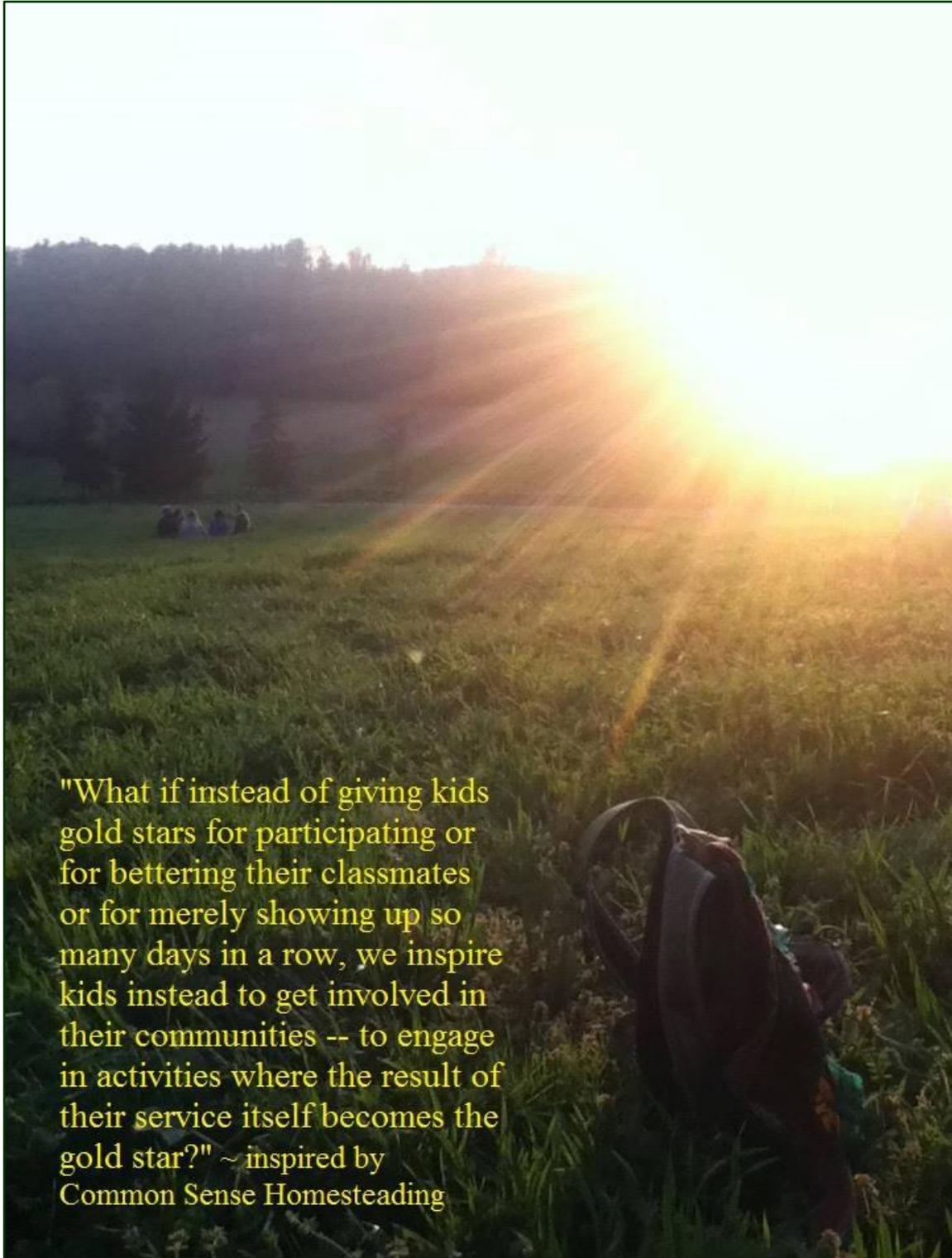
You watch and believe the mainstream nightly news ... You think public schools are actually educating your children ... You stand with your hand over your heart while reciting the Pledge of Allegiance ... You think the system would fix itself if only *your* favorite politicians were in control ... You think your vote actually counts in state & national elections ... You blindly trust medicines from Big Pharma and regularly consume GMO-laden "foods" ... You proudly "support the troops" ... You think there is a substantive difference between the Republicans & the Democrats ... You think the police are here to protect you and serve you in times of need ... You think the United States is invading other countries to make you safer and that the US armed forces are "fighting for your freedom" ... You believe that America is interested in "preserving democracy" at home and abroad.

Find it; Share it ...
(08/02/2017)



The Solution is simple: Find something you are Good at; something that gets you really "stoked" -- and then go forth each day and humbly share that thing with someone else.

Teaching to Learn ...
(08/03/2017)



"What if instead of giving kids gold stars for participating or for bettering their classmates or for merely showing up so many days in a row, we inspire kids instead to get involved in their communities -- to engage in activities where the result of their service itself becomes the gold star?" ~ inspired by Common Sense Homesteading

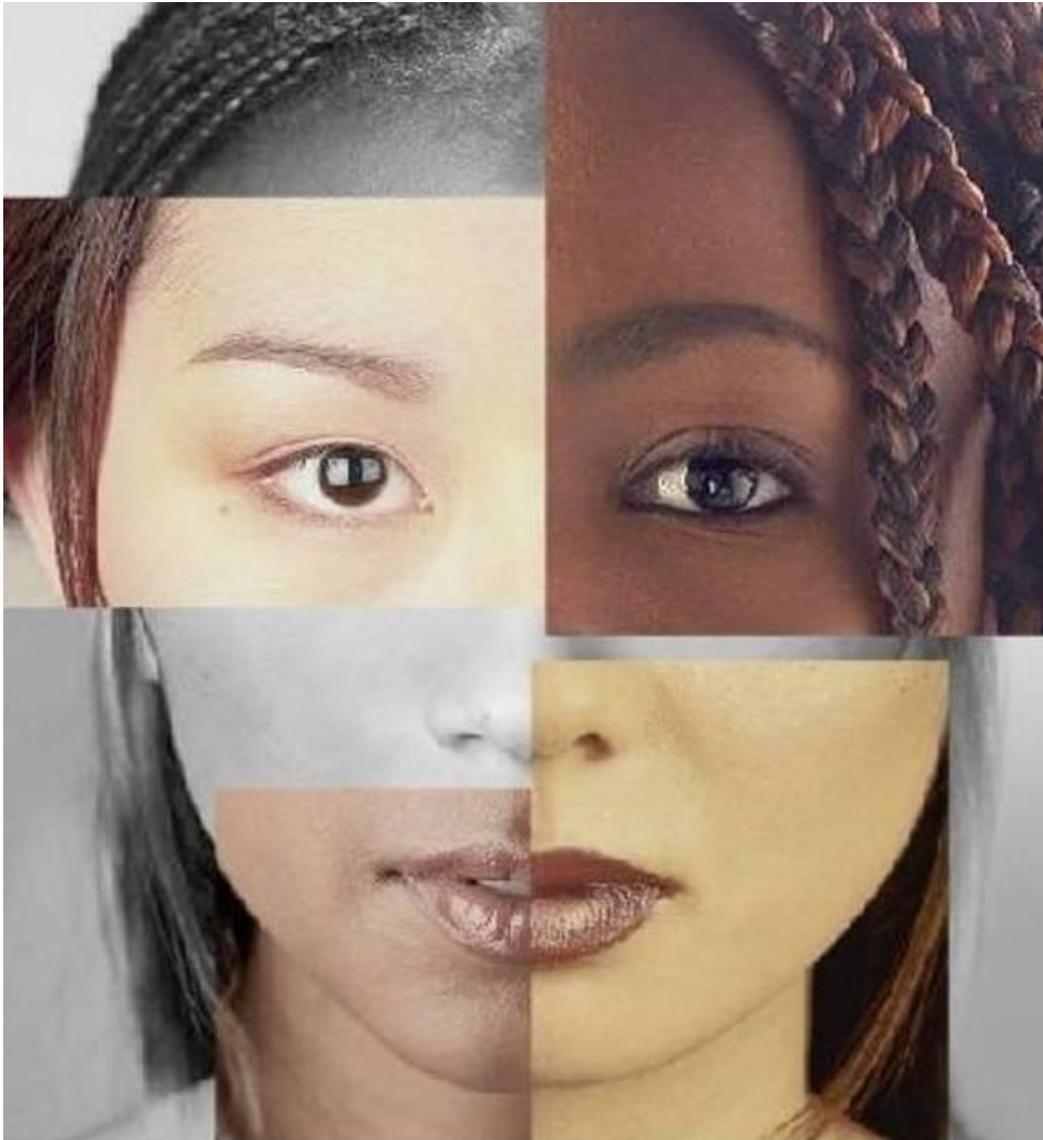
The nature of Good Work ...
(08/04/2017)



"The name of our proper connection to the earth is 'good work,' for good work involves much giving of honor. It honors the source of its materials; it honors the place where it is done; it honors the art by which it is done; it honors the thing that it makes and the user of the made thing. Good work is always modestly scaled, for it cannot ignore either the nature of individual places or the differences between places, and it always involves a sort of religious humility ...

The name of our present society's connection to the earth, on the other hand, is "bad work" – work that is only generally and crudely defined, that enacts a dependence that is ill understood, that enacts no affection and gives no honor. Every one of us is to some extent guilty of this bad work. This guilt does not mean that we must indulge in breast-beating and confession; it means only that there is much good work to be done by every one of us -- and that we must begin to do it as soon as possible." ~ via Wendell Berry

Mending the Ties ...
(08/05/2017)

