

# *Wisdoms from the Journey*

*(Volume IX ... Oct 2014 thru Aug 2016)*



*...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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*“You cannot teach a man anything,  
you can only help him find it within himself.”  
~ Galileo Galilei*

*“Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers.”  
~ Alfred Tennyson*



## *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 unfettered and tangible and plain and unchanging.

Indeed (and in-deed), even though we have all 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, while 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 a 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 – have always proven 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*  
October 2016



*“The simple things are also the most extraordinary things,  
and only the wise can see them.” ~ Paulo Coelho*

*“The mind once enlightened  
cannot again become dark.”  
~ Thomas Paine*

## *Celebrating Columbus Day* (10/13/2014)

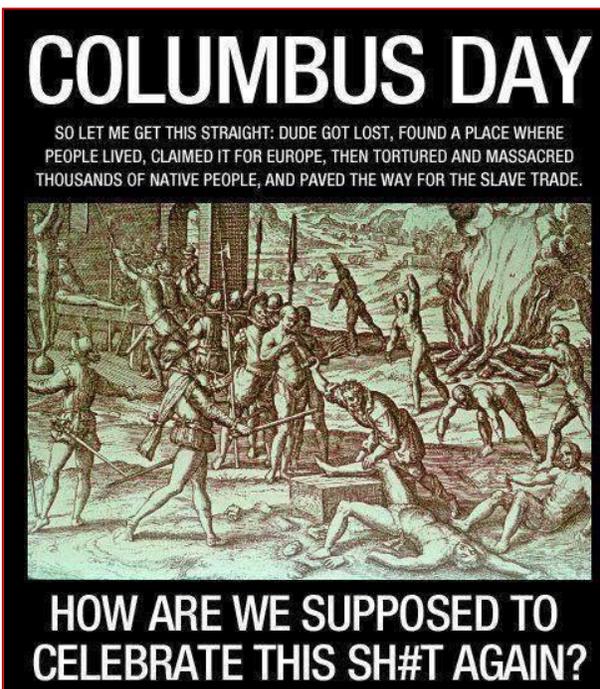
Here's an idea: Why don't we celebrate Columbus Day in a way that actively DISHONORS the unjust events that founded it? Instead of “discovering” things that were already there or taking things that don't belong to us, how about we go forth to day and give and Give and GIVE to all those we see in need?

Let's give our wealth to those poor &/or homeless ...  
Let's Give our time to those stressed &/or lonely ...  
Let's GIVE our Kindness to those depressed &/or downtrodden.

Let's show followers of Columbus what *should* have happened back in the day, and let's show our current “leaders” what *should* be happening today.

*Amen* ... let it be so.

“Though an accomplished enough mariner, Columbus was not terribly good at a great deal else, especially geography, the skill that would seem most vital in an explorer. It would be hard to name any figure in history who has achieved more lasting fame with less competence. He spent large parts of eight years bouncing around Caribbean islands and coastal South America convinced that he was in the heart of the Orient and that Japan and China were at the edge of every sunset. He never worked out that Cuba is an island and never once set foot on, or even suspected the existence of, the landmass to the north that everyone thinks he discovered: the United States.” ~ Bill Bryson



## *Injustice from on high* (10/13/2014)

“Do the United States and its people really want to tell those of us who live in the rest of the world that our lives are not of the same value as yours? That President Obama can sign off on a decision to kill us with less worry about judicial scrutiny than if the target is an American? Would your Supreme Court really want to tell humankind that we, like the slave Dred Scott in the 19th century, are not as human as you are? I cannot believe it. I used to say of apartheid that it dehumanized its perpetrators as much as, if not more than, its victims.” ~ Archbishop Desmond Tutu

There are things currently going on in the White House and other places “on high” that would make even George Orwell shudder -- and we can't do anything about them as long as we have our heads buried in the sand.

I say it's time for us all to come up for air ... I say it's time to open our eyes to the perverse injustices our government is allowing -- indeed, the perverse injustices our government is actively *facilitating* -- every single day ... And I say that it is thereafter high time we do something about those grave wrongs.

***Thank you*** ... and as allWays, **PEACE** to ALL!

“To the United States, a drone strike seems to have very little risk and very little pain. At the receiving end, it feels like war. Americans have got to understand that. If we were to use our technological capabilities carelessly ... then we should not be upset when someone responds with their equivalent, which is a suicide bomb in Central Park.” ~ retired General Stanley McChrystal

“We’ve been talking about this for a good while, the immorality of drones, dropping bombs on innocent people. It’s been over 200 children so far ... These are war crimes.” ~ Princeton professor Cornel West





*Our Stars*  
(12/27/2014)

“I used to think that if the stars were mine I would keep them exactly where they are, but save one of them in my pocket to lighten the way for others whenever life became shrouded in shadow ... Then I grew in wisdom and realized that the stars are already mine; that we are not only in the Cosmos, but that the Cosmos is inside each of us as well -- that I can cast the most radiant of glows upon another's Path whenever I wish, and that already I do so every time I reach out to them with simple acts of Kindness.”

(~ inspired by Alyssa Khela & Matthew Fox)

Be a Light shining through another's darkness today, my Friends ...

... Reach out to someone and be courageously Kind.



*Heeding the Words*  
(12/29/2014)

Wise Dog is correct ... Please heed the words of Wise Dog.



“There are those who do not hold that there is any innate Goodness to humankind. To them I say, had you lived my life, you would know differently. Yes, I have witnessed the depths to which we mortals are capable of descending, and yet I have also seen our great heights. I have seen firsthand how Kindness and Compassion blossom forth from the most unlikely of Souls, just as stubborn as the mountain flower in springtime forces its way up through the solid stone.”

(~ inspired by Jacqueline Carey)

## *Becoming the Lake* (01/04/2015)

An aging master grew tired of his apprentice's complaints. One morning, he sent him to get some salt. When the apprentice returned, the master told him to mix a handful of salt in a glass of water and then drink it, and the apprentice did as he was told ...

"How does it taste?" the master asked ... "Bitter," said the apprentice.

The master chuckled and then asked the young man to take the same handful of salt and put it in the lake. The two walked in silence to the nearby lake and once the apprentice swirled his handful of salt in the water, the old man said, "Now drink from the lake."

As the water dripped down the young man's chin, the master asked, "How does it taste?" ... "Fresh," remarked the apprentice ... "Do you taste the salt?" asked the master ... "No," said the young man. At this the master sat beside this serious young man, and explained softly, "The pain of life is pure salt; no more, no less. The amount of pain in life remains exactly the same. However, the amount of bitterness we taste depends on the container we put the pain in. So when you are in pain, the only thing you can do is to enlarge your sense of things.

Stop being a glass ... and **become a lake.**"



"You may encounter defeat, and yet you need not be defeated ... You may encounter sorrow, and yet you need not be saddened ... You may encounter enemies, and yet you need not know anger ... You may encounter difficulty, and yet you need not know despair. Indeed, it is necessary for us to stumble upon such challenges, for they are the very moments that allow us to remember who we truly are, how indomitable is our Spirit -- how powerful is our Purpose ... These are the moments when we remember that we will ride through every storm that meets us, and that we will arrive at our sparkling destiny; indeed, these are the moments when we remember that riding those violent gusts with selfless calm IS our destiny; that caring for others anyway is the reason we are here." (~ inspired by Maya Angelou)

## *The Holy Man* (01/07/2015)

Word spread across the countryside about a wise Holy Man who lived in a small monastery atop a mountain, and a man from a small village in a neighboring state decided to make the long and difficult journey to visit him ... When he arrived at the monastery, he met an old servant inside who greeted him at the door.

“I would like to see the wise Holy Man,” he said to the servant. The servant simply smiled and led him inside. As they walked through the house, the man from the village looked eagerly around the house, anticipating his encounter with the Holy Man ... And yet before he knew it, he had been led straight to the back door and escorted back outside. Upon realizing what had happened, he stopped and turned to the servant, exclaiming -- “But I want to see the Holy Man!”

“You already have,” said the old man. “Everyone you may meet in life, even if they appear plain and insignificant... see each of them as a wise Holy Man. If you do this, then whatever problem you brought here today will be solved.”



**P.S.** To truly SEE another person as a “Holy Man” (or “Holy Woman”), it is not necessary to adopt their beliefs or follow their teachings or worship their being or emulate their actions ... No, my Friends -- to truly SEE another person as “Holy” or know them as “Wise”, we must simply *treat them accordingly* -- with Kindness & Honor & Respect ... And when we do this, we too will find the answers to all our many questions ... **Peace.**

## *Some thoughts on true Success* (01/17/2015)

Success is not what we have been taught or what we have been told ... It has nothing to do with how much money we earn or how much influence we gain or how much fame we reap, and it has nothing to do with how long we live or how much fun we have or even how healthy we are.

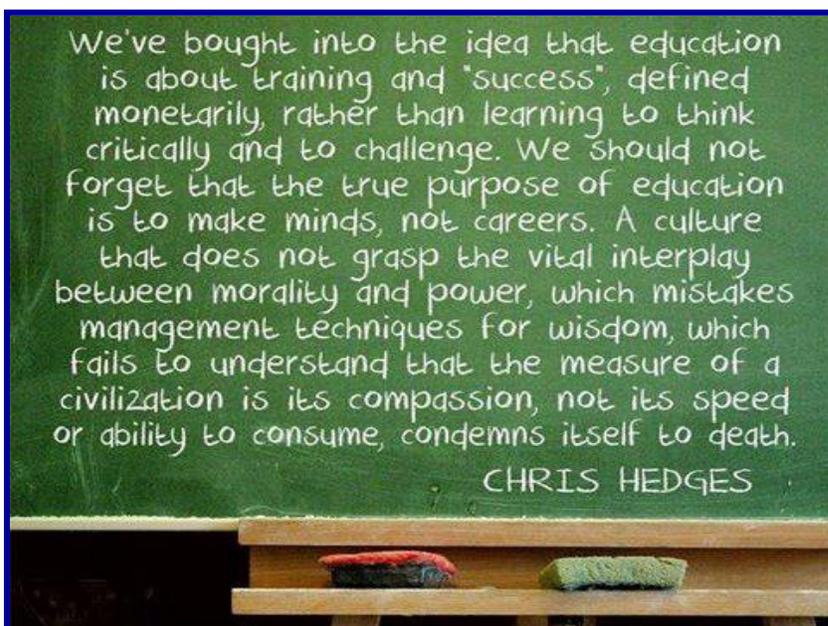
No, my Friends, there is a far deeper Truth as to what it means to be Success-full in this priceless life we have all been given -- a Truth that each & every one of us will most certainly realize at the latest on our deathbeds, AND a Truth that we are all allowed to realize far earlier than that if we so choose.

And this awakening to true Success requires that we break free of our conditionings & indoctrinations long enough to **redefine what Success means** in our lives -- to make the truly victorious life about serving others instead of being served by them; about liberating others from suffering instead of immersing ourselves in mere happiness or fleeting pleasures; about extending ourselves beyond what is comfortable instead of accumulating instants of ease.

No, my Friends, for our lives to become truly Success-full, our days must reflect Compassion instead of callousness, they must be grounded in Caring instead of convenience, and they must be reflective of conscience over culture.

And so it is that I wish each & every one of you a most Success-full day today ... May you have the willingness to examine this new way, may you have the Humility to appreciate it, and may you have the Courage to make it come alive.

*Amen* ... Let it be so.



*"Integrity is the essence of everything successful." ~ Buckminster Fuller*

*A Tribute to Pooh ...*  
*Part 01: Tigger's Truth*  
(01/18/2015)

A. A. Milne, the creator of Winnie the Pooh and all his friends, was born 133 years ago today. In honor of what I consider to be his great achievement, the first tribute thereto relates to one of my favorite Pooh companions -- Tigger ...

I loved Tigger because he was silly and I loved Tigger because he was carefree and I loved Tigger because he was “fun fun fun fun fun” ... **and yet** what I love most about Tigger these days is his naiveté; the fact that he so wanted to be selfless and yet so rarely was -- the fact that he really did believe that he was “the only one”, and thereby completely missed the fact that he was actually an interconnected facet of the entire Winnie the Pooh gang -- the fact that, just like so many of us, his self-centered drive to be loved often kept him not only from being Kind to others, but also from appreciating the Love he was already being given.

“Well, I gotta go now. I've got a lotta bouncin' to do!  
Hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo! T-T-F-N ... Ta-Ta For Now!” ~ Tigger



*A Tribute to Pooh ...*  
*Part 02: Making fantasy Reality*  
(01/18/2015)

In honor of A. A. Milne (the creator of *Winnie the Pooh*), who was born 133 years ago today, I offer yet another tribute -- this time an ode to the power of dreaming BIG -- and the POWER of making those Big Dreams come True. I saw the image below earlier today and wondered what would have truly happened if Winnie the Pooh and his friends had decided to role play Star Wars ...

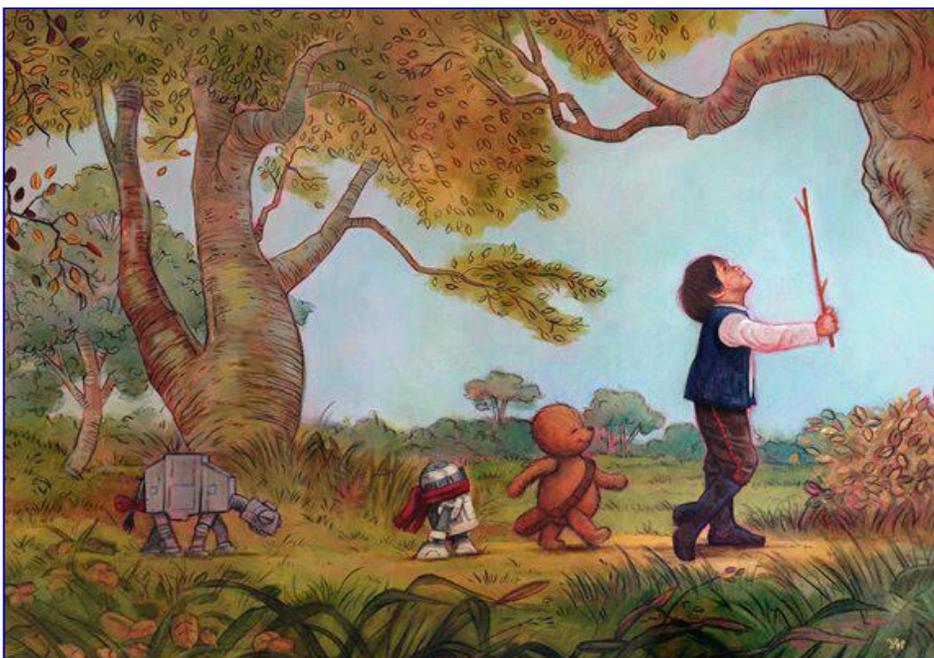
EnJOY the results!

Han Solo: “Promise me you'll always remember that you're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.” (played by Christopher Robin) ... **The Lesson:** Talk BIG -- and *Walk your BIG Talk*.

Chewbacca: “You can't stay in your corner of the forest waiting for others to come to you. Sometimes you have to go to them.” (played by Winnie the Pooh) ... **The Lesson:** Choose your Friends recklessly -- *Be bold in your loyalty* to them.

R2D2: “The things that make me different are the things that make me ME.” (played by Piglet) ... **The Lesson:** *Being courageous* is a lot more important than merely being brave. Being your SELF is a lot more important than merely being yourself.

Imperial Walker: “Good morning, Pooh Bear -- if it is a good morning -- which I doubt.” (played by Eeyore) ... **The Lesson:** If you can't *see the Light*, your mind is stuck in the shadows. If you can't muster a winning attitude, your mind is on the losing team.



