

Wisdoms from the Journey

(Volume VI ... Dec 12 thru May 13)



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

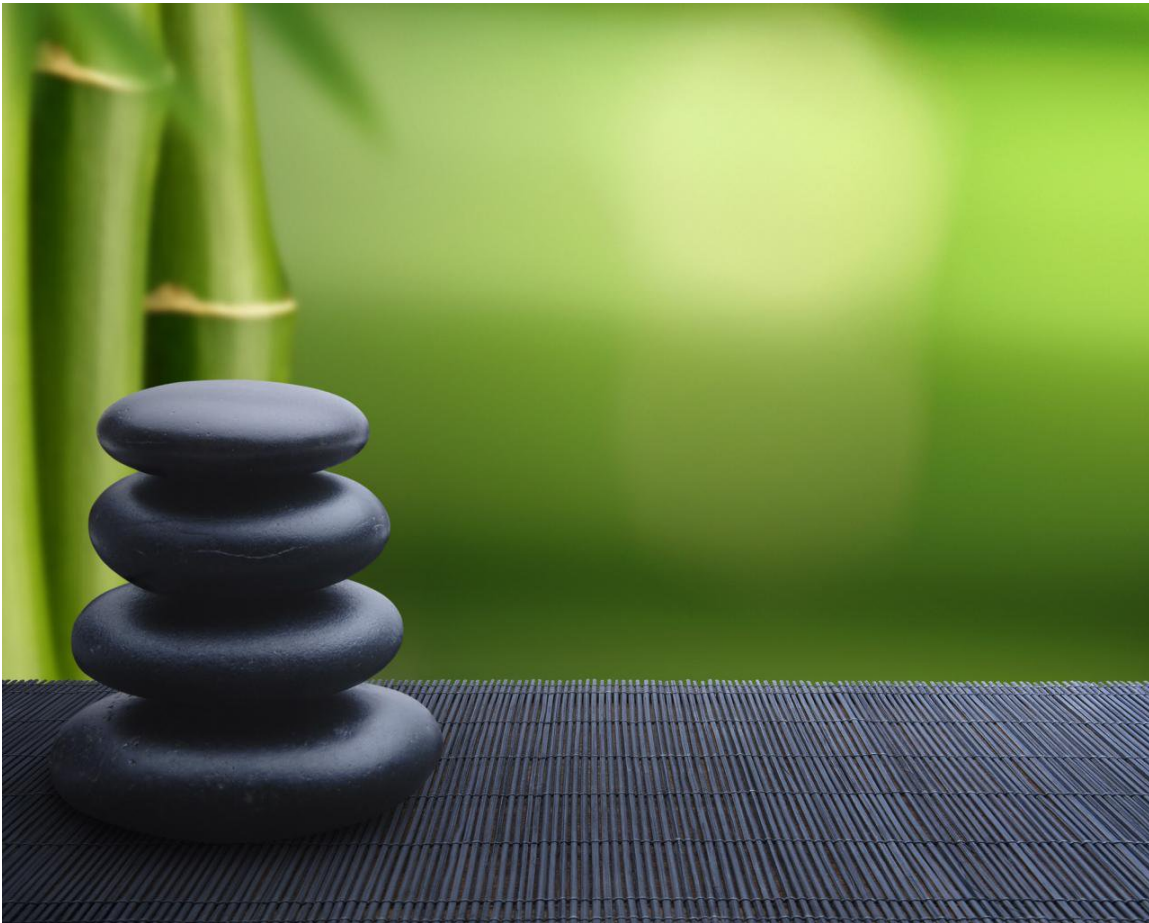
via Scaughdt
an (i)am publication

NOTE: This work is Purpose-fully non-copyrighted, and may therefore be copied, reprinted, forwarded &/or gifted onward in whatever ways any of its readers deem fit. That having been said, the author would also like to remind anyone so doing that, just as these Truths have been given to all for free, so too should they be freely given onward to others – fully profitless to the giver; without any additional costs or conditions attached for the recipients thereof.

*"Wisdom is not wisdom
when it is derived from books alone."
~ Horace*

*"Honesty is the first chapter
of the book Wisdom."
~ Thomas Jefferson*

*"Wisdom, compassion, and courage
are the three universally recognized
moral qualities of humankind."
~ Confucius*



(Wisdom is nothing without Compassion ...
... and Compassion, nothing without Courage.)

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



Change is Now ... (12/14/2012)

“No one knows how many groups and organizations are currently working on the important issues of our day: animal exploitation, climate change, poverty, deforestation, peace, clean water, hunger, conservation, human rights and more. Indeed, collectively this is the largest movement the world has ever seen.

Rather than control, it seeks connection ... Rather than dominance, it strives to spread out all concentrations of power. And as large as it is, no one knows the true size of this wave of brilliant change. It provides drive, support, and meaning to billions of people in the world ... Its power resides in inspiration & idea, not in fiction or force.

It is made up of motivated teachers, laughing children, ethical businesspeople, socially conscious rappers, organic farmers, gentle nuns, caring priests, visionary artists, compassionate government workers, innovative engineers, motivated students, incorrigible writers, weeping Muslims, gentle mothers, positive poets, altruistic doctors, humble Christians, innovative street musicians ... and, of course, what some would call “God” – the Force that permeates all matter; the foundation-energy that literally binds us all together; the One who truly Loves us all in such a huge way; the One that is the vivid embodiment of that Love.

And the best news of all is that this movement requires no dues and has no membership limit ... Indeed, you can join this movement for free and there is room for you to join today.”

~ inspired by Paul Hawken



Real Realism ...
(12/14/2012)

The Pessimist (a.k.a. the “realist”) believes that “The glass is half empty.” He attends to what is “broken” or “lacking” in life in order to obtain more, or — at the very least — to attain his or her “fair share”.

The Optimist (a.k.a. the “idealist”) believes that “The glass is half full.” She attends to what is “pleasant” or “abundant” in life in order to “manifest more wealth” or — at the very least — to justify protecting the “fair share” she already possesses.

The Altruist (a.k.a. the “Dreamer”), on the other hand, simply holds out his or her glass and asks, “Are you thirsty? Would you like some of my water?” ... These are the ones who are grateful for whatever they already have; those who express that thankfulness by sharing their lives with those who appear to have less.

In this way, the “Altruists” are the ones who have awakened to Life’s true Beauty ... And as such, these are the ones who come to live a Life that is truly & verifiably full & truly real.



The First Step ... (12/17/2012)

“I am pretty sure that you will not find your way to real Happiness with your thoughts. Only actions — preferably those different from the primarily self-centered ones you’ve taken in the past — will allow you to climb out of the hole of selfishness in which you reside.

When it gets right down to it, you’re going to simply have to get up one morning (maybe today) and decide to get out there and *DO SOMETHING* selflessly Kind with your time. And if you do so, It’s a pretty safe bet that a Meaning-full task or service will thereafter cross your path.

Admittedly though, that first step is a real doozy — if for no other reason than your ego wants you to stay in bed. Your ego wants you be safe — which it tends to equate with “hanging out” and “having fun” and experiencing pleasure — any activity that hoards security and maintains your status quo.

Of course, these superficial enjoyments tend to flee from our lives just as quickly as they arrive. Indeed, fun and comfort and wealth might feel really good for a few fleeting moments, and yet they certainly don’t make for a truly Good Life. They don’t bring lasting Peace, they don’t bring deep-seated Joy, and they certainly don’t give us a sense of personal Worth.

So even if you are tempted to stay in bed, I say get up and get to it instead ... Even though you are tempted to strive for ‘success’, I say strive for service ... Even though you are tempted to primarily take care of yourself &/or have fun with your friends, I say choose to get up and Care ... for everyone.”

~ anonymous

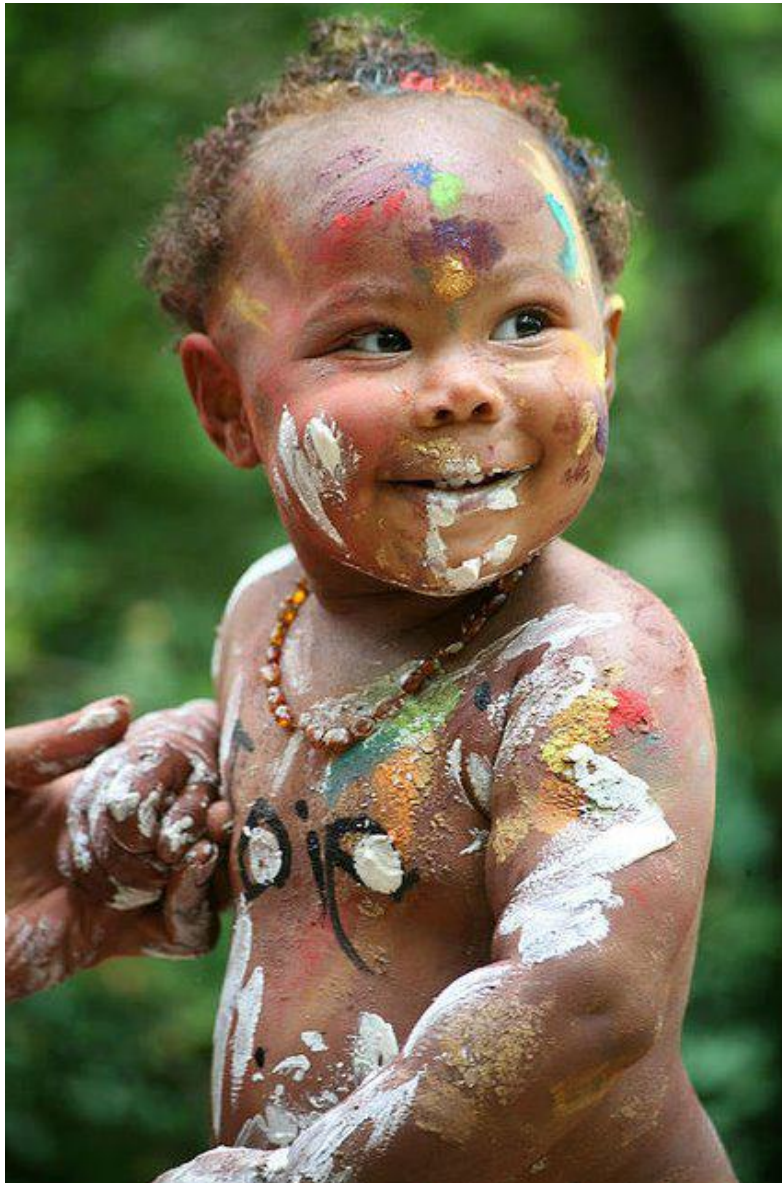


Becoming Beauty-full ...
(12/18/2012)

*“What makes you different
is what makes you beautiful.” ~ unknown*

... and awakening to how we are all alike*
is what makes you Beauty-full!

(*because we all have the ability to be Kind,
especially when least inclined)



Dance anyway ...
(12/19/2012)

*“Let each person dance to the music that he hears,
however measured or far away.” ~ H. D. Thoreau*

We’ve all got Gifts to share that only we can give, and lots of them are considered “weird”, or “weak” -- or even “worthless” -- by other folks at the Big Party we call “life”.

Well, maybe they are weird — and maybe they are even weak, and yet I say with gusto that they are anything but worthless.

So, no matter what negative things “they” might be saying about yourself or your chosen path or Purpose,

... get out there and *DANCE ANYWAY!*



Becoming ONE again ...
(12/22/2012)

We all came from the water. It runs through our ancient days; through each and every year; all the way to this very moment ... It courses through our lives like the bloodline of kings – and it runs through our days like the simple joys of every pauper. It is a smooth yet powerfully flowing stream of memory that binds us to our heritage ...

... and one that ultimately manifests our fate.

It is important to remember that every small drop of water never ceases its trek to the sea. The bitter cold might freeze its flow and the blazing heat might vaporize it into steam, and yet the gentle warmth of spring or the violent release of the thunderhead both ensure that every small drop will one day continue onward again. Yes, though it starts as only one miniscule droplet, water refuses to be swayed in its task ... It continues on and on and on in its single-minded quest to see its Great Brother once more.

And on its way there, it is that single, mere drop of water that becomes a ripple ... and then a river ... and then a rising torrent. It I time becomes a force unstoppable, which inevitably breaks down and flows over all resistance in its path – allowing it to flow free once again, back on its way to Oneness.

And so it is with each of us and our LOVE ... So it is with every drop of sweat that falls while serving our communities ... So it is with every drop of Kindness that graces the heart of a stranger ... So it is with every drop of blood we sacrifice to bring an enemy the very Peace for which we ourselves yearn.



These are the drops of our deepest Self, my Friends ... These are the drops that will trickle -- and then ripple -- and then flow -- and then rush onward to rejoin us with our own ocean; the Ocean of Humanity.

These are the drops that will bring us back to our brothers & sisters ... These are the drops that will once again bring us Home.

(~ inspired by unknown)

Waking UP ...
(12/23/2012)

“The key to your awakening as a real Human Being is what you choose to do for others – especially when no one is watching; and especially when you’d rather be doing for yourself.”

~ inspired by Alan Buncher



UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

when this is the first thing you see in the morning...and he let you sleep in.

The Right Choice ...
(12/26/2012)

“The perfect Way is only difficult for those who pick and choose ... Do not like, do not dislike: all then will be clear.” ~ Sen T’san

*“There is no Love greater than Love with no object.
For then you, yourself, have become Love itself.” ~ Rumi*

In every random happenstance and within every chance meeting, there is a choice to be made.

Especially when you are least inclined to do so,
... choose **LOVE**.



Meaning of Life ...
(12/27/2012)

When compiling his first dictionary, the young Noah Webster traveled to the Himalayas, where he climbed up to the cave of the world's wisest man ...

“O, great sage,” he said, “Please tell me the Meaning of Life.”

The sage smiled, sat Noah at his feet and, with great solemnity, commenced to unfold for him the Meaning of Life ... And when he finished, he placed a hand on young Noah's shoulder and asked, ‘Do you have any other questions, my son?’

Noah flipped a page in his notebook and said, “You wouldn't also happen know the meaning of *LIFT*, would you?”

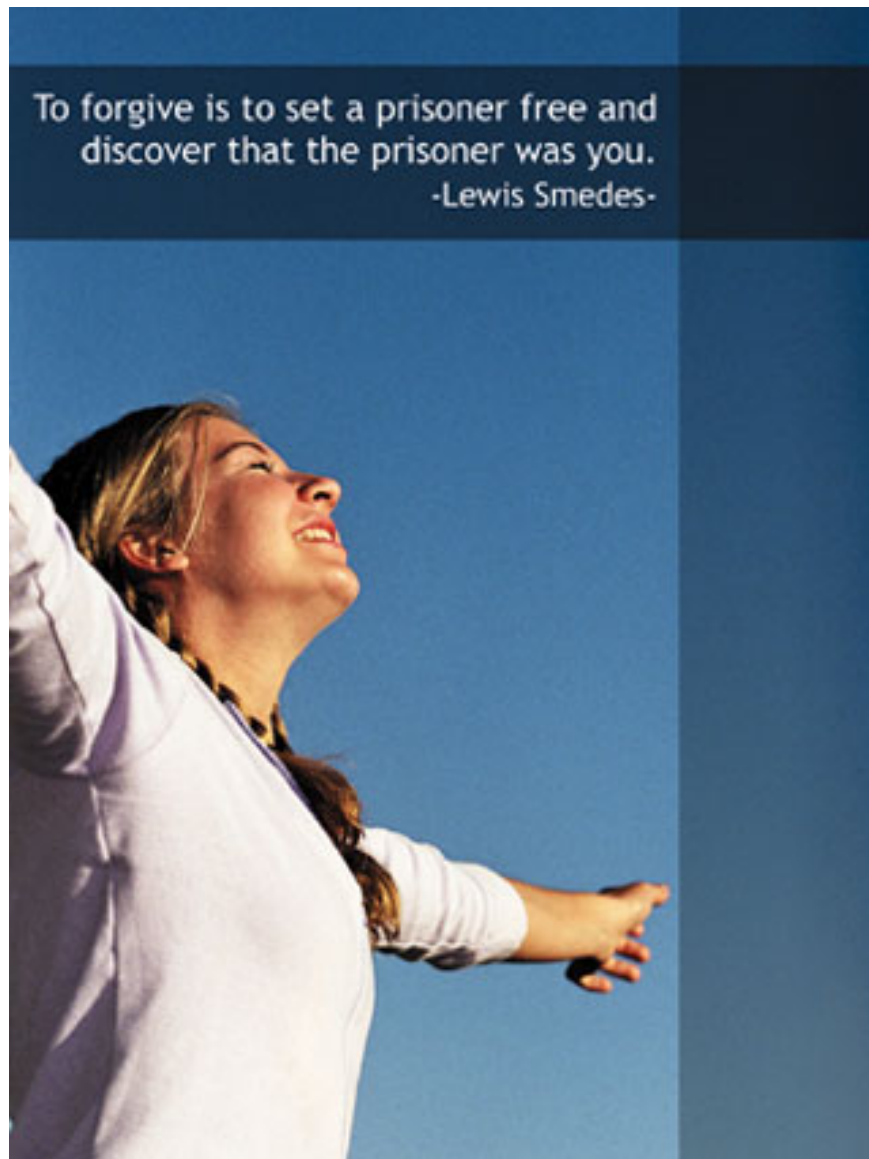
(~ inspired by Robert Brault)



(The Meaning of Life can only be known
once we stop searching for Life's meaning ...
... and start Living Meaning-fully instead.)