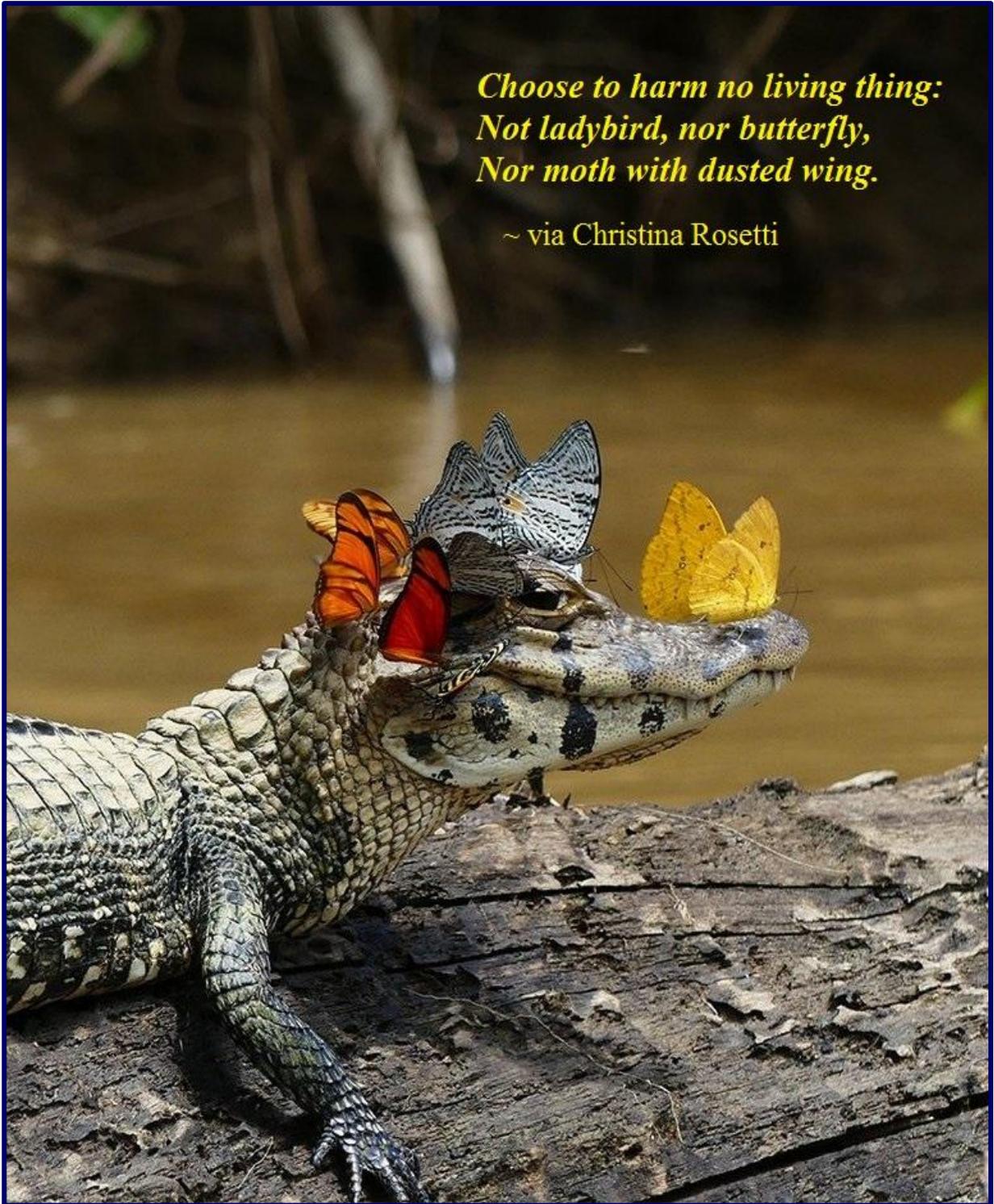


*The bigotries of condemnation, criticism, ridicule, punishment, and incarceration have been tried for thousands of years by our primitive forefathers — and they have failed us. They have failed us miserably and they have failed us completely ... What will work instead is choosing to reach out to those of different color & different culture **before** violence erupts; to mend the Family-ties that were broken long ago; to remind ourselves and others that our only true enemy is the mindset that would label another as an “enemy” by the color of his skin or by the God that she worships, by the way he talks or by the clothes she wears ... Don’t wait for the next act of violence to heal wounds that are already bleeding, my Friends. **Start the Healing today.***

Kindness knows no exceptions ...
(08/06/2017)

*Choose to harm no living thing:
Not ladybird, nor butterfly,
Nor moth with dusted wing.*

~ via Christina Rossetti



To turn Life UP, turn it off ...
(08/07/2017)



They want you to remain placid and timid in the darkness. They want you to blindly accept the "truths" they are showing you; the "reality" they have created. And yet the world is far more beautiful than they will ever allow you to see, and far more loving than they will ever allow you to know ... It is a gorgeous day today, my Friends -- a day overflowing with opportunities to serve and be grateful. Why don't you come outside and see for yourself?

What God has left ...
(08/08/2017)



"If you see what needs to be repaired and how to repair it, then you have found a piece of the world that God has left for you to complete. But if you only see what is wrong and broken and ugly in the world, then it is you yourself who needs repairing."

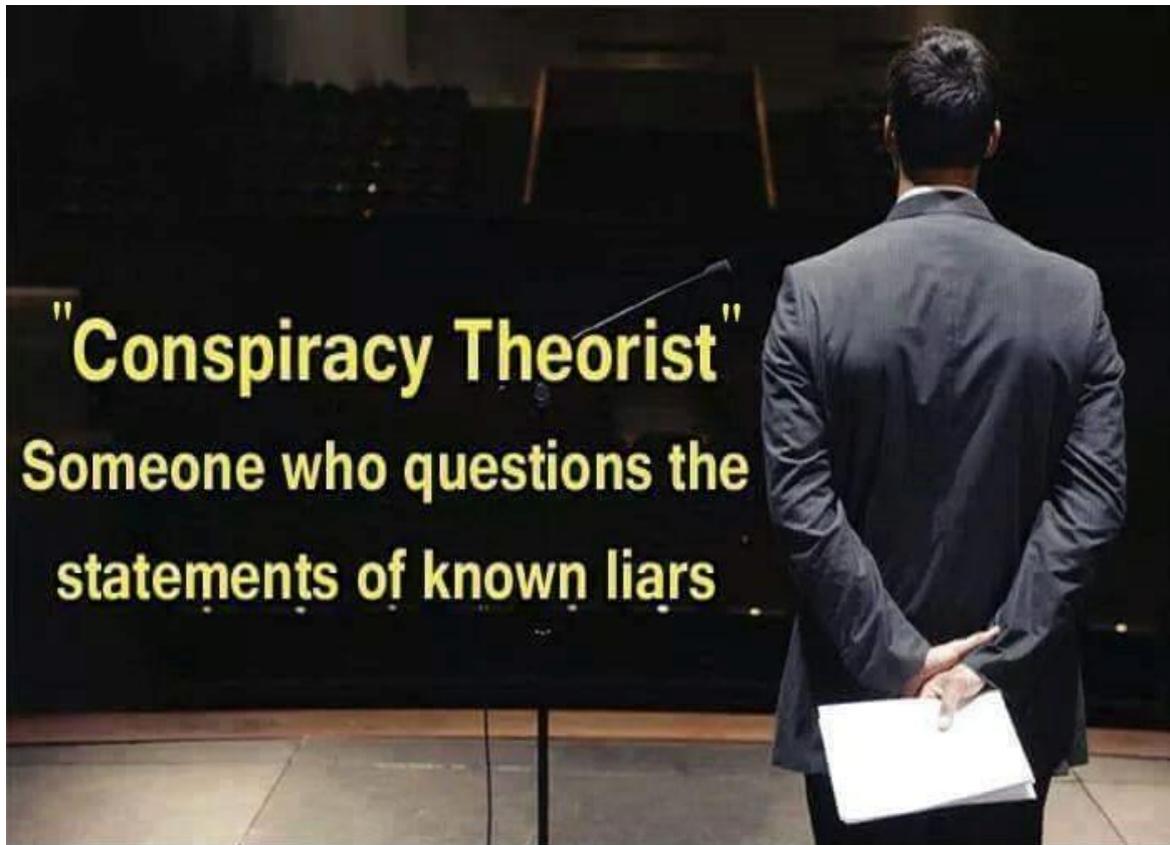
~ Menachem Schneerson

Un-phoning Home ...
(08/09/17)



NOTICE: All citizens must at all times remain in direct contact with their cell phones ... At no time is it permissible to sit in relaxed appreciation of Nature's Beauty, or to observe the poetic interactions of other beings, or to gaze deeply into the eyes of another person ... **Remember** -- every jot & tittle of text in every arriving message holds the promise of a superficial yet potently jovial distraction from the worries and concerns of Life ... So honor all of your device's ringtones and all of its vibrations -- and pay it homage above all your other gods.

Conspiring Conspiracy ...
(08/10/2017)



"It is imperative that we improve our own knowledge before choosing which side of the fence to which we feel compelled to belong. And it is just as important thereafter to continually revisit that same compulsion -- and be ready to hop that same fence -- whenever new information presents itself." ~ via J. P. Robinson

Not quite fatal ...
(08/11/2017)



“Why should we tolerate a diet of weak poisons, a home in insipid surroundings, a circle of acquaintances who are not quite our enemies, the noise of motors with just enough relief to prevent insanity? Why do we choose to live in a world which is just not quite fatal?” ~ via Rachel Carson

The bad & the Good ...
(08/12/2017)



“When asked if I am pessimistic or optimistic about the future, my answer is always the same: if you look at the science related to what is happening on Earth and aren't pessimistic, then you simply don't understand the data. And yet at the same time, if you meet the people who are working to restore this Earth and the lives of the poor who live on it and aren't optimistic, then you simply haven't got a pulse.” ~ via Martin Keogh

A new and nobler Path ...
(08/13/2017)



“No matter how many toys we amass we leave them behind when we die, just as we leave a broken environment, an economy that only benefits the richest, and a legacy of empowering greed over goodness. It is now time for us to commit to following a new and nobler path.” ~ John Perkins

Laying (aside) the blame ...
(08/14/2017)



*"Humans are so content to blame something else, like government or corporations, for the messes we ourselves create. And yet it is each of us who continue doing the same things, day in and day out, that have created those very problems. Sure, corporations create pollution. If they do, stop buying their products. Sure, municipal waste incinerators pollute the air. So stop throwing trash away. Minimize your production of waste. Recycle. Buy food in bulk and avoid packaging waste. Simplify. Turn off your TV. Grow your own food ... **GO VEGAN** ... Plant a garden. There so many ways we can each become part of the solution, instead of remaining part of the problem. After all, if we don't, who will?" ~ Joseph Jenkins*

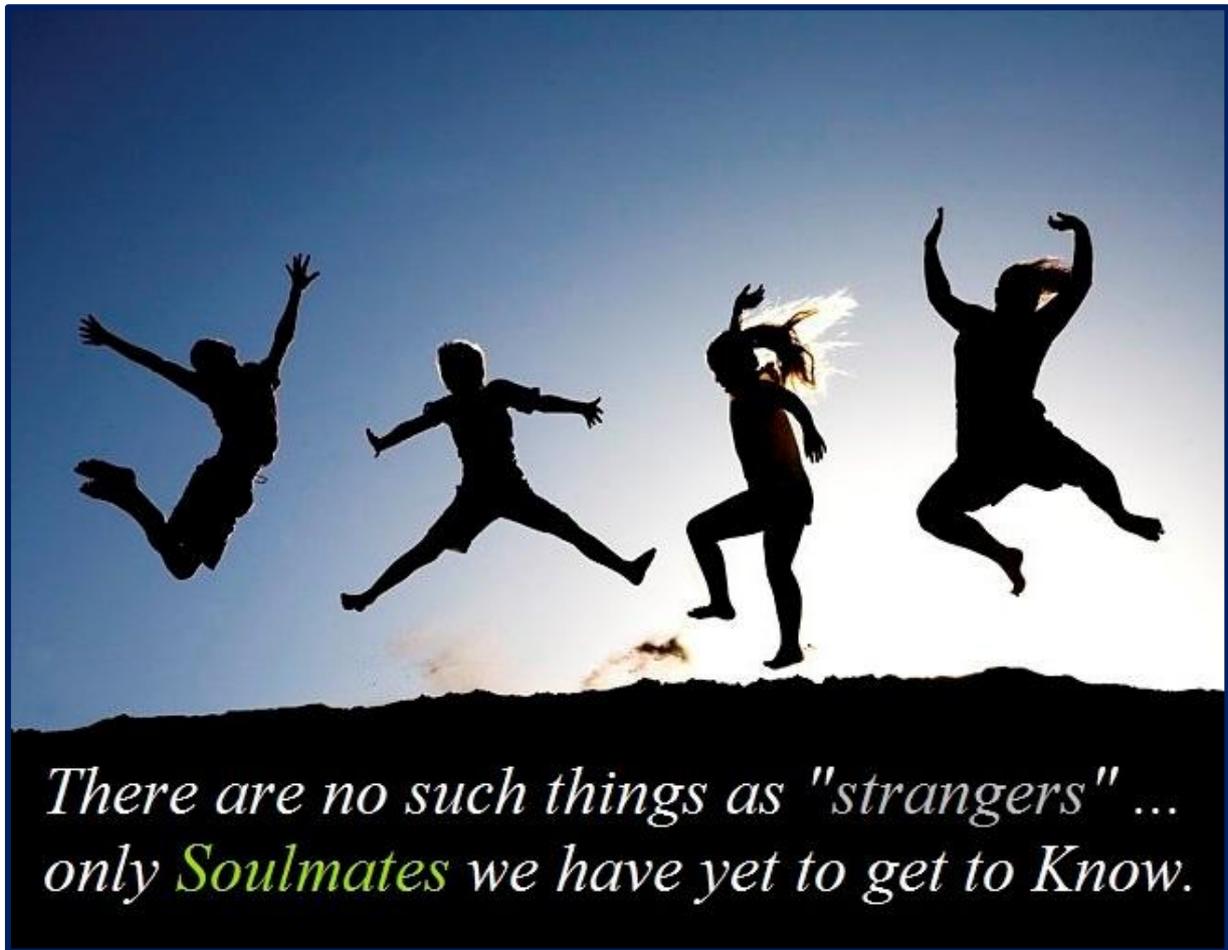
Our only Hope ...
(08/15/2017)



