

Wisdoms from the Journey

(Volume III ... Sept – Oct 2011)



*...a few of the in-Sight-full sayings
& inspirational images that
I have been blessed to gently gather
while wandering along my Way*

via Scaughdt
an (i)am publication

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*"Knowledge is a process of accumulating facts;
Wisdom lies in their simplification ...
and, more importantly, their application."
~ inspired by Martin Fischer*

*"Wisdom is meaningless
until your own experience
has given it meaning,
and ... there is Wisdom
in the selection of your wisdom."
~ Bergen Evans*

*"There is knowledge and there is wisdom ...
The difference between the two
is the presence -- or lack -- of Compassion.
~ inspired by Benjamin Hoff*

An Introduction to what Follows

Everyone ends up collecting something as they journey through Life ... For me, I simply ended up being drawn – while searching for “the truth” – to collect Truths.

Now, ideological “truth” is a funny thing; slippery according to circumstance and very hard to pin down once captured ... As such, it is very unlike Wisdom, which is constant -- obvious and tangible and plain and unchanging.

Indeed (in-deed), even though we have been taught that Truth and Wisdom are “kissing cousins”, in actuality they couldn’t be more different. “Truth” is conceptual, while Wisdom is verifiable ... “Truth” is knowledge – a noun, while Wisdom is the setting that knowledge into harmonious motion – a verb ... “Truth” ponders & theorizes & hypothesizes, while Wisdom simply identifies what functions ... “Truth” might delineate our choices, and yet it is Wisdom that guides us towards making good ones ... “Truth” is intellectual; accumulating information and defining meanings. Wisdom is practical; making “facts” (and therefore Life itself) Meaning-full ... “Truth” changes over time – contracting as old information is found lacking & expanding as new information is found to bear “Good Fruit”, while Wisdom remains the constant bellwether through which those evolutions ensue ... “Truth” is a powerful tool – one that is utterly useless (and even drastically dangerous) unless skillfully used in harmony with acquired Wisdom ... In essence, as one scholar once put it: “Truth is knowing that a tomato is a fruit; Wisdom is knowing not to put tomatoes into fruit salad.”

As such, it is the former – “Truth” – that I have gently abandoned as “false”, and it is the latter – “Wisdom” – that I have repeatedly rediscovered to be True. And so it is that while I do most humbly and most publicly now declare that I most certainly do *not* have access to anything resembling “*the Truth*”, I most certainly *have* acquired access to a set of principles & values that – to the degree that they are courageously applied & enlivened – always prove to be Wise. And it is these same principles & values that are represented by the words & images contained in the pages that follow ...

May you each receive much Peace while reading them &/or gazing upon them, and may at least a few of them inspire you to go forth and know the Bliss that only comes to those who choose to put their Goodness into motion.

Amen ... Let it be so.

Scaughdt

December 8, 2014



LOVE stands OUT ...
(08/11/2011)

“Sometimes the questions are complicated and the answers are simple ... Today I shall behave as if this is the day I will be remembered ... Why fit in when you were born to stand out?”
~ Dr. Seuss



(Hint: self-sacrificial Love always stands out.)

Leaving old patterns ...
(08/11/2011)

“All of us are like eagles who have forgotten that we know how to fly ... living in a nest filled with old food, excrement and stale air. From when we were very young we’ve had this longing to see the mountains in the distance and experience the big sky and the vast ocean, but somehow we got trapped in that nest, just because we forgot that we knew how to fly.” ~ Pema Chodron



(Note: We cannot hope to relearn how to fly unless we first have the courage to leap.)

Potent Purpose ...
(08/12/2011)

“Fundamentally, helping, fixing, and service are ways of seeing life. When you help you see life as weak ... When you fix, you see life as broken ... When you serve, you see life as whole. From the perspective of service, we are all connected: all suffering is like my suffering and all Joy is like my Joy. The impulse to serve emerges naturally and inevitably from this way of Seeing. ~ Rachel Naomi Remen

Behind many a man of Noble Courage rests his muse;
... the person who believes in him whole-heartedly;
... the person who stands by him through times dark & uncertain.

We like to think that it is the muse who inspires him to do his great Work, but in reality it is the muse who does the Doing ...

In reality he is but a conduit for *her* Greatness.
... In reality they Work as **One**.



Already Great ...
(08/13/2011)

“I wanted a perfect ending. Now I’ve learned, the hard way, that some poems don’t rhyme, and that some stories don’t have a clear beginning, middle, and end. Life is about not knowing, about having to change, about taking the moment and making the best of it ... without knowing what’s going to happen next ... Life is about delicious ambiguity – and what you choose to do with it.”

~ inspired by Gilda Radner

“We don’t always have a choice how we get to know one another. Sometimes, people fall into our lives cleanly — as if out of the sky, or as if there were a direct flight from Heaven to Earth. In the same sudden way we lose people who once seemed they would always be part of our lives.” ~ unknown

We only have those who are with us now ...

... so cherish them.

We only truly have this very moment to do so ...

... so do so!

Cherish
THE MOMENT

Enlightenment IS ...
(08/14/2011)

*“We talk about enlightenment
as if it’s a big accomplishment.
Actually, it has to do with relaxing
and rediscovering what you already have.”*
~ Pema Chodron



(Finding out what we have is only the first step of Awakening.
Enlightenment comes when we give away what we rediscover.)

LOVE accepts it All ...
(08/15/2011)

“It’s pointless to run around trying to heal our friends. We can’t force others to change. Each person is here to work out his or her own lessons, and if we fix it for them, then they will just go and do it again – if for no other reason than they have not worked out what they needed to do for themselves. All we can do is show them The Way of Love by Loving them – by allowing them to be who they are.” ~ inspired by Louise Hay

“I did not come into the world to accomplish anything or to prove myself. I came into this world to bring Joy ... and I remain in it to bring Love.” ~ inspired by Sri Chinmoy



Self giving self aWay ...
(08/17/2011)

*“I’m afraid that sometimes
you’ll play lonely games too.
Games you can’t win
'cause you’ll play against you.”*
~ Dr. Seuss

*“Being while not possessing
is the great Joy of living.”*
~ unknown



(To give of yourself
is to set your Self free.)

LOVE as we Do ...
(08/18/2011)

“The wisdom, the strength, the confidence, the awakened heart & mind are always accessible — here, now, always. We are simply uncovering them ... We are rediscovering them. We are not inventing them or importing them from somewhere else. They are here. That’s why when we feel caught in the darkness, suddenly the clouds can part ... The main question is, are we living in a way that adds aggression & self-centeredness to the mix, or are we adding some much-needed sanity?” ~ Pema Chodron

“What does Love look like? It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men ... It has eyes to see misery and want ... It has the hands to help others ... And it has the feet to hasten to those poor and needy. That is what Love looks like.” ~ inspired by Saint Augustine

... and in addition to those qualities, Love has the Courage to be assaulted by fear & steeped in doubt, and yet keep on Loving anyway.

“Your friend is your deepest needs answered. She is the field in which you sow your Love and reap your thanksgiving. And in this sweetness of Friendship let there be laughter ... for it is in the dew of little things, that the Heart finds its morning and is refreshed.” ~ inspired by Kahlil Gibran



Uncriticizing your Self ...
(08/19/2011)

*“When we begin to see clearly what we do,
how we get hooked and swept away by old habits,
our usual tendency is to use that
as a reason to get discouraged,
a reason to feel bad about ourselves.
Instead, we could realize how remarkable it is
that we actually have the capacity
to see ourselves honestly,
and that doing so takes great Courage.”
~ Pema Chodron*



(Seeing the innate & ever-present Goodness of ourSelves means nothing if we do not then have the wherewithal to set that Goodness in motion.)

Responsible for it ALL ...
(08/20/2011)

*“It is not only what we do,
but also what we do not do,
for which we are accountable.”*
~ Jean Baptiste Moliere



*“We can easily forgive a child who is afraid
of the dark. The real tragedy of life
is when men are afraid of the light.”*
~ Plato

*“Our lives begin to end
the day we become silent
about things that matter.”*
~ Martin Luther King Jr.

Make Life last ...
(08/21/2011)

*“Life is short ...
So forgive quickly;
hug deeply;
serve courageously;
laugh fully.”*
~ unknown

He who wishes to make his own life last,
... must act for others first.



got purpose?

Love lets BE ...
(08/22/2011)

*“In my efforts to embody
a more heartfelt way of being,
I needed to distance myself
from the battlefields I knew best.”*
~ Jeff Brown

(... which is best done not by running away from those battlegrounds,
but rather by re-entering them consciously — and then refusing to fight.)

*“When the resistance is gone,
so are the demons.” ~ Pema Chodron*



LOVE is clear Sight ...
(08/22/2011)

*“When someone Beautiful enters our life,
it affects the way we See the world.”*
~ Dalton Roberts

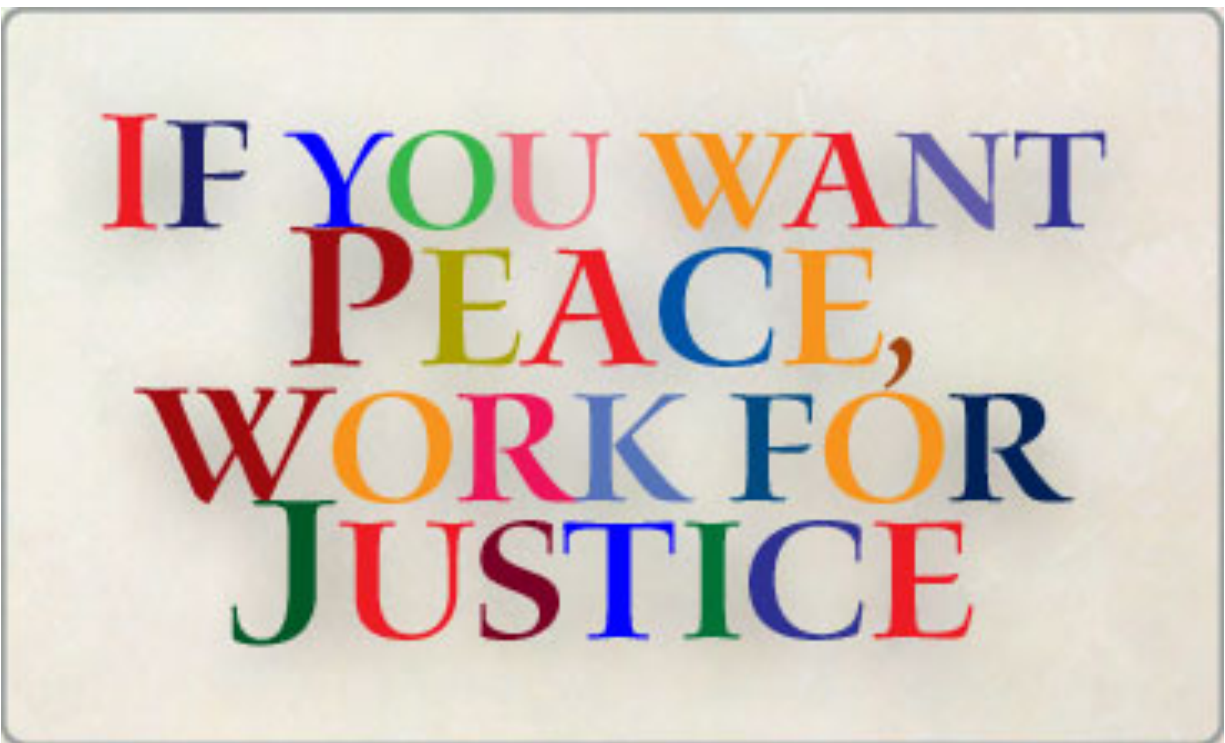


(And -- it is very important to remember:
there is always someone Beauty-full entering our lives ...
... and that we can always be that same someone for others.)

Great Nations choose LOVE ...
(08/23/2011)

*“Many thousands of you have survived the propaganda you have been subjected to, & are actively fighting your own government ... If you join this battle you will see how beautiful it is to be gentle instead of brutal ... Yours is by no means a great nation. But you **could** be a great people. History is giving you the chance. Seize the time.” ~ Arundhati Roy*

“Deep down in the human spirit there is a reservoir of courage. It is always available, always waiting to be rediscovered.” ~ Pema Chodron



(The true Patriot loves his country so much that he repeatedly stands up to expose its injustices ... After all, no nation can be truly Great until it chooses Love.)

Affirm the Rights ...
(08/23/2011)

“The Statue of Liberty does not say ‘Give us your poor and your tired, and then we’ll fingerprint them, take their photograph, and deport them after we’ve gotten their work out of them.’” ~ Dennis Kucinich

“America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter, and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves.” ~ Abraham Lincoln



(The only way to preserve your own freedoms
is by fighting for those who have lost theirs.)

Embracing what IS ...
(08/23/2011)

“If something is painful, you can choose to hold your place and move closer to that pain. ... Become willing not just to endure it, but also to let it awaken your heart ... Choose to embrace it and let it soften you.

And whenever you are enjoying what you are experiencing, you can also choose to think of others and wish for them to feel that same contentment ... Instead of holding on to it for fear that it’s going to slip away, be generous with your Joy.