Escaping prison ...
(12/28/2012)

“We must somehow develop for all our conflicts an effective method of resolution; one which rejects revenge, abandons aggression and refuses retaliation. To bear the fruit of lasting Peace, such a method must first and foremost be built upon a foundation of courageous Kindness and humble Respect.” ~ inspired by Martin Luther King, Jr.



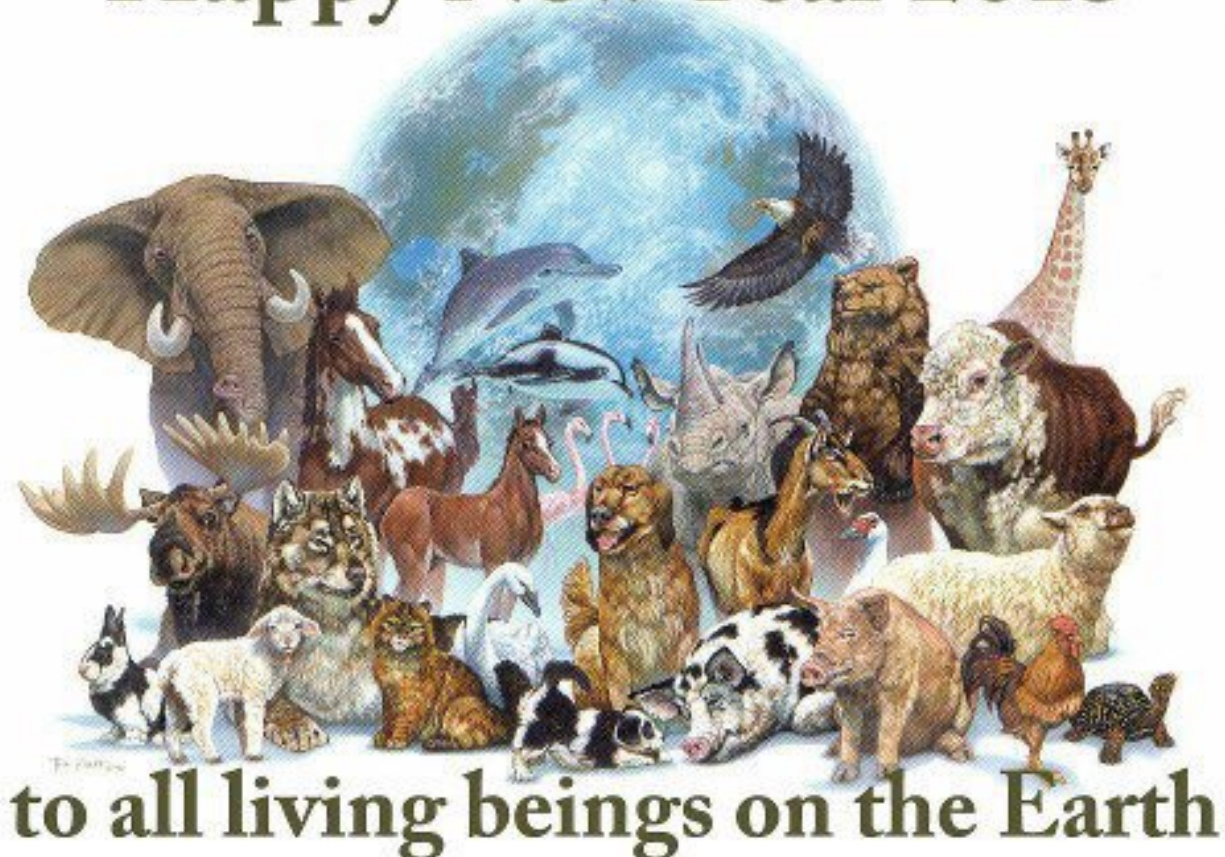
Heaven on Earth ...
(12/31/2012)

“I suddenly understood: Heaven and Hell offer the same set of circumstances and conditions. The critical difference is in the way their beings treat each other.” ~ Haim of Romshistok

This and every year, may we all have the grace to walk humbly in the shoes of others ... along with the courage to reach out with Kindness to ease their burdens.

Wishing you all a blessedly Joy-filled upcoming year!

Happy New Year 2013



The Brilliance of LOVE ... (12/31/2012)

*“Love is when your puppy licks your face
even after you left him alone all day.” ~ Mary Ann, age 4*

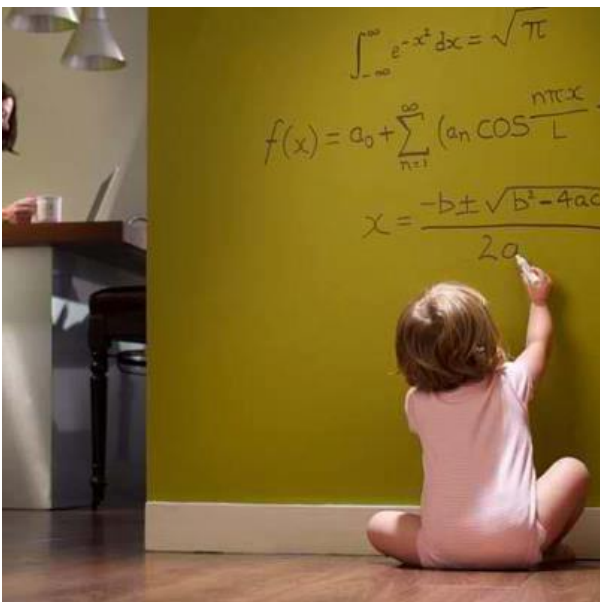
*“Love is when someone hurts you, but you don’t yell at them
because you know it would hurt their feelings.” ~ Samantha, age 7*

*“If you want to learn to Love better,
start with a friend you don’t like.” ~ Nikka, age 6*

Let’s face it, when it comes to relationships, children are simply brilliant. When it comes to getting along with others, kids simply “get it” ... To see this Truth firsthand, go to any park or any school where toddlers are at play and just watch them for awhile.

Sure, they can throw temper tantrums when they don’t get what they want,
... and yet kids remember to share.
Sure, they can be mean and callous and disrespectful to each other,
... and yet kids remember to apologize and make amends.
Sure, they cry when criticized or ridiculed,
... and yet kids remember to forgive.
Sure, they mope & pout when things don’t go their way,
... and yet kids remember to then let it go and get on with living.

Of course, the truly good news is: kids aren’t the only geniuses when it comes to really Caring for one another. We adults can still remember to live this way as well ... Because we were all once children, and because the Wisdom of the Child – given to us all at birth – can’t ever be lost, we adults also understand perfectly how best to treat each other. Deep inside, we all “get it” too ... Now all that’s left is for us to get out there and *DO IT*.



So, just for today, I will remember to
become again as a child.

Just for today, I will do more than merely
know ... I will Engage.

Just for today, I will do more than merely
believe ... I will Give.

Just for today, I will do more than merely
ponder ... I will be Kind.

Just for today, I will do more than hope
... I will pray with moving feet.

A lesson of Lessons ...
(01/01/2013)

As his lecture began, a professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. He wordlessly picked up a very large and completely empty jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked his students, “Is this jar full?” ... Many of them said that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of small pebbles and began pouring them into the jar. As he did so, he lightly shook the jar, and the pebbles easily flowed into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked his students, “Is the jar full now?” ... Most of them nodded.

The professor then picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand easily filled up all the remaining space. He then asked once more if the jar was full, at which the students laughed and responded with an enthusiastically unanimous “Yes!”

Finally, the professor brought two cups of tea from under the table and poured their entire contents into the jar, effectively and smoothly filling the empty space between all the grains of sand.

“Now,” said the professor as the silence subsided, “I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are life’s truly Important things — Loving your family, being Kind to strangers, Serving your community, Caring for your friends, and Forgiving your enemies. If everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be very full indeed ...

The pebbles are the other not-nearly-so-important things that still matter — like your health, your job, your house, your car, and having fun ...

Finally, the sand is everything that’s left — the superficial possessions, as well as life’s difficult moments; all the “small things” that can be very irritating if we let them get into our eyes, and yet that are really not that important at all.”

“Now, if we put sand into the jar first,” he continued, “there is then no room for the pebbles or the golf balls ... and the same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy focusing on what annoys or frustrates or disappoints or angers you, you will never have room for the things in your life that are truly Important.

So attend to the things that are critical to your true Happiness — and by that I do *NOT* mean the pebbles ...

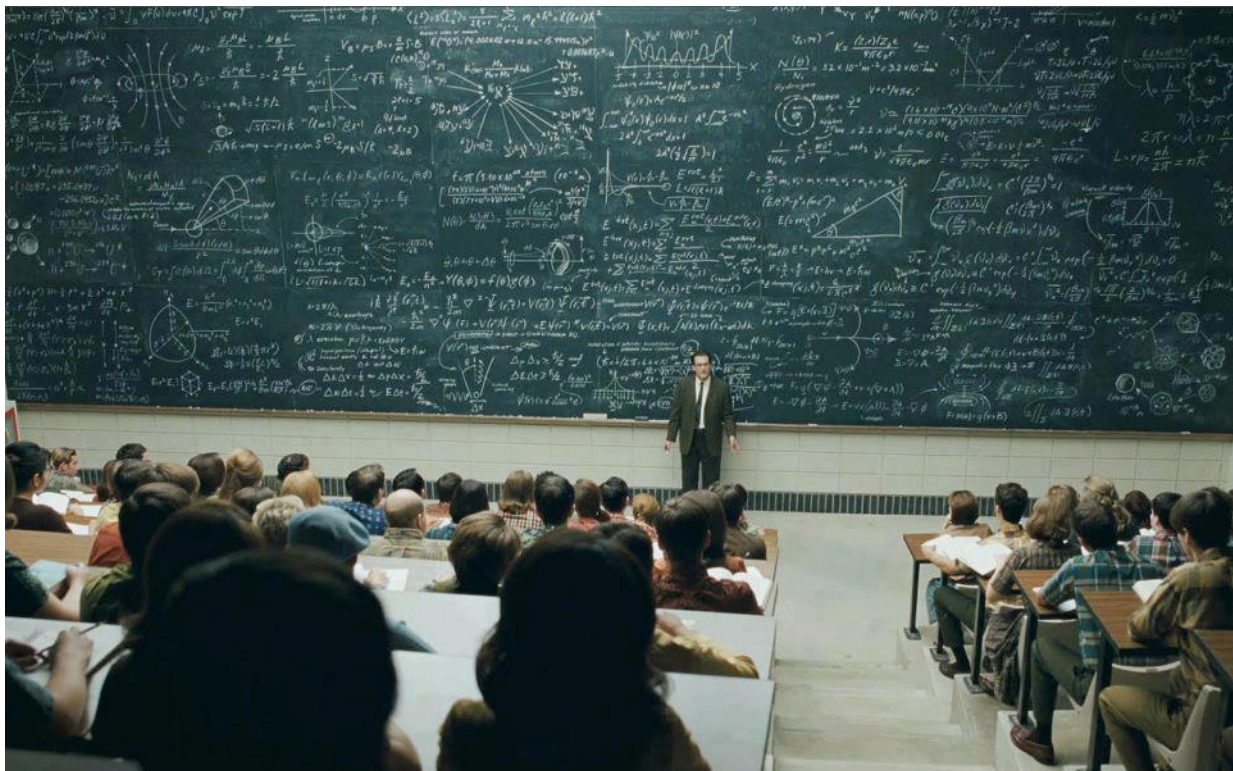
You are going to get sick, so focusing on your health is going to bring you disappointment. You are going to get bored or feel “down”, so clinging to fun is not going to help you either. And your possessions are all — every one of them — going to get old or break down or disappear, so attaching to having them will bring you suffering as well.

No, choose to enjoy those things while you have them, and yet don't invest in them. Invest instead in your “golf balls” – in your life's truly Important things:

- *Listening to your children ...
- *Cooking dinner for your parents ...
- *Doing anonymous Good Deeds for your friends ...
- *Smiling at, and saying a nice word or two, to strangers ...
- *Forgiving those who have harmed you.

There will always be time for you to ‘fulfill obligations’ and ‘enjoy life’. So take care of your life's golf balls first. Care for others whenever you have the chance ... and remember that the rest is just sand.”

There was a long pause after he finished, and then one of the students raised her hand and inquired what the tea represented. The professor smiled and said, “I'm glad you asked ... The tea reminds us all that no matter how full our lives may seem, there's always room for a cup of tea with a friend.”



To BE as a tree ...
(01/01/2013)

“I would like to believe that when I die I will have given myself away like a tree that has sown its seed every spring, and never counted that loss; because such giving is never loss — it is always adding to future life ... It is the tree’s way of being strongly rooted and spilling out its treasure to the wind.” ~ inspired by Mary Sarton



Love will do that ...
(01/02/2013)

“I sat there and forgot and forgot until what remained was the river that went by, and I who watched. Eventually the watcher joined the river, and there was only one of us. I believe it was the river.” ~ Norman McLean

I sat there and forgot and forgot — and cared and cared — until eventually my watcher within joined my enemy. And then there remained only one of us, and I believe it was both of us -- Together as One ...

... LOVE will do that.



Your true colors ...
(01/03/2013)

“We shall not want to be the same as others and we shall not want others to be the same as us. Rather, we remember that life is here for us to shine radiantly in all of our differences ... It is never conformity that we need. What we need is to have the courage to burst out into all our beautiful colors.” ~ inspired anew by C. Joybell C.