*A Tribute to Pooh ...*  
*Part 03: The Meaning of Life*  
*& the Meaning in Living*  
(01/18/2015)

Winnie the Pooh's "father" -- A. A. Milne -- was born 133 years ago today, and I honor both him & his creations with this third tribute: a reminder that the Meaning of Life is already waiting to be found within all our everyday lives; that each & every one of us can simply sit and watch a river flow by and remember everything we need to know.

Of course, the "catch" here is a large one -- namely, that the great Wisdoms we remember in this way will mean absolutely nothing to us unless we get up, grab the hand of our nearest Friend, and set forth to put them in motion.



"Sometimes, if you stand on the bottom rail of a bridge and lean over to watch the river slipping slowly away beneath you, you will suddenly know everything there is to be known." ~ inspired by A. A. Milne



"Before beginning a Great Quest, it is wise to ask someone what you are looking for before you begin looking for it." ~ inspired by A. A. Milne

*The Wisdom of the Loyalty in Wisdom*  
(02/24/2015)

The only way to become truly Wise is to be truly Loyal ... And the only way to be truly Loyal is first, to expand your Circle of Compassion to include every sentient being you encounter -- and second, to ***act accordingly.***



*real & true Power*  
(03/01/2015)

It has come to my attention that quite a few of you believe in “The Law of Attraction”, at least in one form or another ... Some of you believe that you can use focused thought to tap into “Universal Abundance”, and some of you believe that you can use conscious intention to “Co-create Wealth”, and some of you even believe that you can simply “pray in Christ's name” and receive whatever your heart desires ...

Fair enough. After all, who am I to say otherwise, and who am I to stand in the way of your efforts to find such superficial “happiness” and fleeting fancy?



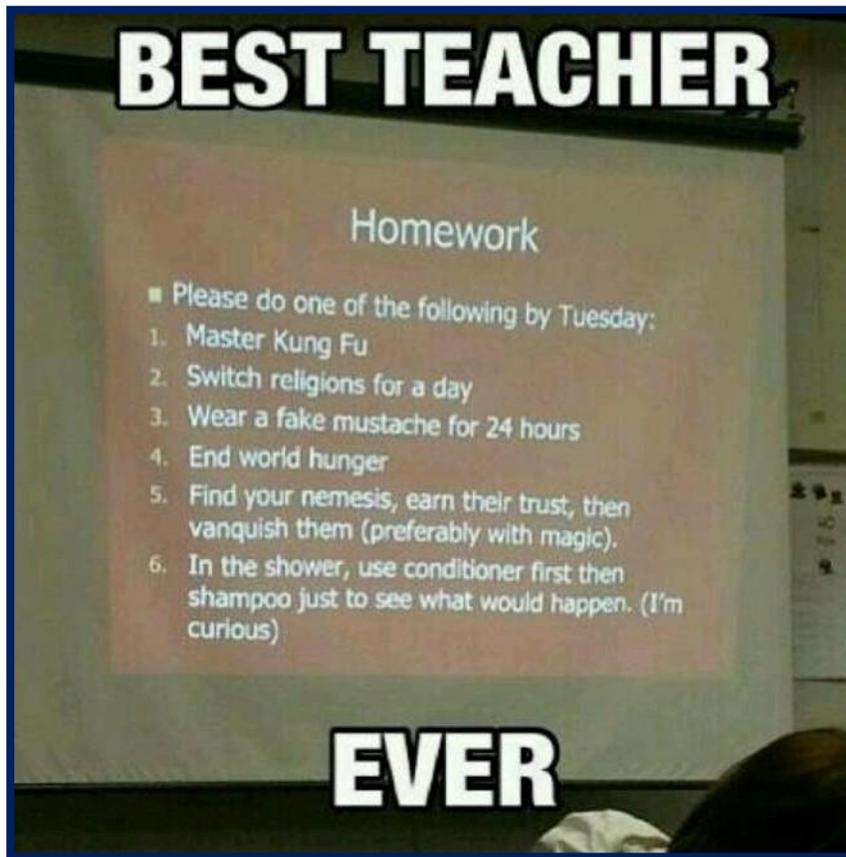
Just know while you do so, my Friends, that you can use these and other “powers of manifestation” to reap all the riches and hoard all the pleasures and conjure all the comforts you wish ...

... **and yet** you will never know even the faintest portion of real Joy until you use your true Power (which is LOVE, the verb) to bring *others* the very Peace you yourself so desperately seek.

*Amen* ... Let it be so.

“**Love** is the affinity which links and draws together all the elements of the world ... **Love** is, in fact, the ultimate agent of all synthesis found in the entire Cosmos.” ~ inspired by Teilhard de Chardin

*The very best teacher*  
(03/02/2015)



This teacher *is* indeed quite a Good one, and yet “best ever” is a slight exaggeration ... To truly be in the running for the Best Teacher Award, one must at the very least do the following:

\*One must encourage others to master LOVE, not merely Kung Fu ...

\*One must encourage others to honor the members of other religions, not merely switch religions for a day ...

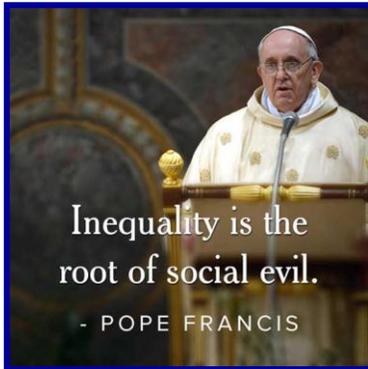
\*One must encourage others to open up and show their True Selves, not to apply additional disguises ...

\*One must encourage others to feed the hungry Souls of the lonely & the downtrodden nearby, not merely fill the stomachs of those far away...

\*One must encourage others to embrace their enemies with kindness, not “vanquish them” with magic ...

\*And one must encourage others to cleanse the **inside** of their bodies first -- with acts of radical Compassion, not to merely clean the outside of those fleshly vessels with mere shampoo & conditioner.

## *Filthy Theology* (03/02/2015)



... said the man wearing a diamond-bedecked, gold-infused smock. You've got to be kidding me! What do you have to say about this mess, Shane?

“I have a friend in the UK who talks about '**dirty theology**' — that we have a God who is always using dirt to bring life and healing and redemption, a God who shows up in the most unlikely and scandalous ways. After all, the whole story begins with God reaching down from Heaven, picking up some dirt, and breathing life into it. At one point, Jesus takes some mud, spits in it, and wipes it on a blind man's eyes to heal him ... In fact, the entire story of Jesus is about a God who did not just want to stay 'out there', but who rather moves right into the neighborhood, a neighborhood where folks said, 'Nothing good could come.' And it is *this* Jesus who was accused of being a glutton and a drunkard for hanging out with all of society's rejects, and it is *this* Jesus who died on the imperial cross of Rome reserved for political rabble-rousers and failed Messiahs. *This* is why the triumph over the cross was a triumph over everything ugly we do to ourselves and everything ugly we do to others -- for it is the final promise that Love wins. Indeed, it is *this* Jesus who was born in a stank manger in the middle of a genocide. And *this* is the God that we are just as likely to find in the streets as in the sanctuary; the God who can redeem revolutionaries and tax collectors, both the oppressed and their oppressors ... a God who is saving some of us from the ghettos of poverty, and others from the ghettos of wealth.” ~ Shane Claiborne

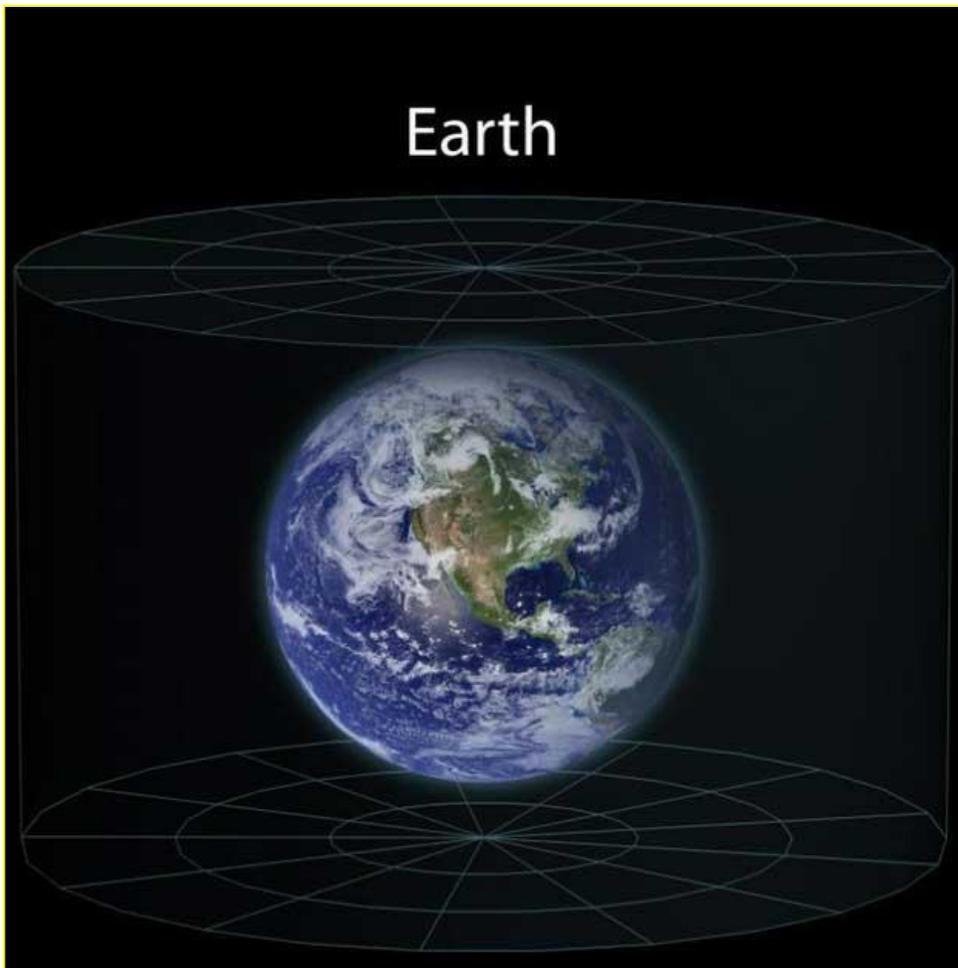
**P.S.** And so that it cannot be said that I only pick on Catholics ...



*What a Human Life is Worth ...*  
*Part 01: the Perspective*  
(03/03/2015)

**FACT** -- You are only one of roughly 7 billion humans living on one small planet orbiting one small star in one back-eddy “rural” neighborhood of one small galaxy in one relatively insignificant cluster of galaxies; all surrounded by literally **billions** of similar clusters of galaxies of neighborhoods of stars containing millions of planets like ours ... Indeed, even though we are alive & well here on planet Earth, and even though we each do indeed have “important things to do”, we are simultaneously almost lost within the overwhelming vastness that is the rest of the Universe.

*“The size and age of the Cosmos are beyond ordinary human understanding. Lost somewhere between immensity and eternity is our tiny planetary home. In a cosmic perspective, most human concerns seem insignificant, even petty ...” ~ Carl Sagan*