"The care of the Earth is our most ancient, our most worthy and, after all, our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of Her, and thereby to foster Her renewal, is our only legitimate hope." ~ via Wendell Berry

P.S. And remember, the only way left for us to effectively "cherish what remains of Her" is to Go Vegan ... For if we don't soon choose the vegan Way; if we don't soon choose to live with compassion; if we don't soon choose to cease abusing & murdering our innocent animal cousins, our Earth (and our own lives and the lives of all those we love along with Her) is doomed, and it will not matter what else we do.

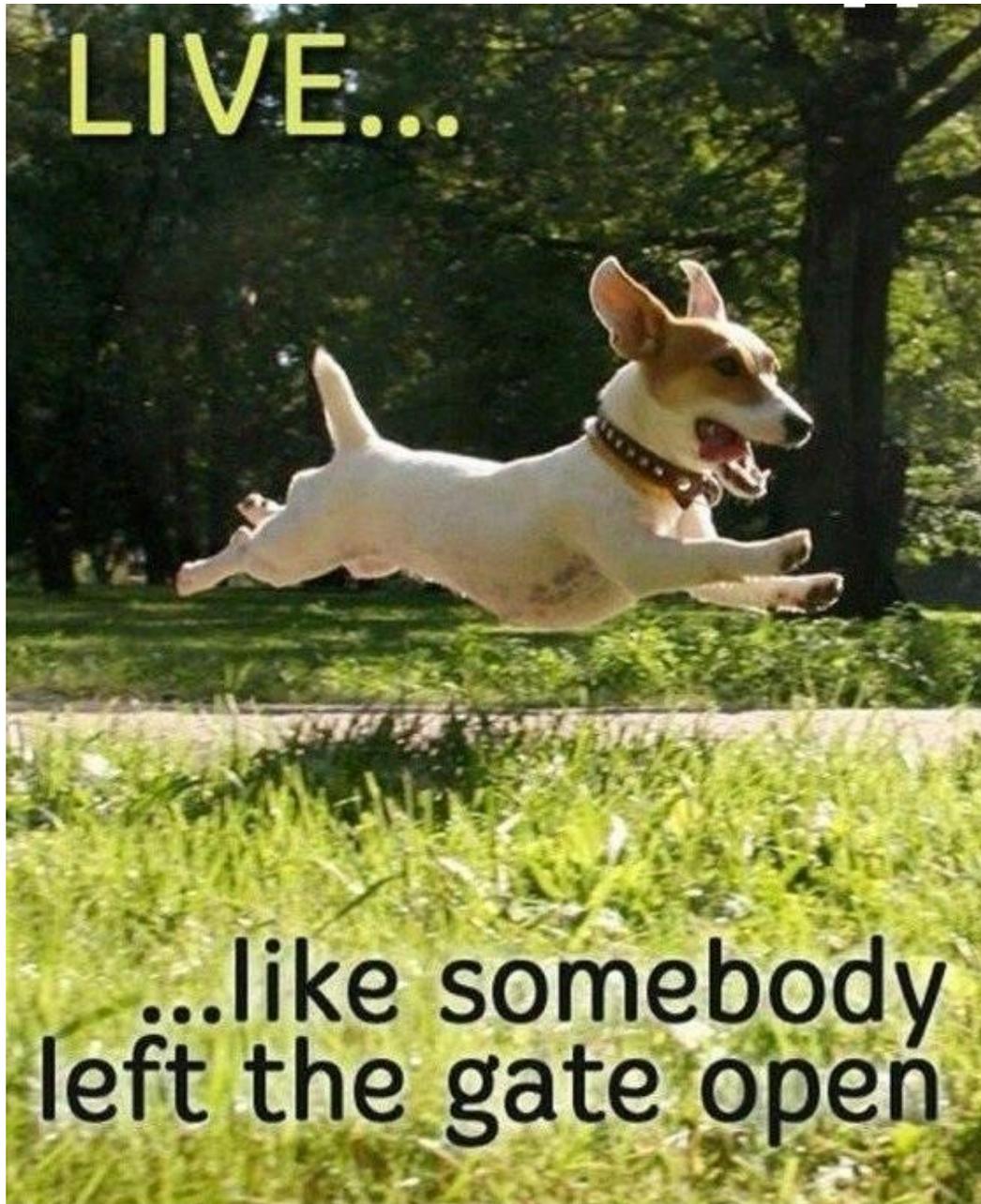
How to BE with strangers ...
(08/16/2017)



*There are no such things as "strangers" ...
only **Soulmates** we have yet to get to Know.*

“Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance ... The tender loving care of other human beings will never become obsolete. People much more than things have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed and redeemed -- and redeemed -- and redeemed ... No matter what they might have done or what they might well do, never throw out anybody.” ~ via Robert Kennedy & Sam Levenson

Living all-IN ...
(08/17/2017)



**...like somebody
left the gate open**

*(P.S. The only way to Live all-in
... is to LOVE all-out.)*

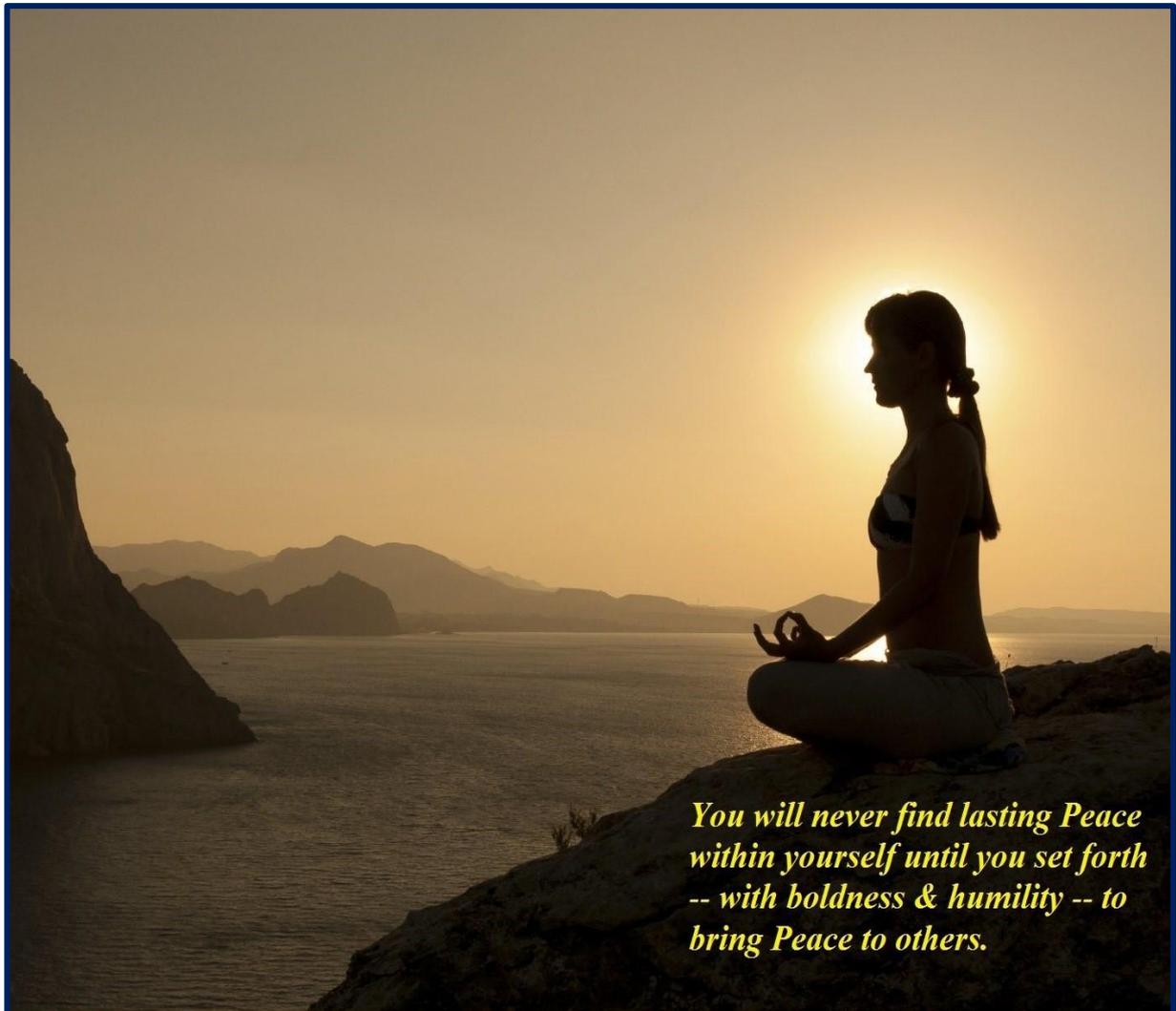
On replacing War ...
(08/18/2017)



"To replace the current paradigm of waging war with a new paradigm of waging peace, we must each become pioneers; pioneers who push the boundaries of human behavior ... We must become doctors who seek to cure the virus of violence. We must become reverends who do more than merely preach to the choir. We must become teachers of forgiveness who lead by example. We must become soldiers who conquer by refusing to fight ... In essence, we must each become artists; visionaries who every single day remake the world again & again & again into a masterpiece of Oneness & Harmony."