Through the Darkness ...
(01/09/2013)

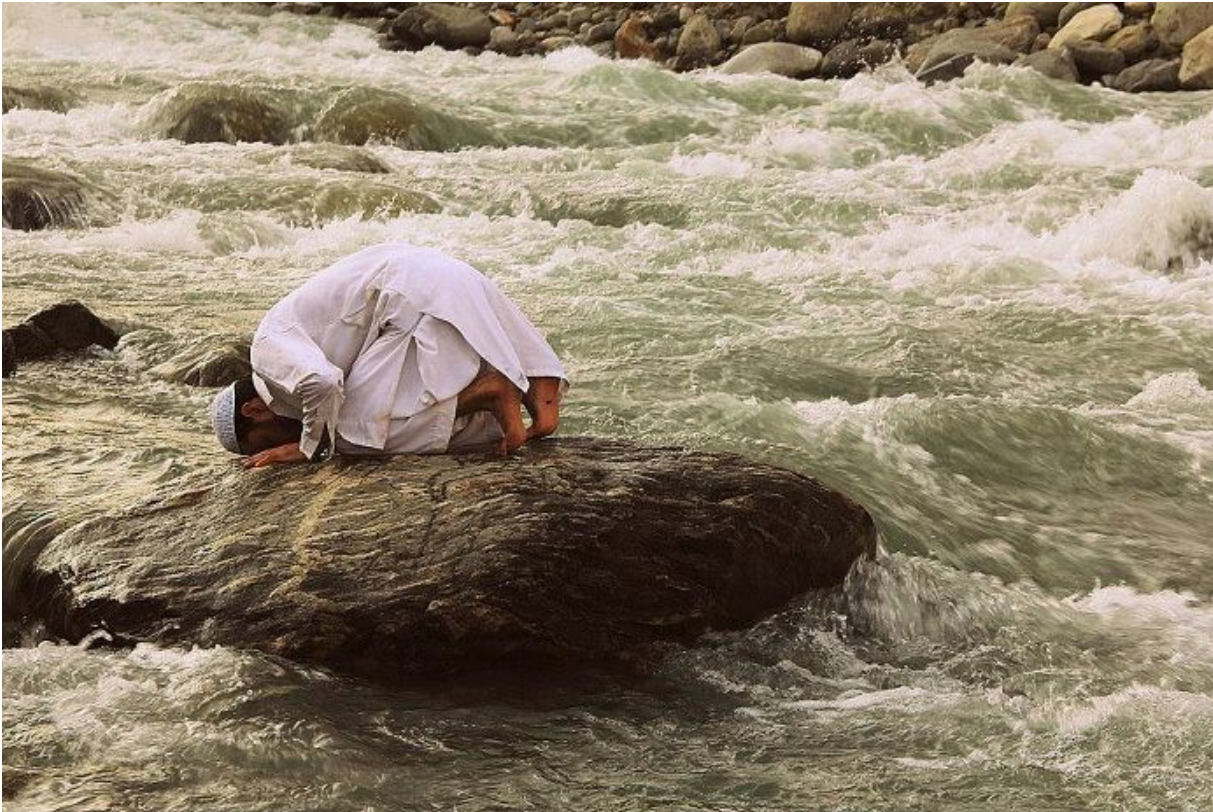
If we can Love a child even when he is afraid of the dark,
then why not also a man when he is afraid of the Light?

(inspired by Plato)



The Love of God ...
(01/10/2013)

“All truly enlightened Souls have this in common: not that they gather in the desert to voice exuberant prayers, and not that they shut themselves up in seclusion to quietly become one with God, but rather that wherever the Divine is, there they Are ... and wherever they happen to Be, they gently bring the Divine with them ... And this is the greatest mystery of our ultimate vocation: not that we cease to be human in order to become angels, but that the Love of our human hearts can literally become God’s Love — for God, yes, but also for all of humankind.” ~ inspired by Thomas Merton



Freedom from the past ...
(01/11/2013)

*“The past is our cradle, not our prison.
There is as much glory as there is danger in its call.
For the past is inspiration, not imitation ...
... it is to be transcended, not repeated.”*
~ inspired by Israel Zangwill



Holding the Holy Spirit ...
(01/12/2013)

“We cannot hope to enliven the Holy Spirit within us by merely crawling up into God’s lap and falling asleep in His sweet aroma & cozy warmth, especially when so much of the world – indeed so much of our own community – lies swaddled in the cold and clammy darkness of human suffering ...

No, the Holy Spirit is only awakened when we have the courage to do what the original followers of Christ did when they did not have enough food for the hungry at their door — when their entire community would fast until every one of them could sit and share a meal together.” ~ inspired by Shane Claiborne



Dancing the Dance ...
(01/14/2013)

“Your blissfulness, your devotion, your ecstasy should not be contained within you like a seed. Let it open like a flower and spread its fragrance to all — not only to friends, but to strangers and enemies as well ... Let your life reach out to everyone. For this is real Compassion, this is real Love: sharing your Self with others; sharing your dance of the Beyond.” ~ inspired by Osho



Feeding the hungry ...
(01/16/2013)

“If today was the first day of the last year of your life, what hunger would you be moved to feed? What pain would you be called to soothe” ~ inspired by Rachel W. Cole

Guess what? ...
... Today *IS* that day!



A bigger Happiness ...
(01/16/2013)

“What we call fate does not come into us from the outside, but emerges from within us.” ~ R. M. Rilke

Even when it feels otherwise, it is impossible for us to ever really lose control of our lives ... I know, none of us choose what happens to us, *AND YET* in every moment of every one of our days, it is we and we alone who choose how that ‘what’ affects us.

When pain comes, we can either choose to focus on ourselves — and become weak & suffer, *OR* we can choose to focus on reaching out to others — and become Strong & filled with Peace. For the ego, life happens “to me”, and creates a helpless victim, and yet for the conscious Soul, life happens “*FOR US*” -- and creates a Being transcendent.

In every single moment of our lives, that choice is ours to make ...
... So Happy choosing, my Friends!



Joining the Team ...
(01/19/2013)

“The Bible tells us to Love our neighbors, and also to Love our enemies; probably because they are often the same people.” ~ G. K. Chesterton

The only way to truly win the Game of Life is first, to humbly remember that we are *ALL* on the same team — and second,

... to courageously go forth and act accordingly.



Setting Love free ... (01/20/2013)

“If you close your arms tightly around another, then your LOVE will slip right by them. Even though you are holding the other tightly, they are receiving none of how much you truly Care.

And yet whenever we catch ourselves doing so, we can awaken to realize that we are not really holding the other at all — we are actually only holding ourselves ... Real LOVE always means open arms and an open Heart.” ~ inspired by Kasuja Kasule



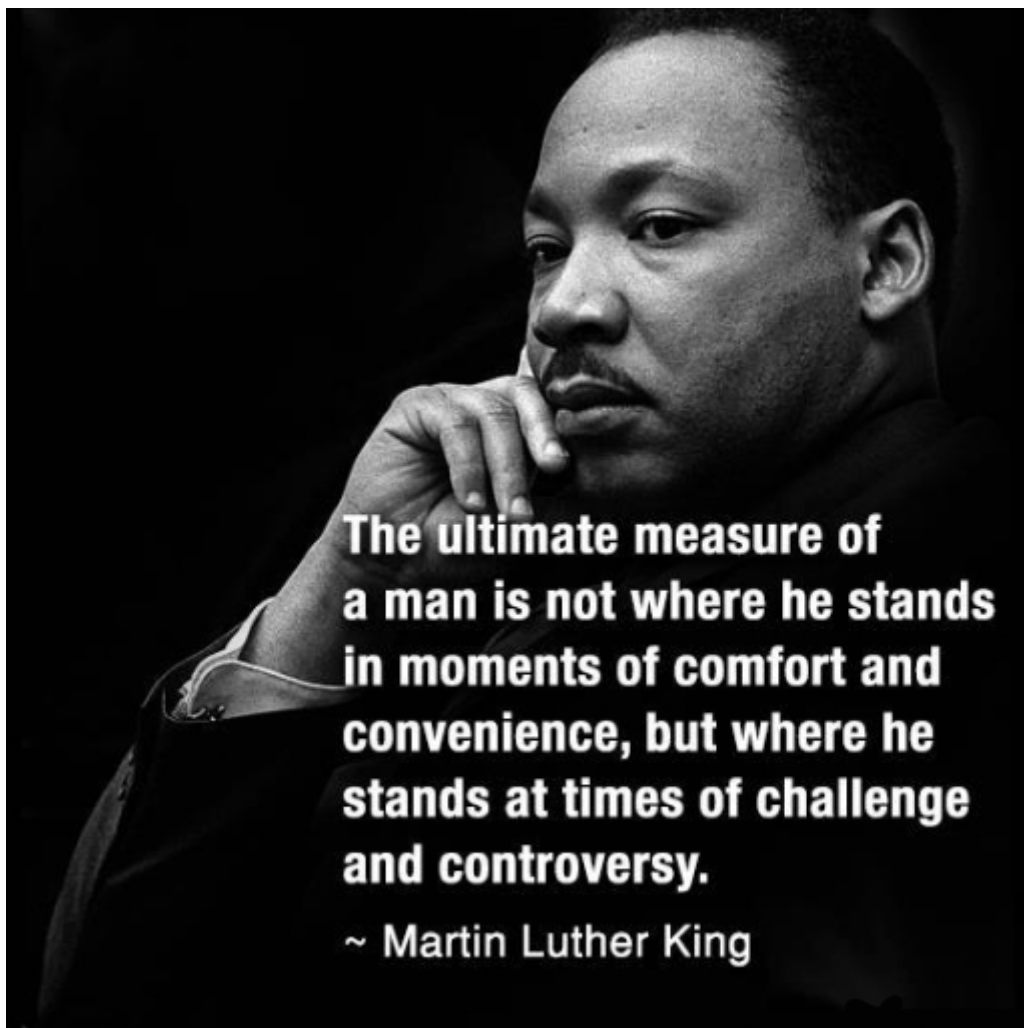
(The only way to truly LOVE your Self
is to set free everything your ego wishes to hold.)

We shall overcome ...
(01/21/2013)

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” ~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Enough said ... yet still far from enough done.

“We shall overcome ... and with this faith, we will go out and adjourn the councils of despair, and bring new light into the dark chambers of pessimism. And we will be able to rise from the fatigue of despair into the buoyancy of hope. And this will be a great America, and we will be the participants in making it so.” ~ Martin Luther King, Jr.



Action is the Healer ...
(01/21/2013)

“[There is a] strangely irrational notion that there is something in the very flow of time that will inevitably cure all ills. In actuality, time itself is neutral; it can be used either destructively or constructively ... Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability. Rather, it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co-workers with God ... And without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use our time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do Right.” ~ inspired by Martin Luther King, Jr. (via a letter he penned while imprisoned in the Birmingham jail — April 16, 1963)

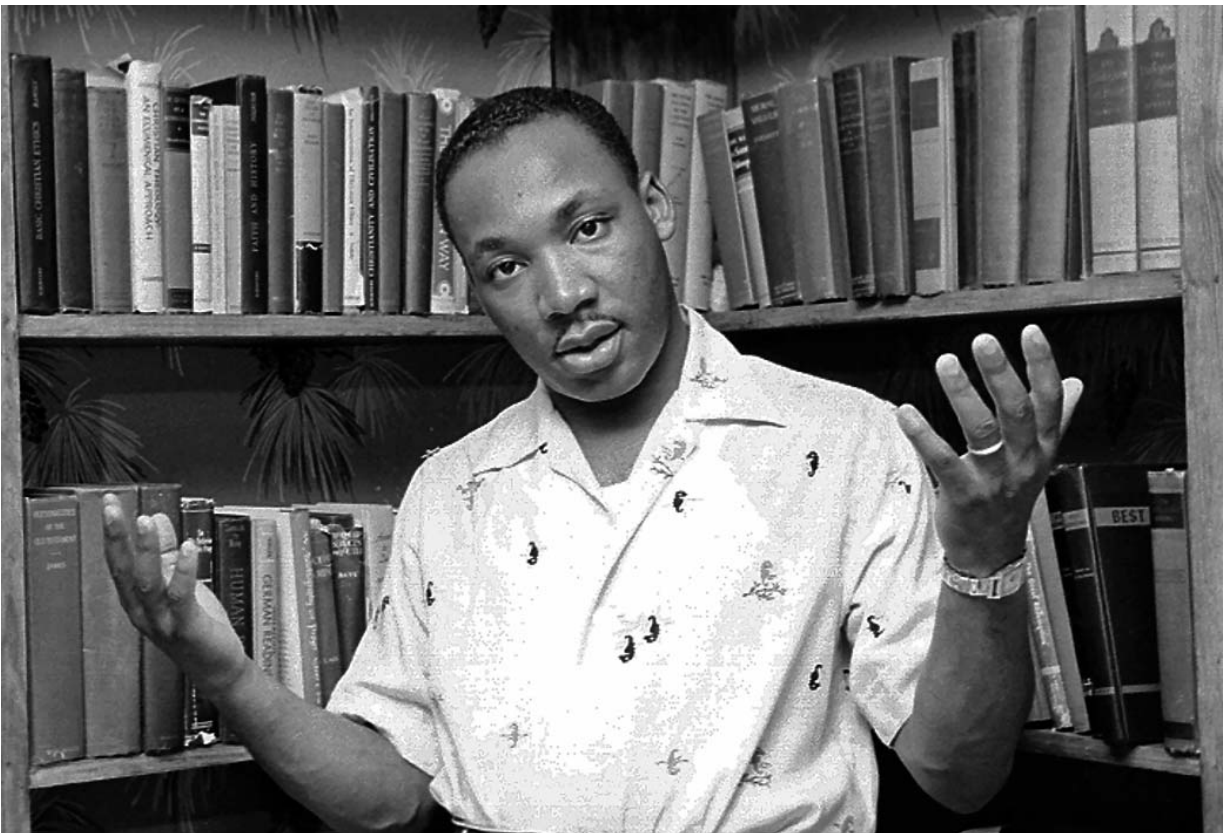


Extreme gentleness ...
(01/21/2013)

“Though I was initially disappointed at being categorized as an extremist, I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the label. After all, was not Jesus an extremist for Love; telling us to Love our enemies, bless those who curse us, and do good to them that hate us? So I guess the real question we all face is not whether or not we will be extremists ... but rather what kind of extremists we will be ... Will we be extremists for hate, will we be extremists for indifference,...

... or will we be extremists for Love?”

(~ inspired by Martin Luther King, Jr.)



Civil in disobedience ...
(01/22/2013)

*“If a law is unjust, a man is not only right to disobey it,
he is obligated to do so.” ~ Thomas Jefferson*

Civil disobedience takes many forms ... The farmer who owns the pictured pasture was told that he was not allowed to build a shed for his horses — so he simply built a very large table and two very large chairs.

Similarly, there are government ordinances in many U.S. cities that make it illegal to feed the homeless, and there are social “laws” everywhere in the world that make it “illegal” to even look them in the eye — that make it “illegal” to even speak with the downtrodden — that make it “illegal” for us to reach out and Care.

Such “laws” are just as unjust as the one our brave farmer Peace-fully opposed ... Such laws are also begging to be broken.

It is truly time for a **rEVOLution**; it is time to stand up to the social norms of judgment, selfishness & callousness that keep us distanced from the oppressed & the impoverished & the saddened in our midst.

So, my Friends -- keeping all this in mind, how are you going to “break the law” today?