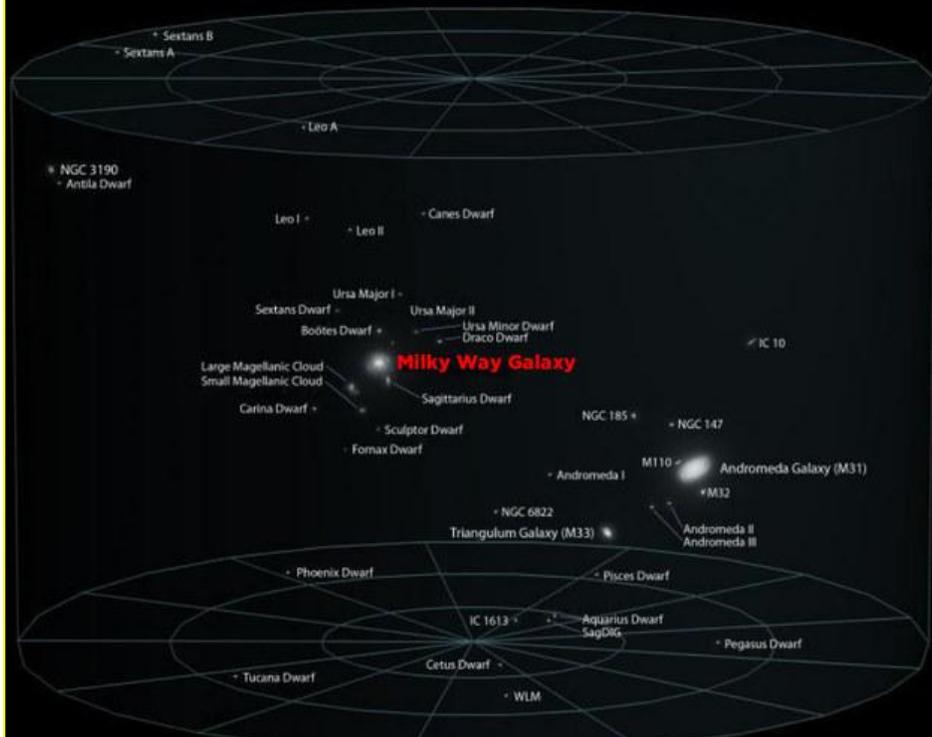




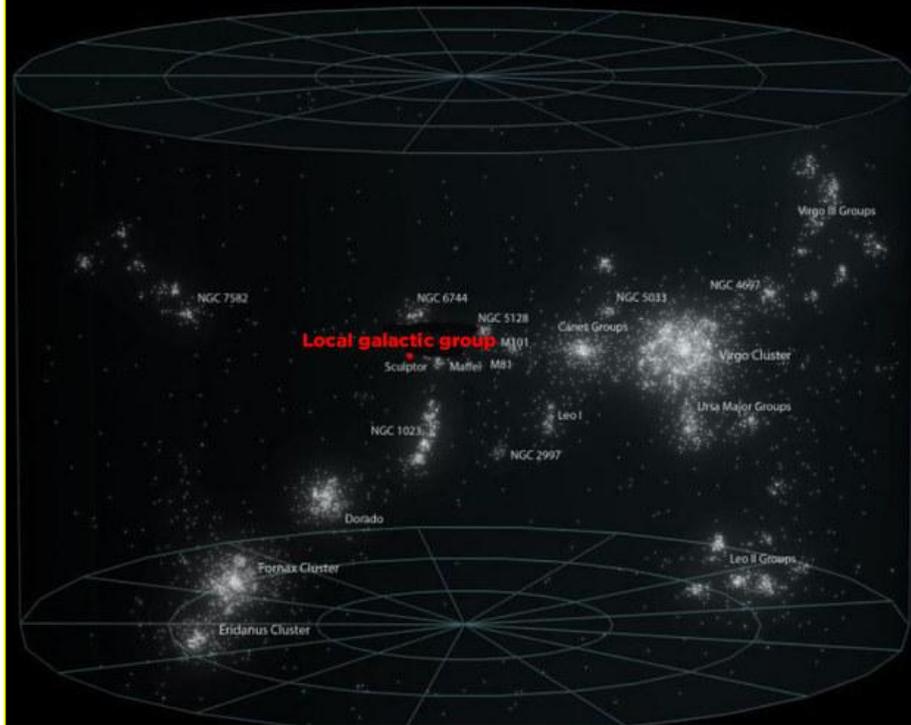
# Milky Way Galaxy



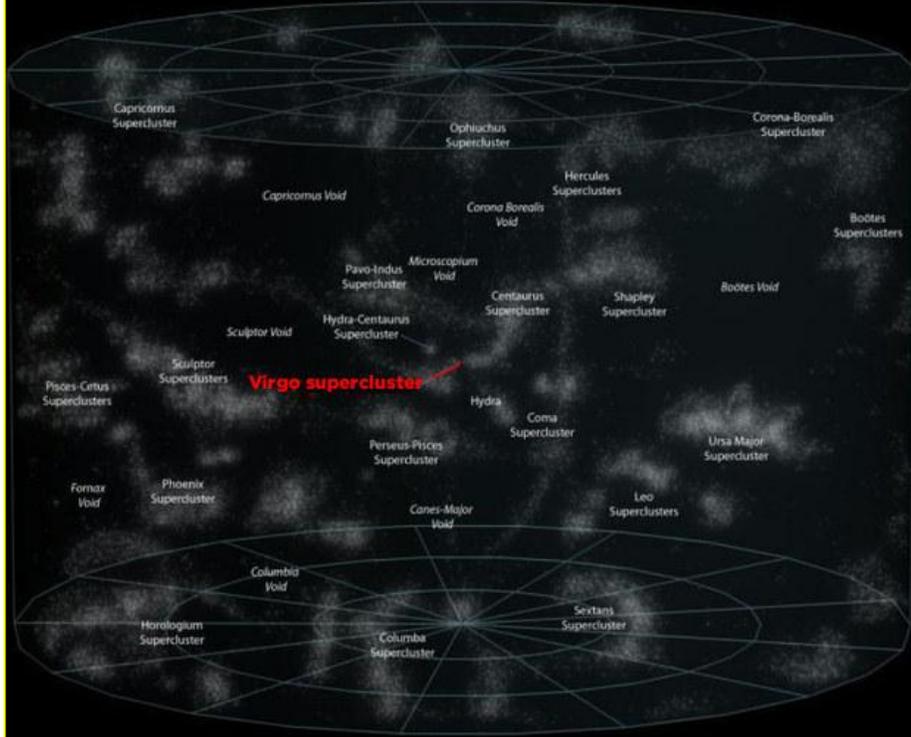
# Local Galactic Group



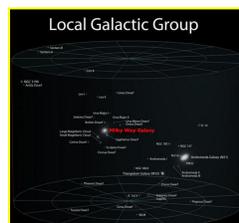
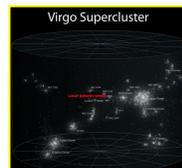
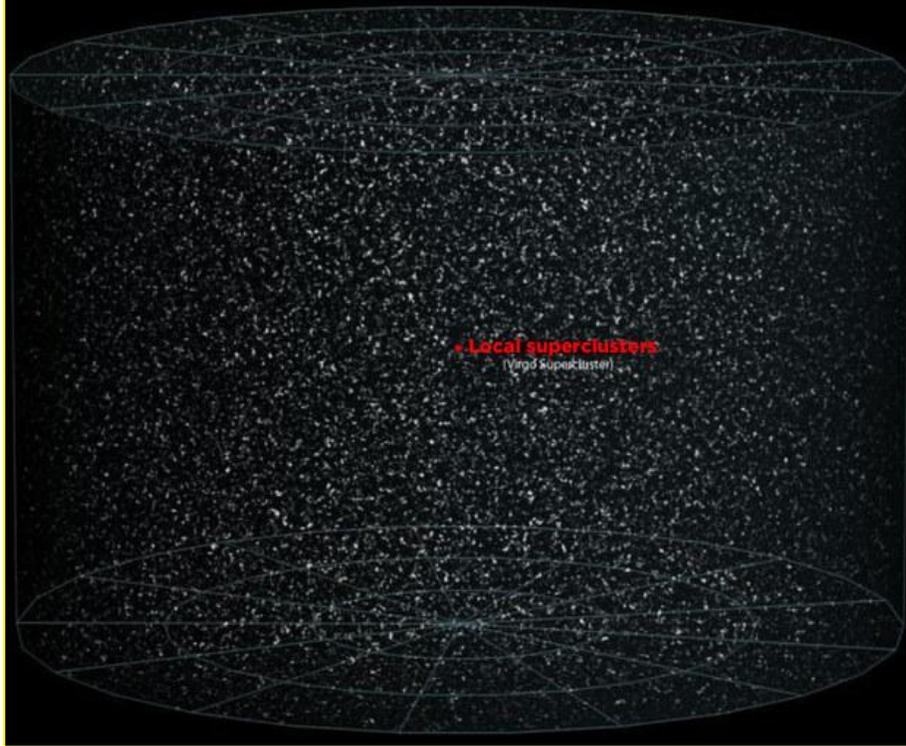
# Virgo Supercluster

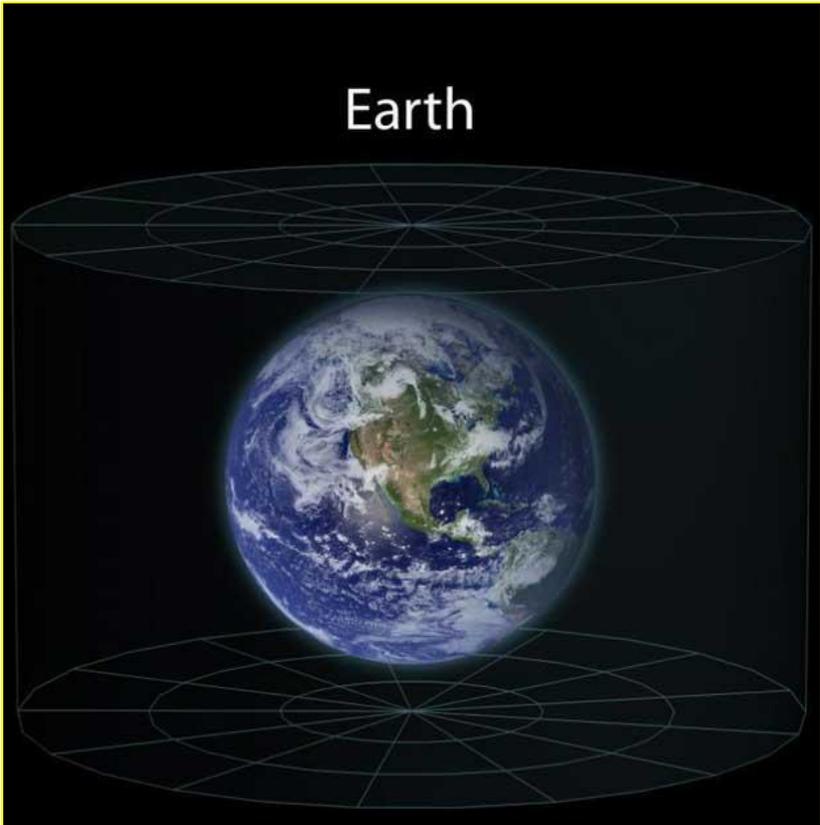
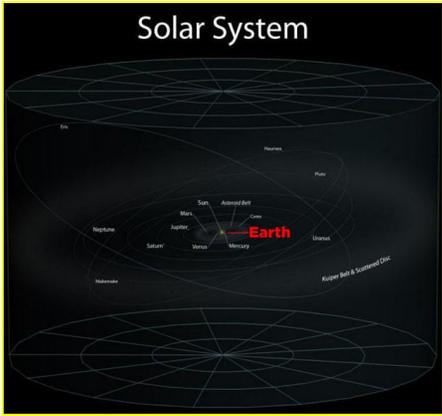


# Local Superclusters



# Observable Universe





*What a Human Life is Worth ...*  
*Part 02: the Judgment*  
(03/03/2015)

**FACT** -- No matter how critical our crises or terrible our tragedies or colossal our challenges, we are indeed but a small speck of dust in the grander scheme of things. AND this need *not* be a call to depression or hopelessness or a loss of Meaning ... Indeed, we can just as readily use this Truth to reawaken a profound sense of Humility instead; a Humility that can re-enable us to renew our sense of wonderment over all things “normal” or “boring”; that can re-inspire our desire to learn more about those around us instead of judging them from a place of ignorance or fear or hatred; and that can thereby re-enliven our ability to exude Compassion towards all others -- especially those seen as “strange”, or “scary”, or “mean”, or even “evil.”

“[O]ur species is young and curious and brave and shows much promise. In the last few millennia we have made the most astonishing and unexpected discoveries about the Cosmos and our place within it, explorations that are exhilarating to consider. They remind us that humans have evolved to wonder, that understanding is a joy, that knowledge is prerequisite to thriving within this Cosmos in which we float like a mote of dust in the morning sky.”

(~ inspired by Carl Sagan)

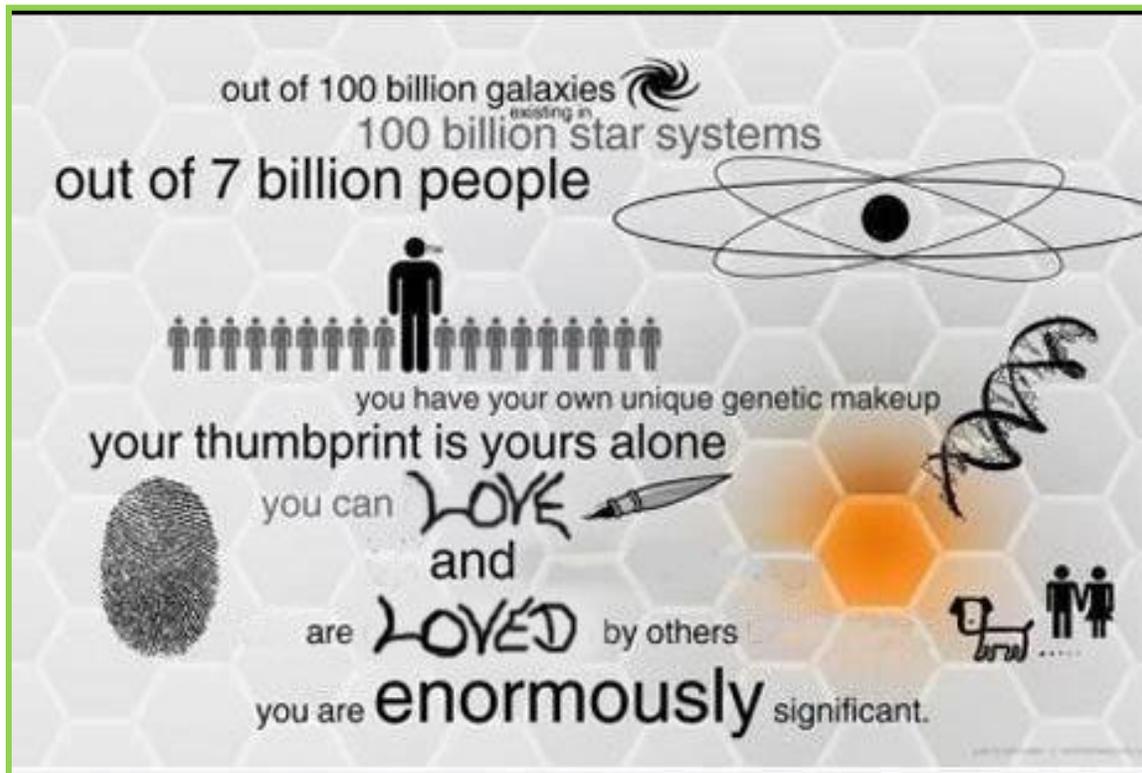


*What a Human Life is Worth ...*  
*Part 03: the Reality*  
(03/03/2015)

**FACT** -- No matter how small we might be -- no matter how weak & alone we might appear -- no matter how insignificant we might feel within the hordes of other humans ( living on a planet that is floating amongst hordes of other planets, spinning within a galaxy that is floating amongst hordes of other galaxies), **we can still boom a truly Great Power.** For in any given moment in every one of our lives, we each can choose to face our most selfish instincts, and face our most primal fears, and face our most justified hatreds -- and then choose to LOVE anyway.

*Amen* ... Let it be so.

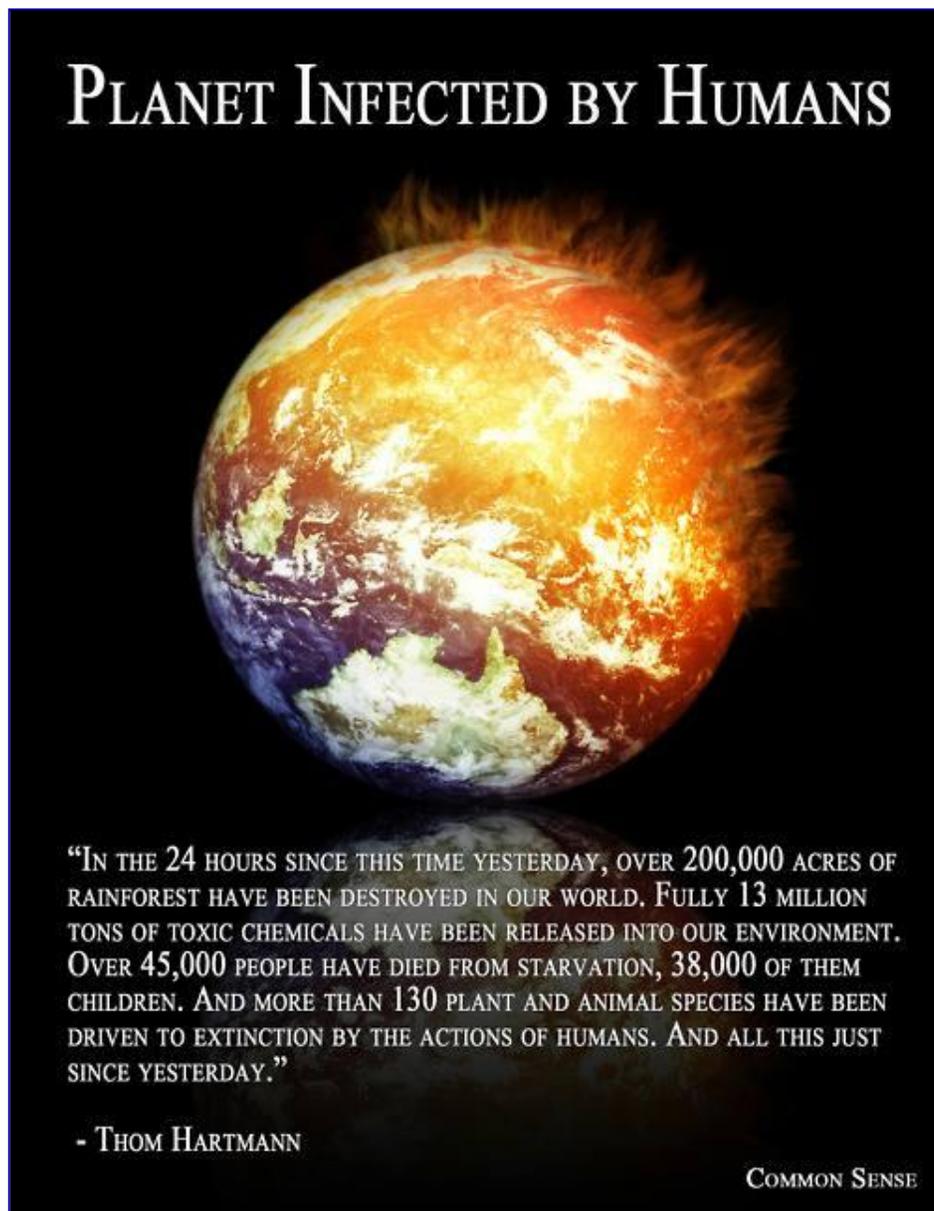
“Every one of us is, in the cosmic perspective, fully precious. So if any human disagrees with you or lambasts you or even harms you, let him live. For no matter how he treats you in this one moment, he is still and will forever remain your brother, and in a hundred billion galaxies, you will not find another like him.” ~ inspired by Carl Sagan



*Enlivening the Good News*  
(03/04/2015)

The **bad news**: the world is currently infested by a radically selfish, relatively ignorant, and still-mired-in-savagery species of animals called “humans” ... The **Good News**: whether we choose to wake up and become the gentle stewards of our yet-glorious planet -- or fade into the tragic & pain-filled obscurity of near-extinction, our ever-beautiful Earth is going to be just fine.