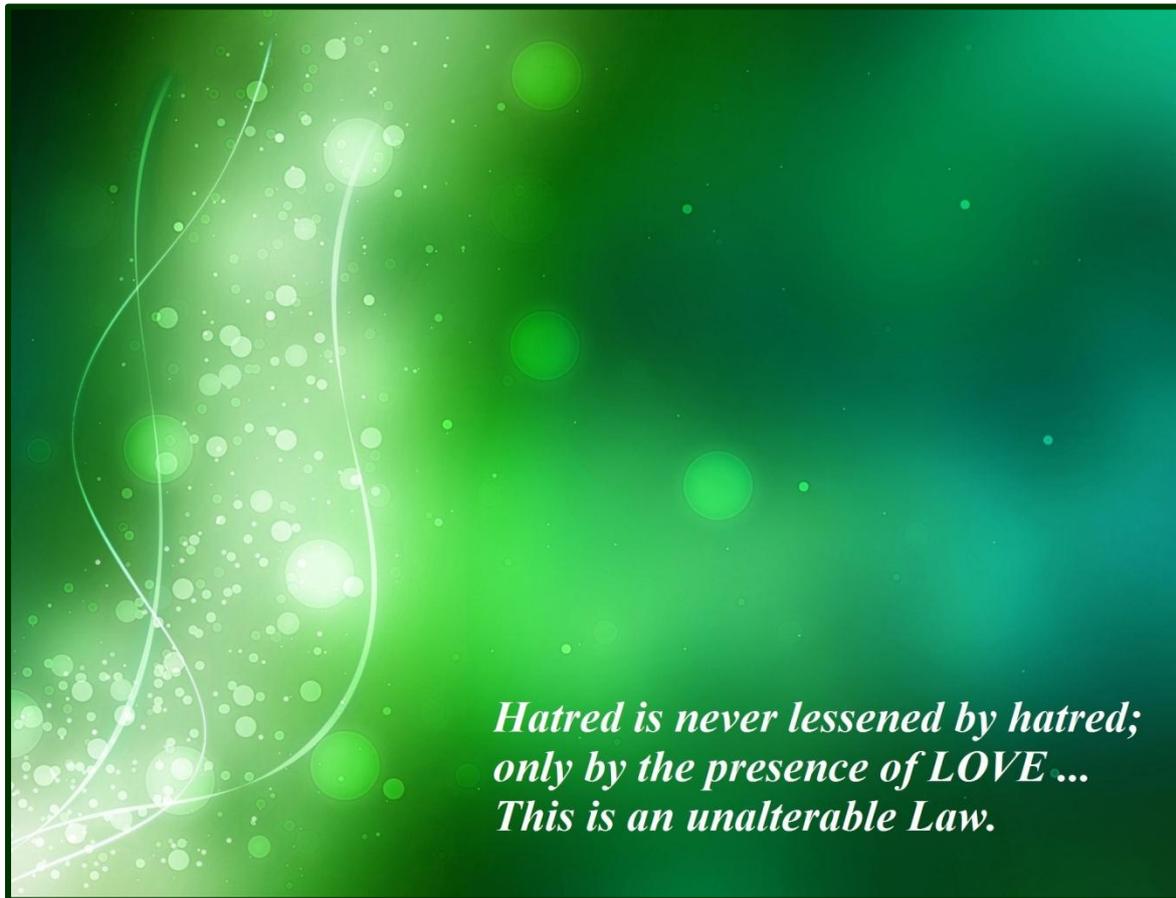
~ inspired by Paul Chappell

On finding Inner Peace ...
(08/19/2017)



“When you do the Right Thing – which is nothing more than having the courage to openly care for others, you always get the feeling of peace and serenity that is always comes with doing so. This means that knowing inner peace is simply a matter of choosing to do the Right Thing repeatedly & earnestly -- again and again and again – in as many moments as you remember to do so – for every day of your life.” ~ inspired by Roy Bennett

What it means to Forgive ...
(08/20/2017)



“Grudges and resentments and frustrations and even annoyances are for those who have succumbed to the myth of entitlement – are for those who arrogantly believe that they deserve to be treated more fairly than the norm – are for those who insist that they are owed something by life in general &/or those nearby. Forgiveness, however, is for those who are substantial enough to remain humble – are substantial enough to live kindly; seeking to serve rather than be served – are substantial enough to move smoothly away from being wronged and move steadily toward becoming a source of Harmony for every wrongdoer.”
~ inspired by Criss Jami



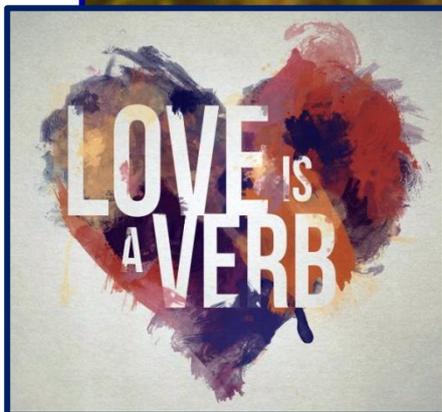
*"And when you get right down to it,
that is the only purpose grand enough for
a human life: not just to Love, but rather
to persist in Loving." ~ via Sue Monk Kidd*

To transform the World ...
(08/21/2017)

“Three things in human life are important: the first is to be kind; the second is to be kind; and the third is to be kind ... Do your little bit of Good wherever you are; for it's those little bits of Good put together that ultimately transform the world.” ~ via Henry James & Desmond Tutu

See the light in others
& treat them as if
that's all you see.

wayne dyer



Embracing real Power ...
(08/22/2017)



Anyone can hold a grudge, and it's easy (tempting, even) to persist in hating or feeling ill will towards the one who has wronged us ... On the other hand, it takes a real sense of humility and a profound solidity of character to forgive ... Indeed it's downright difficult to do so -- and that is why it's so *powerful*.

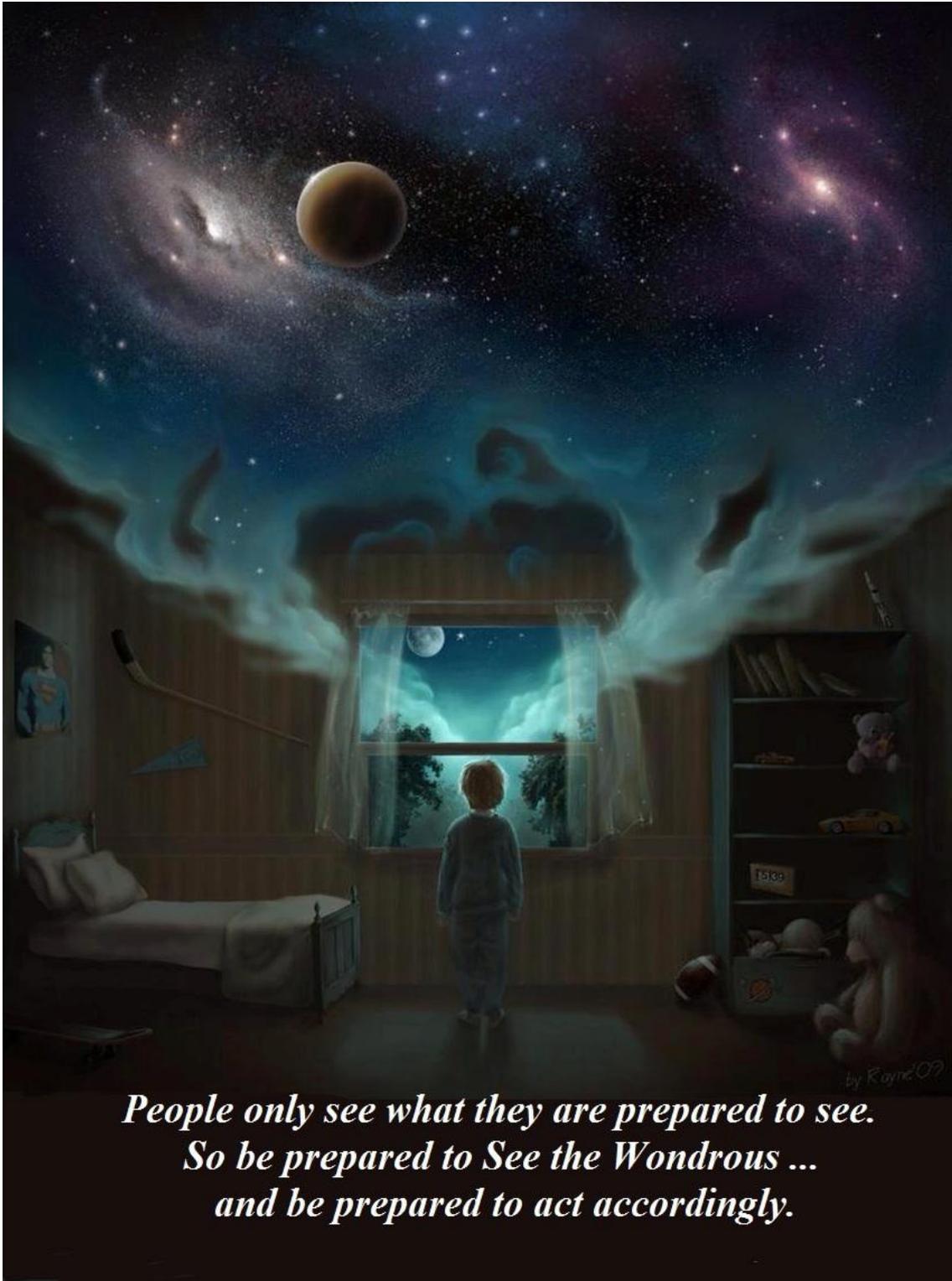
And it is important to realize that when we forgive it doesn't mean that what happened has become OK or that we are encouraging the other to repeat their mistake. It simply means that we can pause long enough to See beyond the other person's behaviors -- that we can still See the innate Goodness residing within them -- that we can See that they too have suffered (and are probably still suffering) from their misdeed -- and that we remember that they are (& always will be) our Brother or our Sister; and as such that we will always wish them **Peace**.

The ultimate (and ultimately only) Answer ...
(08/23/2017)

“Love is by nature an untamed force – a completely selfless drive to Care that cannot be swayed or altered. That is why when we try to make Love about ourselves we suffer – why when we try to control it, it destroys us; why when we try to imprison it, it enslaves us, why when we try to understand it, it leaves us feeling lost and confused ... For Love is not about us at all. Love is solely about the other. Love is friendship that has caught fire and is burning its brightest. Love is calm acceptance, Love is humble gentleness, Love is self-sacrificial sharing, and Love is actively tending. Love is forgiving unconditionally and doing so ahead of time. It is loyal in times of revelry and just as steadfast in times of betrayal. It settles willingly & continually for far less than perfection and forever allows for – even cherishes -- the weaknesses and foibles of the one being Loved. It pines for nothing, demands nothing, and hopes for nothing for its self – that is why it is indestructible, and those who embody it, invincible.” ~ inspired by Paulo Coelho & Ann Landers