In essence, the key to Peace is choosing to give away that which you most want.” ~ inspired by Pema Chodron

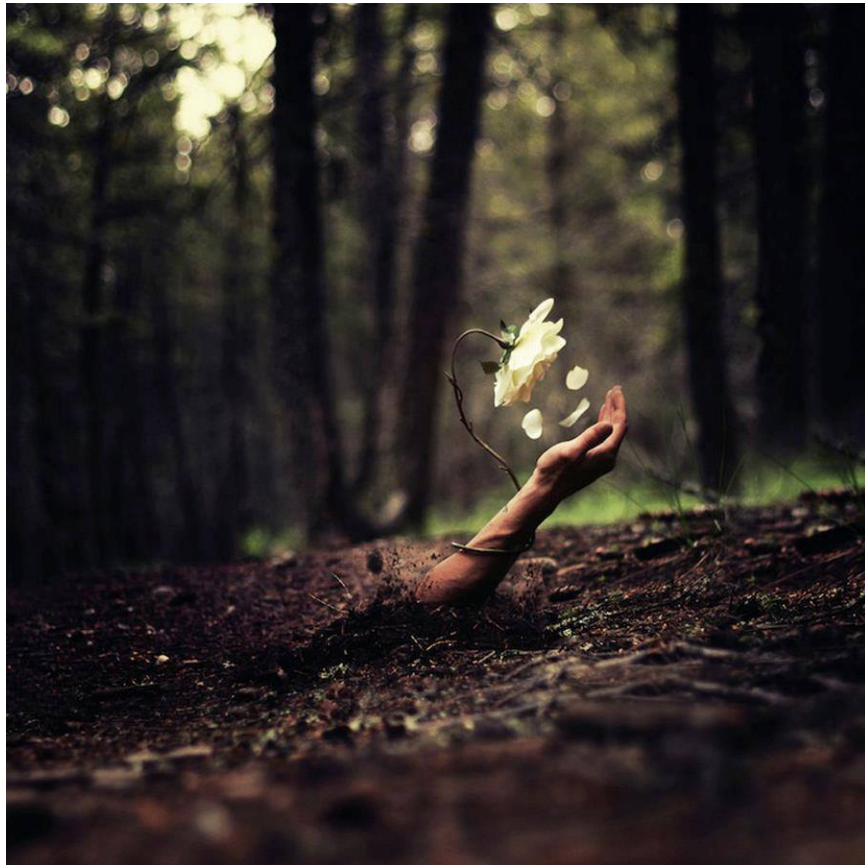


The Meaning-full life ...
(08/24/2011)

“Those who live nobly, even if obscurely, need not fear that they will have lived in vain. Something radiates from their lives; some light that shows The Way to their neighbors, perhaps even to long future ages.” ~ Bertrand Russell

“The aim of the Quest must be neither release nor ecstasy for oneself, but rather the wisdom & the willingness to serve others.” ~ Joseph Campbell

“Here is the test to find whether your mission on Earth is finished: If you're alive, it isn't.” ~ Richard Bach



(Note to Self: You're not dead yet ...
Time to get busy Loving.)

God only knows ...
(08/25/2011)

It's a sunny day in Chicago and I'm hanging out on the back porch with 5-year old Oliver sitting on my lap when an interesting conversation takes place:

Oliver: "Scaughdt, where does God live?"

Me: "No none knows for sure, but to me it feels like God is inside everything around us."

Oliver: "Well how does God get inside of houses?"

Me: "I'm not sure about that, my little Friend."

Oliver: "Hmmm ... I guess the only one who Knows is God."



(Hint: You can't truly Live while trying to "figure life out".)

Real LOVE ...
(08/26/2011)

Any critical analysis of another person is always self-reflective -- and almost always incorrect ... Every being is perfectly Beauty-full when perfectly Loved. As such, every "flaw" we see in another is actually merely a reflection of the defects in our own affection.

*"To unify your life,
unify your desires.
To spiritualize your life,
spiritualize your desires.
To spiritualize your desires,
desire to be without desire."
~ inspired by Thomas Merton*

*"May I always choose to be
the kind of person
my dog thinks I am."
~ unknown*



Giving up hope ...
(08/28/2011)

“Life is not about problem to resolve. It requires a much more open-ended and courageous approach. It has nothing to do with knowing what will happen, and it has nothing to do with wanting to get ground under your feet ... It’s about keeping your heart and mind open to whatever arises, without clinging to any hope or expectation.” ~ inspired by Pema Chodron

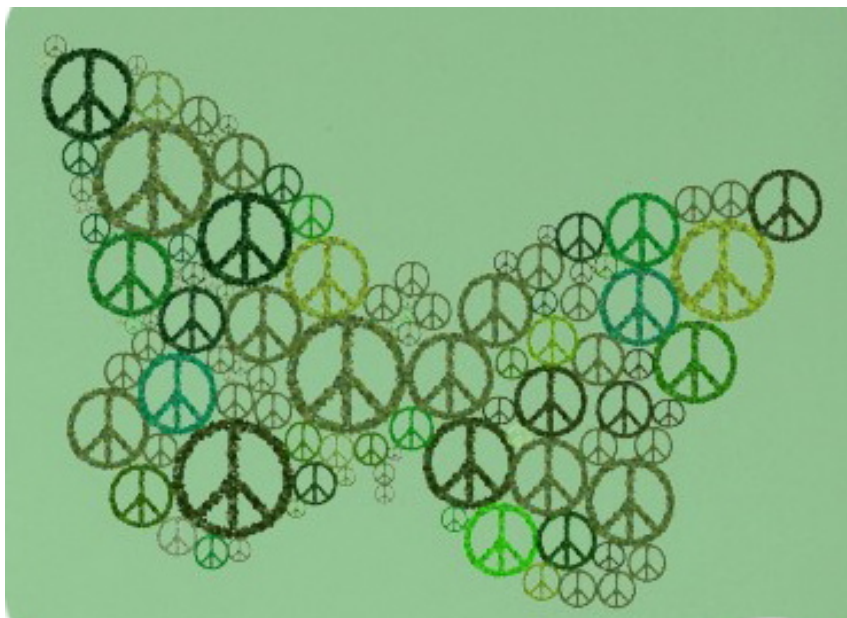
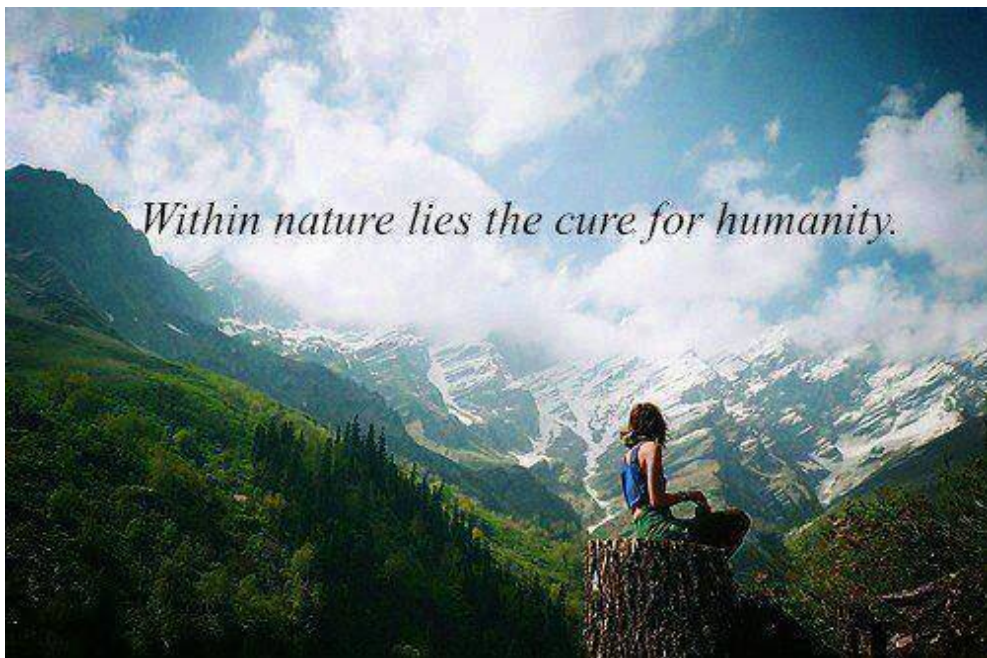


(The only way to fully embrace life is to repeatedly let it go.)

Making Peace ...
(08/29/2011)

“I think it not improbable, like the grub that prepares a chamber for the winged thing that it has never seen but is to one day become, that humankind may indeed have cosmic destinies that have yet to be envisioned or comprehended.

And as such, beyond the awareness of battling nations and suffering beasts and an impoverished Earth, I still hold within a dreaming glimpse of Peace.” ~ inspired by Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.



You are Power-full ...
(08/31/2011)

*“The whole course of human history
may well depend on a change of heart
in one solitary individual –
for it is in the solitary
mind & soul of the individual
that the battle between good & evil is waged
... and ultimately won or lost.”
~ M. Scott Peck*

*“You are a puppet in the hands of the Infinite ...
... hands which are your own.” ~ unknown*



(Courageous Kindness is the only Power worth setting into motion.)

Life is a Dance ...
(09/03/2011)

*“Dance, when you’re broken open. Dance in the middle of the fighting.
Dance in your own blood. Dance and be perfectly free.” ~ Rumi*

*“When you look in the mirror,
see yourself as a marvelous being crafted by God,
a precious collection of matter
that is unique to the entire universe.” ~ unknown*

*“Dance as though no one is watching ...
Love as though you have never been hurt before ...
Sing as though no one is Listening ...
Live as though Life was Heaven on Earth.” ~ Souza*



(Being Kind to strangers & enemies is the dance you were born to join.)

Here to Love ...
(09/04/2011)

*“All forms of exercise are excellent,
and yet risk exercise is essential.”
~ Sol Rosenthal*

*“The urge to go deeper, higher, farther is not to be denied ...
At any moment we are free to stop, to stop the pain.
Of course, we are also free to go on.
To cross any significant boundary in this manner
is to rediscover who we truly are.”
~ inspired by George Leonard*

*“We are put on earth a little space,
that we may learn to bear the beams of Love.”
~ William Blake*



(Hugs are extremely dangerous ...
They risk you remembering who you truly are.)

The littlest Love ...
(09/05/2011)

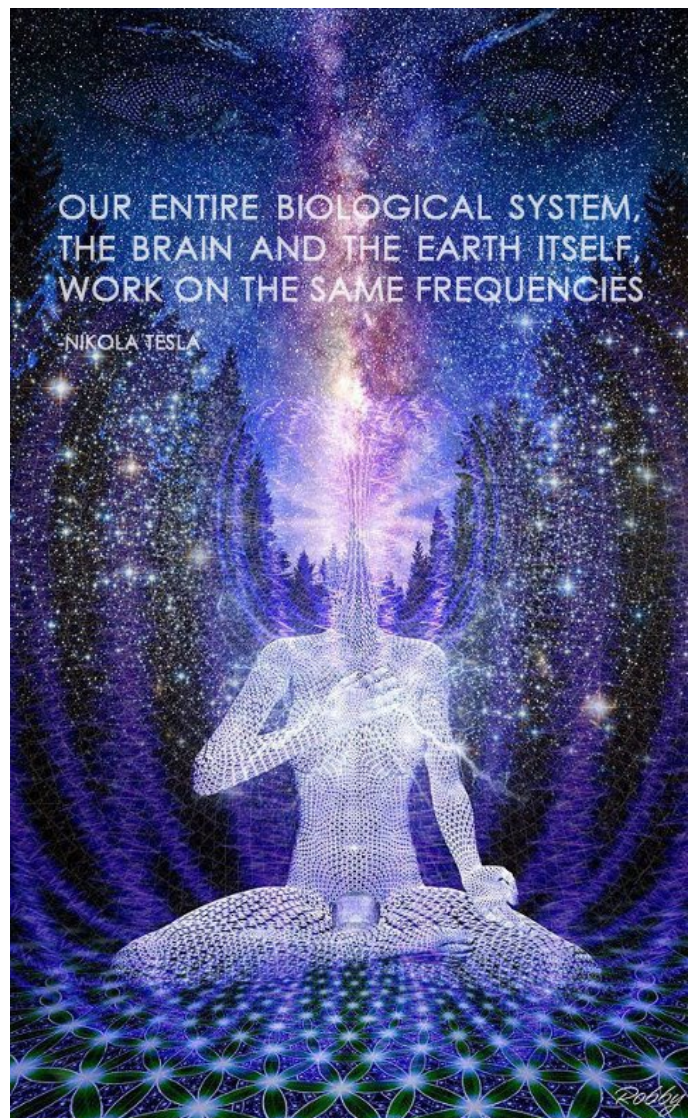
We have a saying about life that it is “one foot in front of the other.” Let us change it now to “one wave of Love after the other,” and let this be how you go forth into your days – as a brave messenger for the Divine, allowing each heartbeat to assist its Loving will in every way it can ...

All the ways that Love can move you, all the ways you can use your heart to bless the world, are too innumerable to contemplate, and yet I promise you that they are there ... Every day that you decide to be the open heart of Love is a day that you change the world and bring Heaven a bit closer to Home.

Essentially then, it comes down to every moment and each decision you make therein. It comes down to having the guts to open your heart, trusting that the Love that fills you and rushes forth will transform your world.