That having been said, I still think it's worth it to choose Stewardship ...  
... Don't you?



**PLANET INFECTED BY HUMANS**

“IN THE 24 HOURS SINCE THIS TIME YESTERDAY, OVER 200,000 ACRES OF RAINFOREST HAVE BEEN DESTROYED IN OUR WORLD. FULLY 13 MILLION TONS OF TOXIC CHEMICALS HAVE BEEN RELEASED INTO OUR ENVIRONMENT. OVER 45,000 PEOPLE HAVE DIED FROM STARVATION, 38,000 OF THEM CHILDREN. AND MORE THAN 130 PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES HAVE BEEN DRIVEN TO EXTINCTION BY THE ACTIONS OF HUMANS. AND ALL THIS JUST SINCE YESTERDAY.”

- THOM HARTMANN

COMMON SENSE



*Credit where Honor is due*  
(04/04/2015)

47 years ago today, Martin Luther King Jr. was murdered in Memphis, and a Great Voice for Peace was seemingly silenced -- and the world rightfully mourned both his passing and the apparent fading of his Great Dream. Indeed, I myself have recently heard others publicly pronouncing that Martin Luther King Jr. fully failed in his Mission of Love -- that because our world is still an often vile & violent place (e.g. the ongoing aggressions of ISIS and the U.S. drone attacks that inspire them), that his efforts bore no lasting fruits and made no lasting difference.

Well, in honor of this most noble man who so courageously championed a most noble of causes, I unabashedly say that these opinions are nothing more than pure *HOGWASH* ... Martin Luther King Jr. **did** make a difference. He inspired thousands to transcend a significant portion of their personal bigotries, he inspired hundreds of thousands to stand up against all forms of injustice, and he inspires millions to this day to make our world a more Peace-full place in which to live. And to back up this more-than-mild claim I offer the following oft-forgotten **facts**:

**\*Fact #01)** During the less than 13 years of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s leadership of the Civil Rights Movement, African Americans achieved more progress toward racial equality in the United States than their previous 350 years combined ...

**\*Fact #02)** Dr. King is to this day internationally recognized as America's preeminent advocate for nonviolence and as one of the greatest nonviolent leaders in the history of humankind ...

**\*Fact #03)** While others were advocating for freedom by "any means necessary" (including violence), Martin Luther King, Jr. used the power of words peaceful-yet-passionate and acts of nonviolent resistance to achieve seemingly-impossible goals; including the effectuation of the Civil Rights Act & the Voting Right Act ...

**\*Fact #04)** Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech, Nobel Peace Prize lecture, and "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" are among the most honored orations and writings in the English language ... They are still revered & studied to this very day, and to this day all of them still provide inspiration to hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of people all around the world ...

**\*Fact #05)** Martin Luther King's courageous accomplishments are now taught to American children of all races (indeed, to children all around the world), and his teachings are studied by scholars and students worldwide as well ... He is the only non-President to have a national holiday dedicated in his honor, and is the only non-President listed on the Great Mall in the nation's capitol ...

**\*Fact #06)** Dr. King is memorialized in thousands of statues, parks, streets, squares, churches and other public facilities around the world as a leader whose moral teachings are increasingly-relevant to the progress of humankind, if not its ultimate survival ...

**\*Fact #07)** In 1963, Dr. King was one of the driving forces behind the March for Jobs and Freedom, more commonly known as the “March on Washington,” which drew over a quarter-million people to the national mall in Washington D.C. It was at this march that King delivered his famous aforementioned “I Have a Dream” speech, which cemented his status as a social change leader and helped inspire the United States to finally begin to ensure practical civil rights for **all** its citizens ...

**\*Fact #08)** In 1964, Martin Luther King, Jr. became the youngest person to ever win the Nobel Peace Prize. His acceptance speech in Oslo is thought by many to be among the most powerful orations ever delivered at the event, climaxing at one point with the oft-quoted phrase “I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant” ...

**\*Fact #09)** Dr. King’s human rights leadership emerged in the movement against South African apartheid in the early 1960’s, became even more prominent when he began to oppose the Vietnam War in 1965, and continued to be viable until his assassination in 1968 – repeatedly emphasizing the fact that economic rights and human rights are necessary values for **all** the world’s citizens; and that these liberties must be recognized as co-equal with political and civil rights ...

**\*Fact #10)** Dr. King had a considerable impact on the development of international law, most notably via the adoption in 1965 of the “International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination” -- the first human rights treaty signed after the Genocide Convention 1948. This legal precedent was clearly infused with & inspired by Dr. King’s teachings and the Civil Rights movement he was leading in the United States at the time ...

**\*Fact #11)** Finally, Dr. King continues to have an undeniable influence on thousands upon thousands of peacemakers & human rights advocates around the world; many of whom openly state that he was one of the primary inspirations for their noble work. A small sample of these brave, King-inspired peacemakers – who are indeed making an enormous positive difference in our world today – include: **Zainab Al Khawaja** in Bahrain, **Thich Nhat Hanh** in France, **Juan Nel** in South Africa, **Dina Wahba** in Egypt, **Kaspars Zalitis** in Latvia, **Shirin Ebadi** in Iran, **Dmitry Makarov** in Russia, **Elvira Fatykhova** in Tatarstan, **Anastasia Danilova** in Moldova, **Natasa Kandic** in Serbia, **Tolekan Ismailova** in Kyrgyzstan, **Yevgeny Zhovtis** in Kazakhstan, **Ramazan Bashardost** in Afghanistan, **Nurberdi Nurmamed** in Turkmenistan, and **Hanaa Edwar** in Iraq.

In conclusion then, my Friends, while it is true that 47 years ago today Martin Luther King Jr. was indeed murdered, and while it is true that on that day one of history's greatest Lights of Peace faded into mere memory, and while it is also true that MLK's personal Light of Love has indeed faded, each & every one of us can still be inspired to **pick up his Torch** and shine its brilliant magnificence powerfully into our own lives:

\*We can each hold aloft *the Torch of Kindness* by reaching out courageously to the poor & the homeless & the downtrodden in our midst ...

\*We can each hold aloft *the Torch of Justice* by respecting our animal brothers & sisters with a cruelty-free life (i.e. by going vegan, just as Dr. King's wife & son did & have done) ...

\*We can each hold aloft *the Torch of Compassion* by praying & preaching and indeed living Peace -- by openly forgiving those who have trespassed against us; by refusing to support corrupt politicians who would have us support their immoral wars; by reaching out to members of faiths & lifestyles "other" in order to bring them gently into the fold of our own circles of Friendship.

Yes, some will continue to claim that the world is still full of violence -- that as such Martin Luther King Jr. made no real lasting difference, and that as such we ourselves need not even try to emulate or even support his great cause of Peace. AND YET in Truth, that opinion is actually nothing more than a feeble cop-out of penultimate cowardice ...

For in Truth, we do not have to liberate hundreds of thousands or inspire hundreds of millions like Martin Luther King Jr. did in order to bring a significant portion of additional Peace to our still beautiful world. Indeed, while it might be true that we may each only be able to do a little each day to bring Harmony & Joy into our own communities, that "little" is exactly what we have each been called to Do.

As such, I humbly ask that you please honor those like Martin Luther King Jr. who have carried the Torch before you -- that you please do so by picking up that Torch and carrying it boldly forth into your own surroundings -- and that you please begin to do so today.

*Amen* ... Let it be so.

# Martin Luther King, Jr.

January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968



*"Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!"*

With these words, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. built a crescendo to his final speech on April 3, 1968. The next day, the civil rights leader was shot and killed on a balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee.



## *The Meaning-full Way* (03/13/2015)

For all of you out there who are angry or afraid or sad or annoyed -- for all of you who are frustrated or confused or lost or disheartened, there is a Way that will lead you directly back to a life of deep Meaning & profound Peace & unbridled Joy ... It is a Path that is very simple to traverse, and yet it is a Path that requires great courage to walk -- for it is a Path that always leads directly through the fears & the sufferings & the sorrows of those nearby.

“Let’s be both extremely happy and fully thrilled that we are each able to uniquely serve others around us in ways both intimate and powerful ... And let us be fully excited about how we continue to fulfill such loving service.”

(~ inspired by Bhakti Tirtha Swami)



*Becoming ONE ...*  
(04/11/2015)

Contrary to popular New Age belief, to truly “*become One*” with our surroundings does not mean that we regularly “meditate”, or that we “choose to relax”, or that we learn to “focus the mind on the moment”, but rather that we have the courage to go forth and extend radical, selfless acts of Kindness & Caring to the others in our midst -- especially those who seem “least deserving” of the same; both those we fear, as well as those we loathe.

*Amen* ... Let it be so.

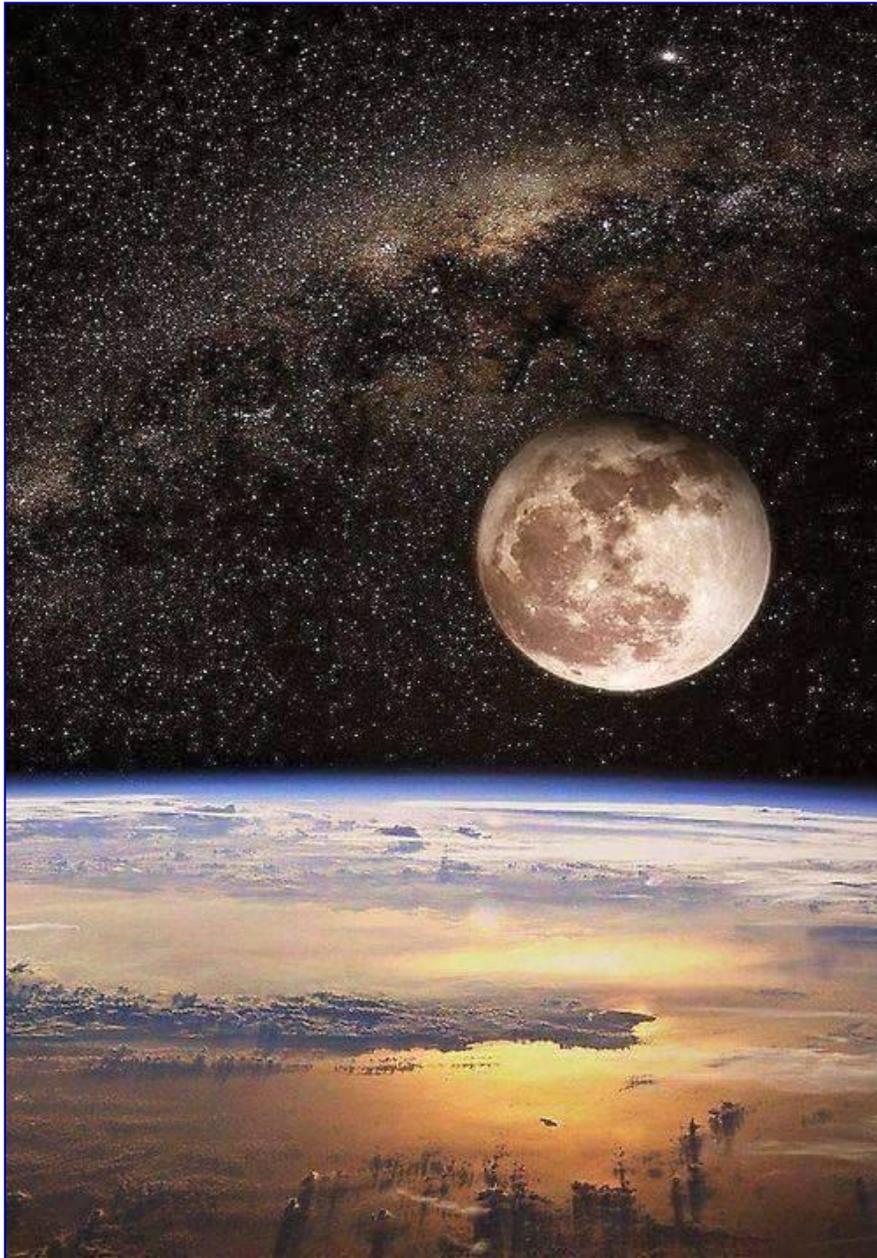


## *To Know true LOVE*

(04/27/2015)

“True LOVE is eternal & infinite -- always a reflection of itself. It is equal in its aim and non-discriminate in its purity; given to all regardless of merit or measure. Its ends are always Peace and its means always match those ends ... As such, even though it might sometimes be seen with hairs silver and thus judged as feeble, it is actually always Strong & ever young at heart.”

(~ inspired by Honore de Balzac)



*Acceptance is giving UP*  
(05/14/2015)

**Life Hack:** Joy-fully (and Purpose-fully) accepting whatever **IS** is lots more fun (and far more productive) than “giving up” or “quitting” or “surrendering” to it.

“You couldn't relive your life, skipping the awful parts, without losing what made it essentially all worthwhile ... As such, you simply have to one day choose to accept your life as a whole -- every lover; and every friend; and every stranger; and every enemy.” (~ inspired by Stewart O'Nan)



i ca<sub>n</sub>'t do this anymo<sub>re</sub>.

## *Thanks to Gilda* (05/20/2015)

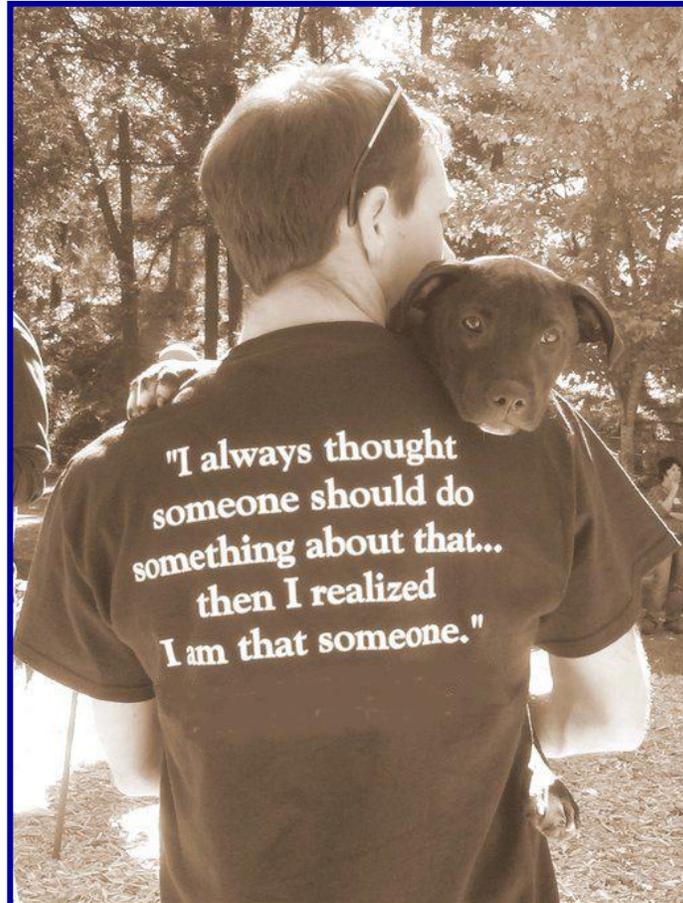
26 years ago today, Gilda Radner passed on at the tender age of almost 43 ... Adored by her fans & co-workers alike, Radner was known as someone who not only made folks laugh, but who also inspired them to be better people as well. Some might say she “died too young” and others might believe that she stood for silliness, and yet without a doubt we can all look to her life and remember that our own lives are here for the Living; that we are, each of us -- right here & right now -- fully able to fully embrace each fleeting moment of our existence while we still have it; that we can all truly “make the best of it” -- by having the humility to open our eyes to See the Good that needs to be done, and by then having the guts to open our Hearts to Do that Good that there is to DO.

some stories don't have  
a clear beginning, middle,  
and end. life is about not  
knowing, having to change,  
taking the moment and making  
the best of it, without knowing  
what's going to happen next.  
**delicious ambiguity...**

-gilda radner

*Amen* ... Let it be so.