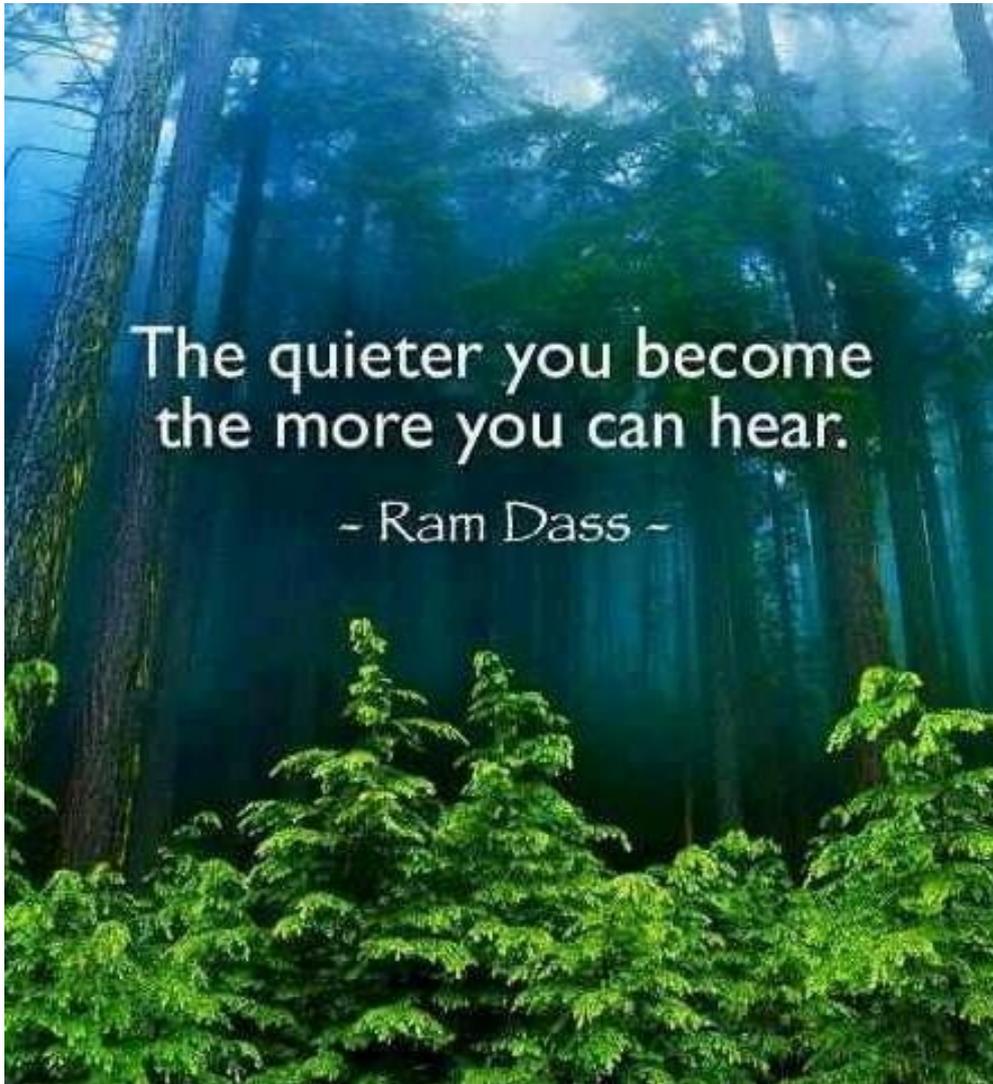


Seeing the Wondrous ...
(08/24/2017)



*People only see what they are prepared to see.
So be prepared to See the Wondrous ...
and be prepared to act accordingly.*

Soaking UP the Truth ...
(08/26/2017)

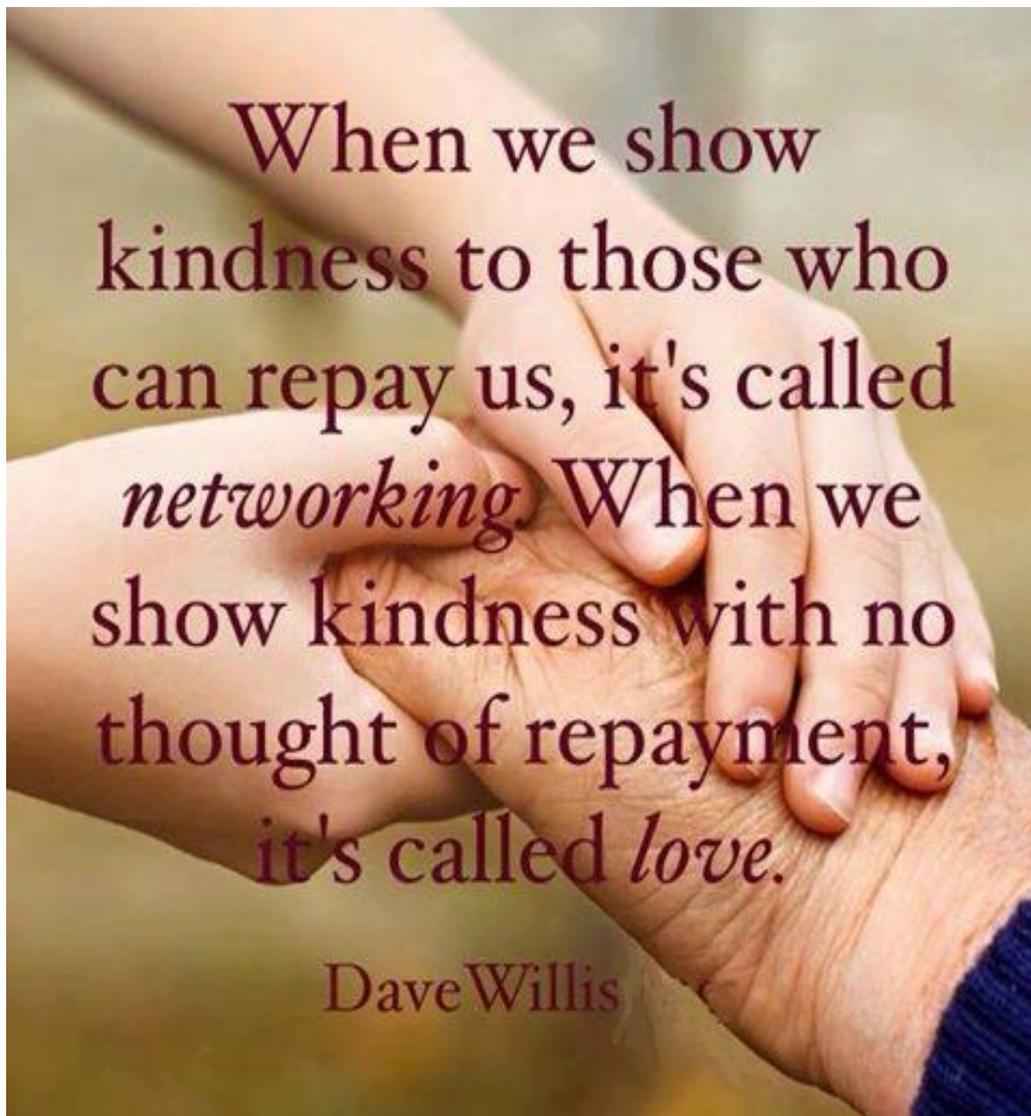


*The more intensely you listen,
the more fully you understand ...*

*The more courageously you emulate,
the more you come to Comprehend.*

“The manuscript you brought me argues that mental understanding is more important than movement; that action is virtuous only if it reflects intellectual comprehension; that virtue comes from lucid thinking, not bold action ... Without question, this manuscript is wrong.” ~ via Iain Pears

No need to Know ...
(08/27/2017)



“After the fire, when I'd tried to express my gratitude to our customers for their kindness, they'd been awkward – shy -- uncomfortable. Later that night my father had explained to me that giving thanks is not a common practice in India. I had asked him that, if this were truly the case, how could I ever know if others appreciated what I had done for them. My father simply smiled at me and said, ‘Do you really ever need to know?’” ~ via Chitra Divakaruni

To light The Way ...
(08/28/2017)

*“We easily forgive the children
who are afraid of the dark.
The real tragedy of life
is that so many men & women
are afraid to live in the Light.”*
~ via Plato



*"Carry your candle ... Run to the darkness ... Seek
out the helpless, confused and torn ... Take your
candle ... Go and light your world." ~ via Chris Rice*

To know a greater Peace ...
(08/29/2017)



*Life becomes Peace-full when we
accept the apologies we never got ...
Life becomes Joy-full when we engage
the friendships we'll never receive.*

~ via Robert Brault

Instead of hatred ...
(08/30/2017)



"Be accepting of those who are obviously lost on their path. Bigotry, Arrogance, Anger, Cowardice, Jealousy, Violence, and Greed all stem from feeling far removed from one's True Self; far from one's Center; far from one's Soul ... Instead of hating such people, pray that they will find their way back to the Way of mutual Respect and Kindness. And instead of attacking them or ridiculing them or abandoning them, reach out to them with acts of Respect & Kindness yourself." ~ anonymous

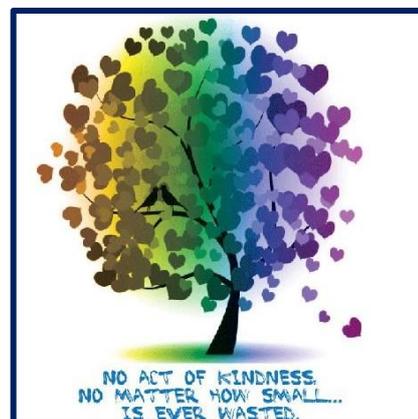
Showing real Courage ...
(08/31/2017)



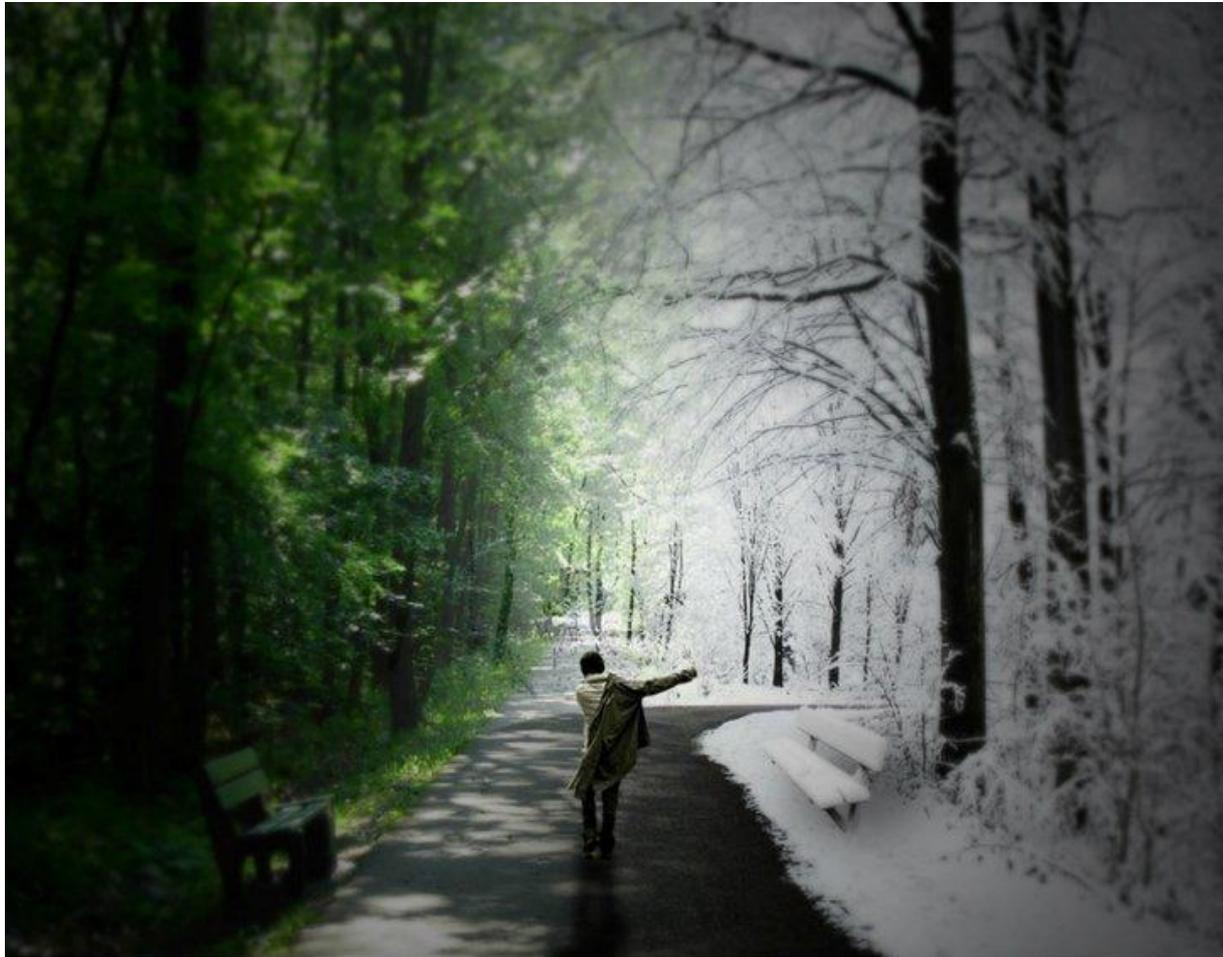
***Politely refuse to walk timidly through
your life to arrive safely at your death
... Walk bravely to the edge of LOVE
instead, and leap boldly over its edge.***