When you align with the power of giving, then you literally become an embodiment of the Cosmic Heart. You are, in those moments, truly unlimited, and you can feel, pulse by pulse, the glory of Love within you.

(~ inspired by Pam Warren)

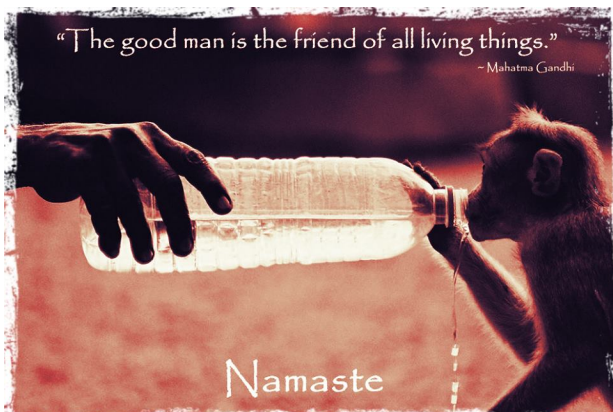


All must be given ...
(09/08/2011)

*“A gift turned inward, unable to be given,
becomes a heavy burden, even a kind of poison.
It is as though the flow of life were backed up.” ~ May Sarton*

*“And the day came when the risk of remaining tight in the bud
became more painful than the risk it took to blossom.” ~ Anais Nin*

*“Each of us possesses an exquisite, extraordinary gift:
the opportunity to give expression to Divinity on Earth
through everyday acts of Love.”
~ inspired by Sarah Ban Breathnach*



Beauty allWays IS ...
(09/09/2011)

*“Acceptance makes any event
put on a new face.” ~ Henry Haskins*

*“We do not see things as they are.
We see them as we are.” ~ The Talmud*

*“It’s not what you look at that matters.
It’s what you choose to see.” ~ H. D. Thoreau*



(No matter what’s happening in your life,
if you can’t see the Beauty,
you simply aren’t looking for it.)

LOVE brings understanding ...
(09/10/2011)

“We try so hard to ‘get it’, but no matter how focused we become, the Truth refuses to truly sink in -- like gentle rain falling onto hard earth. Waking up doesn’t happen by striving for it or working at it or trying to capture it. It happens by letting go of what you think it is ... It happens by relaxing the mind and then choosing to care for yourself -- by Caring for others.”

~ inspired by Pema Chodron



Re-membering PEACE ...
(09/11/2011)

“There can be value in our personal suffering. We can understand firsthand that we are all in the same boat and that the only thing that makes any sense is to care for one another ... Instead of your distress becoming all about yourself, it can become your link with everyone all over the world who is in the same predicament ... Peace isn’t an experience free of challenges ... it’s an experience that is expansive enough to include all that arises without feeling threatened.” ~ Pema Chodron



Ten years ago our nation was given the opportunity to awaken the entire planet — and for the past ten years our nation has essentially squandered that opportunity. We can no longer rely on our “leaders” to guide us to Peace ... Instead, each of us must go forth — starting TODAY -- to be the change we so desperately need to see.

How to be miserable ...
(09/12/2011)

“HOW TO BE MISERABLE: Think primarily about yourself...Listen greedily to what people say about you...Desire to be appreciated...Be envious of others’ success...Gossip about strangers, politicians & other “bad people” ...Take criticism personally...Desire for others to agree with you...Strive for your “fair share” ...Sulk if people are not grateful for you...Harbor hatred for your enemies...Open up to no one...Yearn to be loved...Do little for others & much for yourself.” ~ unknown



HOW TO BE HAPPY: Think on others ... See the Good & the Amazing all around you ... Desire to lessen the suffering of strangers ... Revel in the victories of even your enemies ... Compliment those you pass by, encourage politicians to remember the service their job entails, and openly forgive all those (including your “leaders”) who are wronging you & yours ... Receive criticism humbly – use what applies; gently discard what does not ... Detach from others’ actions & opinions ... Strive to Give all that you have to give ... Have compassion for your enemies ... Open UP to everyone ... Yearn to serve them ... Do everything for others fully and nothing solely for yourself.



Stalking Life ...
(09/13/2011)

“God is dead.” ~ Nietzsche.
“Nietzsche is dead.” ~ God.

Today is a good day to live ...
Today is also a good day to die.
And though I might indeed die on this day,
I will most certainly choose to Live.



To be Human ...
(09/14/2011)

*“What is it to be Human?
It isn't only the realization that we are descended from kings.
It is the realization that we are royalty ourselves;
empires on two feet striding in power ...
strolling continents of awe.”
~ inspired by Hal Boyle*



Time for LOVE ...
(09/15/2011)

*“In a world of smart bombs & military intelligence,
we need far more fools.” ~ Shane Claiborne*

*“If we are crazy, it is because we refuse to be crazy
in the same way that the world has gone crazy.”
~ Peter Maurin*

*“With the global economy in chaos
& the environment of the planet at risk,
it is time for each of us to take the leap
and do whatever we can to help turn things around ...
Now more than ever we are all in this together”
~ Pema Chodron*



No need to worry ...
(09/16/2011)

“When I look back at my life’s amazing road and all its serendipity, I have to laugh ... Now, as I look ahead, I laugh again, hoping it saves me some time I used to spend worrying.”
~ Rebecca Rodriguez Heller

“Worrying does not empty tomorrow of its troubles ... It empties today of its strength.” ~ Corrie Ten Boom



Patterns are for changing ...
(09/17/2011)

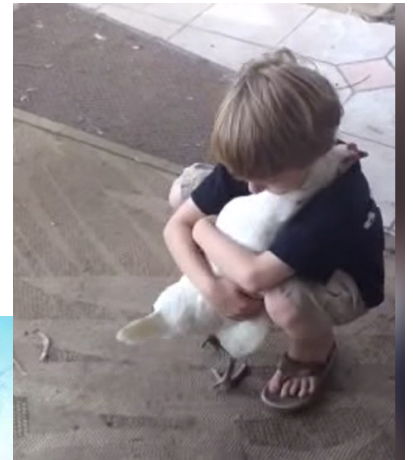
“You are bound to feel pain when you don’t do the habitual, comfortable thing ... And so it is that we opt again & again for short-term gratifications that in the long run keep us stuck in the same cycles of suffering ... Once we realize this, instead of seeing our emotional reaction-patterns as obstacles to be overcome, it is far more helpful to see them as opportunities for trying new behaviors – as open doorways to a fresh awakening.”
~ inspired by Pema Chodron



God reaches down ...
(09/18/2011)

*“When dear friends enter my home,
I sense their presence in a special way.
Why would it be any different with God?”*
~ Dalton Roberts

*“Rather than our towers and temples reaching up to heaven,
maybe we can allow the God of Heaven to reach down to Earth
and live among us through our acts of Love.”*
~ inspired by Shane Claiborne



Love
=
God



Love ever-changing ...
(09/19/2011)

*“No longer recoil in fear ...
Feel free as a leaf in the wind,
as free as the wind itself.”
~ Deepak Chopra*

*“Get curious about the truth
that nothing and no one
ever remains the same.”
~ Pema Chodron*

*“The wind blows where it wills,
and you hear the sound of it, but do not know
whence it comes or whither it goes;
so it is with every person
who is born of the Spirit.”
~ Jesus Christ (John 3:8)*



(Looking for the path to the Kingdom of Heaven?
... Try looking in the mirror. You'll find it there.)

LOVE simply IS ...
(09/20/2011)

*“The supreme happiness of life
is the conviction that we are Loved –
Loved not for ourselves, but rather,
Loved in spite of ourselves.”
~ Victor Hugo*

“Loving is never a waste of time.” ~ Astrid Alauda



(We can only truly Love
when “being loved” becomes unimportant;
as insignificant as the color of a rose — and
as indiscriminating as the object of a child’s smile.)

A new Beginning ...
(09/21/2011)

“Where does Joy come from? It comes from realizing that nothing is ever truly a dead end; that whatever is happening right now in present time is both the fruition of something from the past and the seed of something else in the future ...

In a similar fashion, we can know that the emotions we feel aren't final either; that they too are the end of something, and also the beginning of something else ... Indeed, Joy comes to us in those times we remember that every instant is always the start of something fresh.”

~ inspired by Pema Chodron



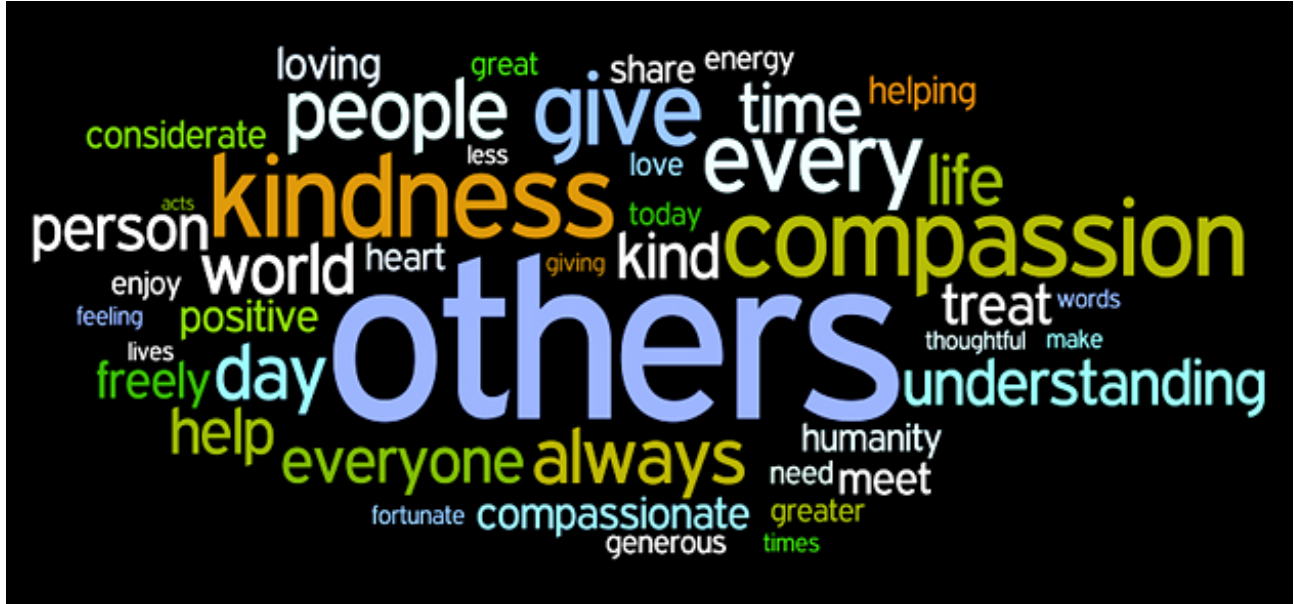
No act of Love is ever wasted ...
The more courageous the Caring,
the more Peace-filled the results.



Inspiration realization ...
(09/22/2011)

“There are, it seems, two muses: the Muse of Inspiration, who gives us inarticulate visions and desires, and the Muse of Realization, who returns again and again to say “It is yet more difficult than you thought.” ... It may be that when we no longer know what to do, we have come to our real work and when we no longer know which way to go, we have begun our real journey. The mind that is not baffled is not employed. The impeded stream is the one that sings.” ~ Wendell Berry

When in doubt, believe in Love ...
When unsure, Love anyway.

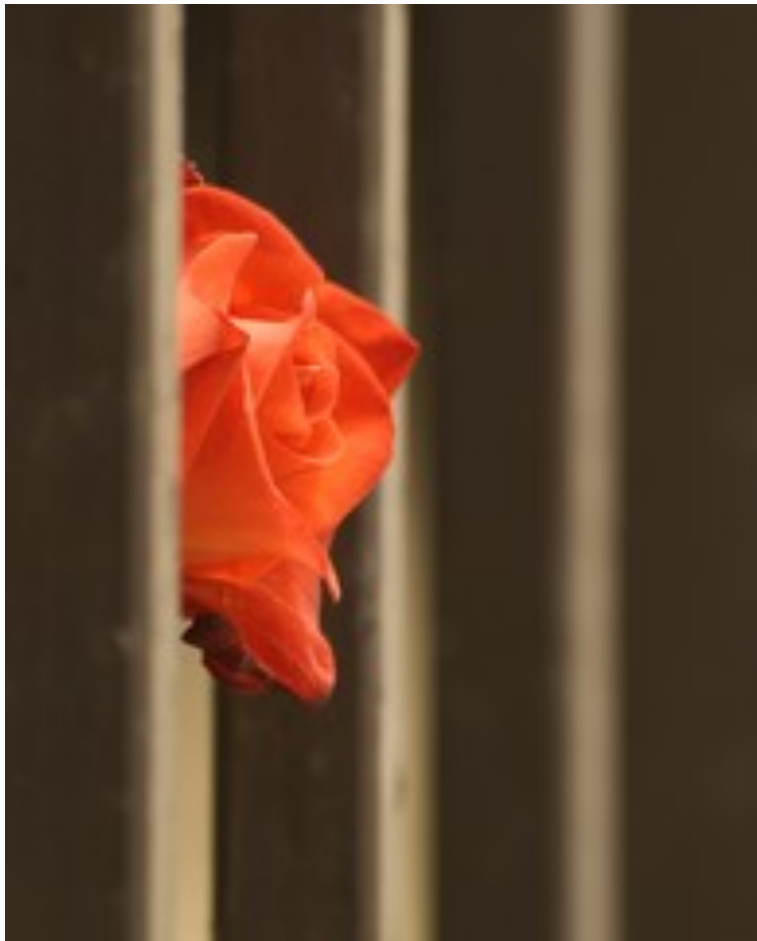


LOVE right Here ...
(09/22/2011)

“Are you looking for me? I am next to you. My shoulder is even now touching yours. Indeed, when you really look for me, you will instantly feel me everywhere around you ...