*“I think dogs are the most amazing creatures; they give unconditional Love. For me they are the role model for being alive.” ~ Gilda Radner*



*Our persistent Becoming*  
(06/02/2015)

Your eventual sense of Inner Peace rests on your eventual re-Awakening ... and your eventual re-Awakening rests on your courageous determination to BE the Caring YOU you have always been -- to BE the Caring YOU you already are.

“Against criticism a person can neither persuasively protest nor effectively defend himself. No, to champion over criticism one must persistently act in spite of its negativity & despite its doubt. And if he or she does so with a faithful resolve, that criticism will soon have no choice but to gradually yield to who She or He truly **IS**.” (~ inspired by J. W. Goethe)



*on deserving Death*  
(06/04/2015)

“Deserves death? I daresay he does! Indeed, there are many who currently live who deserve death, just as there are many who die who deserve to continue living. And yet can you give that life to them, much less determine who is worthy of that death? Of course you can't! As such, do not be too eager to deal out death in judgment ... for even the very wise cannot know all beginnings, and even the most wise cannot see all ends.” (~ inspired by Gandalf a la J. R. R. Tolkien)



*The gentle Embrace*  
(06/05/2015)

“It's so easy to look the other way and walk on by because we know we can't change someone's whole life in a single afternoon ... And yet what we fail to realize when we do so -- and what we fail to enliven as a result -- is the undeniable Truth that even the smallest act of Kindness always lands right where it is supposed to; right at the center of the lightly slumbering Soul of each & every homeless recipient to which it is given ... and that such simple deeds of Dignity & Respect -- even if but for a few, shining moments -- always brighten the lives of all they happen to so gently embrace.”

(~ inspired by Mike Yankoski)



*Love lights the Morn*  
(06/06/2015)

And today a New Day dawns bright upon us; bringing with it a bold tale of heroism & justice, singing a song of hope & wonder -- gentle, yet vibrant & full.

Let its Power remind you of a LOVE given to perfection ...

... and let its Beauty inspire you to help make it so.

*Amen.*

“Whatever you are physically -- male or female, strong or weak, ill or healthy -- all those things matter far less than what your Heart contains ... All those other things, they are merely the glass that contains the lamp. But you -- **YOU are the light inside.**” (~ inspired by Cassandra Clare)



“Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only Light can do that ...  
Hate cannot drive out hate: only **Love can do that.**”  
~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

*Becoming the Light*  
(06/15/2015)

Shadow is sorrow & want ...

The Light is Joy & Gratitude (the verb).

Shadow is supporting cruelty ...

The Light is living Compassion.

Shadow is condemnation ...

The Light is Forgiveness.

Shadow is intolerance ...

The Light is Kindness.

Shadow is hatred ...

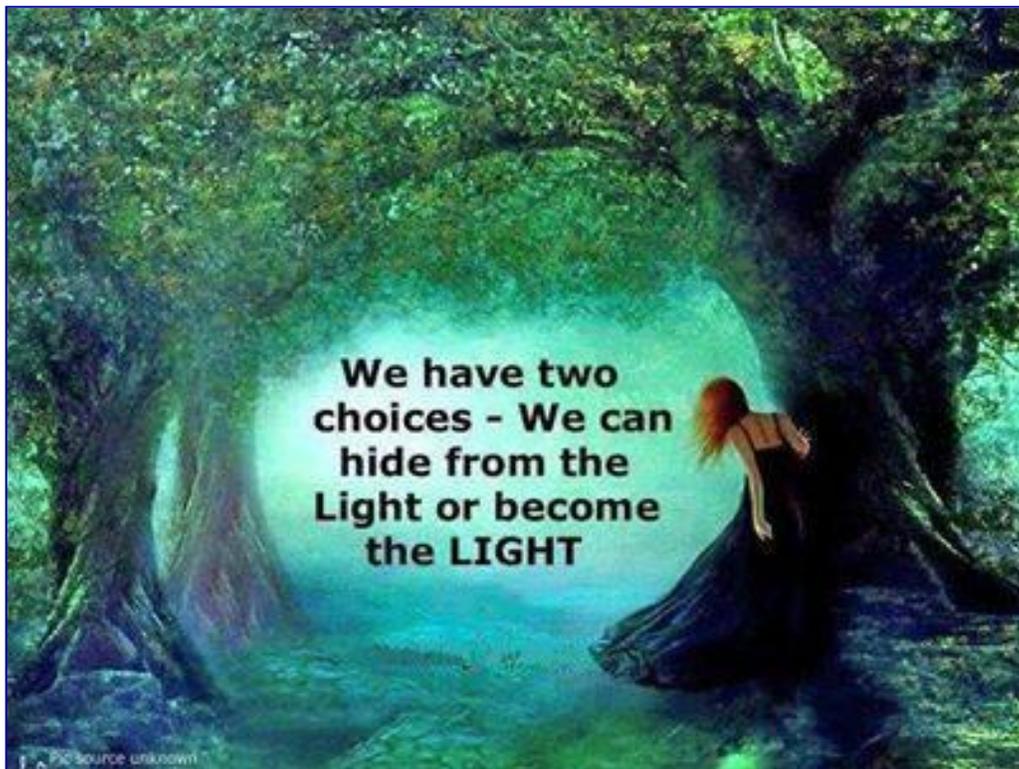
The Light is Empathy.

Shadow is fear ...

The Light is LOVE.

I have lived both ways and tasted both their fruits ...

... and frankly, I highly recommend becoming the Light.



## *Our Circle of Compassion*

(06/21/015)

Every single human being is a part of a single, massive entirety -- a single “everything” – a totality some call “the Universe.” And even though this Universe is by its very nature without limitation of either time or space, each one of us *is* limited -- by the relatively short length of our physical lives, by the very few places we will be able to visit in that time so fleeting, and by the relatively few others with whom we will be able to interact in all those then's & there's ...

Yes, even though we are inextricably linked and solidly melded into the very fabric of the entire Cosmos, each one of us experiences ourselves -- our thoughts and our feelings, our hopes and our fears, our beliefs and our deeds -- as somehow ours alone; as somehow fully individual; as somehow fully separate from the rest of the Universe ... And this at times diabolical and at times delicious delusion of individuality builds and reinforces a kind of prison for us all; restricting us to thinking that we are right and others are wrong; restricting us to feeling affection for those we see as “friend” and hatred or distrust for those we label as “enemy”; restricting us to reveling with those who share our beliefs of the here &/or the Hereafter and judging those who believe differently as being “strange” or “ignorant” or even “damned” ...

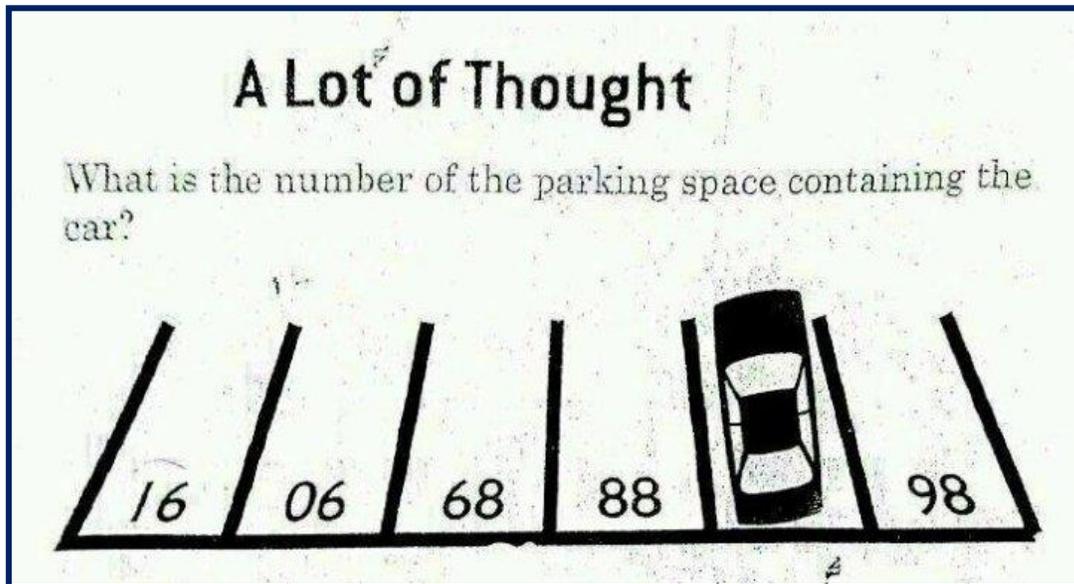
And as such, we each have a Great Task before us -- a Task that we each must engage with boldness & with bravery if we are ever to free ourselves from our shackles of separateness & the sufferings of isolation & ignorance they bring ... Simply put -- we must boldly **shatter those shackles** by purposefully choosing to widen our Circle of Compassion to include *all* living creatures (and indeed the whole of Nature with Her still-resplendent Beauty) -- and then we must bravely exit our prison cells ... by acting accordingly.

*Amen* ... Let it be so,

(~ inspired by Albert Einstein)



*Improving your VISION*  
(06/27/2015)



Tell you what I'm going to do ... I'm going to go ahead and give you the answer to this riddle (a riddle, by the way, that the average 8 year old can solve in well under thirty seconds) ... **The answer is 87.**

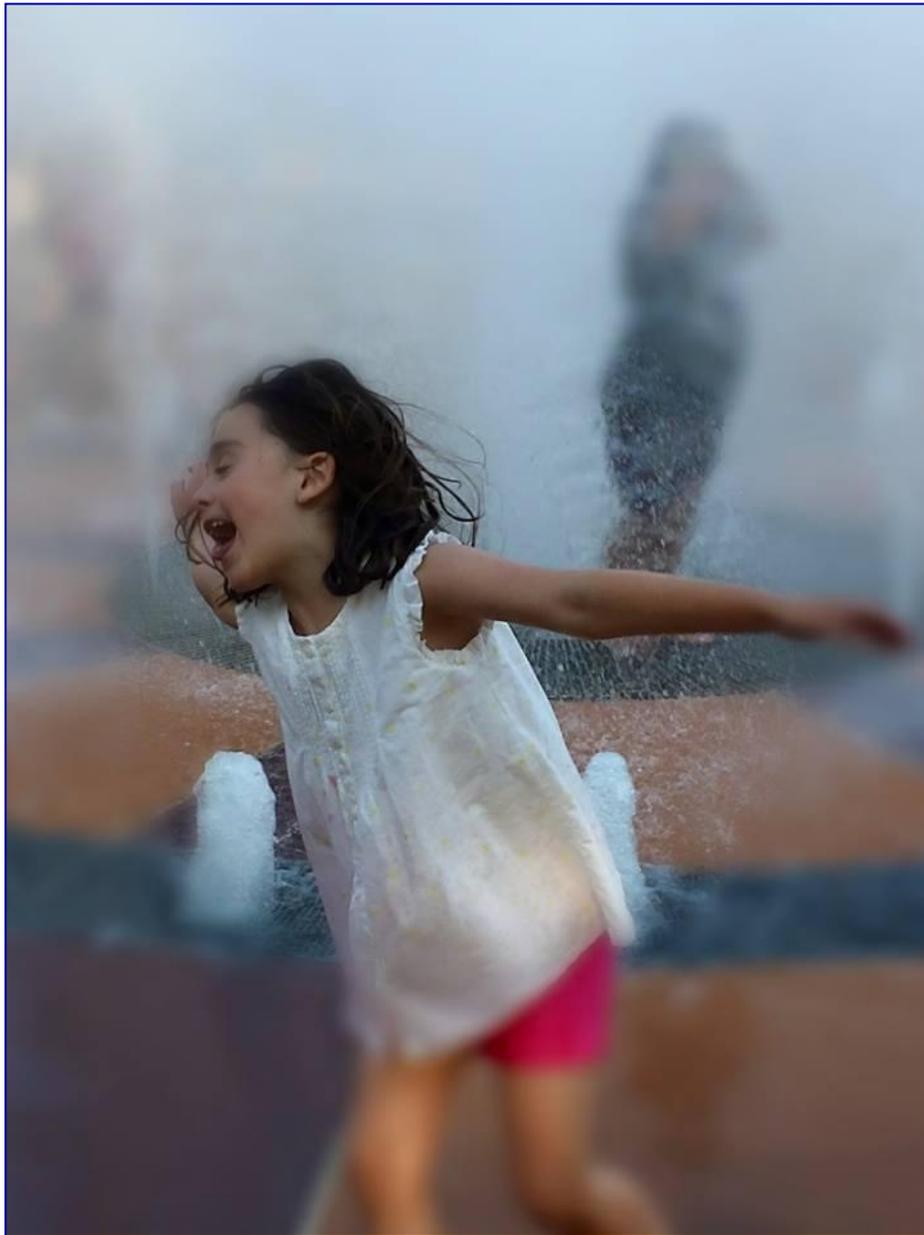
Can you figure out why?

**HINT:** Just like with anything else in life -- from realizing who your politicians are *actually* serving, to understanding what the Bible is *actually* telling you to do, to comprehending the Caring person your most dire enemy *actually* is -- you are going to have to have the humility to set aside what you already "know to be true" and **literally** look at it from a completely different perspective; in this case, turn it literally upside down.