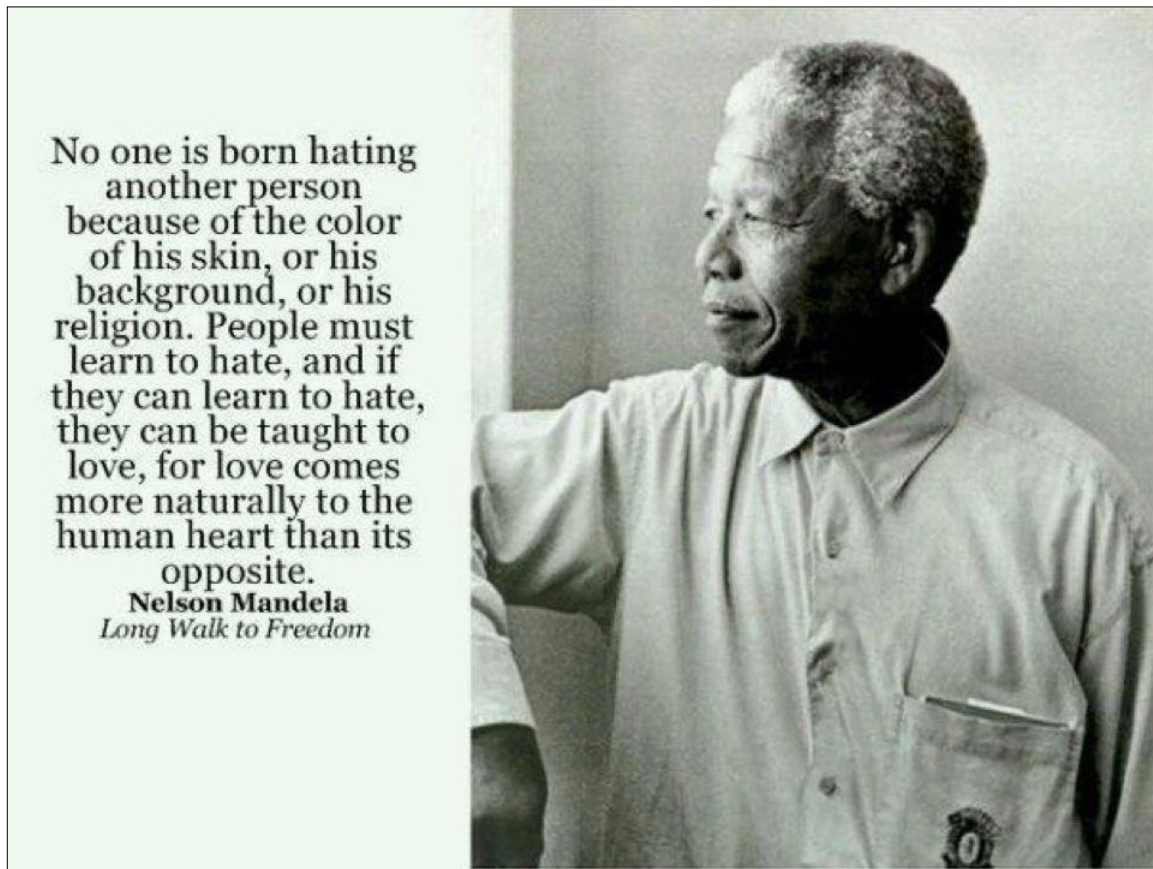


Teaching for teachers ...
(01/23/2013)

It is wise to remember that people don't hear what we say nearly as much as they *HEAR* what us **DO** ... Indeed (in-deed!), others aren't taught by our words as much as they are led by our *ACTIONS*.

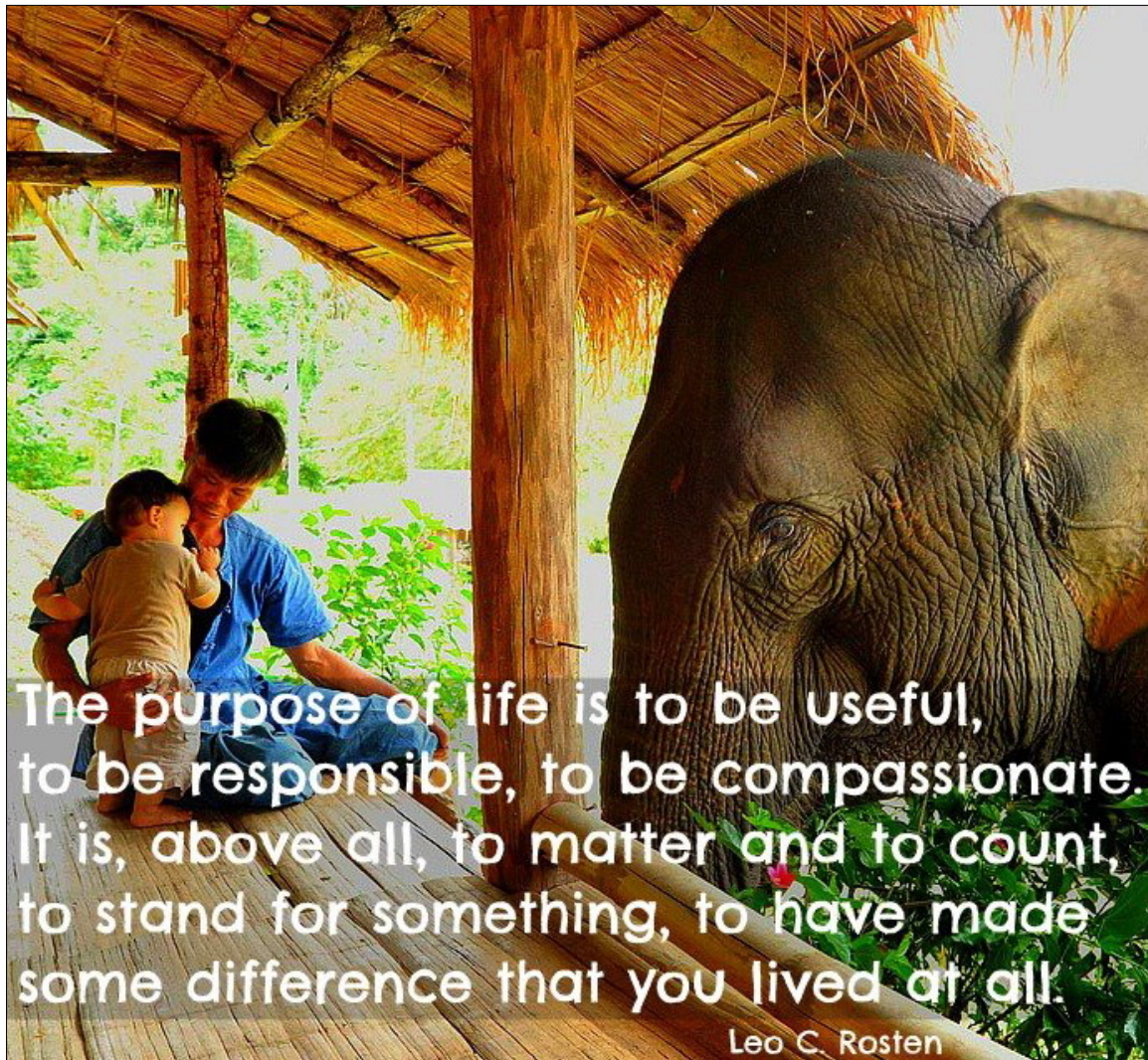
Fear and judgment and hatred have had their run, my Friends ... It is high time we all went forth and started walking our *Love*'s talk.

Keeping that in mind, let's go *BE* the change we wish to See!



Rediscovering Purpose ...
(01/23/2013)

The Purpose of our lives is not to “find true love” ...
LOVE IS OUR PURPOSE!



The purpose of life is to be useful,
to be responsible, to be compassionate.
It is, above all, to matter and to count,
to stand for something, to have made
some difference that you lived at all.

Leo C. Rosten

(P.S. “love” is merely an emotion
that we yearn to receive ...
LOVE, on the other hand, is a verb;
an act of Kindness that we choose to give.)

God is the Calm ...
(01/24/2013)

Inner **PEACE** comes not when we merely pray for God to “make it better”, but rather when we have the courage to *act* as God’s own Caring hands ... In this sense, it is not God that does our calming,

... so much as it is **LOVE** that *is* the Calm.



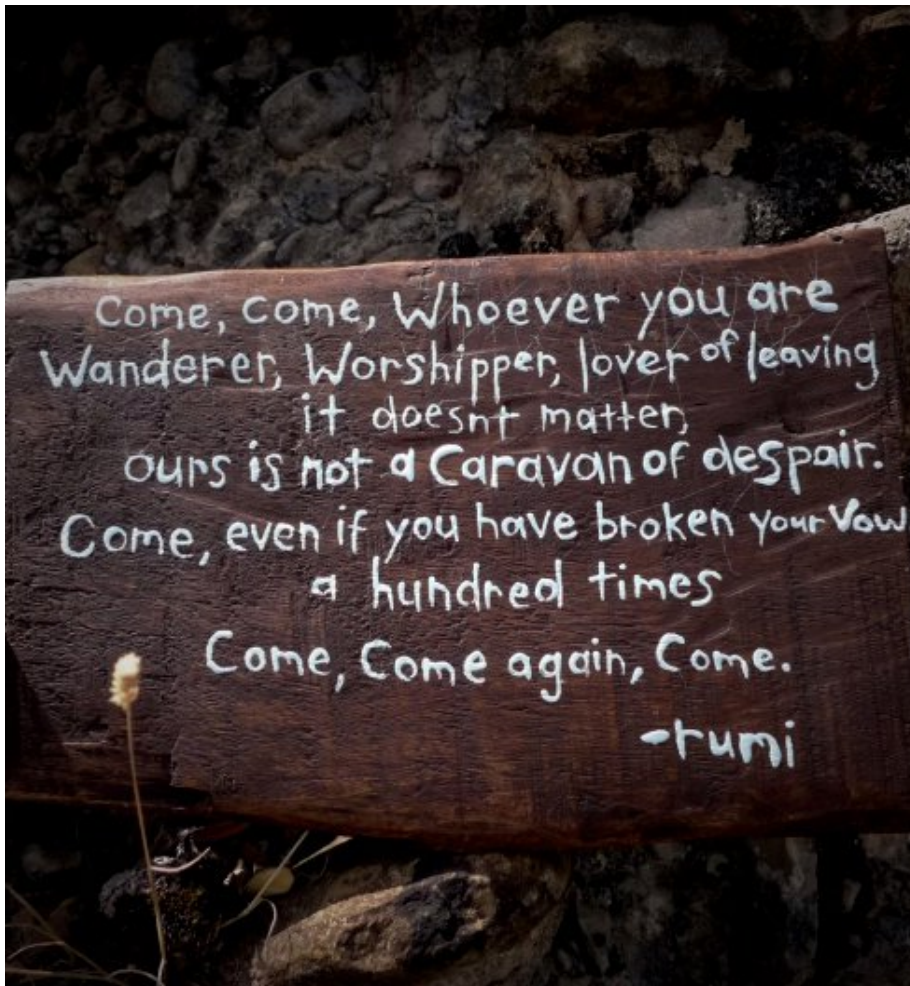
Keep on rising ...
(01/24/2013)

We are not here to slowly “get better” or to steadily “grow as a person” or to gradually “attain enlightenment” ... We are Here — especially in those times when we are too tired or too sick or too busy or too scared or too angry or too sad — to **LOVE**.

And in the moments we do so, we have arrived fully in the Peace that comes to those who awaken to being fully Human ... And in the moments we do not do so, we are blessed with the next moment — and yet another chance to give that **LOVE** anew.

Being perfect over a period of time is impossible ...
... Loving perfectly for just one instant is easy.

Choose to live for that moment ...
... and choose to **LOVE**.



True Freedom ... (01/25/2013)

“Spiritual freedom is not something you can earn or develop or attain ... Spiritual freedom — and the sheer, unbridled Joy that always accompanies it — is innate; an inherent part of who we truly are; from our first instant of awareness unless our last conscious breath ... And this freedom is not affected by any condition or limited by any set of circumstances. A person who chooses to live from this place of absolute integrity is simply filled with Joy — no matter what is happening physically in the world around them; and no matter what is emotionally happening in the world inside of them ...

It matters not whether he or she is locked in a prison cell, sharing a room with a crowd of people, or alone in a forest — he or she is always free; free to rejoice in the Beauty of the Earth, free to cherish each opportunity to be grateful for that life; free to reach out and be actively appreciative of the same via acts of selfless gentleness.

For such people the invisible chains of obligation, duty and need have been shattered — the real prisons of fear and desire have been left behind ... And it is this Truth that has returned their deepest Joy to them; it is this life of **LOVE** that has Joy-fully set them free.”

(~ inspired by Shantidasa)



Looking after the Powerful ...
(01/26/2013)

“I ended up working to get better living conditions for undocumented migrants. If I would share some of what I learned from those people, I would share the choices they made during their most trying times — how they chose to never give up; how they chose to continue to care. I would share about all the things I learned and continue to learn from their courage and perseverance ... It makes me realize that we humans are not only incredibly powerful, but that our lives are also incredibly important ... and that we need to look after each other.” ~ inspired by Ellen Fruijtier



Back to the Now ...
(01/27/2013)

When lost in the gloomy worlds of “back when” or “someday”, remember that it only takes one step & half a second to return to the Present Moment ... and that it is totally worth it to make that short journey -- back to where you already are.

After all, HERE is always where the Heart is.



**Learn from
the past . . .
then get the hell
out of there!**

Clarity in cliché ...
(01/31/2013)

Clichés are quite cliché , I know ...
... and yet they are all cliché for a reason.



[Regarding *LOVE*, it is worth remembering: that all that glitters is most certainly not gold ... that actions always speak louder than words ... that an ounce given is worth a pound received... that Beauty is indeed in the eye of the beholder ... that beggars cannot ever be choosers ... and that later is always better than never.]

Into the Wonderment ...
(02/01/2013)

A forest freshly bedecked with snow is almost irresistible in its Beauty. And yet, it is a place that must be experienced to be understood — a place that must be traversed to be known, and traversed with deep reverence.

Well, the inner worlds of every enemy are just as magical; just as filled with hopes and fears and joys and sorrows ... And just like those mystical forests, the inner landscapes of our villains cannot be known unless we brave their perimeters as well. In-deed, we cannot know real Beauty in anything unless we have the courage to give that Beauty a chance to reveal itself; unless we have the courage to enter that darkness and see for ourselves the radiance hidden within.

It is this brilliant adventure of rediscovery that waits for you within every one of your life's annoyances and every one of your life's fiends ...

All that remains is for you to set aside your fears, open your arms, and take that first step into the Wonderment.

Bon voyage, my Friends!



No Tomorrow ...
(02/02/2013)

*“Well, what if there is no tomorrow?
There wasn't one today.”*
~ Bill Murray (in “Groundhog Day”)

There are a number of uncomfortable thoughts from which we flee each day, none of them more subtle or more potent than the fear of death -- a fear, ironically, that must be focused upon before it can be cleansed; one that must be remembered before it can be forgotten.

And the only truly liberating response to briefly re-cognizing this most immense of internal shadows is *NOT* to run back under our covers and wait for the mythical someday of spring. Rather, it is to rise, to light a candle of Kindness, and to set forth directly into the very maw of that darkness; to bring light to those wandering in the glooms of sadness or selfishness — to bring warmth to those who have forgotten what it is to LOVE.

Groundhog Day is so much more than our petty hopes for an early season of sunshine. It is the reminder that we can make life Meaning-full *TODAY*, and that we need not wait one instant more to do so.

Essentially, Groundhog Day reminds us of the most important of all Truths: that the trick to living forever ...

... is acting boldly as if you know you won't.



Ending the slaughter ...
(02/03/2013)

“To a man whose mind is free there is something even more intolerable in the sufferings of animals than in the sufferings of man. For at least with the latter it is admitted that the suffering itself is evil and that the man who causes that suffering is immoral.

And yet, here we are, living at a time when billions upon billions of animals are cruelly tortured for most of their lives, and when millions upon millions of those prisoners are needlessly butchered every day – and all this occurring with still but the faintest whispers of remorse.

Even worse, when a Noble Soul does happen to stand and expose this tragic injustice, he or she is often dismissed as ‘ridiculous’ or ‘radical’.

And it is *THIS* casual cowardice, my friends, that is a true cause for sadness. It is this bland championing of convenience over compassion that is the truly unpardonable crime.” ~ inspired by Romain Rolland

Help end the slaughter of innocents; embrace a vegan today ...
... and then please become one yourself.