Others believe that the diamond of Love has fallen onto the road; that it remains lost in the dust of disappointments and rejection. And yet I know differently ... I know that this perfect flower lies hidden within – always nestled against your own heart; ever waiting to be summoned anew.

So let your tiny acts of tenderness drink away the honey that surrounds it. Then bring your face close to the ear of your Soul, ... and whisper what you will do for Love.” ~ inspired by Kabir



Sacrificing delusion ...
(09/23/2011)

*“Love is the child of illusion ...
and the parent of disillusion.”*
~ Miguel de Unamuno

*“Love is a smoke
made with the fume of sighs.”*
~ William Shakespeare

*“Neo: What are you trying to tell me? That I can dodge bullets?
Morpheus: “No ... I’m trying to tell you that, when you’re ready,
you won’t have to.” ~ The Matrix*



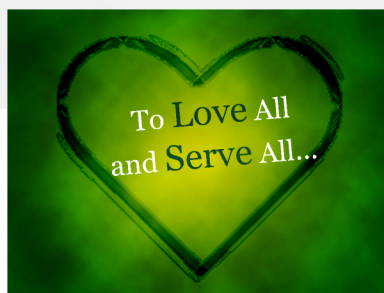
*“Love” the feeling is composed of fear ...
Love the verb transcends it.*

All-IN or Not ...
(09/23/2011)

*“For aught that I could ever read,
could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true Love never did run smooth.”
~ William Shakespeare*

*“You know it’s Love when you want to give joy
... and damn the consequences.” ~ Frank Herbert*

*“For one human being to Love another:
that is perhaps the most difficult of our tasks;
the ultimate, the last test and proof,
the work for which all other work
is but mere preparation.”
~ Rainer Maria Rilke*



Demanding risk ...
(09/24/2011)

*“Of all forms of caution, caution in Love
is perhaps the most fatal to true Happiness.”
~ Bertrand Russell*

*“Do you want me to tell you something really subversive?
Love **is** everything it’s cracked up to be.
That’s why people are so cynical about it....
It really is worth fighting for;
being brave for, risking everything for.
And yet the trouble is, if you don’t risk anything for it,
you risk even more.” ~ Erica Jong*

*“When we come to the last moment of this lifetime,
and we look back across it,
the only thing that’s going to matter is:
“What was the quality of our Love?”
~ Richard Bach*



LOVE is Enlightenment ...
(09/25/2011)

*“If you have [Love], then
you don’t need to have anything else.
If you don’t have it, then
it doesn’t matter much what else you have.”*
~ James M. Barrie

*“He who wants to do good, knocks at the gate.
And yet he who Loves, finds the gates already open.”*
~ Rabindranath Tagore

*“Close your book of complaints
against the management of the Universe
and look around you for a place
to sow a few seeds of Happiness.”*
~ Henry van Dyke



Always an option ...
(09/25/2011)

*“A coward is incapable of exhibiting Love;
Love is the prerogative of the brave.” ~ M. Gandhi*

*“There is no remedy for Love
but to Love more.” ~ Henry David Thoreau*

*“On a cloudy night, when nothing seems above,
still, there is Love – always Love.
For something; from someone.
It’s never done ... Never.” ~ Jeb Dickerson*

*Your work is to discover your world
and then with all your heart
give yourself to it.*

The Buddha

Give your time ... Give your attention ...
Give your Kindness ... Give your Self.



LOVE is effortless ...
(09/26/011)

*“Avoid trying to see through the distance.
That’s not for humans.
Move within instead,
& avoid moving the way
fear wants you to move.”
~ Rumi*

Love never has to combat fear. There is never a struggle between the two. Love simply IS ... And when we have the courage to let our fears fall away – by acting accordingly, Love is all that remains.

Once we choose to Care – to truly & deeply Care for another, Love shines forth effortlessly & clearly through all that we do.



Overflows Joy ...
(09/26/2011)

“When you are absolutely happy in your aloneness, when the other is not a need, it is then that you are capable of Love. If the other is your need, you can only exploit, manipulate, dominate – never Love. Because you depend on the other, possessiveness arises — out of fear ... But true Love cannot create a prison. If Love creates a prison, then what is left for hatred to do? Love brings freedom — and Love gives freedom ...

But that kind of relationship is only possible when you choose a totally different quality of Love; one based not in need but in sharing ... for Love is a sharing of overflowing Joy.

Indeed, you are already so full of Joy, you cannot contain it; you simply have to share it. And once you do so, there is poetry; something tremendously beautiful is born which is not of this world; something that comes from the beyond of Within.”

~ inspired Chaitanaya Keerti



Analyzing never
(09/27/2011)

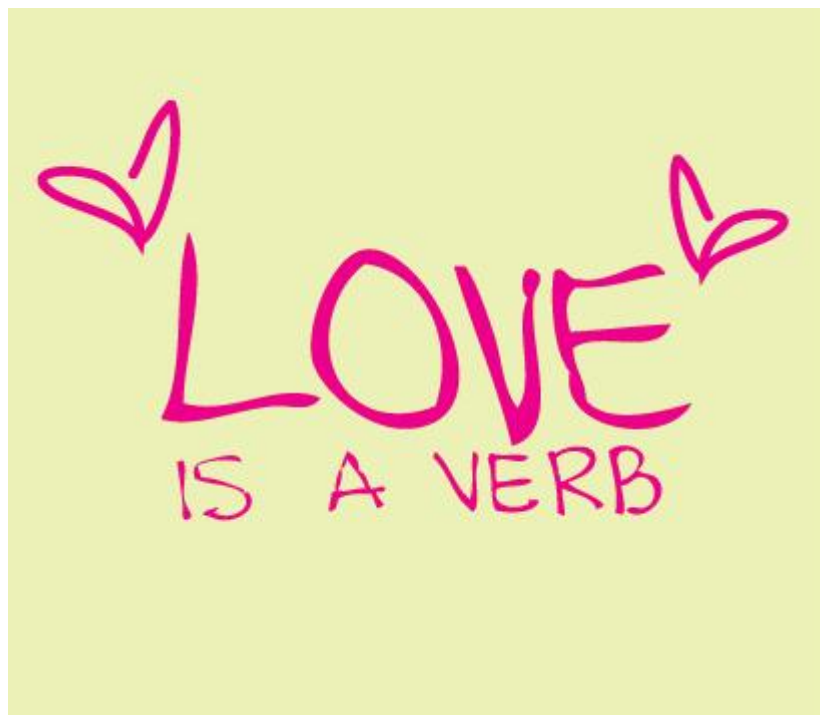
“Once Satan and his demon sidekick were walking down the street, closely watching a man 20 yards ahead who was on the verge of realizing the Supreme Truth. The demon grew worried, and began to nudge Satan, but Satan looked quite calm. Sure enough, the man did, in fact, soon realize the deepest spiritual Truth, yet Satan still did nothing about it.

*With this, the demon nudged Satan harder and, getting no response, finally blurted out, “Satan! Don’t you see? That man has realized the Truth! And yet you are doing nothing to stop him!” With that, Satan cunningly smiled and announced, “Yes, he has realized the Truth. And now I am going to help him **organize** it!”*

~ from Jiddu Krishnamurti

Love (a.k.a. “the Truth”) only blossoms when it is courageously **enacted**, not merely discussed or pondered or analyzed or “felt” ... For most of my own life, I chose to learn about Love or talk about Love or think about Love — somehow believing that these would magically lead me to experience Love — until one day I threw all the teachings & the discussions & the ponderings away, and just went out there and radically Cared; went out there and extended my vulnerable Self to those very folks I was most afraid of, in the very situations where I least wanted to do so ...

And *that* is how I came to truly Know LOVE.



True dissent ...
(09/28/2011)

“Fear is the foundation of most governments. And yet, it is so sordid and brutal a passion, and renders men in whose breasts it predominates so stupid and miserable, that Americans will not be likely to approve of any political institution which is founded on it.” ~ John Adams

Well, it looks like this particular “founding father” drastically underestimated us, eh? And yet, maybe we can do something about that ... today!



By the way, for those of you who think this picture is a call to any form of “bravery” founded in any form of aggression, I remind you of the following simple psychological Truth:

... Your anger is nothing more than your fear, crystallized.

Venturing forth ...
(09/28/011)

*“A ship is safe in harbor,
but that’s not what ships are for.”*
~ William Shed

*“Always remember:
You’re much braver than you believe,
and much stronger than you seem ...”*
~ A. A. Milne

*“There will always be challenges,
obstacles and less than perfect conditions.
So what ...
With each step you take,
you will grow stronger & stronger.”*
~ Mark Hansen



Keeping onward ...
(09/29/2011)

“There are some of us, who do not accept the dreams of dragons as their own, no matter how grand those dragons might say they are. Yes, there are some who refuse to drop the candle, even when pushed into a dark cave and locked there behind a stone.

There is, you must recall, the kind of serious study that will give you confidence to strike your match to the mighty wick, which will illuminate yet another portion of the darkness ...

Out there, somewhere, are the kind of people who do not accept the premature autopsy of a noble art form. These are the ones who have been hurt, but not discouraged; who have been frightened, but who have not forgotten how to be brave.” ~ Stanley Crouch



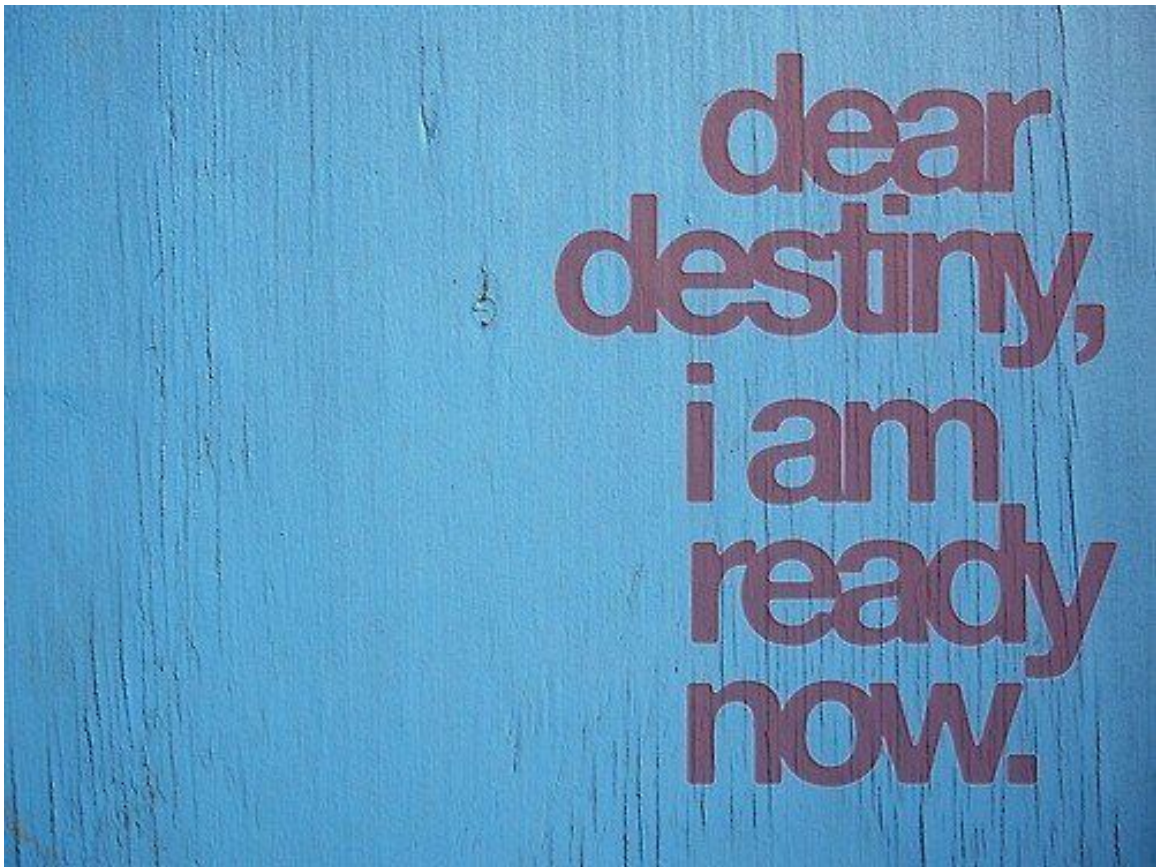
(There is a time to set aside fear
& Love those who seem “unlovable” ...
... That time is NOW!)

As Love Does ...
(09/30/2011)

*“It is curious that physical courage
should be so common in the world,
and moral courage so rare.”*
~ Mark Twain

*“Without courage
all virtues lose their meaning.”*
~ Winston Churchill

*“Courage is the willingness to be afraid
and yet to act anyway.”* ~ Robert Anthony



(Courage & LOVE are cut from the same cloth ...
And both only fully exist as verbs.)