*"In all affairs it's a healthy thing now and then  
to hang a question mark on the things  
you have long taken for granted."  
~ Bertrand Russell*

*Taking FLIGHT*  
(06/27/2015)

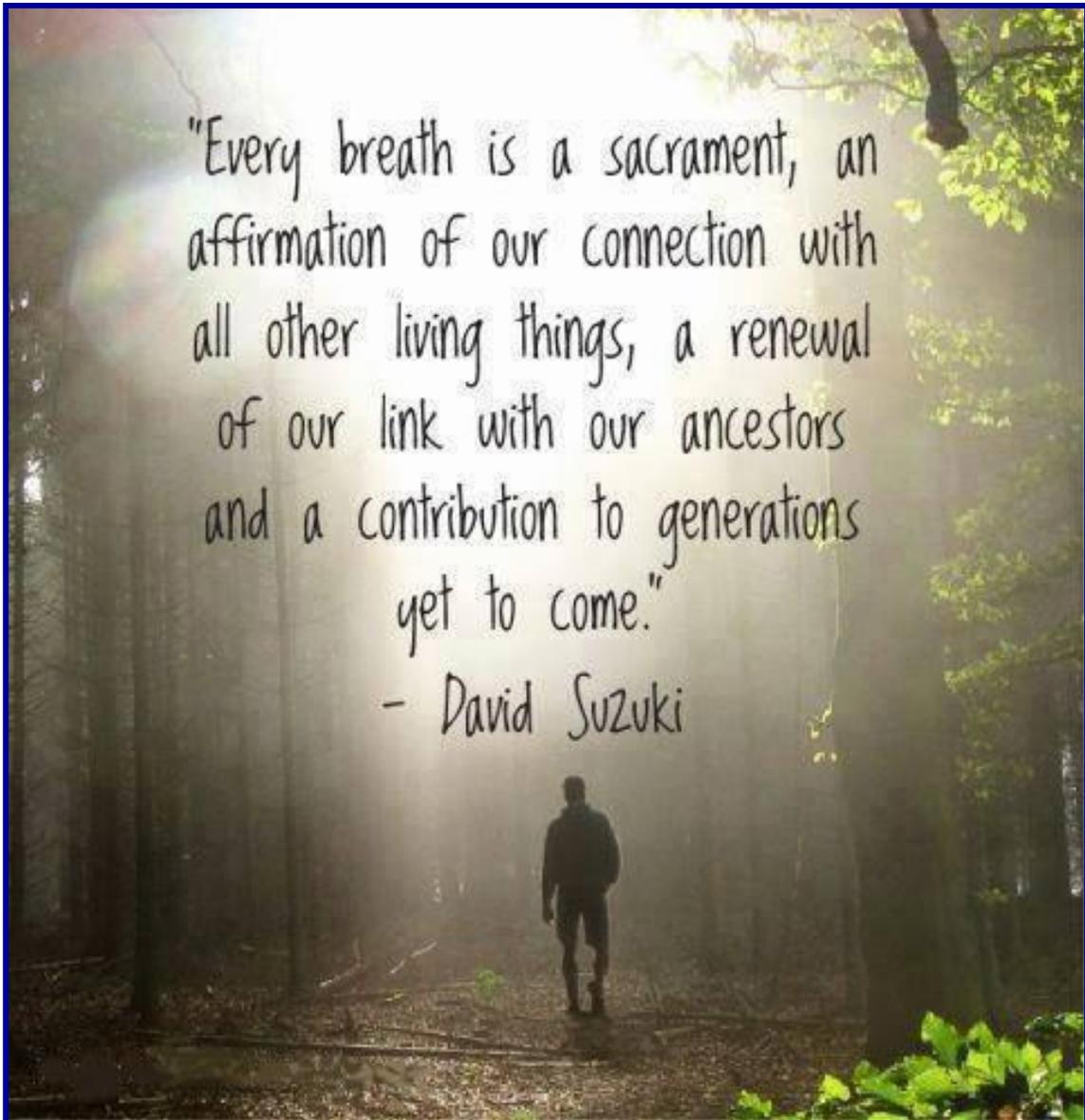
“And who can say that we can't fly? ... Our wings, though featherless, raise us as high as our hearts can carry. We could stay weighted down by the words of others. We could choose to drown in their doubt. We could allow their condemnation to burn a hole through our hearts. We could ... and yet we won't, because our Soul knows that living is Light and that Joy is free when giving; because it knows that there is no time to waste when living for others ... So we simply close our eyes, smile with Faith, spread our wings ... and FLY.” ~ Vanessa Curley



## *Returning HOME*

(07/14/2015)

Left as it is, the quote shown below quietly hints at the way to a Great Truth ... And yet by changing just one word -- by simply changing "breath" into "*deed*", it illuminates that Way fully ... and allows us all to return Home.



## *Reaching for the Light* (07/12/2015)

Some make it their mission to try and hurt others. These are the Shadow-People -- soaked in the sludge of childhood traumas, adolescent codependencies and adult aggressions. They seem to know only one way out of their inner Darkness -- and that way is violence; violence against their “enemies”, by attacking them in “self-defense” ... violence against the unfairness of life, by complaining about their own pains &/or by reveling in the pains & failures of others ... violence against the “sinners” who behave or believe differently than they do, by worshiping a God who will ultimately damn them all to Hell ... violence against their own fears, by soaking their own suffering in a wide variety of self-destructive physical & emotional addictions.

Yes, these are the Shadow-Folk ... They are not completely comprised of fog or blackness, and yet they do tend to reside therein -- and they do tend to do their best to bring everyone around them down into their dreary depths ...

They pull others down with guilt, & they pull them down with blame;  
They pull others down with threats, & they pull them down with judgment;  
They pull others down with temptations, & they pull the down with fear;  
They pull others down with gossip, & they pull them down with criticism.

And yet these are not the ways of the Divine – the Divine that resides within them, and these are not the ways of Light – the Light that fuels their life and embodies their will to live. Yes, the ego is the strongest of all adversaries ... It is insidious ... It is arrogant ... It is greedy ... It is deceitful. And yet even though it is by far our greatest enemy, the ego is *nothing* compared to the strength of the Love that comprises the human Soul.

Yes, the ego will use fear & pride to find any way possible to keep us hidden in the shadows, and yet **LOVE is always available** to us

LOVE is always there and LOVE is always a choice ...

And in those moments when LOVE is finally chosen, **LOVE always wins**;

every ...

single ...

time.

So, my dear Friends, today is a new day for you & yours ... Today is a day when you are once again allowed to choose the Light over the Darkness; the illumination of your Soul over your ego's desire to recede into the shadows; the release of your True Self over remaining imprisoned in fear & anger & selfishness & superficiality.

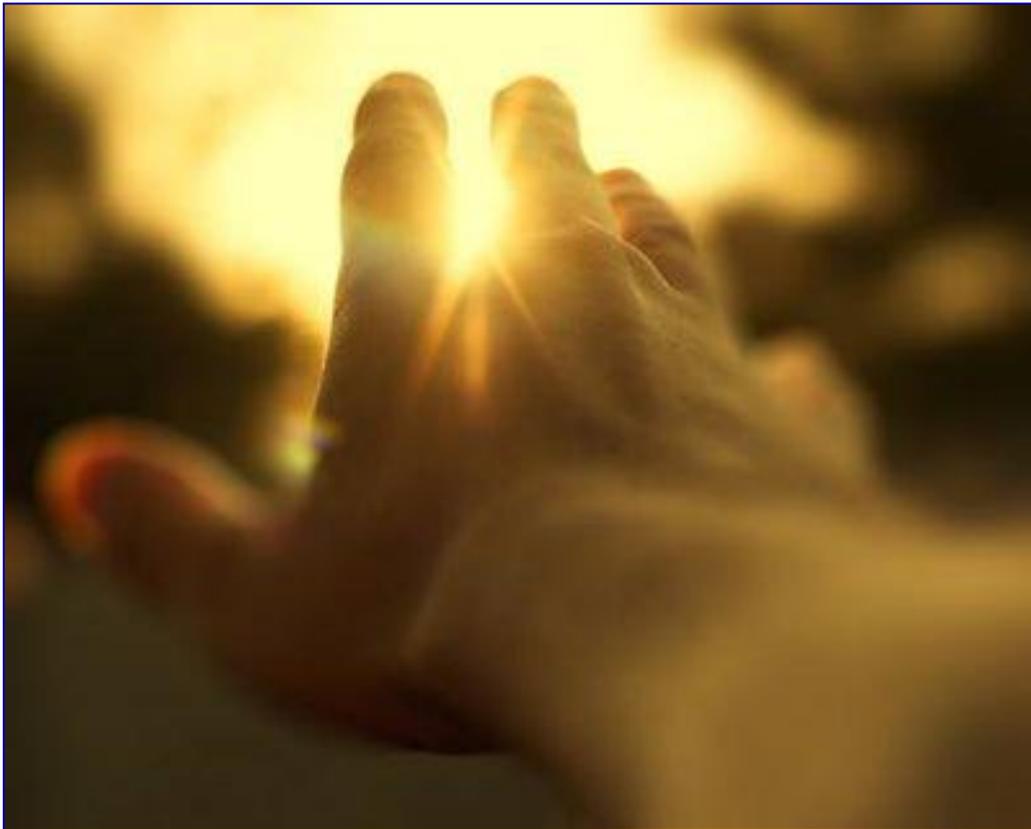
Today you can choose to be reborn as the Caring Servant you once were ...  
Today you can choose to be reborn as the Kind Stranger you have always been ...  
Today you can choose to be reborn as the Generous Soul you will always be.

Yes, your True Self is waiting within you; waiting for you to choose to exit the darkness of fear & self-absorption and re-enter the Light of Love & selfless Giving.

My Friends, our Souls are waiting every day to be so reawakened. And all we have to do to awaken them is reach for them -- by reaching out to others. Indeed, feeling the Soul's all-enveloping arms of Grace is just one courageous act of Kindness away ...

So please be brave -- and make that choice today.

(~ inspired by Vanessa Curley)



## *Living the Bigger Life* (07/22/2015)

“The moment you choose to make your life about something greater than yourself is the moment you will finally realize what it means to truly Serve ... And the moment you make your living about serving others instead of being served by them is the moment you will finally realize what it means to truly LOVE ... And the moment you then *act* on that LOVE and thereby feel it re-blossom deep within your Heart -- the moment you do so and feel the depth, and the delight, and the sheer ecstasy of what it means to truly LOVE life and all those in it, then & only then you will finally rediscover the real reason why you are here ... and for you the entire world will in that moment become fully transformed, and all will be aglow.” (~ inspired by Jiddu Krishnamurti)



*Real SUCCESS*  
(07/26/2015)

At age 4 success is not peeing in your pants.  
At age 12 success is having friends.  
At age 16 success is having a drivers license.  
At age 20 success is having sex.  
At age 35 success is having money.  
At age 50 success is having money.  
At age 60 success is having sex.  
At age 70 success is having a drivers license.  
At age 75 success is having friends.  
At age 80 success is not peeing in your pants

Well, let me tell you -- at age 4 I *did* pee a few times in my pants ...  
... and at age 12 I had almost no friends ...  
... and at age 17 I lost my driver's license ...  
... and at age 21 I still hadn't had sex ...  
... and at age 35 I still didn't have any money (figuratively) ...  
... and at age 48 I still don't have any money (literally) ...  
... and at age 60 I will still not be having any sex ...  
... and at age 70 I will have long since thrown away my driver's license ...

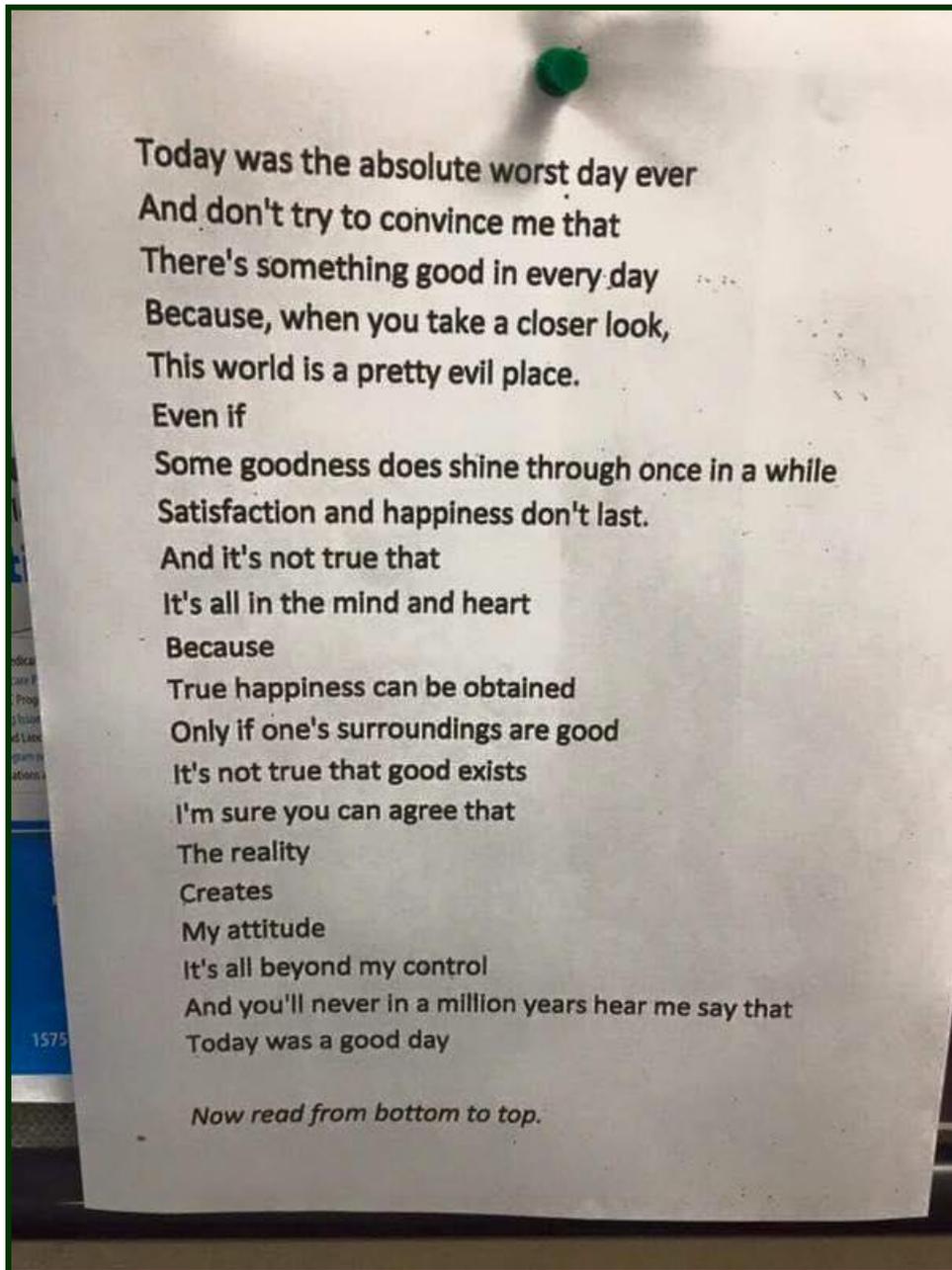
**AND YET** at age 75 (if I'm still alive) I will **still** be serving others, which means that my life will **still** be a true & real Success ...

... and this, even if I happen to occasionally pee in my pants at age 80.

*“Strive not to become a person of great success.  
Rather, choose to become a person of Great Value.”  
~ inspired by Albert Einstein*

*From the bottom UP*  
(07/28/2015)

**Life tip:** Read each & every moment *from the bottom UP* ...



*“Dwell on the Beauty of life. Watch the stars above you, and see yourself running with them. See the downtrodden around you, and reach out a caring hand.” ~ inspired by Marcus Aurelius*

*Our functional FAMILY*  
(08/02/2015)

“Family is family, and is not determined by birth certificates, marriage decrees, divorce papers, or adoption documents. Families are made in the Heart ... Indeed, the only time family becomes broken is when the ties in the Heart are cut. So if you cut your ties to anyone, that person is no longer a part of your Family. At the same time, if you realize that **the entire world is your Family** -- and you make ties &/or strengthen ties with others accordingly, then the world becomes your Family whether they share your bloodline or not.”

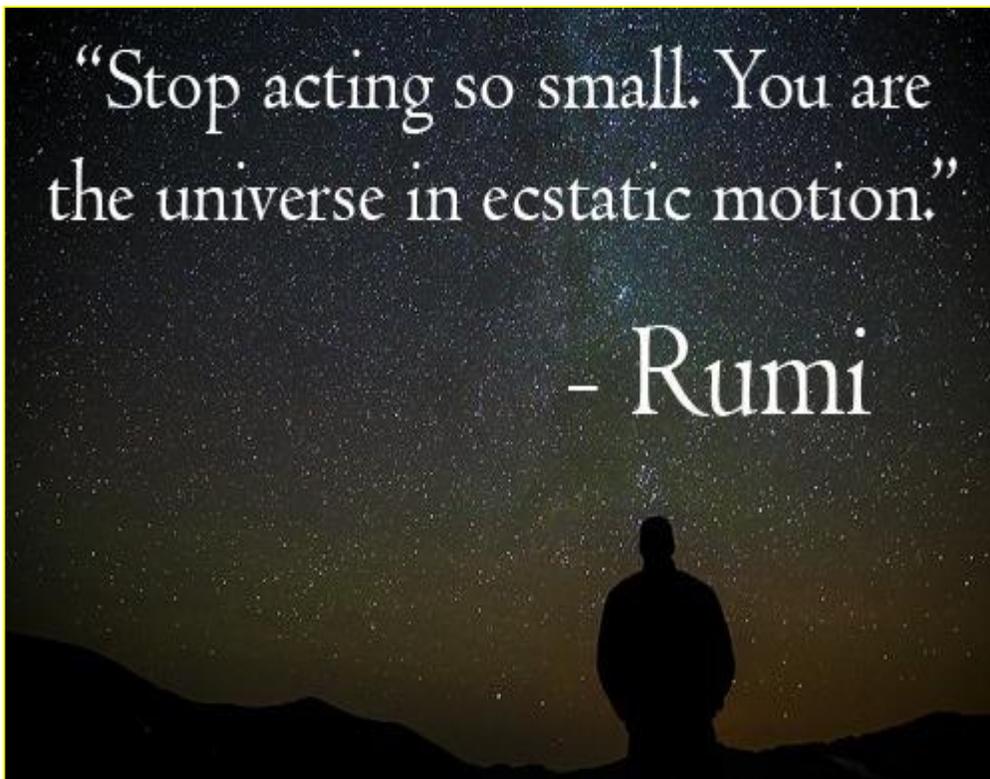
(~ inspired by C. Joybell C.)