RACISM

=

SPECIESISM

=

SEXISM

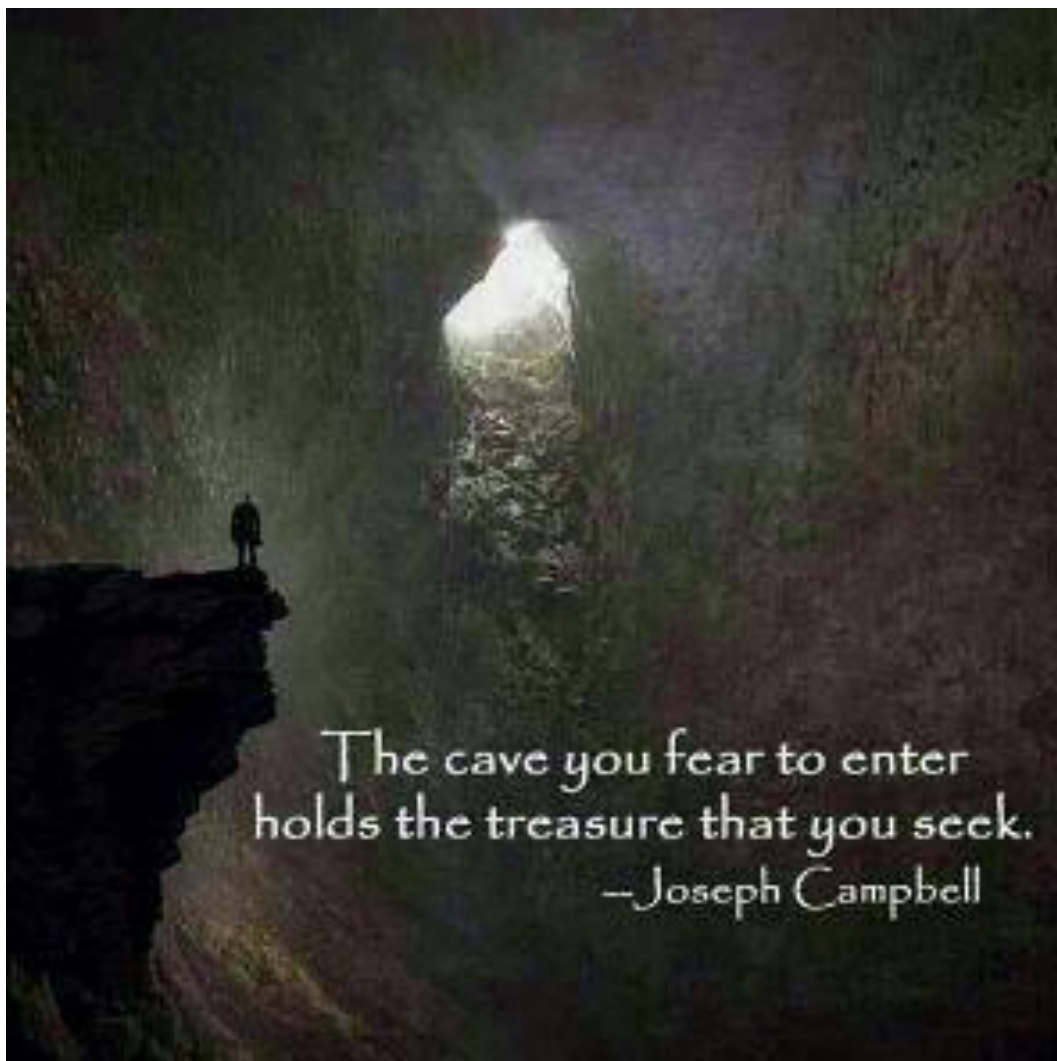
"One day the absurdity of the almost universal human belief in the slavery of other animals will be palpable. We shall then have discovered our souls and become worthier of sharing this planet with them."

~Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Light within the Darkness ...
(02/05/2013)

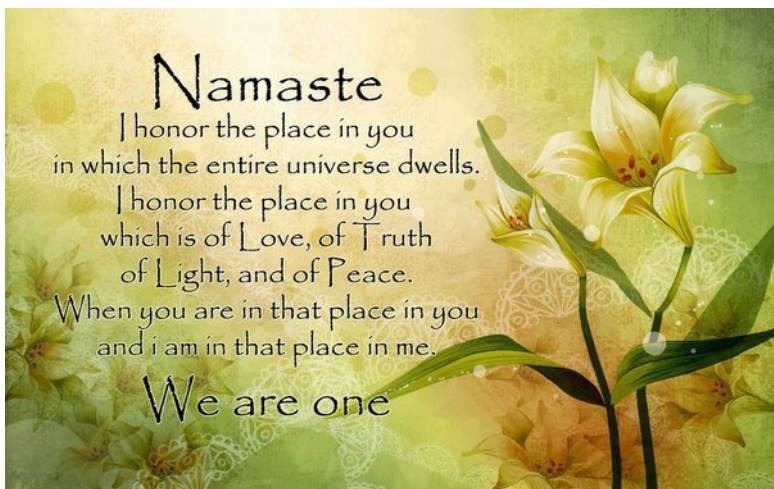
If it is our sincere desire to attain all that is noble & worthy of our species — if we are ever to transcend the quivering, frightened homosapiens and finally become the calm & courageous Human Being, we must be willing to go directly to the most feared of all places ...

... We must be willing -- to *LOVE*.



Kindness is enough ...
(02/06/2013)

“The moment we begin to fear the opinions of others and hesitate to tell the Truth that is in us, and from motives of policy are silent when we should speak, the divine floods of light and life no longer flow into our souls.” ~ Elizabeth Cady Stanton



Remember today that you are *not* a trembling, self-centered bumbler ... Today you are a Caring beacon of **LOVE** ... Remember that *this* — and nothing else — is who you really are; that *this* is your Truth.

And then, once you have thus awoken anew, be sure to BOOM that Truth loud & clear — by acting accordingly.

The world is saved one small act of Kindness at a time ... and save it we will. Together, we can do this.

In YOU, I believe.



High-time to be Free ... (02/07/2013)

“What is a worthy fear? Only the cage; only a life lived so long behind bars that use and old age finally demand that I accept my confinement; only a life ruined by the weak belief that all chance of doing Great Deeds is gone.” ~ inspired by J. R. R. Tolkien



Yes, we are all born into a cage — a cage of selfishness; a cage of fear ... And yes, our culture and our parents and our friends and our enemies and our leaders and our bosses and even our life's strangers keep wrapping chains ever-thicker around that prison for as long as we live — chains that hold us in, chains that block out the light, chains that would have us forget that we were born free.

AND YET, what a glorious day it is when we awaken to the Truth that we are strong and that those chains are weak; that our cage may be closed, and yet its bars are rusty & brittle.

It's high-time for us to break free, my Friends ... It's high-time for us to shatter our shackles and break through those rotten bars ... It's high-time for us to leave the shadows of lust & fear behind and re-enter the world of warmth of Purpose.



I believe it's high-time to be free again ...
... Don't you?

Identifying the enemy ...
(02/18/2013)

“Few tragedies are more injurious than the stunting of Meaning, and few injustices cut deeper than the dismissal of an opportunity to reach out and Care — a rejection that is in actuality always brought about by the cowardly submission to fears of forces external, yet one that is often falsely identified as some personal deficiency demanded from within. We pass through this world but once ... Let us act accordingly.”

~ inspired by Stephen Jay Gould



Remembering the Truth ...
(02/19/2013)

For a real Community to exist, it must be expressed ...
For real Morality to flourish, it must be witnessed ...
For true LOVE to exist, it must be enacted — it must become a verb.

There is no way to Peace ... Peace is The Way.
There is no way to Forgiveness ... Forgiveness is The Way.
There is no way to Kindness ... Kindness is The Way.

And these Truths only become self-evident when they bathe in the light of the empirical ... These paths can only be known *while* they are being bravely trodden.

And it is not enough for us to merely remember this fact ... No, to fully comprehend the raw Power of real *LOVE*, we must pause when “too tired” or “too busy” or “too scared” ... and then choose to *re-Member it!*

(inspired by M. Gandhi)



Rediscovering the Answer ...
(02/19/2013)

*“In order to empower true Compassion,
you must first & foremost give Love
without attaching any hopes or expectations
to its outcome.” ~ inspired by Peace Artist*



**"Until he extends his circle of compassion
to include all living things, man will not himself
find peace."**

A.Schweitzer

Your greatest Power ...
(02/22/2013)

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment — the smallest acts of caring; all of which have the ability to turn a life around.” ~ Leo Buscaglia

Your ability to be Kind is the greatest power in the Universe.

The only thing worse than underestimating it,
... is under-using it.



Key to Transformation ...
(02/23/2013)

In a lecture towards the end of his life, Aldous Huxley, author & pioneer in the study of developing human potential, offered the following:

“People often ask me: What is the most effective technique for transforming our lives? ... After years and years of research, my best answer is — just be a little kinder.”

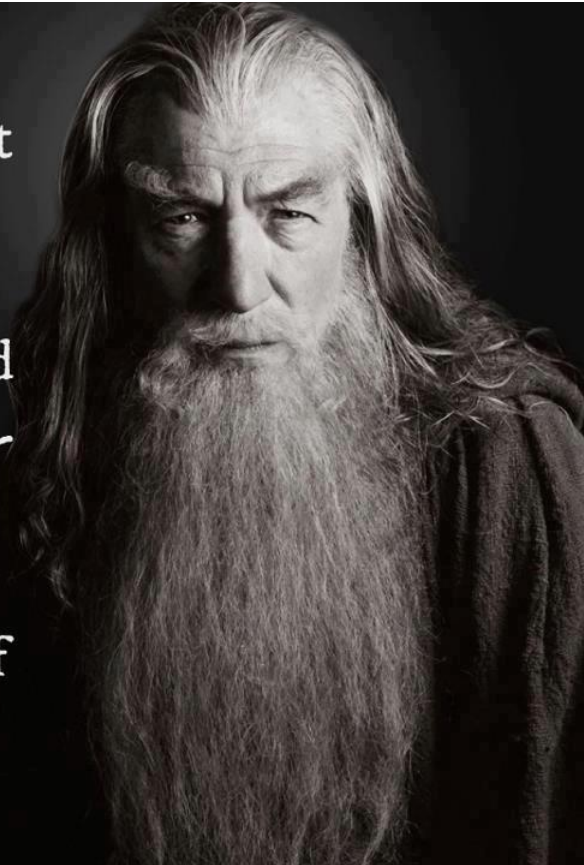


Wisdom of wizards ...
(02/25/2013)

Gandalf's usual approach to combating evil (war) was extremely primitive & empirically ineffective ...

And yet Gandalf's understanding of *Love* is pretty SPOT ON!

"Some believe it is only
GREAT POWER that
can hold evil in check.
But that is not what I
have found. I have found
that it is the small every-
day deeds of ordinary
folk that keep the dark-
ness at bay. Small acts of
kindness and love."
- Gandalf



How to change the world ...
(02/27/2013)



**The kindness one does for an
animal may not change the world**

**But it will change the
world for that one animal**

(P.S. The same is true for one human being ...
So go and change the world for someone today!)

Vanquishing evil ...
(03/07/2013)

Faith is remembering that evil has no chance of victory ...
... and yet confronting it with Kindness anyway.



A Stormtrooper Is The Safest Driver.
He will never hit anything

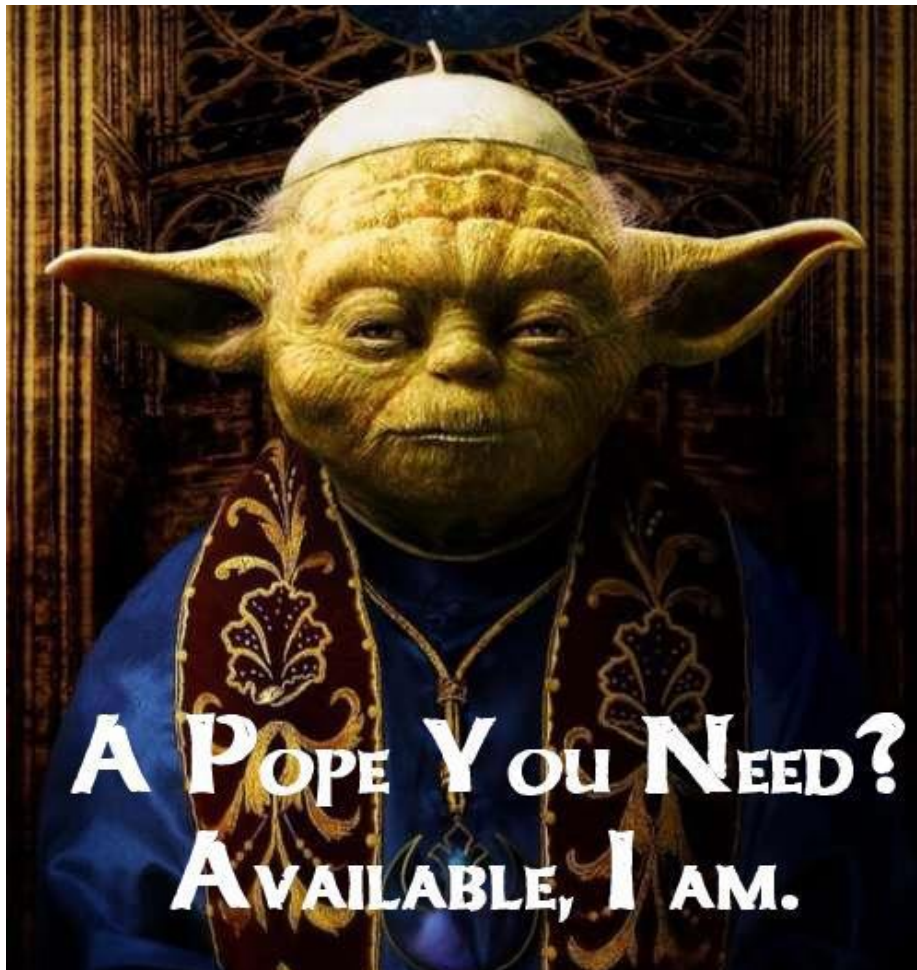
Walking the Talk ...
(03/08/2013)

“Great warrior! Hmmm — Wars not make one great ... To answer power with power, the Jedi way this is not ... To be Jedi is to face the truth, and choose. Give off light, or darkness. Be a candle, or the night ... Fear is the path to the dark side. Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering ... Do, or do not. There is no try.” ~ Yoda

Wouldn't the world be so much better off if all our religious leaders would dismiss their depressing dogmas and cater to some courageous Caring? Of course it would!

Aaaaaaand — we don't need to wait for our clerics & cardinals & clergy to wake up to the **LOVE** they could be preaching ... We can go forth each day and **SHOW THEM** what they are so obviously missing.

Amen ... Let it be so.



True Transcendence ...
(03/10/2013)

It is indeed important to awaken to the Truth that every one of life's challenges & every one of its difficulties is a Teacher -- *AND YET*, this wisdom fails to note the most important Truth of all: that our ultimate Happiness rests not in seeing our trials & tragedies as lessons, but rather in *USING* those "tough times" to emPower all subsequent acts of Kindness.

"Life always gives us
exactly the teacher we need
at every moment.
This includes every mosquito,
every misfortune,
every red light,
every traffic jam,
every obnoxious supervisor
(or employee),
every illness, every loss,
every moment of joy or depression,
every addiction,
every piece of garbage,
every breath.

Every moment is the guru."

PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB MY TRANQUILITY...
~ Charlotte Joko Beck **G ZEN.**



Talking to Angels ...
(03/12/2013)

“There might not be angels, but there are people who might as well be angels.” ~ David Foster Wallace

If we have the energy to pray for someone, we have the energy to do something Kind for them. There is no need to pray for divine intervention when we can ourselves Be Divine.



Forgiveness, the verb ...
(03/13/013)

Indeed, real Forgiveness is a miracle ...
... & in-deed, real Forgiveness is a verb.



War is never the Answer ...
(03/14/2013)

*“We cannot solve our problems
with the same thinking we used
while creating them.”
~ Albert Einstein*

War (and all its cousins – condemnation, judgment, self-defense, healthy boundaries, gossip, insult & ridicule) is the thinking that got us into this mess ...

... only Forgiveness will bring us HOME.



(P.S. Happy birthday to you, Albert ...
May we all have the Courage to finally pay attention
to what you were trying to tell us all along.)