Transcending pleasure ...
(10/01/2011)

*“Love is the extra effort we make in our dealings with those whom we do not like, and once you understand that, you understand all ... The idea that Love somehow overtakes you is utter nonsense; nothing more than a polite manifestation of lust. Rather, to truly Love another, we must undertake to help fulfill some fragment of **their** personal Destiny.” ~ inspired by Quentin Crisp*



(diagram above by Jessica Hagy)



Love waits within ...
(10/02/2011)

“Often I say: Learn the art of Love. And yet what I really mean when I say this is: Learn the art of removing all that hinders Love ... It is like digging a well — you go on removing layers of roots and earth and stones, and then suddenly there is water. The same water was always there, of course. It was always available, you simply removed the barriers that were obscuring it from view ...

So it is with Love.

Love is the undercurrent of your being. It is flowing within and through you in every moment of your life. And yet there are many roots and earth and stones within you that must be removed before it can flow freely again.

That’s what I mean when I say: Learn the art of Love. It is not really a learning of Love, but rather an un-learning of the ways of un-Love.”
~ inspired by Chaitanaya Keerti

To be truly Happy, we must choose to access Love. And to access this Love, we must be willing to “excavate” our ego’s fears and desires ...

And what the best tool for engaging such a digging?

... a courageously radical, fully fear-defying, completely vulnerable, all-out *Act* of Kindness.

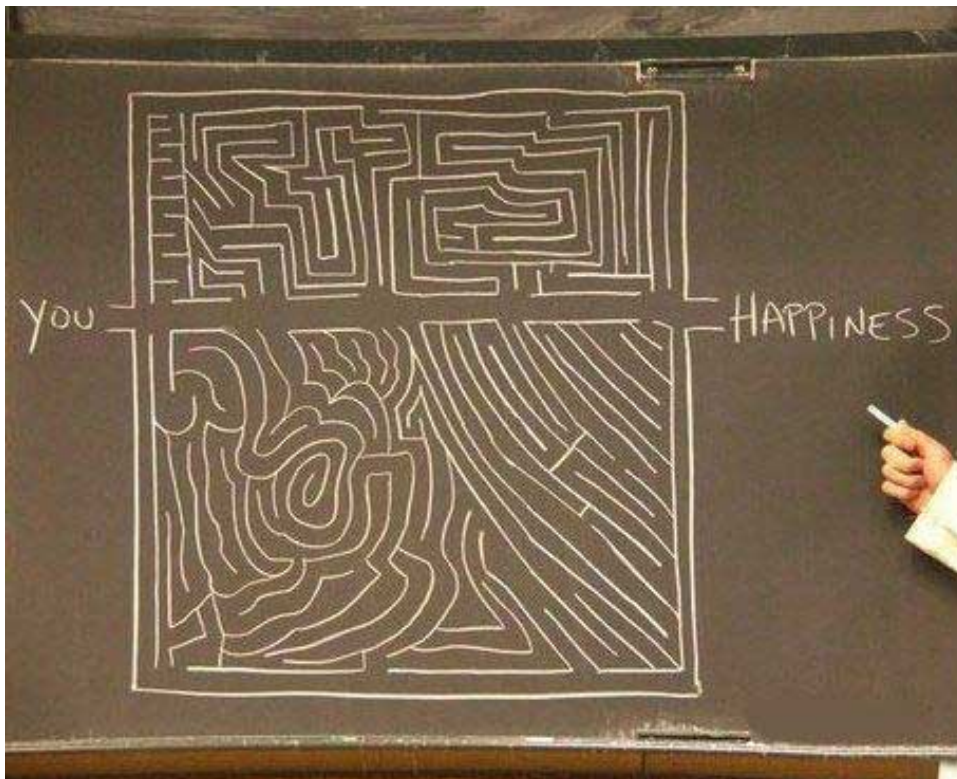


Happiness is easy ...
(10/03/2011)

*“When we’re not caught in the trap of hope & fear,
we intuitively know what’s the right thing to do.
If we’re not obscuring our intelligence with anger,
self-pity or craving, then we know what will help
... and we know what will make things worse.”*
~ Pema Chodron

*“However we may receive blows,
and however knocked about we may become,
the Soul is there and is never injured.
We are that Infinite.
The secret of existence
is to have no fear.”* ~ Vivekananda

*“I have accepted fear as a part of life –
specifically the fear of change ...
I have forged ahead
despite the pounding in my head
that whispers: Turn back.”*
~ inspired by Erica Long



Finding happiness
is ever difficult ...

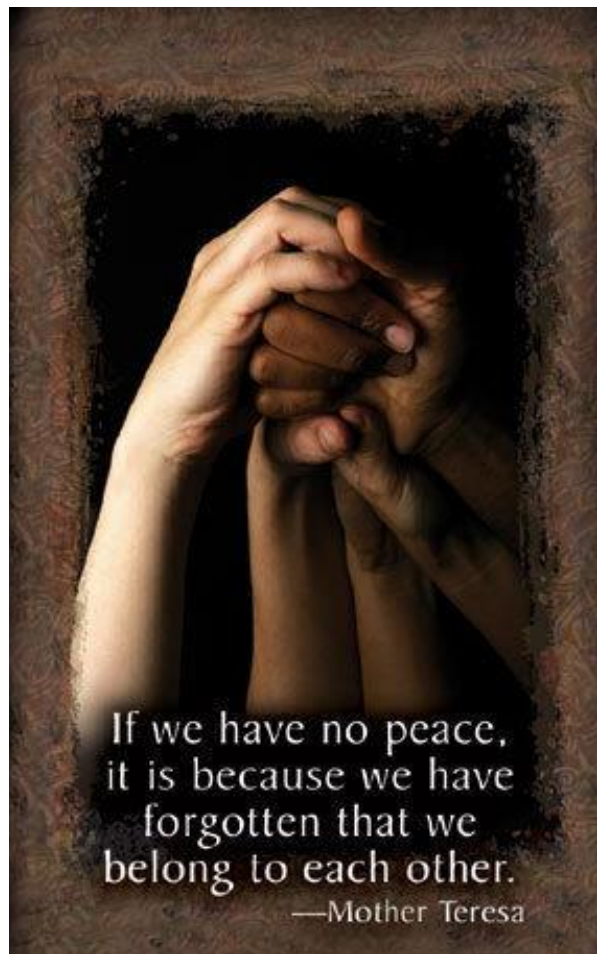
... while knowing
Joy requires no
struggle.

Caring reawakens ...
(10/04/2011)

“To run, to fall, to merge, to die; such passionate thoughts make us uncomfortable ... We are embarrassed by the tenuousness which stands at the heart of the Game of Games we call Life. We seek comfort in forgetfulness and a superficial contact with others ... We shrink from the inevitability of death ... We flee from real intimacy ... We do not run with Joy ... We choose not to Love.

And yet, vivid moments of connection continue to emerge from our forgetfulness when we least expect them – again and again and again ... Do you remember?”

~ inspired by George Leonard



(To remember who you Are, re-member who You are.)

Acceptance, raw & pure ...
(10/04/2011)

*“Love is not blind – it sees more, not less.
And -- because it sees more,
it is willing to see less.”
~ Julins Gordon*

*“True Love is putting someone back on the pedestal
upon which they perched at birth,
and then -- whenever they stumble and fall,
being there to catch them.” ~ anonymous*

*“I but know that I Love thee,
whatever thou art.” ~ Thomas Moore*



Motivating Living ...
(10/05/2011)

*“Who travels for Love
finds a thousand miles
not longer than one.”
~ Japanese proverb*

*“It is sweet to know that
there is an eye will mark our coming,
and look brighter when we do arrive.”
~ a la Byron*

*“Love is why I
came here in the first place.”
~ John Denver*



(Home is wherever my Heart is ... and this,
whether others look brightly upon me or not.)

Disintegrating differences ...
(10/05/2011)

*“The ultimate test of a relationship
is to disagree while holding hands.”
~ inspired by Alexandra Penney*

*“We are not the same persons this year as last;
nor are those we Love.
It is a joyful choice when we, ourselves changing,
continue to Love another changed.”
~ inspired by W. Somerset Maugham*

*“Love is a game that, when two play,
both win.” ~Eva Gabor*



Eliminates nationalism ...
(10/05/2011)

*“I’m addicted to placebos. I could quit,
but it wouldn’t make any difference.” ~ Steven Wright*

*“One of the illusions of life is that the present hour
is not the critical, decisive hour.” ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson*

*“We are to wield only those means that are
precisely fitted to our just ends.” ~ inspired by Eric Brende*

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO AMERICANS



Our current definition of “patriotism” tells us that war leads to peace ...
Our current definition of “justice” tells us that punishment leads to rehabilitation
... And our current definition of “profit” tells us that competition leads to wealth.

The facts, on the other hand, show us quite clearly that these definitions are broken and need to be replaced, ... for only peaceful actions bring real Peace, only kind judgments being real rehabilitation, and only selfless generosity brings real Wealth.

It is time to awaken to a new world, my Friends ...

It is time to redefine Who We Are!

Every encounter ...
(10/06/2011)

*“Can there be more pain
then losing those you Love,
or more Joy
than finding them again?”*
~ Ananda

*“Feel free to delight
in whatever remains to you.”*
~ Rose F. Kennedy



Love cares for the Divine Flower
that already exists in the other;
sometimes doing so by letting her go —
to blossom more fully elsewhere.

A new Reality ...
(10/06/11)

*“In a time of universal deceit –
telling the truth is a revolutionary act.” ~ George Orwell*

*“We have to create a new culture, so don’t watch TV, don’t read magazines, don’t even listen to NPR. Create your own road-show instead. The nexus of space and time where you are right now is the most important sector of your universe. Avoid giving it away to icons; icons which are controlled and maintained by an electronic mass media system that wants you to agree with X or dress like Y or have lips like Z ... Reclaim your mind and get it out of the hands of those twisted cultural engineers who want to turn you into a half-baked moron who consumes all the trash that’s being manufactured from the bones of a dying world.”
~ inspired by Terence McKenna*

*“Don’t fight the old reality;
create the new reality.” ~ Buckminster Fuller*

... and this new Reality is:
seeing everyone & everything around you
as patently amazing & innately Beauty-full ...
and then acting accordingly.



Evil's ally ...
(10/07/2011)

*“I think the willfully unimaginative see far more monsters –
they are the ones more often more afraid.*

*What is more, they who choose not to empathize
with others are the ones who enable real monsters to thrive,
for without committing a single act of outright evil themselves,
they collude with it through their own apathy.”*

~ inspired by J. K. Rowling

*“He who sees a need and waits to be asked for help
is as unkind as if he had refused it.” ~ Dante Alghieri*

DID YOU KNOW

*“We are not called to be mere candles.
We are called to be a raging fire.”
~ Shane Claiborne*



Thomas Edison was afraid of the dark.



A Peace-full Revolution ...
(10/07/2011)

Though we know not what form it will take, there is little doubt that the United States is steadily approaching its next time of social upheaval. Yes, the next American Revolution is indeed on its way. There is simply far too much economic inequality, far too much social injustice and far too much political corruption for the current system to survive much longer.



And as it approaches, each & every American needs to remember that anything done in anger will only re-create the very thing that angers ... that if you are going to change your government's system, you can only do so using means based in feelings that are different from the ones that need changing in the first place ...

... that if you are going to have a revolution, it's got to be from a place of Forgiveness & Compassion & Respect.

It's got to be from Love — or it's simply not going to work!

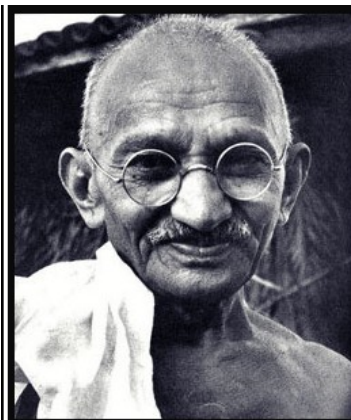
In-deed, real Inner Peace can only be found while having the Courage to stand bravely *and lovingly* in the face of those who would oppress the same. Fighting evil only encourages it defend itself and grow stronger. At the same time, stepping aside and merely “going within” allows that evil to roam where it will unhindered. The only effective alternative is the “narrow way” — the Way of Love, which stands boldly between evil and its intended victims, while simultaneously forgiving it its malicious intentions. As such, for your revolution to take hold, you must choose to see beyond the behaviors of your persecutors, and thereby reawaken the glorious Souls hidden within their pain-coated hearts.



“[Mythical] degrees of separation have allowed us to destroy human beings we do not know at all -- except as ‘enemy’.”
~ Shane Claiborne

“True revolution is when the oppressed are freed from being oppressed and the oppressors are freed from being oppressors.” ~ Desmond Tutu

“The true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of Love.” ~ Che Guevera



A non-violent revolution is not a program of seizure of power. It is a program of transformation of relationships, ending in a peaceful transfer of power.

(Mahatma Gandhi)

Change within ...
(10/08/2011)

Strive for political change if you wish ... and yet if you have realized that the voting booth will not solve anything, feel free to join the Revolution. And once you do so, please remember that it makes no sense to overthrow one system with the same means that screwed it up in the first place.

The Revolution is real, and for It to succeed It must be built on active, irrational, radical acts of Kindness ... Hundreds of thousands of such people have already begun rebuilding what is broken ...