*Living BIG*  
(08/05/2015)

My Friends, today might be the only day you've got left, so go and LIVE IT BIG ... Go out there and **LOVE SOMEBODY!!!!**

**P.S.** This encouragement is only truly transformative when your Love becomes *a verb* -- *AND* when that Love is given to either a stranger or an enemy.



*"Indolence is a delightful but distressing state ...  
We must be doing something to be truly Happy."  
~ Mahatma Gandhi*

*Into the Know*  
(08/07/2015)

Wisdom knows that LOVE always sees most clearly in those moments when fear is most blinding. And as such, Wisdom understands that ...

LOVE sees the triumph within every tragedy;  
just as LOVE sees the victory within every defeat.

LOVE sees the wonder within every boredom;  
just as LOVE sees the wholeness within every illness.

LOVE sees the courage within every terror;  
just as LOVE sees the Soulmate within every enemy.

In essence, LOVE is composed of Courage, and as such,  
LOVE not only sees clearly ...

... **LOVE acts accordingly.**

*Amen* ... Let it be so.



*Setting forth on The Way*  
(08/08/2015)

They will tell you that you are too weak  
... to walk The Way of Kindness ...

**Walk it anyway.**

They will tell you that you are too small  
... to walk The Way of Forgiveness ...

**Walk it anyway.**

They will tell you that you are too old  
... to walk The Way of LOVE ...

**Walk it anyway.**

They will tell you that you are too alone  
... to walk The Way of Change-maker ...

**Walk it anyway.**



The way of being truly Human is The Way of being Humane with others ... of being Gentle when told to be violent; of being Caring when tempted to be prudent; of being Merciful when called to be judge & jury ... And even though we are told that this Way is a path long & jagged -- populated by enemies & vagabonds and strewn with obstacles & pitfalls, in reality it is both the shortest and the smoothest of roads -- the Path that begins in the Heart and ends in the Mind; and the one that then begins in the Mind and ends in arms wide open.

In the end, there is no Journey towards LOVE, my Friends ... For in every single moment of your life, **LOVE is your ultimate Destination.**

*Amen* ... Let it be so.



*Beauty and the beautiful*  
(08/10/2015)

“Avoid confusing Beauty with beautiful. The latter is an illusion; generated by personal prejudice and residing only in the human mind, while the former is Reality itself; infusing both every thing & every being from core to surface -- residing in each & every moment of life that innately brims with wonderment and the warmth of interconnection ...

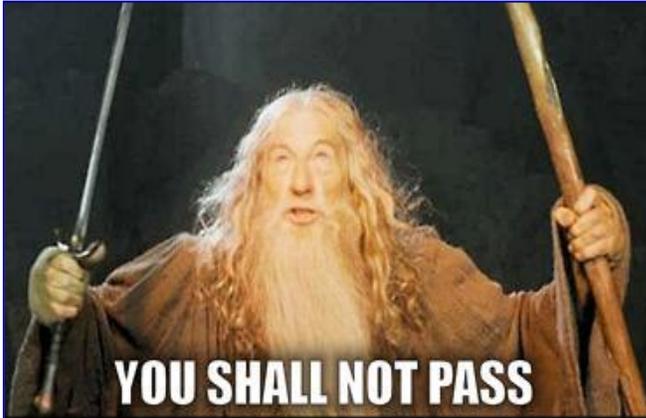
Beautiful is brittle; a hollow human judgment -- Beauty is the epitome of Strength; the pillars upon which all awareness gently rests ...

Understanding this difference means much;  
... enlivening it means everything.”

(~ inspired by Matthew Fox)



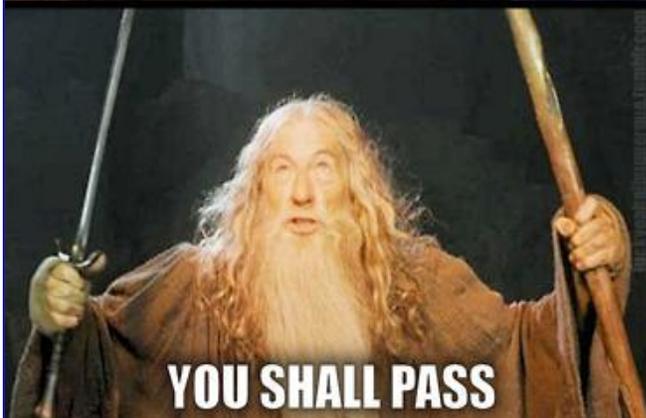
*Magic and the Force*  
(09/19/2015)



Those who deal in “magic” (including those who peddle religious zeal or champion “the Law of Attraction”) attempt to use personal power to manipulate their surroundings; to bend the Universe to their will, & thereby manifest their own desires for self &/or what they believe is better or best ...



Those who employ “The Force”, on the other hand, use the Power that surrounds & infuses everything around & within them to *re-align* their surroundings; to bend individual wills back into harmony with the Universal Whole, & thereby re-create not merely a “good” for themselves but the Highest Good for the energy flow of the entire Cosmos (what some like to call “God”).



The former – “magic” -- is based in the self & pride & fear. The latter – “The Force” -- is founded in other & humility & LOVE ... As you might imagine, and as this meme accurately illustrates, when the two come into play at the same time in the same place, the Force wins out every time.

So, my Friends -- *May the Force be with You!!!*

*Mostly of LOVE*  
(08/14/2015)

It's true for all of us that we have been hurt quite a bit in life. We have all been criticized by our parents & all been harmed by our friends. We have all been abandoned by our lovers & all been slandered by our enemies. We have all been confined by our beliefs & all been tortured by our desires ... And yet it is just as True that we have all Loved greatly, and all been Loved mightily in return. And it is the greatest Truth of all that this LOVE carries a much greater Power than any fear or any pain; a much greater weight that stabilizes us -- a much stronger current that carries us -- a much more solid Strength that supports us.

And in the end (for some of us much sooner than that), we will realize that this is so; we will look back on our lives and see that by far the greatest portion of it all was LOVE. The problems and the fears and the suffering and the sadness were all real, of course, and yet **LOVE was always there**; right there beside us and right there within us -- a bright ray of warmth ever shining from Sun to Soul.

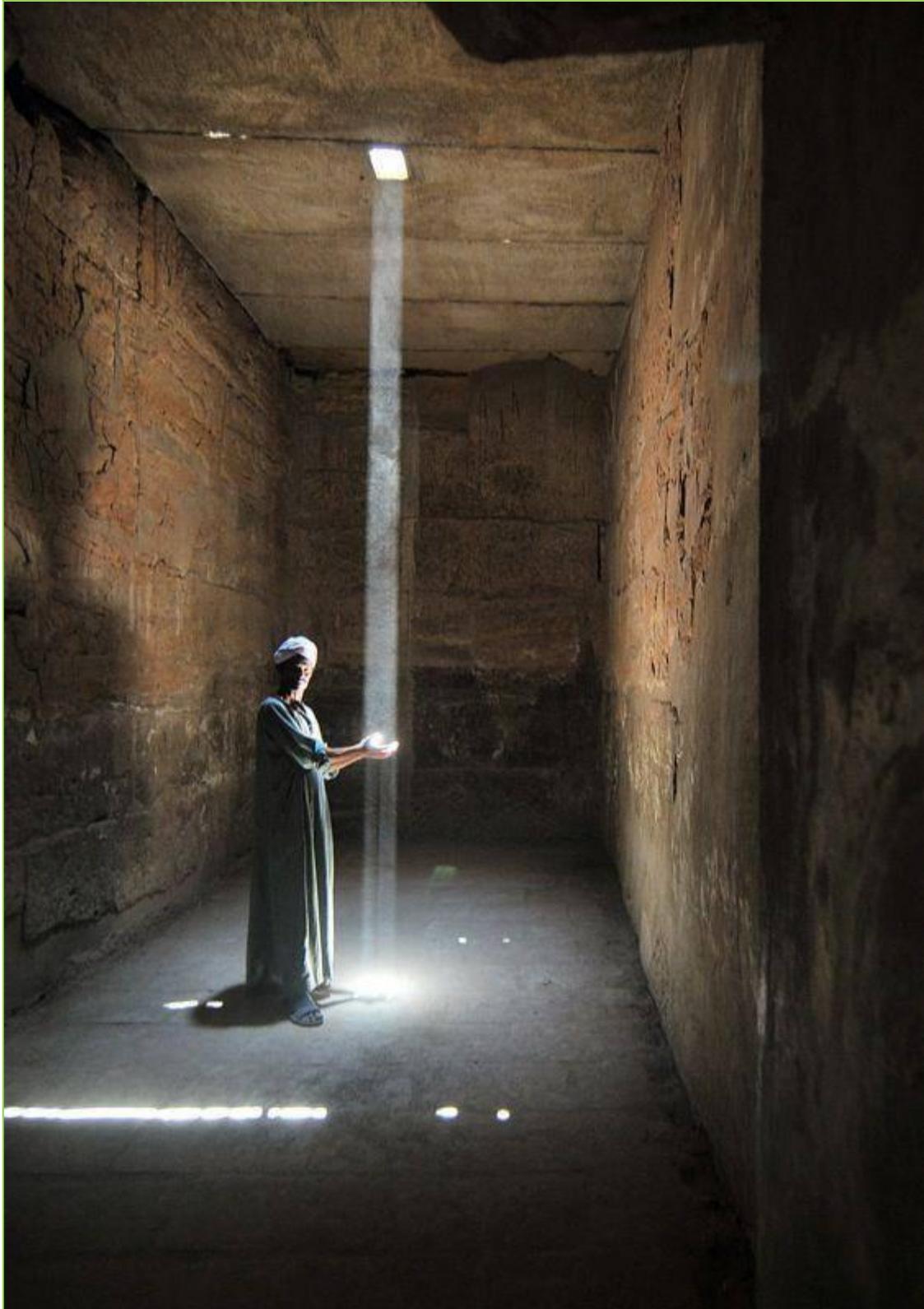
And in that moment of Awakening we will also realize that all that was ever asked of us was to claim that LOVE. All that was ever asked of us was to open our hands and allow LOVE's Light to fill our open palms, and then to open our Hearts and let that warm radiance shine upon all those nearby who might still be shivering in the darkness ...

Yes, when I pause this morning to look back on the life I have already lived, I can see it clearly now; I can see that LOVE was always with me. I didn't always claim it -- in fact, I often ignored it completely. And yet it was always there nonetheless; always there sitting quietly; always there with a gentle smile on its face; always there waiting gently & patiently to be courageously claimed by being boldly given.

And so it is today that I remember this Truth ... So it is today that I feel the Light of LOVE within me and see the Light of LOVE around me ... So it is today that I hold out my palms to catch the Light of LOVE from above and open up my Heart to send out that same warmth into my life ... And so it is today that I go forth to let those Lights reunite in the eyes and the minds and the spirits of everyone I meet -- so it is today that I go forth to be a LOVE-Light-bringer to the world; to do so in every sanctuary and to do so on every street corner.

*Amen* ... Let it be so.

(~ inspired by Sarah Dessen)



*Beauty & the Buddha ...*  
*... Real LOVE & true Living*  
(09/26/2015)

If we do not see the Beauty in others -- no matter what they seem to be doing *to* us, the fault lies not in their doing, but in our (lack of) Seeing ... The Buddha was known to have said: “In the end these things matter most: How well did you love others? How fully did you live your life? How deeply did you let go of all attachments?” ... And yet what is not as well understood is the Truth that -- in order for us to truly LOVE well, *we must first fully Live* each moment as its own lifetime -- and that in order to fully Live each moment as its own lifetime, we must completely let go of all thoughts, all hopes & all fears tied even tenuously to ourselves.

What is the difference between  
I like you  
I love you.

Beautifully answered by  
Buddha:

"When u like a flower, u just pluck it. But when u love a flower, u water it daily..!

One who understand this , understands life ....

May you each enter this next moment in such a pure manner, may you each find an outlet for your Caring Self, and may you each thus come to know the Bliss that only and that always accompanies every act of true LOVE.

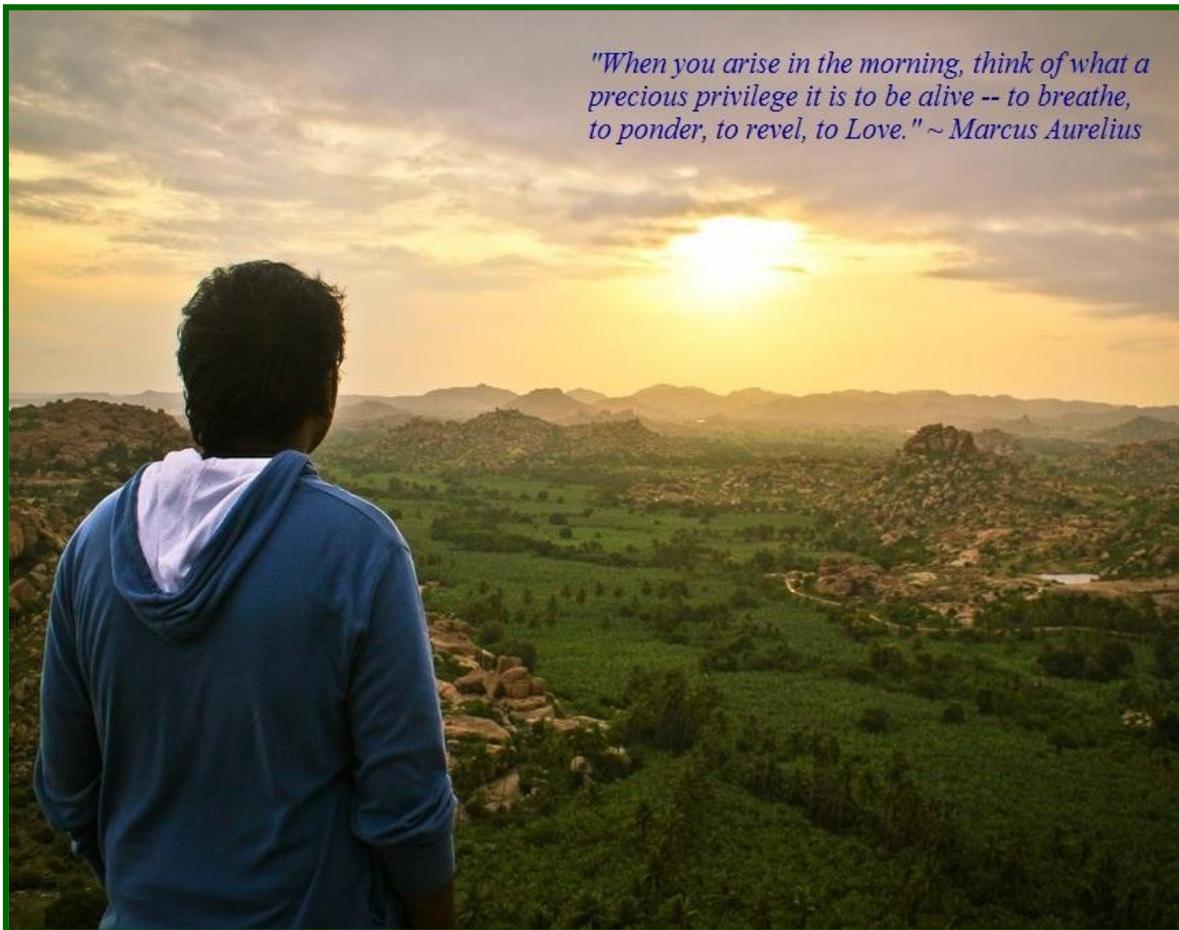
**Peace to ALL ... S**



*“Every instant  
we are born again.  
What we do in this  
very moment is  
always what matters  
most.” ~ G. Buddha*

*The greatest Given*  
(09/27/2015)

“Those who don't feel this LOVE steadily pulling them like a river; those who do not drink fully of each new morn or take in each sunset like supper; those who do not wish to change -- who do not wish to awaken to The Way of LOVE, let them sleep ... You need them not to step forth upon that Sacred Path. You need them not to go to sleep each night with gratitude upon your lips, or to wake yourself each dawn with a winged heart -- to humbly give thanks for being offered yet another day of Loving.” (~ inspired by J. Rumi & Jesus Christ)



*Heading HOME*  
(10/18/2015)

“The act of desperately trying to find our way back is what convinces us we are lost. And the belief that we are surrounded by barbarians is what convinces us we are alone ...