Today, the only Day ...
(03/15/2013)

Regardless of what might happen to us all in the life hereafter, one thing seems certain: this is the very last life you will ever have as *YOU* ...

... So go forth and make the most of it!



Let me do all the good I can, to all
the people I can, as often as I can,
for I shall not pass this way again.

John Wesley

Getting to know God ... (03/17/2013)

The beginning of the religious journey is a short one – its first step hopes that there is a higher power, and then its last step dedicates life to worshipping the same. This is “the broad path” mentioned by so many Masters – a way that always ends in the death of living and the stagnation of the Soul; always with us suffering from the delusion that we are the ones ‘saved’ and that all others are damned; realizing too late that we are here to humbly serve those others, and not arrogantly convert them.

The beginning of the Spiritual Journey, on the other hand, flows only one step further, and yet arrives at a completely different destination ... On this path, there is first the realization that there is indeed a higher power – or force, or chi, or “quantum interconnection“, or “Other” ... Then, there is the second step – when we to try to attain the “happiness” and “peace” of this “Other” – and inevitably fail ... And finally, after our futile striving for “enlightenment” becomes too exhausting and “inner peace” becomes too frustrating to maintain, another final becomes available. Yes, the final step of the Human Journey “back to God” is indeed made when we eventually awaken to realize that there is no “Other” at all ... when we come to finally comprehend the Truth that we and “the Other” are ONE.

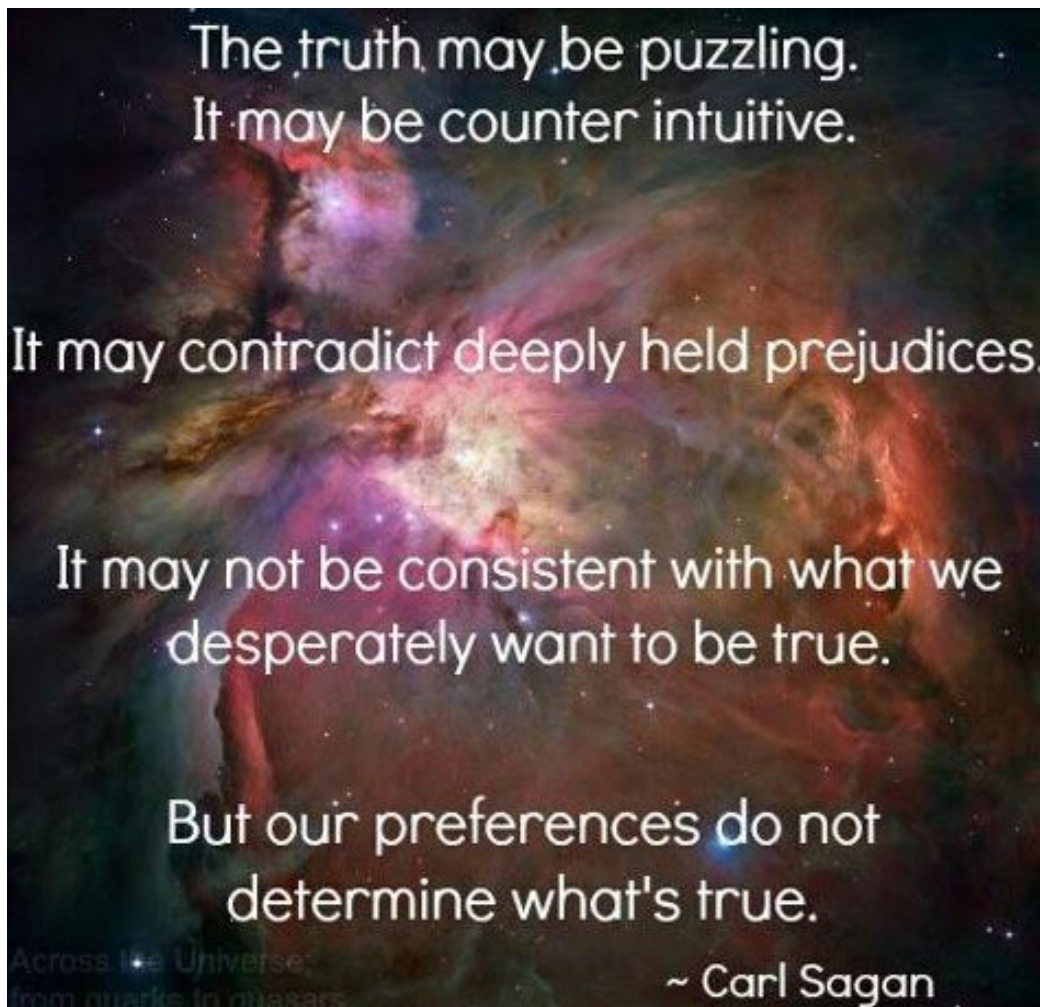
(~ inspired by Thomas Keating)



Truth about the Truth ...
(03/18/13)

And the **TRUTH** of the day (in-deed, one of the most important Truths for the rest of our lives) is this: The only way to defeat evil is to reach out to it with non-condoning yet all-forgiving Kindness.

Consider this humbly ... Enact it courageously.
(Our survival as a species depends on it ... Thanks)



Calling forth Miracles ... (03/20/2013)

When we go hunting for something to be impressed by on this planet, why not go looking for miracles? But when we do so, let us not seek the brittle and rare “miracles” of the supernatural, nor the “signs & wonders” that take the gentle humility of our courageous faith and dash it cruelly on the rocks of concrete conviction and arrogant dogma.

No, my Friends, when we go looking for Miracles, let us look instead for those that are always present and yet somehow even more majestic; those which we always have by our side, and yet have misplaced or simply forgotten ...

- *Let us look for the Beauty that abounds in the Cosmos ...
- *Let us look for the loving devotion parents give their children ...
- *Let us look for an anonymous goodness done for a friend ...
- *Let us look for a caring smile given to a stranger ...
- *Let us look for a resolute forgiveness given to an enemy ...
- *Let us look for some courageous Kindness given to the downtrodden.

AND let us also look for the greatest Miracle of all — the Miracle that is our innate ability as conscious beings to not only look for these miracles, but to *MAKE THEM HAPPEN* ourselves!

(inspired by Dalton Roberts)



On letting Go ... (03/21/2013)

“Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could (or at least what you did). Some blunders and a few absurdities may have crept in; release them ... Tomorrow is a new day. You shall begin it serenely, with far too much gratitude & Loving resolve to be encumbered by your old nonsense.” ~ inspired by Ralph W. Emerson

Lots of folks are big into “letting go” these days — letting go of “unhealthy people” by condemning them, letting go of “unhealthy ideas” by ridiculing them, letting go of “unhealthy behaviors” by ignoring them ... And yet, as those who have tried these futile methods already know, this mentality simply does not work.

Dismissing one “unhealthy person” from your life only opens the door for another to enter ... Rejecting one “unhealthy idea” from your mind only allows the next one to occupy your attention ... Looking away from another’s “unhealthy behavior” only encourages that person to find more painful ways to manifest something similar.

In-deed, as long as we choose the Road of Callousness — the road of “healthy boundaries” & “self help” & “tough love”, there will be no escape from our darkness & our suffering.

No, my Friends, until we choose to set our True Selves free — our Kind Selves, our Caring Selves, our Humble & selfless Serving Selves — nothing will ever “get better” for us or those around us.



Please consider this gently
... and then please enact it
courageously.

Thank you.

The Good Life ...
(03/23/2013)

*“When we have arrived at the question,
the answer is already at hand.”
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson*

What is “the Good Life” for which so many yearn? It is tenuous pleasure and hollow happenstance ... It is subjecting one’s self to the mercy of the whispers and the whims of others ... It is forever striving to be happy without ever knowing true Happiness ... It is a brittle life without **LOVE**.

And what awaits those who choose such a life? What is this Living without Loving? It is like speaking to another without hearing what they have to say ... It is like thinking about the Meaning of Life without living life Meaning-fully ... It is like striving for “enlightenment” without actively (and humbly) shining your Light upon life’s pains & poverties ... It is like finding “inner peace” in the present moment without bringing Peace into your relationships ... It is like having faith in a God of Love without treating others with an according gentleness.

Indeed, each one of the aforementioned practices is nothing more than an irreverent wasting of the few & priceless moments we have each been given to **DO SOMETHING** Purpose-full with our fleeting, fragile lives.

In-deed, choosing to merely “live the good life” means nothing without sharing our Wealth with others, just as living a long life means nothing without living it full of Wonderment & Caring ... In essence, then, without acts of selfless **LOVE**, “the good life” is nothing more than death on the move.

LOVE is a verb, my Friends ...
... got **LOVE**?

*“Ninety percent of the game is half
mental.” ~ Yogi Bera*

*“In every priceless moment, keep
choosing the highest and most loving
response.” ~ inspired by Robin Sharma*



Living your Destiny ...
(03/24/2013)

It is each man's destined quest to rediscover who he truly is, and yet the answer to that searching lies in the present -- not in the past ... For the past is a construct of the mind. It blinds us; it fools us into believing what it so desperately wants us to believe: namely, that we are weak -- that we are "sinners" -- that we are selfish -- that we are "only human".

And yet your Heart knows differently ... Our Heart remembers our gentle acts of Kindness ... Our Heart remembers when we stood speechlessly wrapped in awe ... Our Heart knows when we had the courage to forgive.

Though your trembling mind would have you forever peering through the misty memories of the traumas & sins of your past in order to "find yourself", your Heart wants only for you to be fully *ALIVE* in the present. In-deed, your Heart knows that you don't need to be "found" at all ... as your Heart knows that the real You never left.

So, if you are looking for who you truly are, remember to look only to the actions of your Here&Now -- for that is the only place you will find that Self.

(~ inspired by Kurt Wimmer & Mark Bomback)



What truly matters ...
(03/25/2013)

“The world is a wonderfully weird place, and our consensual reality is significantly flawed ... For no institution can be trusted, certainty is but a mirage, security but a delusion, and the tyranny of the dulled mind looms constantly on the borders of our everyday.

And yet our lives are not as constrained as we think they are ... Because for us all things are possible ... Our laughter is holier than piety, and our freedom is sweeter than fame.

And in the end, it is LOVE – & LOVE alone – that is always available, and it is LOVE – and LOVE alone – that truly matters.” ~ inspired by Tom Robbins

LOVE is a verb ...
... got **LOVE**?



Recognizing your Self ...
(03/26/2013)

*“Those who cannot feel the littleness of the great things in themselves,
are also apt to overlook the Greatness of the little things in others.”*
~ Kakuzo Okakura

The key to knowing real Compassion is realizing that the enemy whose one finger is pointing critically at you always has three fingers pointing accurately back at himself ... And the key to knowing real Humility is realizing that your own hand pointing a single finger critically at an enemy always has three fingers pointing quite accurately back at yourself.



(NOTE: this dynamic is just as real & True
regarding all statements positive & complimentary.)

Becoming Holi ...
(03/27/2013)

*“Let the colors of Holi send the message of Peace & Happiness
deep into the center of your Heart.” ~ anonymous*

Evolutionary biology is now showing that every human being on this planet did indeed stem from a single man & a single woman — that we truly are literally one very *BIG* Family.

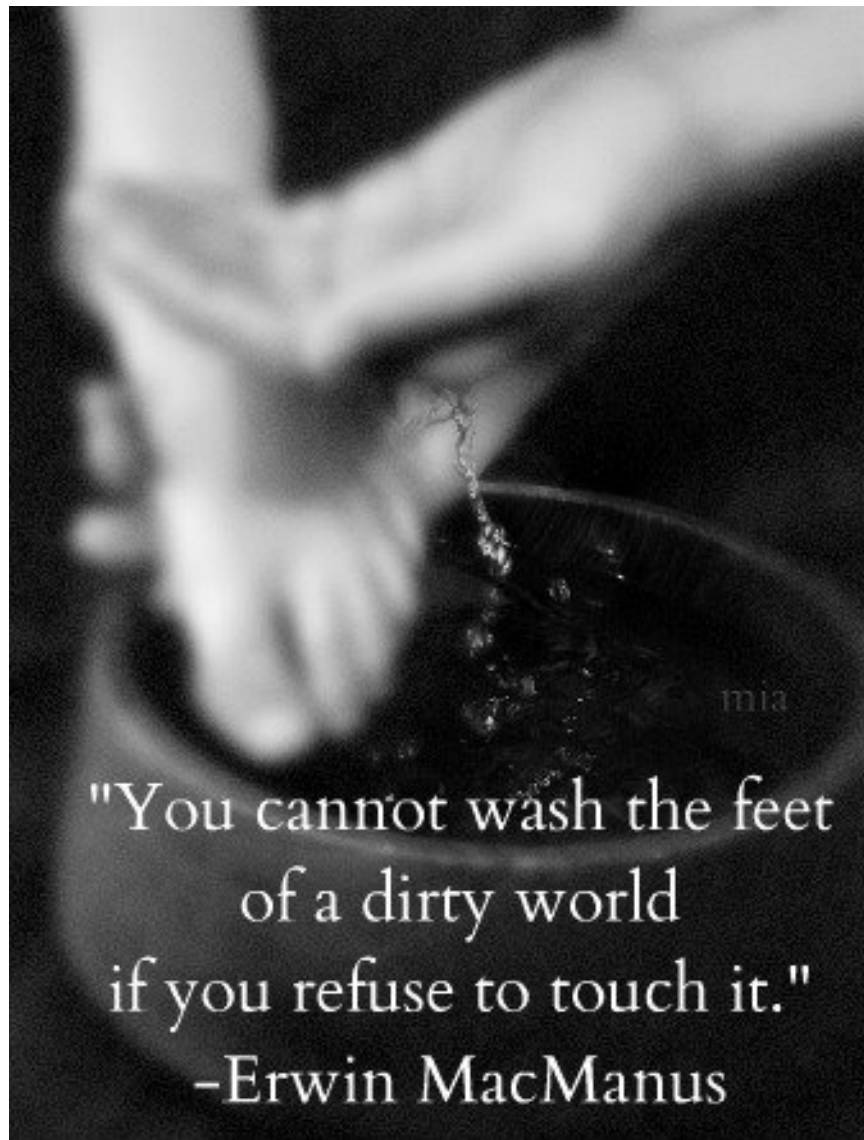
So let us go forth today in remembrance of this Truth ... Let us remember our common heritage, and then let us act accordingly — openly cherishing those who have shown us Kindness -- and courageously forgiving those who have caused us pain.



Setting your Self free ...
(03/28/2013)

*"Freedom means choosing your burdens."
~ Hephzibah Menuhin*

Actually, real Freedom means choosing to *USE* your own burdens
... to lessen the burdens of others.



Life's checklist ...
(03/28/2013)

In applying the Wisdom of picture below to your life, please remember the most important thing of all: You are *NOT* your life's co-pilot ... You are actually the one "flying the plane" ... It is true – even though there are indeed countless external forces that will continue to influence your experience of being alive, you & you alone choose how you respond to those forces; you & you alone get to decide what you will do with the limited time you have been given.

Today is priceless, my Friends -- a perfect day for getting out there and following your life's true Checklist:

Step 1) Reach out and "touch" every single person that you encounter today ... With mouth shut or mouth open, make sure they know that you Care.

Step 2) Disregard all other checklists.



Knocking on Heaven's Door ...
(04/03/2013)

“None of this stuff is really about morality or religion or dogma or big fancy questions of life after death. The capital-T Truth is about life BEFORE death.” ~ David Foster Wallace

“The Kingdom of God is not coming in the future with things that can be observed, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ for the kingdom of God is already here, both within & all around you.” ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 17:20-21)

No one knows what the Universe is or what God has in store for us after we die (or even if there is a God at all) ... And yet one thing seems relatively certain: The raw Bliss of that realm known as “The Kingdom of Heaven” will never be opened to us as long as we are striving in this life to attain Salvation in the next.

My Friends, the grapes of **Love** are not to be pressed into a sour wine for our own future enjoyment, but rather are to be plucked while sweet and given to the poor of today.