(inspired by Paulo Coelho)

“I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand or power at his disposal. Those things don’t show real courage. Real courage is when a person knows they’re licked before they begin, but they begin anyway and see it through no matter what – real courage is knowing your Goodness is going to be met with scorn or ridicule or anger or derision, and yet choosing to do that Goodness anyway.” ~ inspired by Harper Lee

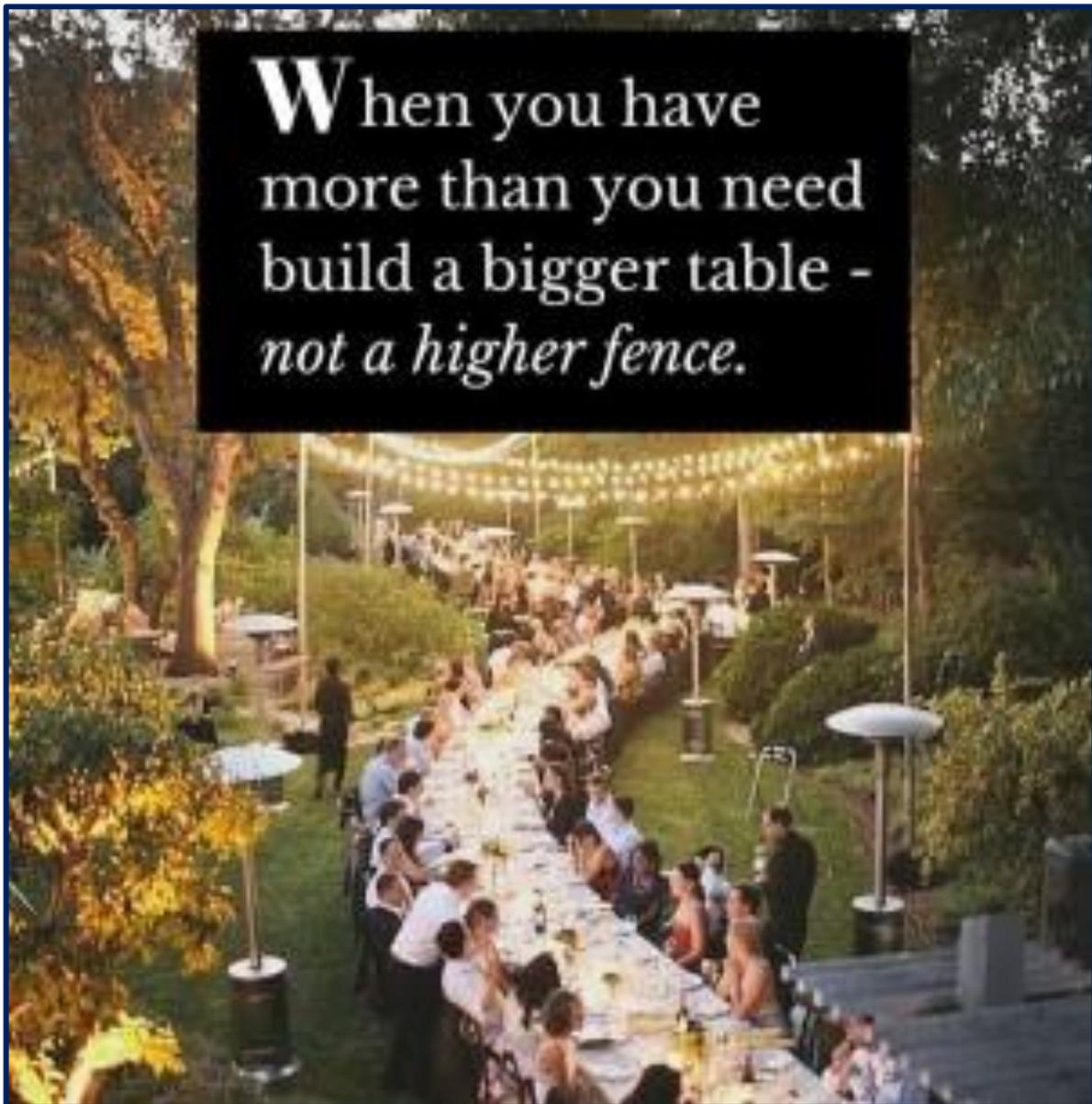


No bad weather ...
(09/02/2017)



“Every day of your life -- no matter what is happening to you or what is happening for you -- you are surrounded by an overwhelmingly beautiful & magnificently wonderful painting. It is intricately detailed and vibrant in its radiance; a scintillating labor of cosmic Devotion and celestial Love. The colors are like no other -- they swim and they leap, they trickle and they shimmer, they illuminate what is darkness and they give depth to all that is glaring ... And yet despite all of this we so often choose to fix our eyes upon the small out-of-the-way blemishes that sit within that canvas' corners. Don't do such a thing, my Friends ... No matter what the weather, *See the Beauty!*” ~ inspired by C. Joybell C.

A much bigger Table ...
(09/03/2017)

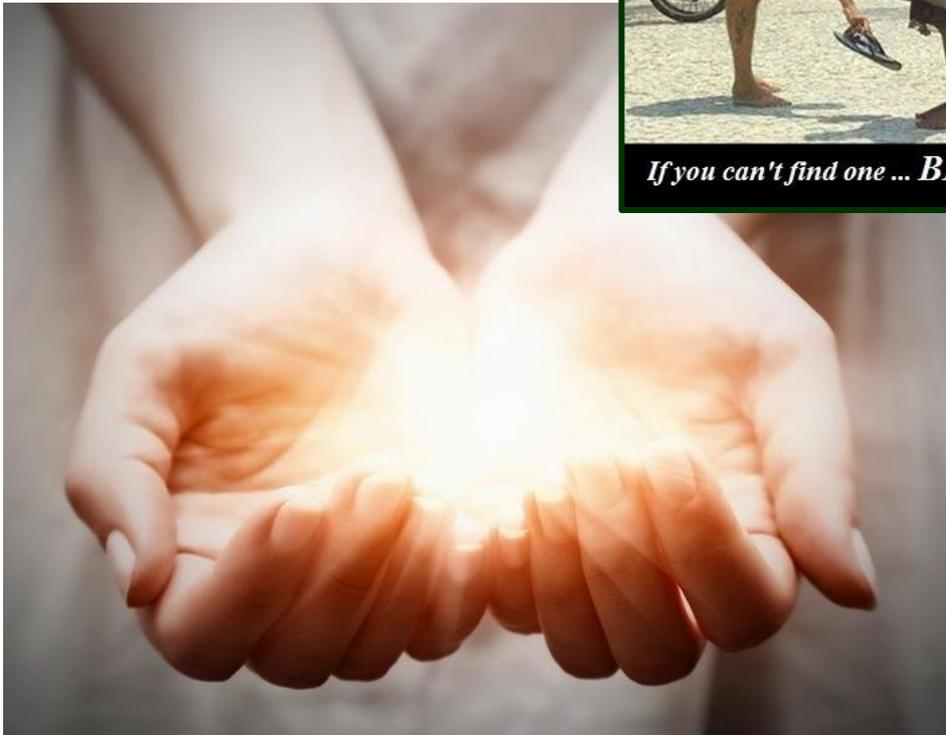
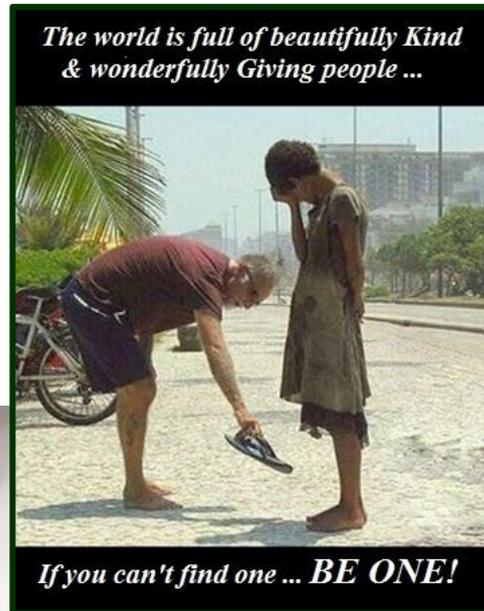


When you have
more than you need
build a bigger table -
not a higher fence.

“Simply stated -- Love is as wise as enmity is foolish. And in this world, which is getting more and more closely interconnected every day, we must learn to do more than merely tolerate each other. We must learn to do more than merely put up with the fact that some people say things that we don't like or do things we can't stand. Indeed, in this world that is forcing us into closer & closer proximity, tolerance is not going to be enough – If we are going to survive as a species, we have no choice but to learn to openly & calmly & humbly & courageously Love one another. If we are to live together, and not die together, we must learn to exude a kind of charity and a kind of respect and a kind of compassion that transcends our differences by reminding us that we are now – and that we always will be -- indeed One.” ~ via Bertrand Russell

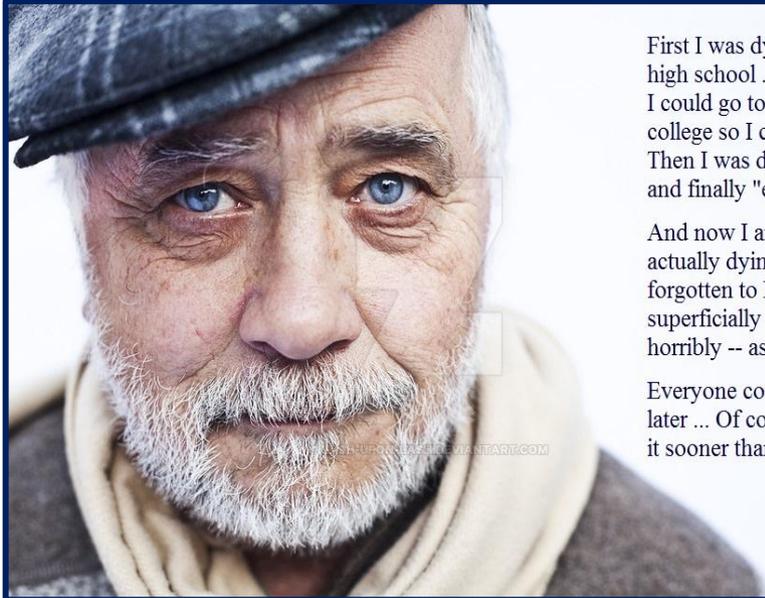
To BE the Light ...
(09/04/17)

“Do not live as if you had ten thousand years to throw away. Death stands at your elbow, so be good for something while you are alive and it is in your power to do so.” ~ via Marcus Aurelius



"Build someone up ... Remind them that they're worthy ... Tell them they are magical ... In a world far too often darkened by fear & callousness, be a LIGHT of bold Caring." ~ unknown

Wisdom, old & younger ...
(09/05/2017)



First I was dying to finish grade school so I could start high school ... Then I was dying to finish high school so I could go to college ... Then I was dying to graduate college so I could get a job and earn some money ... Then I was dying to retire so I could "see the world" and finally "enjoy my life" ...