Feel free to join us — today!



If the world is cold,
make it your business
to build fires.

*“Serenity of spirit and turbulence of action
should make up the sum of a man’s life.”
~ Vita Sackville-West*

*“Better remain silent, better not even think,
if you are not prepared to act.” ~ Annie Besant*

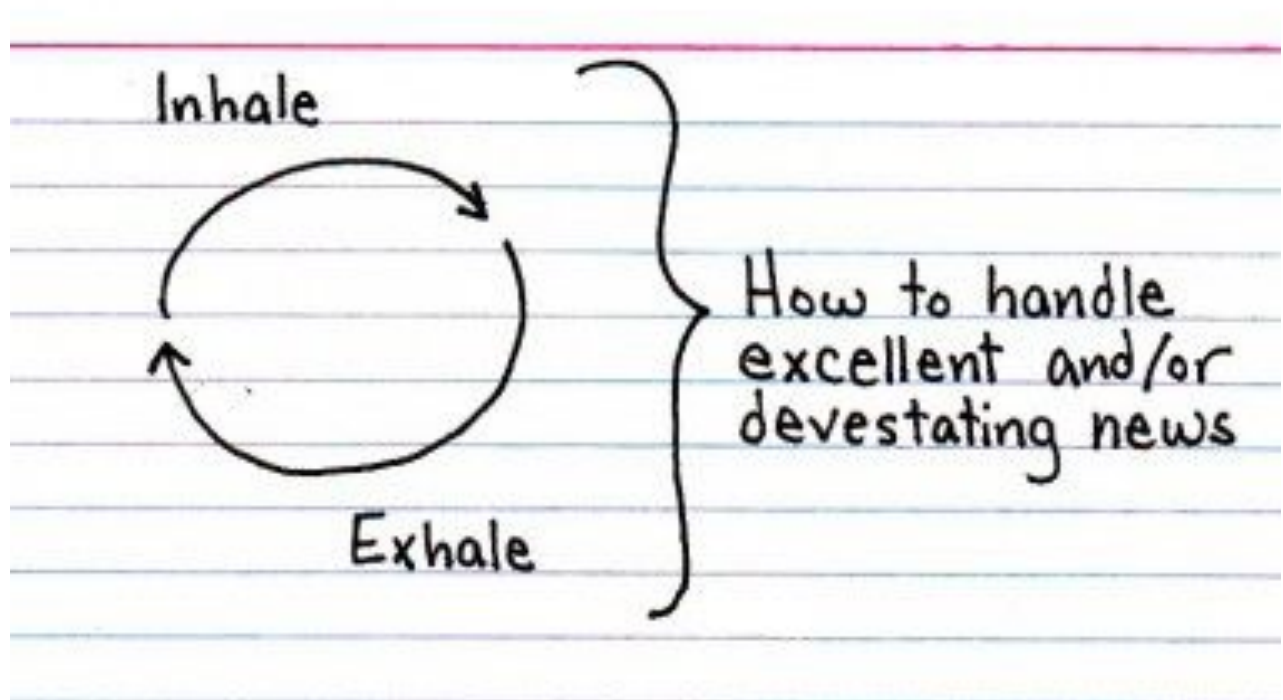
*“I don’t want to abolish government.
I simply want to reduce it to a size where I can drag it into the bathroom
and drown it in the bathtub.” ~ Grover Norquist*

Full of Wonder ...
(10/09/2011)

*“Stop the words now.
Open the window in the center of your chest,
and let the Spirit fly in and out.” ~ Rumi*

No matter what you fear
or what tragedy lurks on your horizon;
no matter what you Love
or what joy is approaching from afar;
no matter what seems to be happening to you —
... just breathe.

*“Triumph and disaster
are both impostors.” ~ Rudyard Kipling*



(diagram by Jessica Hagy)

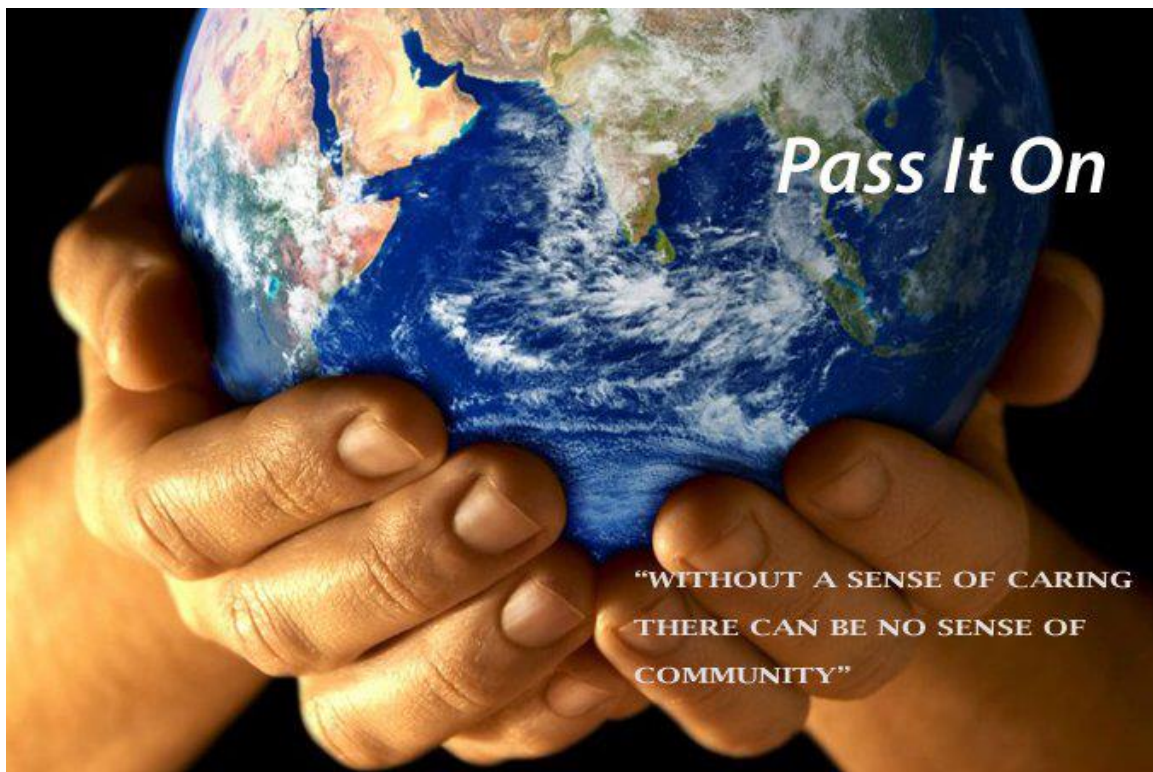
Love allWays wins ...
(10/09/2011)

“There’s a terrible sense of dread filtering across America at the moment ... It grows out of the suspicion that we all may be passengers in a vehicle that has made a radically wrong turn and is barreling along a dark road, with its headlights off and with someone behind the wheel who may not know how to drive.”

~ Bob Herbert

“The direct use of force is such a poor solution to any problem. It is generally employed only by small children and large nations.” ~ David Friedman

“When you have a pro-Peace rally, I will be there.” ~ Mother Teresa
(relaying why she would not be attending an anti-war rally)



(It is true that Love always wins ...
... and yet it is still up to us to play the game.)

Courage to Care ...
(10/10/2011)

*“Love is not two people clinging to each other;
Love can only be fostered between two strong people
fully secure in their individuality.” ~ Daisaku Ikeda*

Of course, to be truly “secure in our individuality”, we must have the Courage to be completely vulnerable with one another; to have the Courage to support each other & to Care for each other self-sacrificially; to have the Courage to do Loving things in those times we least wish to do so ...

“We all seem to be sleepwalking like cruel yet friendly strangers – bumping into each other but never really making contact ... We [could] all mean something important to each other if we’d just open our hearts and our feelings and not be afraid of the consequences.” ~ Shirley MacClaine



(Much more importantly, whether legal or not,
Love always bears the Good Fruit of Joy & Peace.)

Being Kind ...
(10/11/2011)

“Just imagine if everybody stopped snarling, snarking, fighting, and worrying, and just did something Good for one another. And I mean every day; not waiting for the government to do something; not worrying about someone else taking advantage of us. Just doing Good because it needs to be done ... and our hands are free ... and the needs are clear.

Even if the über-rich win and we all are forced to live under a bridge, if we all are in the habit of doing Good we will make that bridge into a paradise; a thriving Community where good people do Good for one another ... without having to make a buck out of it ... without having to score points at someone else's expense.

*We cannot stop a financial Armageddon fro happening, and yet we **can** stop being afraid, and we **can** go out and start being Kind to our neighbors. ” ~ inspired by Rebekah Scott*



Waking UP ...
(10/11/2011)

“A Five-Chapter Biography of Human Life ...

First, we walk down the street. There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. We fall in ... We are lost ... We feel hopeless. It isn't our fault. It takes forever for us to find a way out.

Next, we walk down the same street. There is another deep hole in the sidewalk. We pretend we don't see it – and fall in again. We can't believe we're stuck in the same place. But it still isn't our fault. And it still takes a very long time to get out.

Then, we walk down the same street again, and there is yet another deep hole in the sidewalk. His time we see it – but we still fall in ... We recognize that this 'falling in' is a habit ... Our eyes are opened ... We know where we are ... We accept responsibility for falling I We climb out immediately.

Thereafter, we walk down the same street – again – and there is that deep hole in the sidewalk again. This time, we see it and walk around it.

Finally, we simply choose to walk down another street.”

~ inspired by Sogyal Rinpoche



Kindness has Power ...
(10/13/2011)

*“When we start to develop an unconditional acceptance of ourselves,
we start taking care of ourselves in ways that pay off –
namely, we start caring for ourselves
by Caring for others.”
~ inspired by Pema Chodron*

*“Once you choose to see how many people deeply suffer
and how little it takes for you to actually change
their lives for the better,
it becomes impossible not to do something.”
~ inspired by Wendie Malick*

*“A few ounces of practice are worth far more
than many tons of preaching.” ~ Mohandas Gandhi*

In these times of fear & confusion, every Kind Deed becomes powerful – smiling at a stranger becomes powerful; sitting next to a homeless person and speaking with them for five minutes becomes powerful; complimenting a child becomes powerful ...

So, today, choose to
GO & BE POWERFUL!



Loving the enemy ...
(10/13/2011)

“This is the fundamental change of attitude – this working with pain and pleasure in a revolutionary & courageous way. When we work with pain by leaning into it and pleasure by giving it away, it doesn’t mean that we ‘grin and bear it’. The approach is a lot more playful than that – It’s like dancing. We simply realize that the separateness that we feel is an illusion – a funny kind of mistake.” ~ inspired by Pema Chodron

“Real compassion kicks butt ... If you are not ready for this fire, then find a New Age, sweetness-&-light, perpetually smiling teacher ... But if you do that, be sure to stay away from those who practice real Compassion, because they will fry your ass, my friend.” ~ inspired by Ken Wilber

We are called to be Kind; *especially* when it is most difficult to do so – especially when others are causing us the most pain. Instead of trying to change them, we are to open up instead. We are to Love them, and thereby allow their innate Goodness to blossom and meld with our own.

Most of us believe that we will only be truly ready to Love an enemy one day when Hell freezes over.

Well, guess what ...



Love & Humility ...
(10/14/2011)

*“We cannot see things in perspective
until we cease to hug them to our own bosom.
Only when we let go of them can we begin
to appreciate them as they really are.
Only then can we begin to see God in them ...
This, then, is our Wilderness:
to live facing imminent despair,
but refuse to consent.” ~ Thomas Merton*

*“When fear and desire are both released,
we access Beauty everywhere.” ~ anonymous*

*“Always remember that your days are blessed.
You may know how to profit by them, and you may not,
but blessed they remain nonetheless.” ~ Nadia Boulanger*

*There is always,
always, always
something to be
thankful for.*

(To count your blessings, become a Blessing.)

Carpe Diem ...
(10/14/2011)

“And therefore, all of those for whom authentic transformation has deeply unseated their souls must wrestle with the profound moral obligation – nay, the profound conscient privilege – to shout from the Heart ... Step back and allow that radical realization rumble through your veins and rattle those around you. ... This is not time for timidity. The possibility that you might have erred is no excuse: You might be right in your communication, and you might be wrong, but that does not matter ... If you are right, or if you are wrong, it is only your passion that will force either to be discovered ... You must shout your new brave Truth in whatever way you can.”

~ inspired by Ken Wilber



Stopping the dreaming ...
(10/14/2011)

*“Life may not be the party we hoped for,
but while we’re here we should dance.” ~ unknown*

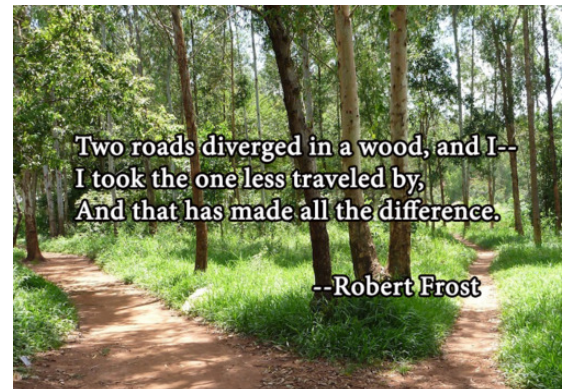
*“For if there is a sin against life, it consists not so much
in despairing of life as it does in hoping for another life,
while eluding the implacable grandeur of this one.”
~ Albert Camus*

*“Light up the fire of Love inside and blaze the thoughts away ...
Let the beauty of what you Love be what you do.” ~ Rumi*

*“True success is not the moment apparent to the crowd.”
~ George Bernard Shaw*



(The opinions of others are irrelevant
to your own true Worth & Goodness ...
You are the only one
who can make or break YOU.)