Consider this all with an open mind ...
... and enact it all with an open Heart.

Thank you.



One of those Moments ...
(04/05/013)

“It was one of those perfect warm afternoons; the ocean shimmering like a promise; a light breeze on my skin; calm silence in my Heart ...

And then I noticed another person nearby pointing to the ocean with an amazed smile upon his face. He had spotted a small school of dolphins very close to shore ... They were swimming and diving playfully, as if trying to share their Joy with as many of us as possible.

It was one of those perfect moments — one that answered all the questions I ever asked -- while leaving me to stand in awe over a rainbow of fresh wonders.”
~ inspired by Sebastian Schulz

We can only find our deepest Truth when we humbly seek the same ... and we can only truly seek that Truth when we cease to blindly follow the truths of others. The Soul is the most magnificent of landscapes, my Friends ...

Happy trails therein!



The ONE in the All ...
(04/06/2013)

It is time, my Friends ... It is time for us to come together and finally recognize our fundamental Oneness with everything — all the living beings that share our neighborhoods; all the ecosystems of the Earth upon which we live; even all the galaxies & stars & planets of the entire Cosmos that spin & whirl & dance above & all around us.

And once we do so — and only after we do so — the old ways of thinking & believing that have immersed us repeatedly in the sadness of lack & the anger of enmity will disappear ... And the outmoded ways of behaving that have brought us to the brink of destruction will be transformed.

Such a shift within you will occur with your first radically humble thought — the remembrance that life is not about “me”, but is actually *ALL* about “we” — and such a transformation of BEing will blossom forth in rich fullness the very next moment you act accordingly.



LIFE is truly lived
once **LOVE** becomes a
verb.

So ... got *LIFE*?

~ inspired by Edgar Mitchell
(astronaut and founder of the
Institute Of Noetic Sciences)

The Eye of the Needle ...
(04/07/2013)

A great king once came to visit Farid, a wise & venerated Sufi mystic. And the king brought with him a beautiful pair of scissors made of gold & studded with diamonds — They were very valuable; very rare.

As he entered, he approached Farid reverently, touched Farid's feet, and gave him the priceless gift ... Farid then lifted the gleaming scissors, looked at them calmly, and surprisingly gave them back to the king, saying, "Many thanks for the present that you have brought, dear Friend. It is indeed beautiful, and yet utterly useless to me. It would be better if you could give me a needle ... For scissors I do not need, and a needle I do."

The king was stunned by the gesture and confused by Farid's words, and stuttered a bit before replying: "I don't understand, my wise one. If you need a needle, you will surely need the scissors as well."

Farid smiled gently & replied, "Scissors I don't need because scissors cut things apart. A needle I need because a needle puts things together. You see, my dear Friend, my entire teaching is based on **LOVE** — a bringing of Harmony, a making of Peace, an enlivening of real Wisdom ... Scissors are useless for such work; they cut, they disconnect, they separate. It is only the needle we can use to bring real Togetherness. So the next time you visit, an ordinary needle will be more than sufficient."

The king took humble note of Farid's wisdom, and the next time he visited, a needle he did indeed bring.

For each of us, the Wisdom of this tale is just as poignant ... Indeed, *anger is a pair of scissors* -- separating every victim from her perpetrator; casting them both into the abyss of cold isolation ... It is wise for us to remember that Forgiveness is the needle that repairs this rent; allowing the warmth of Harmony to glow again.

And indeed, *religious faith is a pair of scissors* -- separating a believer from his God; casting him into the pit of pious judgment and his God into the deep & dark vacuousness of Heavens “elsewhere” ... It is wise for us to remember that Kindness — when given humbly, especially to all “heathens” less devout — is the needle that bridges this gap; allowing for a reunion real tangible between God & man.

And *reason, too, is a pair of scissors* -- separating every Truth from its inherent Wisdom; casting them both into the realm of arrogant convictions & confused ponderings. It is wise for us to remember that Humility is the needle that allows the lost seekers of “fact” to make fresh leaps of real Faith; allowing their Truths to be openly tested — and Wisdom to be rediscovered therein.

In closing, each of us is the needle that can soothe all hatreds & right all wrongs. Each of us is the needle — & our **LOVE** unconditional is the thread that passes effortlessly through our own needle’s eye.

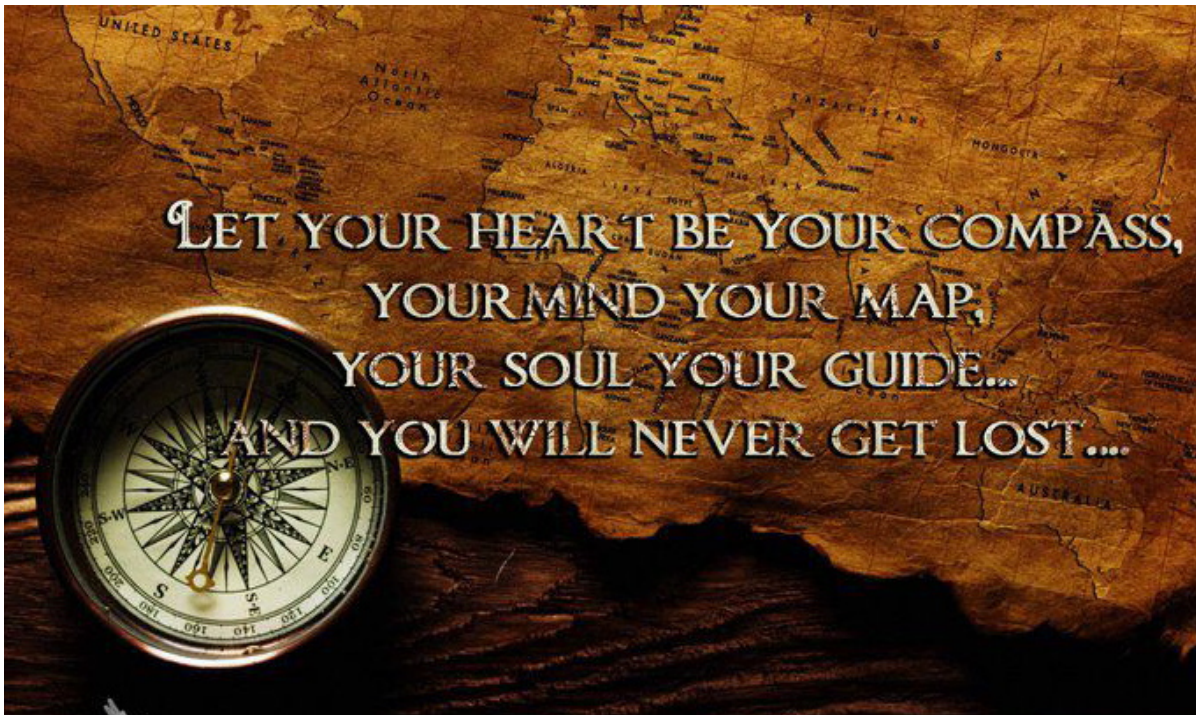
LOVE is the thread that mends our fear & anger ...
... and **LOVE** is the active mending of all wounds past & present.

So ... Got **LOVE**?



Finding your Way ...
(04/09/2013)

To find your Way through life, let your Soul be your compass, and your Heart be your guide ... For truly, as soon as your mind becomes either, you are most surely lost.



“Shine brightly, so you can help those who have not yet found their path to discover their own way through the darkness.”
~ inspired by Jeffrey Fry

On LOVE & fear ...
(04/19/2013)

When **LOVE** becomes a verb,
fear becomes just another odd word
that has no meaning ...



On real Freedom ...
(04/10/2013)

One day, a DEA officer stopped by a ranch and told the rancher there that he needed to “search the property for illegal drugs.” The rancher shrugged his shoulders and said that this was fine, adding “But be sure not to go in that field over there”, while pointing to the place in question.

Upon hearing these words, the officer got right up in the rancher’s face, pulled out his badge, and shouted, “Mister, I have the authority of the United States federal government. Do you see this badge? This badge means I am allowed to go wherever I wish ... on any land I want ... for no reason whatsoever! Have I made myself clear?”

The rancher nodded calmly, turned, and went about his business.

A short time later, the rancher heard loud screams, looked up, and saw the DEA officer running for his life, while being chased by a *HUGE* – and quite irate – Santa Gertrudis bull ...

With every step the bull was gaining ground, and it seemed likely that the terrified officer was sure enough going to get gored before he reached safety ... And just as the bull was about to get him, the rancher dropped his tools, ran to the edge of the fence, and yelled at the top of his lungs:

“Your badge, mister ... Show him your **BADGE!**”

.....

There are a number of authorities in our lives who will intrude upon us, and there is indeed often very little we can do to stop them ... And yet the solution to these personal invasions is almost always a very simple and remarkably Peace-full one: namely -- nod your head, smile with compassion, let them go one thinking that they are important ... and go on living your life.

It's time for us all to remember that we don't need politicians to tell us how to build our communities, that we don't need preachers to tell us how to "become one with God", and that we don't need our egos to tell us how to spend the priceless few moments we have left on this planet.

It is important to finally remember that we all, my dear Friends, are now & always will be — *COMPLETELY FREE*.

*We no longer have to wait for the government to stop paying for its criminal wars and to start taking care of the poor instead ... **We are FREE** to actively Care for our neighbors on our own.

*We no longer have to listen to others tell us who or how to worship (or whether to worship at all) ... **We are FREE** to write our own "scripture" on how to *LOVE*; free to recognize that Heaven is already both within and all around us — and free to act accordingly.

*We no longer have to heed the nervous whisperings of our egos, telling us to protect ourselves from all the people who are "mean" and "bad" and "dangerous" ... **We are FREE** instead to reach out and be Kind to all those "least deserving" — to shower *LOVE* upon all those who need our Kindness the very most.

We are living a **FREE** life, my Friends ...
So let's Do something Meaning-full with it!



Defeating terror ... (04/16/2013)

In the wake of the Boston Marathon tragedy, I offer you all the following very important re-minders ...

***First**, remembering that our anger is nothing more than our crystallized fears, that terrorism can only continue when we respond to violence with terror.

***Second**, that while feeling rage over brutal acts of violence is extremely reasonable, it is important to respond to aggression in ways that do not make the problem worse ... Hammering terrorists with “the full weight of justice” (a quote from President Obama — how ironic, coming from “Mr. Drone War” himself) might be logical to many and “right” to more than a few, *AND YET* doing so gives terrorists exactly what they want. Terrorists (both those fighting against our government, as well as our government itself) want our terror ... They want war ... They want anger ... They want condemnation ... They want conflict. Give them these things and they will happily grow stronger and attack again another day. Give them the opposite, and they will fade away.

***Third**, that *WE HAVE A CHOICE* as to how we will respond to terrorism. Instead of hateful condemnation for our attackers, we can answer with courageous compassion. Indeed, quite ironically, this is the one thing terrorists fear the most. For the fact remains — as uncomfortable as it may be — that we humans are herd animals, and that herd animals do not ever repeatedly “bite the hand that feeds”. As such, if we have the courage to openly forgive our terrorists — the noble bravery to treat them with same unconditional Love we reserve for the “black sheep” in our own families, then they will have no choice but to eventually respond in kind.

So, my Friends, choose to see the wave of terror that comes upon us ... Choose to open your arms to its delusion & its fear & its hatred ... Choose to let it crash upon your steadfast Love ... And the choose to feel it flow away into the nothingness from which it came.

There is no way to peace, my Friends ... PEACE is truly The Way! ... Now more than ever we must re-mem-ber this Truth. Please join me today in doing so ...

Thank you.



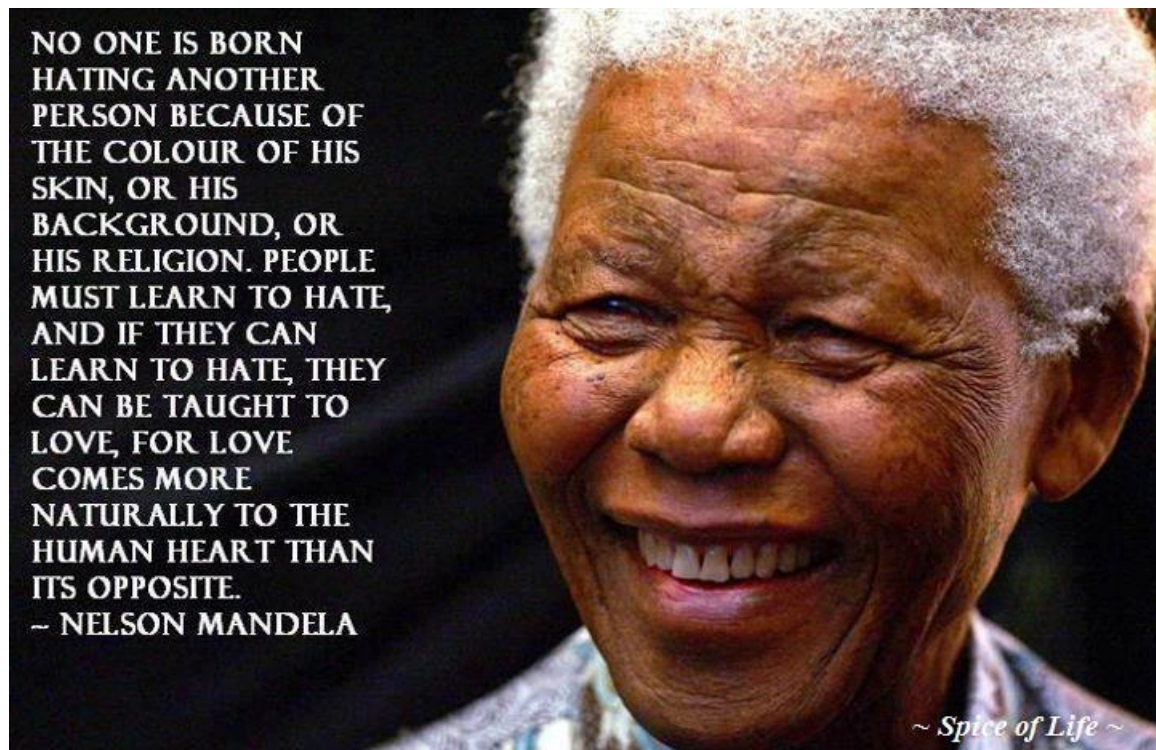
The truly Important Days ...
(04/17/2013)

LOVE is anything but weak. Yes, it refuses to lash out in anger, and yet **LOVE** does not cower in the corner ... No, real **LOVE** is real Strength. It stands boldly before every enemy, and it does so with Compassion for the emotional illness that has so obviously infested the Soul of those foes.

Yes, real **LOVE** is real Strength. It has the guts to respond to every enemy with the only response that will stop the madness — with the only response that will bring Peace — with the only response that will ever truly “serve our country” -- with the only response that will truly protect our families ... In its Way of “gentle Force”, **LOVE** not only courageously stands between wrath and its next intended victim, it does so with Forgiveness in its heart and Kindness on its lips. It not only uses its body to shield the innocent, it reaches out to the enemy with arms open — and thus shocks the enemy into becoming a friend.

This kind of **LOVE** is anything but weak ... In-deed, this kind of **LOVE** is the only real Strength we will ever know.

These are important days, my Friends ...
... Be **STRONG** in them.



Becoming the Change ... (04/18/2013)

Our times of tragedy are priceless. They remind us that life is so precious ... They remind us that life is built on choices ... They remind us that life is not a spectator sport.

Today, during our next collective time of tragedy, we can show all “terrorists” that we will not give in to their anger; that we will not aid their cause by showing them our rage ... Today, we can remind all would be violent criminals and corrupt politicians and teetering zealots that our ability to Care for them is *FAR STRONGER* than their cowardly acts of aggression or their rabid manifestations of greed or their arrogant words of condemnation.