And now I am retired and suddenly realize that I am actually dying, and that in all those previous years I had forgotten to LIVE ... Indeed, in the end, if we live superficially -- as though we will never die, we will die horribly -- as though we never lived.

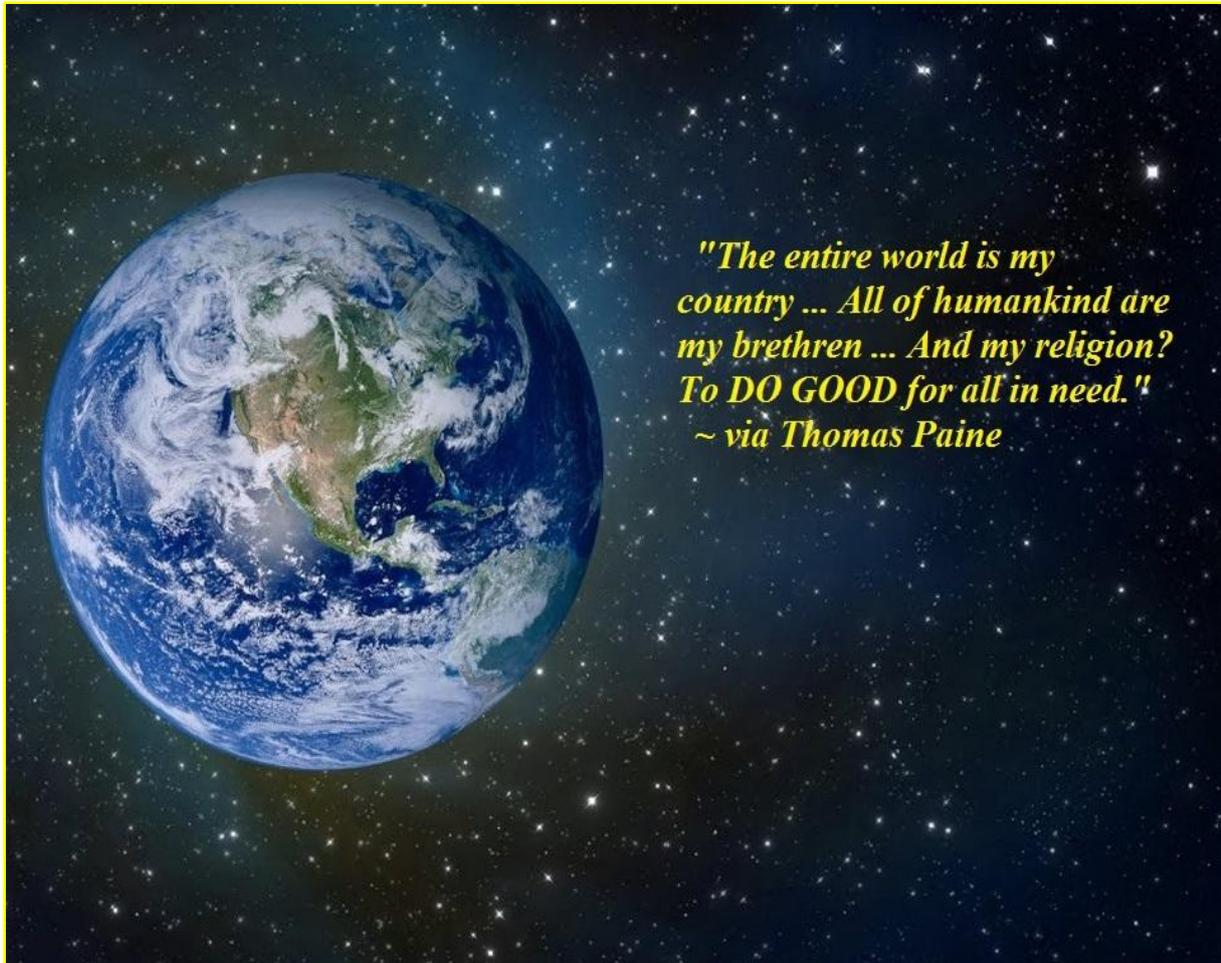
Everyone comes to this profound realization sooner or later ... Of course, it is those who are Wise who come to it sooner than later.

***You only truly have today ...
Remember to live accordingly.***



You see these people behind me? They are rushing to work and not paying attention to anything. Sometimes we get so caught up in our daily lives that we forget to take the time out to enjoy the beauty in life. It's like we're zombies. Look up and take your head phones out. Say Hi to someone you see and maybe give a hug to someone who looks like they're hurting. Help out someone. You have to live every day like it's your last.

The only Good Religion ...
(09/06/2017)

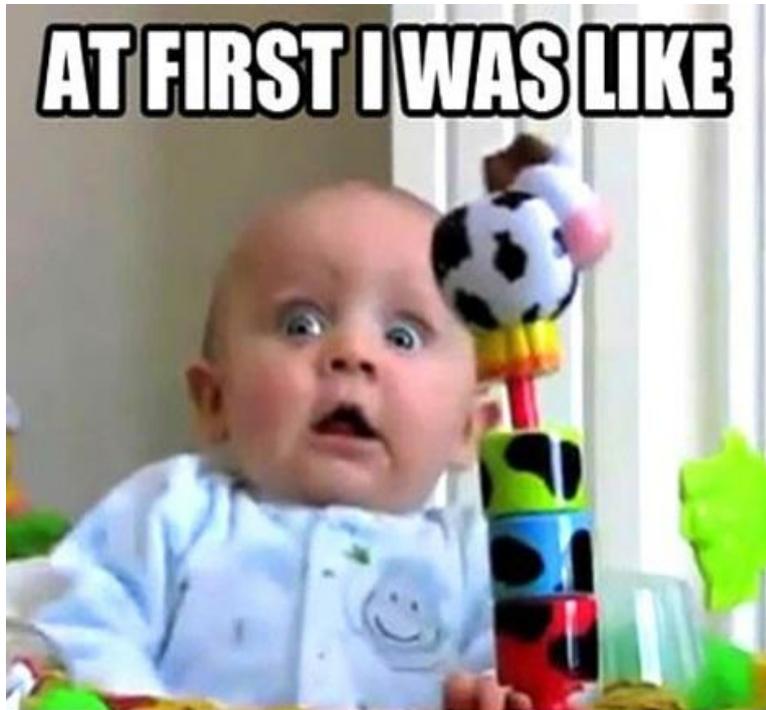


*"The entire world is my
country ... All of humankind are
my brethren ... And my religion?
To DO GOOD for all in need."
~ via Thomas Paine*

“Conventionality is has nothing to do with morality, just as self-righteousness has little to do with any worthy religion. As such, to attack those former is not to assail those latter. To pluck the mask from the face of the Pharisee, is not to lift a heretical hand to the Crown of Christ. Indeed these two deeds are diametrically opposed: as distinct as is vice from virtue – as separate as Truth from deception. Men often confound them: that which should never be confounded. Appearance should never be mistaken for substance; just as narrow human doctrines (that only elate and magnify a few at the dismissal of the many) should never be substituted for the world-redeeming creed of truly Divine Love. There is a grand difference here; and it is a good, and not a bad action to mark boldly and clearly a line of separation between them.”

~ inspired by Charlotte Bronte

Who it's really all About ...
(09/07/2017)



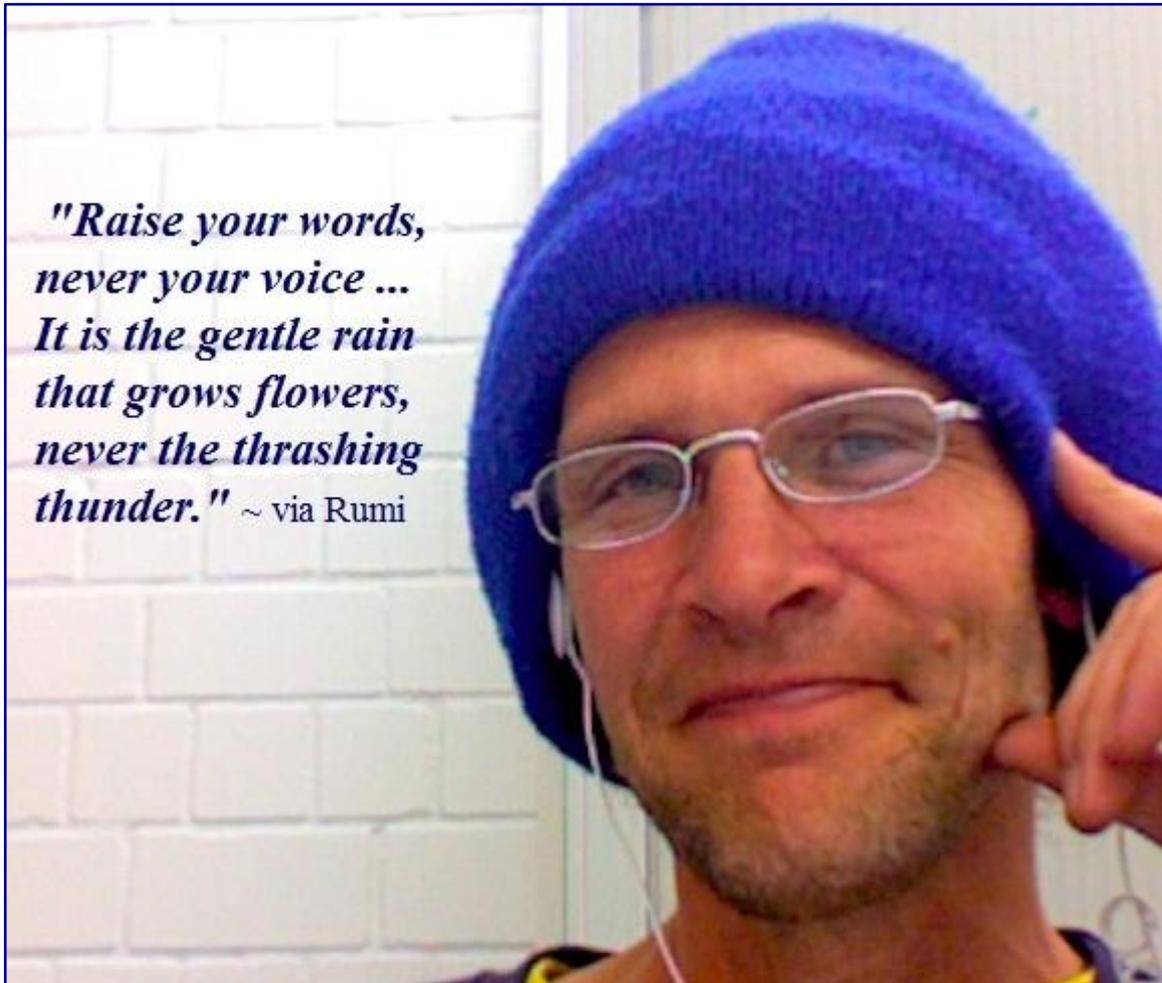
"If you are willing to look at another person's behaviors towards you as a direct reflection of their current relationship with themselves (rather than as a statement about your own worth as a person), then over a relatively short period of time you will cease reacting emotionally to those behaviors at all, and will be able to extend to them much needed expressions of heartfelt Kindness instead." ~ via Bhajan