Love is the Reason ...
(10/15/2011)

*“We are all born for Love.
It is the principle of existence,
and life’s only end.” ~ Benjamin Disraeli*

*“Love is the condition
in which the happiness of another person
becomes essential to your own.”
~ Robert Heinlein*

When you are merely “in love” with someone, and they are not nearby to give you the “juice” that makes that “love” so pleasurable, then life becomes painful. And yet when you truly LOVE another, then it matters not how far apart you might be ... You revel in your living, and use your Love for the other to empower that celebration.



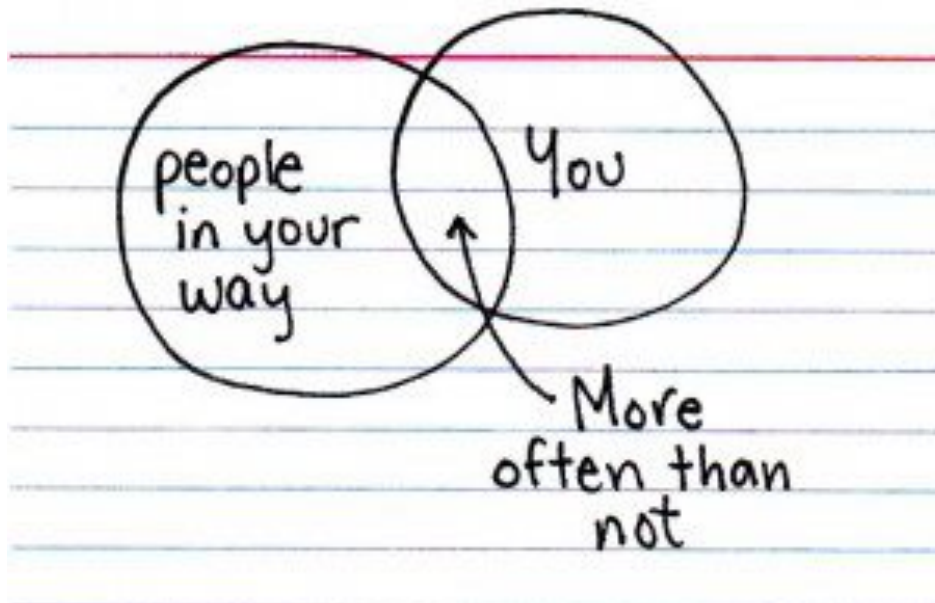
(When you are truly & literally in LOVE, then
reveling in your own blessings becomes celebrating another’s.)

Only to LOVE ...
(10/16/2011)

*“The spiritual life is first of all a life.
It is not merely something to be known and studied;
it is necessary that it be lived ...
Your life is shaped by the end you live for;
You are remade in the image of what you desire.”
~ Thomas Merton*

*“Any intelligent fool can make things bigger,
more complex, and more violent.
It takes a touch of genius — and a lot of courage —
to move in the opposite direction.” ~ Albert Einstein*

*“A little consideration,
a little thought for others,
makes all the difference.” ~ A. A. Milne*



(image by Jessica Hagy)

(You immediately get out of your own Way
The minute you start helping others along theirs.)

A joke without humor ...
(10/17/2011)

In case you might have forgotten, the United States is still at war in Afghanistan — a war that is patently unjust & completely ineffective. As such, it is time for Americans to protest, and if they protest, to protest powerfully. When it comes to matters of social justice, our energies need to have an acute focus, & I suggest we start by demanding U.S. “leaders” to withdraw **ALL** American troops from Afghanistan — immediately.

“For war, when we confront it truthfully, exposes the darkness within all ...of us. This darkness shatters the illusions many of us hold not only about the human race but about ourselves. Few of us confront our own capacity for evil, but this is especially true in wartime.” ~ Chris Hedges (2003)

*“In war, God is on neither side ...
In peace He is on both sides.”
~ Steve Consilvio*

*“Suppose the world were only one of God’s jokes.
Would you work any the less
to make it a good joke instead of a bad one?”
~ George Bernard Shaw*



Strong enough to LOVE ...
(10/18/2011)

*“No one is weak in this world
who lightens the burdens of another.” ~ anonymous*

*“Action creates motivation,
not the other way around.” ~ unknown*

*“You cannot leap a twenty foot chasm
in two ten-foot jumps.” ~ unknown*



(Remember that your character molds your future –
and that they are both forged anew in every choice you make.)

You were given
this life
because you were
strong enough
to live it.

Unlocking the Love ...
(10/19/2011)

*“Though we seem to be sleeping,
there is an inner wakefulness that directs the dream,
and that will eventually startle us back
to the truth of who we Are.” ~ Rumi*

We will not awaken using thoughts, for it is thinking that put us to sleep. Only when we have the courage to leap directly into actively Caring for others will our eyes open ... and with our eyes, our Hearts as well.

*“A mind stretched by humble seeking
never returns to its original dimensions.” ~ unknown*

(... and a Heart stretched by courageous Love
steadily returns to its place of Beauty-full Beginning.)



Ripples of hope ...
(10/21/2011)

*“I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word. Nonviolence means avoiding not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. You not only refuse to shoot a man, but **you refuse to hate him.**”*

~ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

I would add something to this, but I've really got nothing more important to say — other than to have you all pay very special attention to this quote's last sentence ... and then to enCourage you all to have the courage to put its principle into practice.



Each time a person stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, they send forth a tiny ripple of hope... These ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

Robert F. Kennedy

The Miracle of Consciousness ... (10/23/2011)

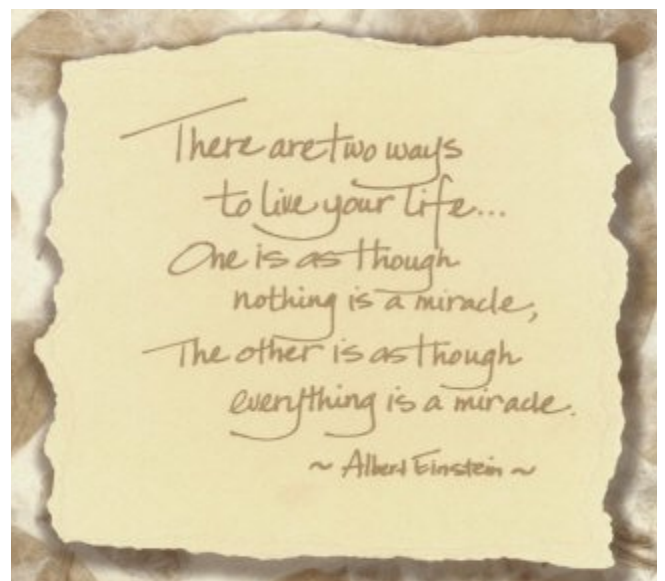
We are soooo much more than the mere flesh & bones & blood that make up the bodily “machines” in which our Souls reside. Even a few of history’s most notable scientists affirm this Truth (see below). Of course, it doesn’t really matter whether our consciousness comes from evolutionary accident or Divine Providence. It only matters what we choose to do with this amazing gift in the limited time we ha...ve to use it. And there is no more potent way to cherish this blessing than to be sorely tempted to react emotionally to an attacker, and yet choose instead to extend him or her a gentle hand of kindness. This is what it means to be truly conscious ... This is what it means to be a Human Being!

“In my search for the secret of Life, I ended up with atoms and electrons which have no Life in them at all. Somewhere along the line, Life has run out through my fingers. So I am now retracing my steps.” ~ Albert Szent-Gyorgi (Nobel Laureate in physiology)

“It seems to me pretty plain that there is a third thing in the Universe, to wit, consciousness, which I cannot see to be matter or force or any conceivable combination of either.” ~ Thomas Huxley (Darwin Medal winning biologist)

“We can admittedly find nothing in physics or chemistry that has even a remote bearing on consciousness. Yet all of us know there is such a thing as consciousness simply because we have it ourselves. Hence consciousness must be apart of Nature, or, more generally, of Reality. Which means that quite apart from the laws of physics and chemistry, we must also consider laws of a quite a different kind.” ~ Neils Bohr (Nobel Laureate in physics)

(I guess that means, quite ironically, that to champion the atheistic belief that consciousness arises solely via molecular interactions in the brain now requires an enormous leap of Faith.)



Choosing Love ... (10/24/2011)

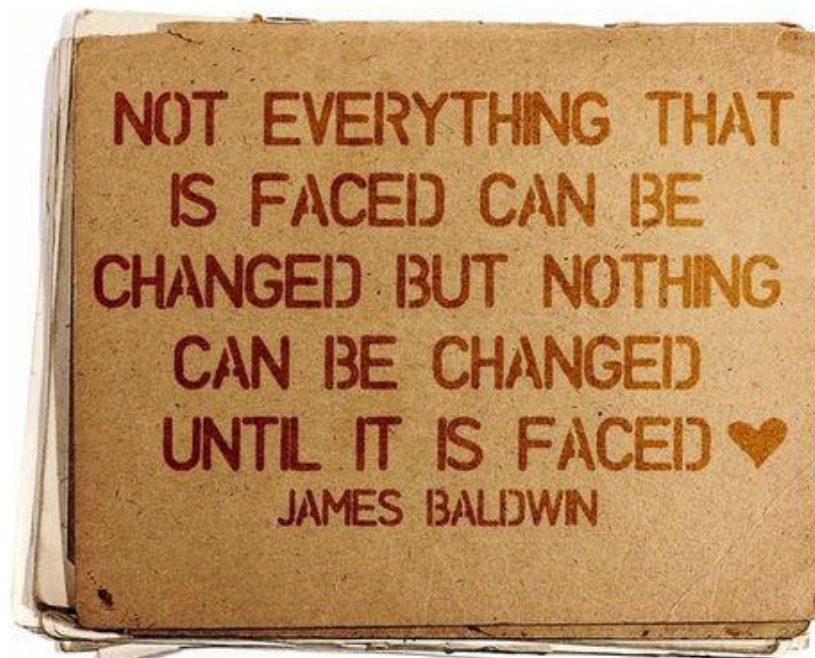
“The Universe awaited your birth. There never has been nor will there ever again be someone exactly like you. You are unique. No one can bring into being the thoughts, the beliefs, the Love, and the sharing that you can.

You can change the world. You have at your command a vast array of talents, perhaps as yet undiscovered, ready to create that which you wish. Look for what makes your heart quiver. Look to make others happy. Look to Love someone ... Joy will invade you as you give free reign to that which is you and that which is highest and most noble. Look to bring that joy to where joy is not.

Some people live within the darkness of their thoughts, not knowing other realities are possible. Love is everywhere, everything — calling to you. You need not search for it, simply recognize it — and then actively appreciate it. The perfection of a drift of clouds, the softness of a child’s hand holding yours, a thirst-quenching drink of water, the beauty of an old woman’s face, the majesty of an oak tree, the person in your life who Loves you purely, the other who might hate you — they are all saying, “I Love You” in their own way.

And you have a choice as to how you will answer it. You can shrug your shoulders and wait for a “better time” to reach out — or you can let Love overwhelm you. You can let it wash over your being and intoxicate your awareness. You can go forth and express Love in all you do — from the humblest task to your highest aspiration.

*Imagine a world where everyone did the same ...
... Now go make it happen.” ~ anonymous*



Love is the Rebellion ...
(10/25/2011)

Before any of you go forth on October 28th to “Occupy Yourself”, please consider the following Truths:

In order to transform your system, you must transform your system’s politics ... In order to transform your system’s politics, you must transform your personal relationships ... In order to transform your personal relationships, you must transform your actions ... And in order to transform your actions, you must transform yourselves.

Our world consists of a mass of interrelationships; nothing more — nothing less. Thus, to alter the way our world functions, we must have the courage to alter the foundation of that world; namely, how we choose to interact with others — with our partners, with our family members, with our friends, with our enemies, and with the strangers we encounter every day.

Yes, our world’s systems are rife with corruption and greed and injustice. And yes, they need to be changed and the time to change them is indeed *now* ... AND we must finally have the courage to change them *EFFECTIVELY*.

We have tried faithful voting, we have tried violent revolution, and we have tried angry protest – and none of these methods has ever brought deep-seated, lasting change ... In-deed, pro-active Caring for others is the only alternative we have yet to employ.

So stand bravely for justice when persecuted, and yet have the courage to forgive ... Stand bravely for equality when robbed, and yet have the courage to be giving ... Stand bravely for others when they are attacked, and yet have the courage to respond to all aggressors with kindness.

And finally, regardless of how you choose to rebel, please remember while you do so ...

... that **LOVE IS THE REBELLION!**

Thank you.

“What we need in the world today is not more ideas, not more blue prints, not better leaders, but goodwill, affection and kindness. Love is the only solution ... The individual is what the world consists of, and without transformation of the individual there can be no transformation in the world.”