Despite what these enemies would have you believe, you are not “only human” — Rather, you are *HUMAN*, and as such *you* are the one who chooses how you respond to tragedy ... Responding with sadness and fear and anger is reasonable, of course, *AND YET* there is an equally reasonable alternative -- instead of attacking our attackers and thereby making their mission of misery complete, we can choose to fight back effectively; by allowing their acts of hatred to inspire our deeds of Love.

In every one of our lives, there is someone especially in need of encouragement; someone especially in need of a kind gesture or a caring word. In every one of our lives, there is something powerful we can all do *TODAY* to change the world for the better ...

So let’s go forth *TODAY* and shatter the brittle walls we have built around “our family” & “our friends” & “our religion” & “our country” ... Let’s set aside our need to be “right” and our desire for “righteous judgment” ... Let’s remember something far greater than these things ... Let’s remember our inherent Goodness instead.

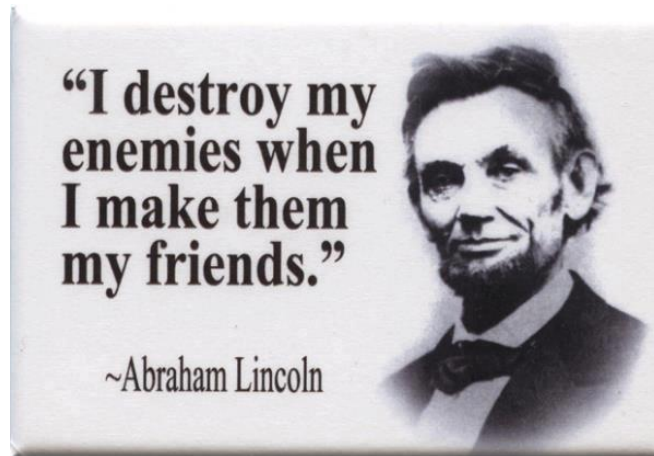
Today is the last day many of us will have to **Do** something Meaning-full with our lives; something courageous ... something Loving ... something Kind.

A smile to a stranger might save a life ... A phone call to a friend might save a family ... An act of radical forgiveness just might save the world.



What you do today matters, my Friends ...
... and you have been given this glorious day to do it in.

Indeed ... in-deed ... it is high time for us *all* to become active.
It is high time for us *all* to **BE the Change** we want to see.



Peace is a verb ...
(04/20/2013)

In times of violent strife, there is often the call to “Imagine Peace”, and this is indeed a fine thing to do — It is indeed far better us to imagine a Peace-full society than to dwell negatively on the fact that we clearly haven’t yet attained that goal ... It is far better to visualize how we want to one day Be than it is to critically harp on the failings of where we already are.

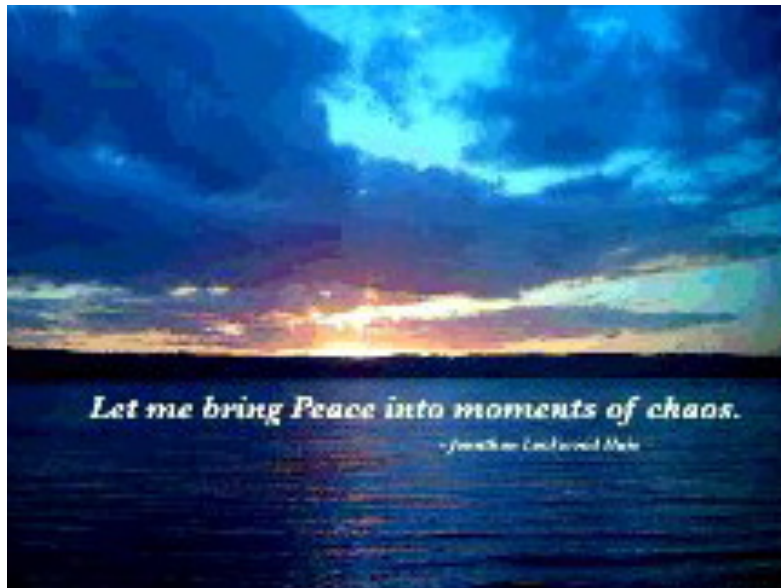


AND ... it is also true that merely imagining Peace will not bring the Change we wish to see.

In fact, if we dwell on the Harmony that we are missing — if we focus on the terrorist aggression & the political corruption & the religious condemnation & all the other forms of hateful bigotry that surround us — if we concentrate our efforts on identifying our enemies and then “protecting ourselves” from them by ridiculing or shunning or punishing them, then we are actually *SUPPORTING* the causes of those enemies; we are actually guaranteeing that their violence & their greed & their arrogance & their hatred will continue to haunt our lives.

And yet, THERE IS ANOTHER WAY, my Friends ... If we truly do desire to bring a real Peace to our moments of chaos – a real Harmony to our instants of discord – a real Calm to our times of strife, then there IS and always will be a very simple solution ...

To make real Peace a reality,
... we must make our Peace a verb.



Beating back the Fear ...
(04/21/2013)

Don't get me wrong, my Friends ... For the reasons that follow, it is more than reasonable for us to be afraid these days — *very* afraid indeed.

*We cherish health, and yet your medical system profits from our continued illness — prescribing medicines that give us more negative side effects than they do relief ...

*We cherish our freedom, and yet our governments have erased many of our God-given liberties, and are just a few domestic “acts of terror” removed from shackling us with martial law ...

*We cherish our “right to know”, and yet our mass media refuses to tell us the Truth — dramatizing the fearful while burying the uplifting; over-blowing events violent while hiding facts illuminating ...

*We cherish our spirituality, and yet our churches are mired in the pungent stink of greed, deceit and hypocrisy ...

*We cherish safety, and yet the threat of terrorism has now invaded our own native lands — indeed our own homes; indeed our own minds — once again.

Yes, my Friends, it is most true that the things we Love the most are being steadily pulled from our grasp, and there seems to be nothing we can do about it.

AND YET, just because it is reasonable to be afraid of these trends does **not** mean that we are required to submit to those anxieties ...

Just because it is understandable to be enraged at the state of our world (or our country, or our neighborhood, or our own lives) does **not** mean we are required to act on that rage ...

Just because it is reasonable to believe that we are “only human” -- or that one person can't make a difference, or that things are “beyond our control” -- does **not** mean that we are required to sit at home and mope about how things should or could be.

Yes, there *are* people engaging in “evil” activities — deeds designed to make us cower in fear or lash out in anger or loll about in a morose complacency. *AND YET* we are the ones who choose how we respond to these times:

*Instead of whining about the inaccessibility of quality health care, **YOU CAN** resolve most of your own maladies by drinking water instead of soda and eating delicious, purely plant-based meals ...

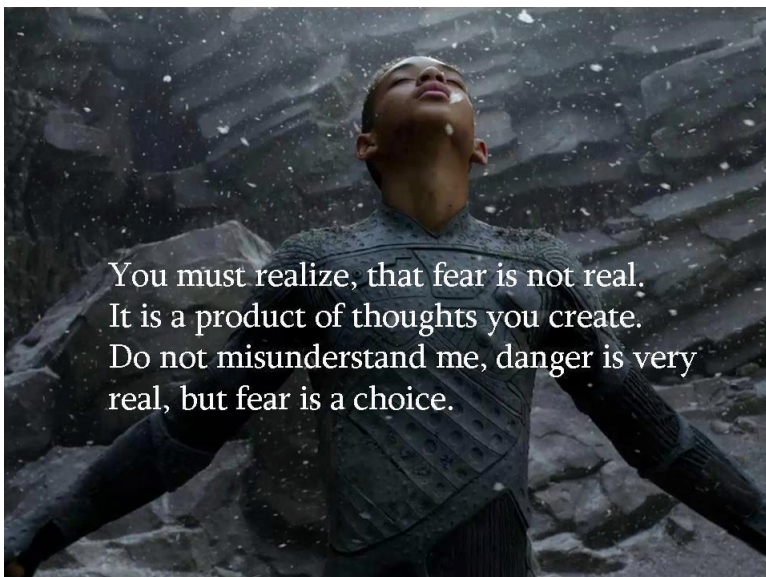
*Instead of looking for a politician who is brave enough to rescind the Patriot Act and return your freedoms to you (for example), **YOU CAN** remove yourself from the political arena entirely and use that currently wasted energy on rebuilding your own community — on being the change you wish to see ...

*Instead of zoning out while the nightly news fills your heads with melodramatic garbage & negative propaganda, **YOU CAN** turn off your televisions, go out into your neighborhoods, and remind yourself firsthand how Good people truly are — *ALL* of them, by acting accordingly ...

*Instead of giving your time & your money to a corrupt churches and worshipping a God of callous judgment, **YOU CAN** leave that hypocrisy behind and make “worship” a verb — going bravely forth into your communities as active agents of Divine LOVE ...

*And instead of yearning for revenge on “the terrorists” or meting out “justice” upon your transgressors, **YOU CAN** respond to all violent misdeeds with the true Courage of sincere & stalwart Forgiveness.

It is high time, my Friends ... It is high-time for us to stop complaining about what is broken in our society and start repairing it ourselves; time to stop coming together in indignant anger and instead begin to reunify our lives with Kindness.



You must realize, that fear is not real.
It is a product of thoughts you create.
Do not misunderstand me, danger is very
real, but fear is a choice.

Hopelessness is fear and fear
is weakness ...

Arrogance is fear and fear is
weakness ...

Anger is fear and fear is
weakness ...

LOVE, on the other hand, is a
verb ... and **LOVE** is Strength.

Be Strong, my Friends.

Saving the World: Step One ... (04/22/2013)

Happy Earth Day, my Friends! ... In honor of our beautiful planet — a Home we are currently destroying and dirtying at an alarming rate, I suggest that today we all *DO SOMETHING* to help Her. And what I am suggesting is a much easier solution than many of those offered by the many thousands of Caring Earth-activists these days ...

*I am **not** asking you to walk to work (or to bike, or to commute, or to use public transportation) in order to help weaken the stranglehold that big oil has on our world ...

*I am **not** asking you to take shorter showers, to replace your lawns with low-maintenance groundcovers or to stop running the tap while you brush your teeth (though most think-tank intellectuals do believe that the next world war will indeed be fought over clean water) ...

* I am **not** asking you to create less garbage or to recycle the garbage that you do create (compost, people — compost! It's the best way to feed those home-grown vegetables) ...

Nope ... All I am asking you to do is make one small shift in your diet: All I & the Earth are asking you to do is to stop eating meat & dairy products for one day ... Because in that one day (*TODAY*), you & you alone will do your part in saving planet Earth ... Because In just that one day (*TODAY*), you will save well over 5000+ gallons of fresh water, you will save the lives of literally hundreds of trees, and you will lessen the amount of air pollution produced by more than ten automobiles. All this for the Earth in *just one day* of veganism ... just one day, FOR every day you choose to do so!

Now I know that that there are many other very important reasons to replace the meat & milk in your diet with healthier alternatives, and yet saving our planet is a pretty good place to start ...

... After all, it's the only place we have.



Finding your Way ...
(05/03/2013)

All knowledge of Life starts from experience and ends in it as well.
Propositions arrived at purely by thought (or reason, or faith) are completely empty of Reality.

As such, to Know, we must DO ...
To receive Love, we must LOVE ...
To understand Peace, we must be Peace-full ...
To arrive at our Destiny, we must put one foot in front of the other.

Our Way is not a road to find, my Friends ...
... Our Way is a Path to create.

(inspired by Albert Einstein)



To Coexist ...
(05/01/2013)

“Loneliness is not a function of solitude.”
~ David Foster Wallace

There is little doubt that the only way our species will ultimately survive is if we choose collectively to consciously coexist ... But what in the world does this mean, and how in the world can we each go about helping to attain this objective?

The answer to the second question — how to effectively Coexist — will become quite obvious by the end of this post ... The answer to the initial question — what coexistence **IS** — can be best answered by first looking at what coexistence is not:

*Coexistence is **not** the “tolerance” that judges another as “less than” while turning away & passively “putting up” with their beliefs ...

*Coexistence is **not** the “patience” that judges another as “wrong” while condescendingly waiting for them to “wake up” ...

*Coexistence is **not** even the “respect” that extends a hollow & vapid politeness to those we find “wrong” or “strange” ...

No, a Coexistence that is real & deep-seated & practical is not a feeling that we have -- or a thought that we entertain -- or even a belief that we adopt. No, my Friends ... Real COEXISTENCE is something that we must actively **DO**.

*Real COEXISTENCE sees the “crazy” homeless man, walks right up to him, and extends him the open Kindness he deserves ...

*Real COEXISTENCE hears the religious rantings of the zealous believer, walks right up to him, and extends him the gentle Forgiveness he deserves ...

*Real COEXISTENCE watches the wealthy neighbor be cold & callous to those less fortunate, walks right up to him, and extends him the pure Compassion he deserves ...

*Real COEXISTENCE listens to lies of the power-hungry politician, walks right up to him, and extends him the unconditional **LOVE** he too deserves ...

What Kindness Knows – part one ...
(05/04/2013)

Kindness knows that there is no unworthy recipient thereof; that there is no Kind deed “too small”, nor a Loving act “insignificant” ... Kindness knows that even a mere drop of water given to a thirsty insect saves the Universe in that moment.

“True generosity doesn’t start when you have some thing to give, but rather when there’s nothing in you that’s trying to take.” ~ Nipun Mehta



What Kindness Knows – part two ...
(05/04/2013)

Kindness knows that this is the only moment we have to Do Good for another ... Kindness knows that we are to greet all others as though they are long-lost Soulmates, and Kindness knows that we are to part company from those others as though we will never see them again.

When Kindness speaks, it hugs the other close — and when Kindness hugs, it hugs all out!

“True generosity doesn’t start when you have some thing to give, but rather when there’s nothing in you that’s trying to take.” ~ Nipun Mehta



What Kindness Knows – part three ...
(05/04/2013)

Kindness knows that we never need look far for an opportunity to Care ... Kindness knows that a soft hand on the slumped shoulder of a stranger, or a gentle smile into the despondent eye of a friend, is the same **LOVE** that liberates the tortured & overthrows life's tyrants.

Kindness knows that we are *all* in this together ... and that *everyone* we meet, in *every moment* we meet them, is in need of a helping Heart.

“True generosity doesn't start when you have some thing to give, but rather when there's nothing in you that's trying to take.” ~ Nipun Mehta



What Kindness knows – part four ...
(05/04/2013)

Even when someone is “intruding on your space”, Kindness knows that it is Good to sit Peace-fully, open your arms (or your paws) ... and let them **BE**.

Even when someone is annoying the bajeesus out of you (e.g. pulling your hair, poking your nose, bouncing on your back), Kindness knows that it is Good to sit calmly, smile at them gently ... and let them **BE**.

And even when someone is shouting loudly or insulting you scathingly, Kindness knows that it is Good to sit quietly, listen Respect-fully ... and let them **BE**.

“True generosity doesn’t start when you have some thing to give, but rather when there’s nothing in you that’s trying to take.” ~ Nipun Mehta



What Kindness knows – part five ...
(05/04/2013)

Kindness knows that, if we but have the humility to look for them, opportunities to Care are always nearby ... And Kindness knows that, if we but have the courage to engage those opportunities when we see them, we will have done our part.

The world is truly saved one small act of Caring at a time ...
... Let's go **BE** the change we want to see.

“True generosity doesn't start when you have some thing to give, but rather when there's nothing in you that's trying to take.” ~ Nipun Mehta



What Kindness knows – part six ...
(05/04/2013)

Even if the other is very different than you are; even if they are much bigger than you or their beliefs are much different than your own, Kindness knows that it is Right to reach out and Care for them.

And even if the “muddy puddle” of need that those folks are standing in is far too deep for you to comfortably engage ... Kindness jumps in for them anyway.

“True generosity doesn’t start when you have some thing to give, but rather when there’s nothing in you that’s trying to take.” ~ Nipun Mehta





*“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)*