Your warm & perfect Heart ...
(09/08/2017)



"Don't allow the coldness of your society or the fear of others to tarnish your warm and perfectly vulnerable Heart. There is nothing more powerful than having the courage to let yourself be deeply affected by the things around you -- be it the melody of a song, the smile of a stranger, the stunning visage of a mountain, the cool refreshment of a rain drop, the warm sustenance of a cup of tea, the wisdom of an article, the caring of a sentence, the kindness of a word, the boldness of a footstep ... Have the guts to open up and FEEL it all. Have the courage to open up to your life; to look around you and realize it is all for you -- that it is all there within your grasp; waiting for you to use it for great Good ... So take of your Life and feel Gratitude; give of your Life and feel Love." ~ inspired by Zooey Deschanel

To raise UP one's Words ...
(09/09/2017)



“Nothing is so strong as conscious gentleness. Nothing is so gentle as real Strength ... You can waste so many years of your life trying to become something hard in order not to break, only to one day realize that it's the soft things that don't ever crumble; that it is the hard things that, when struck, shatter into a million pieces ... As such, real success in life – success at re-attaining a true sense of Self and becoming all we could be -- is not a matter of learning when to fight and when to be purposefully yield in tenderness, but rather rests in finally coming to realize that the former is an ever-counterproductive bringer of discord & suffering, while the latter is always a potent deliverer of profound & lasting Peace.” ~ inspired by Ralph Sockman & C. Joybell C.

A surprising Surprise ...
(09/10/2017)



People aren't used to
being deeply appreciated
& unconditionally Loved.

People *are* used to being
analyzed & criticized &
ridiculed & judged.

Your Mission

Surprise someone today!

(inspired by Cheryl Richardson)



Grateful silence is the sea ...
Kind speech, the river.

“Gentleness is not apathy in any form,
but is rather an overtly courageous –
almost aggressive -- expression of **Love**;
the way we view others as being innately
worthy and ever viable. Indeed, in
gentleness we see people as being so
valuable that we deal with them via acts of
Caring so soft as to be deemed radical ...
To be apathetic is to set others loose and
turn them over to life’s meaner and more
destructive elements. To truly **Love** people
requires that we be aggressively gentle
towards them.” ~ inspired by Gayle Erwin

on Humblapocaloptimism ...
(09/13/2017)



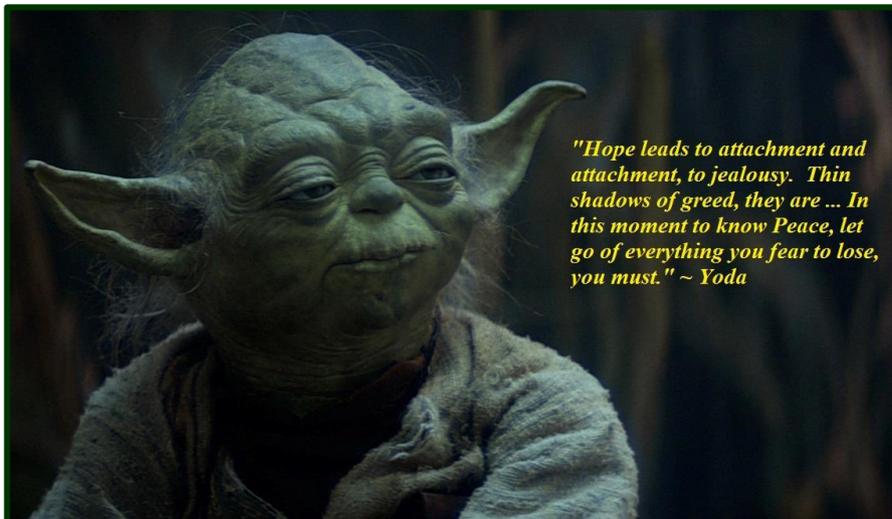
The End ...

Apocalypticist (n.) ... A person who knows it's all going to shit and that a large portion of humanity is destined to die out soon.

Apocaloptimist (n.) ... A person who knows it's going to shit *and* who also believes it's all going to work out OK regardless.

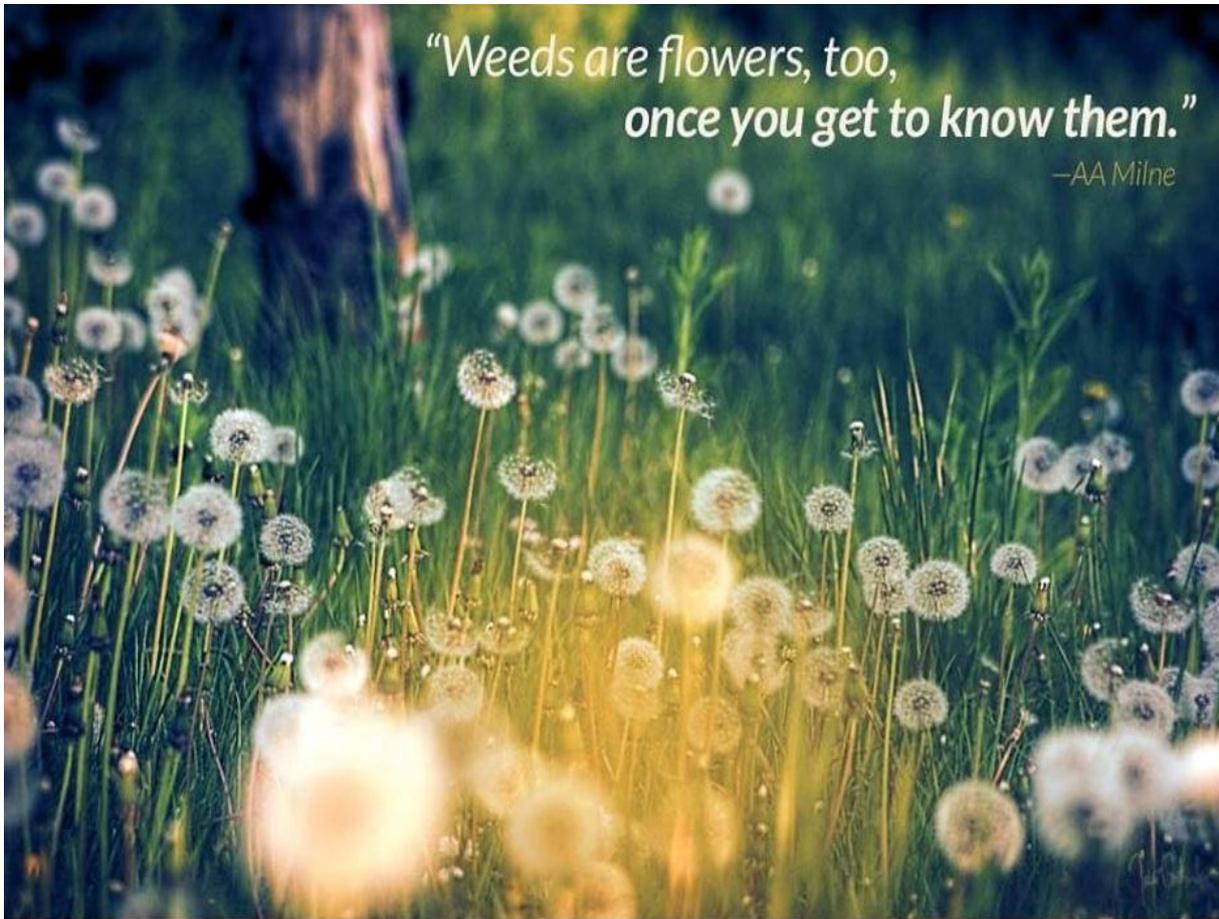
Humblapocaloptimist (n.) ... A person who knows it's going to shit and that a large portion of humanity is destined to soon perish, *and* that this same massive cull is the very reason why everything is indeed going to ultimately be OK -- especially for all the non-humans left alive thereafter.

... will be but a new Beginning.



"Hope leads to attachment and attachment, to jealousy. Thin shadows of greed, they are ... In this moment to know Peace, let go of everything you fear to lose, you must." ~ Yoda

Tender to the Thorns ...
(09/14/2017)



*"Weeds are flowers, too,
once you get to know them."
—AA Milne*

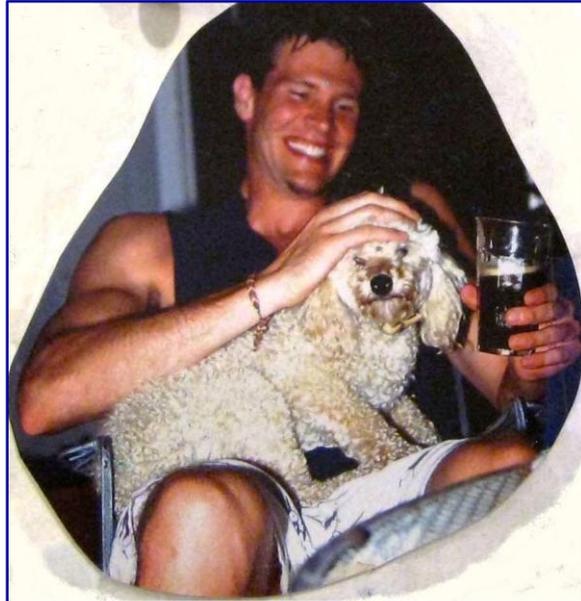
*This wisdom is just as true for all human "weeds" as well ...
Indeed, the only way to see the blossom that hides beneath the
thorns, is to treat those thorns as though they are their flower.*

*"His gentleness was uncompromising.
Because he would not compete for dominance,
he was indomitable." ~ Ursula K. LeGuin*

To hold them CLOSE ...
(09/15/2017)



"Tonight, hold your loved ones close and pray for Peace -- not only from guns and bombs, but also from hatred and fear; and not only with your thoughts and words, but also with a firm resolve to go forth into your life and become a force for the same ... It is our freedom and our joy and our courage that the powers of darkness seek to destroy. Give them not that victory. Always remember that against the forces of fear and shadow, bold deeds of Love & Compassion always prevail." ~ via George Takei



"With every Life being but as short as a half-taken breath, let all your moments be soaked in limitless LOVE." ~ via Rumi



*"And I will take one from a thousand and two from ten thousand, and they shall Become a single One."
~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 23)*