~ Murdo MacDonald-Bayne



Revolution is Here ...
(10/28/2011)

I'll explain why Kindness truly works in a later epistle, and yet it is enough for you to remember it today while you *ACT ACCORDINGLY*. And have fun while you are shaking things up — doing so with thoughts of radical Forgiveness, acts of irreverent Kindness, and a life of Joy-filled resolve ...

If it is to be effective, this Revolution must be about having a firmness of conviction while keeping a most-gentle Heart ... It must be about demanding justice while having compassion for her violators ... It must be about standing up for what is Right with a loud voice and a firm will, while remembering to keep both our minds and our arms calm & open.

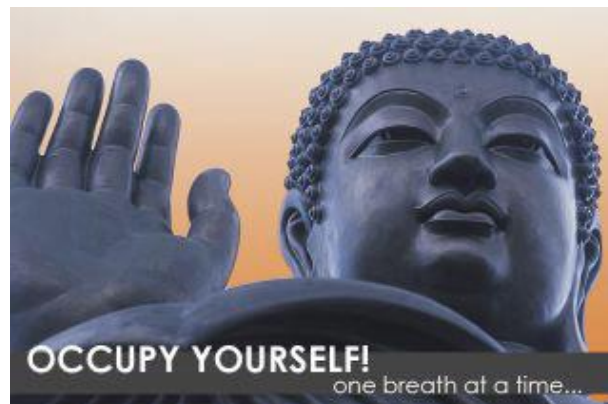
Yes, the Revolution is indeed here ... and remember:

The Revolution is Love!

*“There are three kinds of people in the world: those who are asleep, those who are stirring, and those who are awake. If you try to wake up a sleeping person, he will curse at you and roll over and go back to sleep. If you try to wake up a stirring person he **might** awaken, and yet will probably only do so just long enough to curse you and then go back to sleep as well.*

As such, instead of trying to waken those who are asleep or stirring, simply be Kind to them. Fluff their pillows, kiss them on their foreheads, and tuck them in. The important task for those who are Awake is to seek each other out; to connect with others who are also Awake; to talk and sing and openly celebrate together. This interconnection of Compassion will alone be enough to create a groundswell of Awareness. And as this groundswell expands and intensifies and spreads, it will of its own accord awaken the stirring and stir those still sleeping.”

~ inspired by Buckminster Fuller



Celebrating Living ... (10/28/2011)

Some have been pretty critical of the consumption of alcohol, saying that alcohol takes control of our lives ... (“One drink is too many for me and a thousand not enough.” ~ Brendan Behan)

Some have noted that we cannot “become enlightened” if we also choose to imbibe; that it is merely an escape from our real Journey ... (“Alcohol doesn’t console, it doesn’t fill up anyone’s psychological gaps, all it replaces is the lack of God.” ~ Marguerite Duras)

And some have even said that drinking only guarantees the experience of pain & loss ... (“Drunkenness is temporary suicide.” ~ Bertrand Russell)

Well, I am personally a big believer that it is not *WHAT* we do, but *WHY* we do it that matters on the Path to Meaning-full living. And I have also experienced the Truth that consciously celebrating life in ways that do not harm others is always a good thing.

And there is more than enough to be celebrated this evening:

*I celebrate that the Mayan Calendar has reset and we are all still here (that’s right: the “big date” was *yesterday* — **not** 12.21.2012 like many are saying) ...

*I celebrate that the Occupy Yourself movement has essentially come and gone and we are all that much closer to awakening to the *true* Power we have at our disposal — the Power of radical Kindness ...

*I celebrate that I am alive, and that I am conscious of that life ... I have the ability to Care even when afraid, to Forgive even when attacked and to Cherish even when betrayed.



So tonight I choose to celebrate *THAT* — quite simply, Life & the ability to Love ... After all, what more do we really need to be grateful and truly Happy?

Lighten up, everyone ... literally.

For, despite its many trials and turmoils,
... it’s a Good Life after all.

Functional regret ...
(10/30/2011)

*“As you grow older, you’ll find the only things you regret
are the things you didn’t do.” ~ Zachary Scott*

We are taught that we need to analyze our past in order to remember our mistakes — to remember the choices that didn’t work out well for us so that we can then make “better decisions” in the future; decisions that will bring us more pleasure or more comfort or more wealth or more ease.

And yet, when we examine it closely, we find that real regret -- what I tend to call “functional regret” -- actually has very little to do with the wrong things we did engage, and quite a bit to do with the right things we didn’t. Opportunities to care for others are all around us in every moment of our lives; opportunities that most of us completely ignore most of the time. And *these* are the sources of our Souls’ much deeper regret — these are the true mistakes of our past. Did we criticize a friend when we could have encouraged him? ... Did we gossip about an enemy when we could have defended her? ... Did we turn away from a homeless stranger when we could have paused and cared?

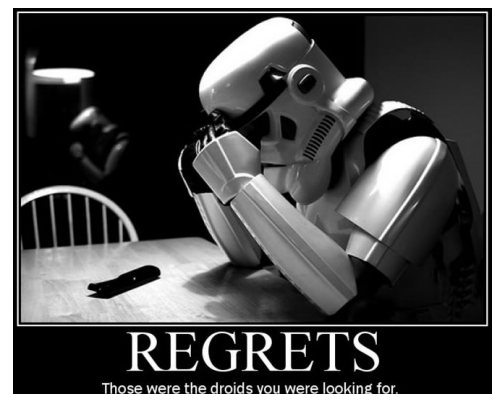
Of course, this more profound form of regret has nothing to do with feeling ashamed of the errors of our past. Instead, “functional regret” non-judgmentally recognizes our recent acts of callousness, and then demands that we go forth into our future and replace them with acts that are courageously Kind.

*“Do not brood over your past mistakes,
as this will only fill your mind with regret and depression.
Simply do not repeat them in the future.” ~ Sivananda*

So my Friends, remember that chances to make a real difference are all around you every day.

Search for them, find them,
... and then ***act on them.***

*“Learn to see the world in its true light.
It will enable you to do good while present, and, when
summoned away, to leave without regret.”
~ inspired by Robert E. Lee*



To be naïve ...
(10/30/2011)

*"I'm guilty of extraordinary naiveté, I suppose.
And yet it's a naiveté that I really don't want to abandon,
not even now." ~ Jock Sturges*

From a very early age, we are all steeped in a culture that encourages us to "be informed" -- that we might then "act more wisely" and thereby "live more safely". Of course, the price we pay for adhering to these norms is a loss of the very things that make us truly special as a species — We forget our ability to see new solutions to old problems; we forget our ability to pause and be amazed at the innate Beauty of life; we forget our ability to actively Care for others when we least wish to do so.

And yet even though we might have forgotten these Gifts, they are still alive & well within us. We *CAN* choose to be open-minded and see a different way of responding to fear & pain. We *CAN* choose to rebel against the grain of all things "responsible" and "prudent" in order to give Love a try. We *CAN* choose to be "humble as a child" and simply believe in the power of Kindness — even though all those around us might call us "unrealistic" or "irresponsible" or even "crazy".

In essence, *we can choose* to believe in the power of Love. As Love is the only response that the fearful truly fear, it is Love that is the only response that actually works. As such, instead of choosing to fight back with anger & indignation, *we can choose* differently the next time around ... *we can choose* to respond to hatred with Forgiveness, to aggression with Peace, and to injustice with Compassion.

In essence, we can choose to be naive once again ...

If you say
"gullible" slowly
it sounds like
"oranges".



To Live is to Die ...
(10/31/2011)

*“Death is a very dull, dreary affair, and my advice to you
is to have nothing whatsoever to do with it.”*
~ *W. Somerset Maugham*

Today is Halloween, the “day of the dead”, so I guess the thing we need to really talk about ... is death.

It’s the last thing we’d like to talk about, of course ... We’d rather dress up in costumes that mock death and go to parties or gather candy (or both). In fact, we’d rather do anything but remind ourselves that our life on this Earth is tenuous; that our days are numbered; that we are, quite literally, running out of time.

And so we hide from that Truth — covering our heads under the thick blankets of hollow “fun”, melodramatic “news” or worrisome “crises”. We think that we can somehow gather enough comforts & pleasures for ourselves that death won’t come for us. We think that hiding under the covers of “healthy boundaries” and “self respect” and “good times” will have death somehow pass us by. We focus on making our lives as comfortable as possible by neglecting the one thing that can bring us real Joy (that being open, selfless Love).

And by doing so -- by in effect running from death -- we make our lives meaningless. Ironically, by running from death, we die ...

*“Because of indifference,
one dies before one actually dies.”*
~ *Elie Wiesel*

And yet in order to truly live, we must choose to “Die”. In other words, in order to fully know the joy of living, we must have the courage to sacrifice our lives ...

We must greet others every day as though we haven't seen them in ages, and we must say goodbye to them every time we part as though we will never see them again ...

We must remember while we are with them that our time together is priceless — that if there is any kind thing to say, that we must say it then and say it fully ...

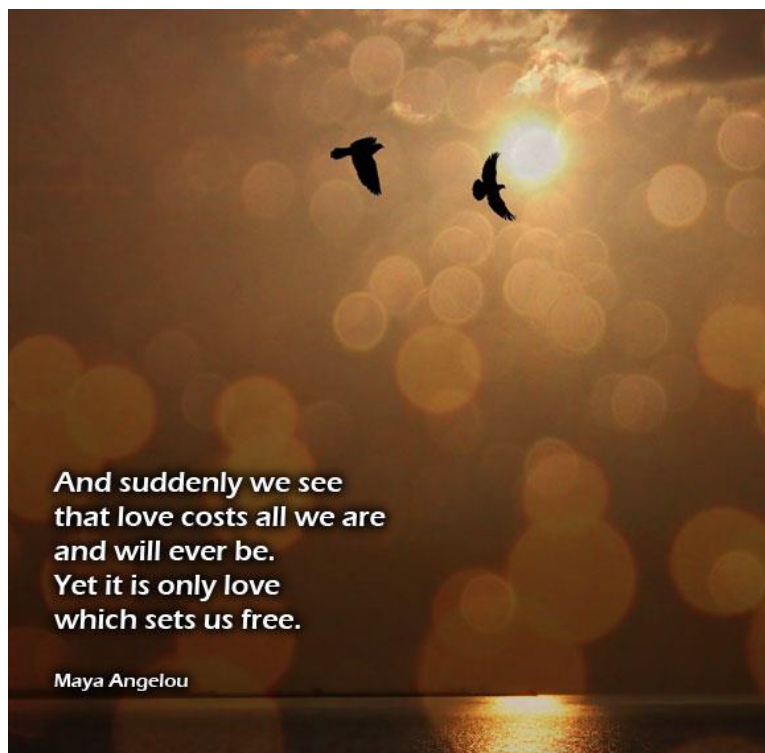
We must set aside our fears of being harmed or seeming foolish in order to Love others with everything we have in every moment we have to give it ...

And this is especially true in our most difficult times ... Indeed, there is no greater privilege than the ability we each have to be neglected and yet choose to Care; to be betrayed and yet choose to Forgive; to be attacked and yet choose to be Kind; to be afraid and yet choose to be Gentle; to be rejected and yet choose to keep Loving.

Indeed, this is what it means to Die ...

... and in-deed, this is the Way to Life.

*“A man who won't die for something
is not fit to live.” ~ Martin Luther King, Jr*

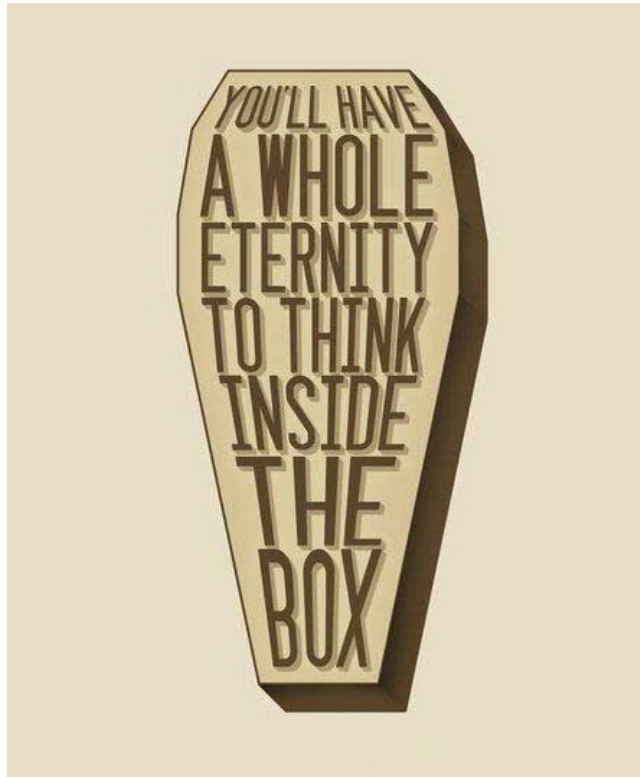


Death to death ...
(10/31/2011)

*“Our problems cease to trouble us
once we realize they are simply blessings in disguise.”
~ Ishaah*

*“All that we have to decide
is what to do with the time
that has been given to us.” ~ Gandalf*

*“The life-span of the butterfly
is precisely the right length.” ~ Tom Robbins*



(There is no key to Happiness ...
for its door is selfless Kindness,
... and that door is always open.)