And yet we are not lost -- and we are not alone ... In Truth, we are constantly surrounded by Loved Ones -- and in Truth haven't left Home at all.”

(~ attributed to Rumi)



*An un-silly question, ...  
and an unenlightened Answer*  
(10/25/2015)

I like the Dalai Lama ... I really do. He seems like a pretty nice guy, and most of the time he relays a pretty important message. Yes, it is disconcerting that he has still not yet returned to Tibet to protest Chinese atrocities there in person, and it is actually just as disconcerting that he sometimes panders to what I lovingly call “New Age BS” by telling people that they should have compassion for their enemies because that is the best way to achieve peace for themselves (which is, of course, a total crock) – **and yet** I believe that he is a powerful Force for Good in the world, and I admire him immensely nonetheless ... That having been said, he was recently caught completely off-guard by a particularly insightful question, and as such gave an answer that was completely “unenlightened.” For in response to the question (paraphrased) of “What would you say if you only had one moment to say it” is probably the least silly question of all, and when asked that remarkable query, the Dalai Lama had quite a few very good retorts at his quite-wise disposal:

- \*He could have said, “Love is a verb.”
- \*He could have said, “Be Kind when least inclined.”
- \*He could have said, “Your life is not about you.”
- \*And he could have said, “Do whatever you can with whatever you've got.”

And yet instead of any of these answers -- indeed, instead of even a prolonged, silent smile (which would have allowed the questioner and all others listening in to come up with one of the four aforementioned Truths themselves), our beloved Dalia Lama not only called the question “silly”, but then proceeded to offer one of the least enlightened answers possible -- essentially saying “Feed yourselves when hungry.” (?!?!)

Now I'm sure it's hard to wear the mantle of Holiness, just as I'm sure it is difficult to be continually asked for replies that are expected to be both insightful and wise. That having been said, it is precisely because “holy men” are often asked such questions that they take far greater Care -- and be far more devout champions of CARING -- whenever answering the same.

*Amen* ... Let it be so.



“There is no need for temples; no need for complicated philosophy. My religion is very simple ... My religion is kindness.”  
~ The Dalai Lama

## *Amazing Grace* (10/25/2015)

“This present moment is the only space we each have in which to carry on the positive, unity-based traditions of our ancestors. Indeed, all our present moments are the priceless flashes of Now that bundle together into the future, where they will ultimately create vibrant opportunities for humanity to establish & enliven ways with which to create new traditions that will progressively build a more sustainable global culture ...

Indeed, today -- indeed, in this very moment -- each & every one of us has a choice: to either remain stuck in our old habits of selfishness & callousness; habits of apathy & greed that perpetuate the evils of the status quo, **OR** to aspire to new visionary thoughts and freshly courageous actions that gather all sentient beings together in unity and understanding and cooperation and Love; thereby inevitably one day creating a global state of Grace in which all the Earth's many species will thrive as One.

Let us make that choice;  
... Let us be that Grace.”

(~ inspired by Michael Kowal)



*Unmasking your True Self*  
(10/31/2015)

“Have you ever thought about dressing up as the Noble Woman or the  
Compassionate Man you most want to be ...

... and then simply removing the mask?”

(~ inspired by Heidi Fuller)



## *Long Live Death* (11-10-2015)

During our many months of journeying through life -- long chains of days composed of innumerable instants short yet sparkling; we are in touch with Death all along the way. And the reason we are ever connected with Death is because we have all known real LOVE ... For we have all searched for Love -- and found that Love -- and lost that Love -- and mourned that Love lost -- and let that mourning eventually fade ... And we all have risen to look for Love anew.

And the more we choose to do so, the more purely we do so -- the less we do so for our own pleasure or comfort or security, and the more we do so to bring Joy & Peace to the places where Joy & Peace are not.

And eventually, if we choose to Love enough, we come to know true, selfless Love -- and we sink into the reality that we ARE that Love -- and that we can manifest the same in every single moment of our lives; even in times of sadness -- even in moments of fear -- even in flashes of anger -- even when surrounded by death and suffering; *especially* when surrounded by death and suffering ...

For it is in these moments -- moments when all seems lost and the Sun is gone and we feel as though it might never return and that a smile will never again touch our lips -- it is in these moments of darkness & shadow that our Love is both most precious and most powerful. For it is in these moments that we are most needed ... It is in these moments that we can bring real Hope to those in despair, it is in these moments that we can bring real Solace to those in pain, and it is in these moments that we can bring real Joy to those steeped in sorrow.

Indeed, it is in moments such as these that time stretches beyond the horizon and lengthens through the heavens ... It is in moments such as these when we choose to “Love anyway” that the regrets of the past & the worries for the future completely fade away, and we are left fully and completely in the Now -- fully and completely in this one, present moment; the one moment that is -- this one moment when time has no meaning and where Death holds no sway. In these moments there is nothing left to suffer, for there is nothing left to which to cling or for which to yearn. There is only Peace in the main current of life’s Great River, and our Love -- fully immersed within its flow.

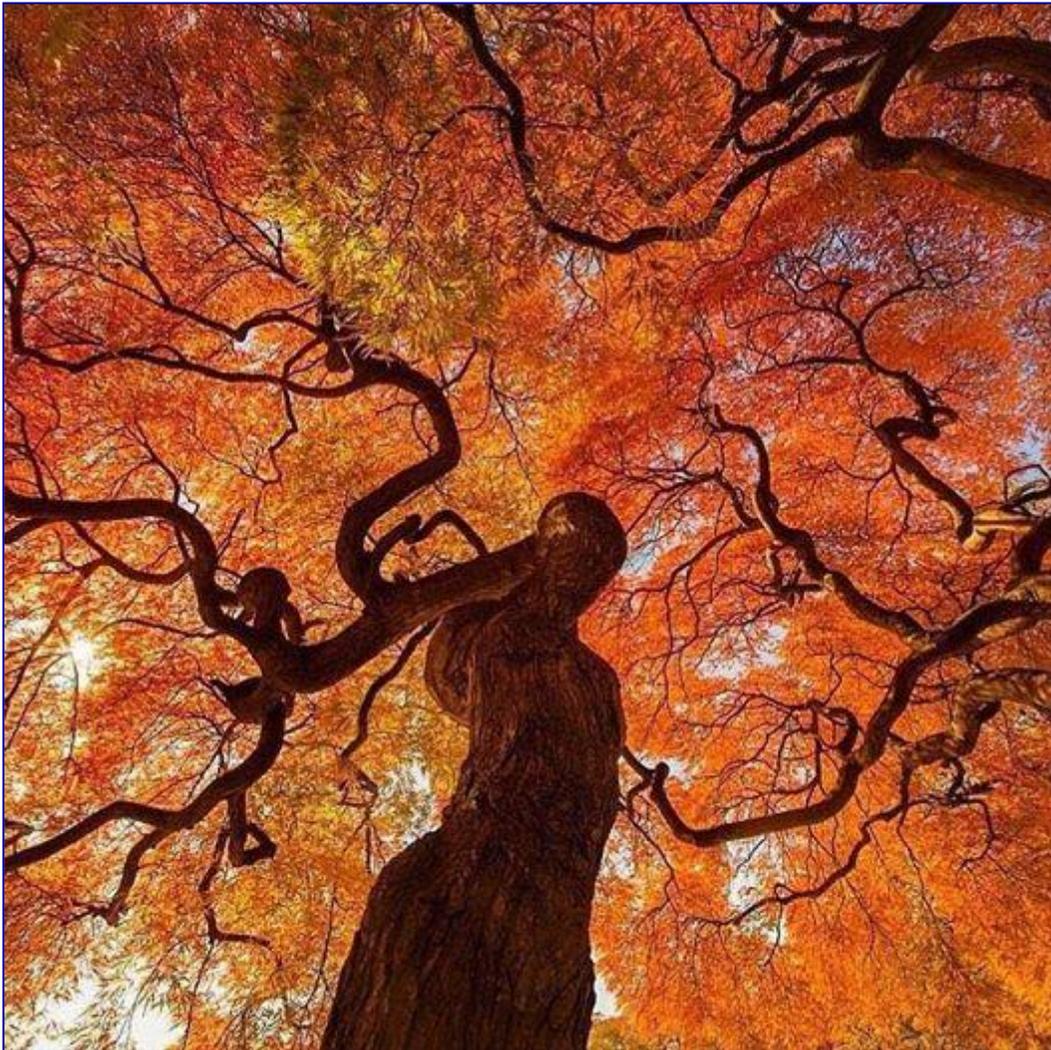


This is the place where the walls we have built around our Souls shatter & tumble ... This is the time when we reach out through “healthy boundaries” barbed and “self-defenses” soured ... This is where we choose to Care anyway -- and thus this is where we defeat Death. For this is where we experience the Truth that Love is all there is -- that Love is the reason we are here -- that Love given purely cannot be dimmed or destroyed -- that Love given purely lives forever ...

And we come to remember that it is Death & Loss that allow such a Love to be given; and that it is Death & Loss that allow such a Love to live.

So long live Death, my Friends ...  
... and thereby longer *live our Love*.

(~ inspired by Naisah van Vliet)

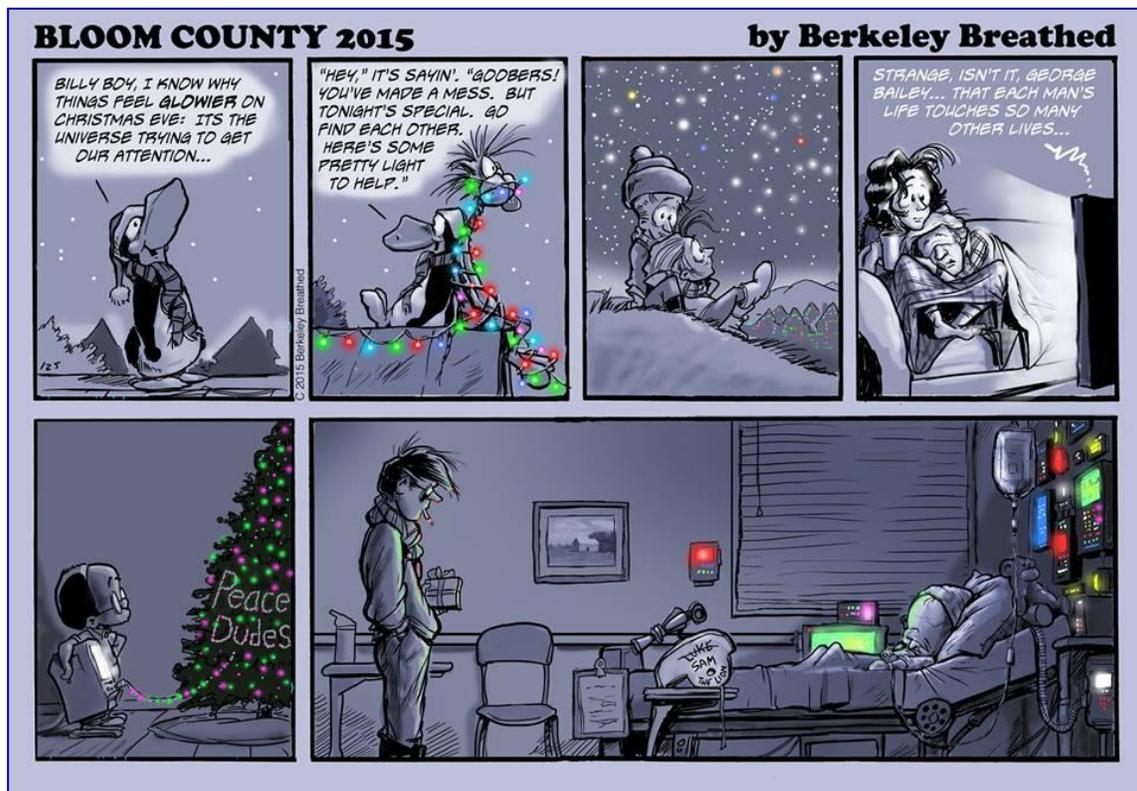


## Redecorating the "Normal" (12/24/2015)

My dear Friends, it isn't strange that our own lives touch so many others ... It isn't strange that every breath we take is a breath shared with many, and that every step we take is a step danced with all ... It isn't strange that every choice we make (and every choice we don't) has tremendously potent consequences -- that there is nothing that we do or don't do that doesn't affect others; peacefully when we act from a place of Kindness; painfully when we act from a place of fear or anger or want.

My dear Friends, it isn't strange that that our own lives touch so many others so deeply ... It is stunningly BEAUTIFUL that they do so.

So go forth and remember the same ...  
... and remember to enjoy the Beauty therein.



## *Making enemies into Art* (12/29/2015)

“The Sand People are easily startled, but they'll soon be back ... and in greater numbers.” ~ Obi-Wan Kenobi

That's the way it is with ALL of our lives' “Sand People” -- all those “enemies” who bother us or bug us or bash us or brutalize us ... We can scare them, insult them, yell at them, punish them, reprove them, attack them, ridicule them -- even run away from them; and yet they just keep coming back in greater numbers – over & over & over again.

And they do so not because they ARE so --- they do so because it is our anger &/or our sadness &/or our annoyance &/or our fear that they are after in the first place ... Refuse to give them these things, and they will look for them elsewhere. Indeed, refuse to give them these things, and they will ultimately stop behaving like “Sand People” at all.

**Peace to ALL ... S**



*No matter what they say*  
(12/26/2016)

My Friends, over the course of your lives, you will be told many things:

\*You will be told that you are only one person, and thus that you can't make a meaningful difference ...

\*You will be told that people simply are who they are, and that they will not listen or change ...

\*You will be told that humanity's salvation is beyond hope (see, global warming) and that war is inevitable (e.g. greed + drones = ISIS & ISIS + drones = more ISIS & more ISIS + even more drones = even more ISIS etc etc etc) ...

\*You will be told that people are cold &/or selfish /&or just don't care – that they don't care about animal abuse; that they don't care about racism; that they don't care about the homeless; that they don't care about peace; that they don't care about Kindness & Decency & Respect...

\*You will be told that it really doesn't matter what you do in this lifetime; that the bad will keep on being bad, and that the system will continue on as is.

Yes, you will be told quite a few things, my Friends ...

... and I say --- **DO GOOD ANYWAY!!!!**

Every deed done for Good brings Goodness, just as every humble search for beauty always finds the Divine. So keep doing that Good & keep finding that Beauty, my Friends ...

No matter what they say, keep searching ...

... & keep finding

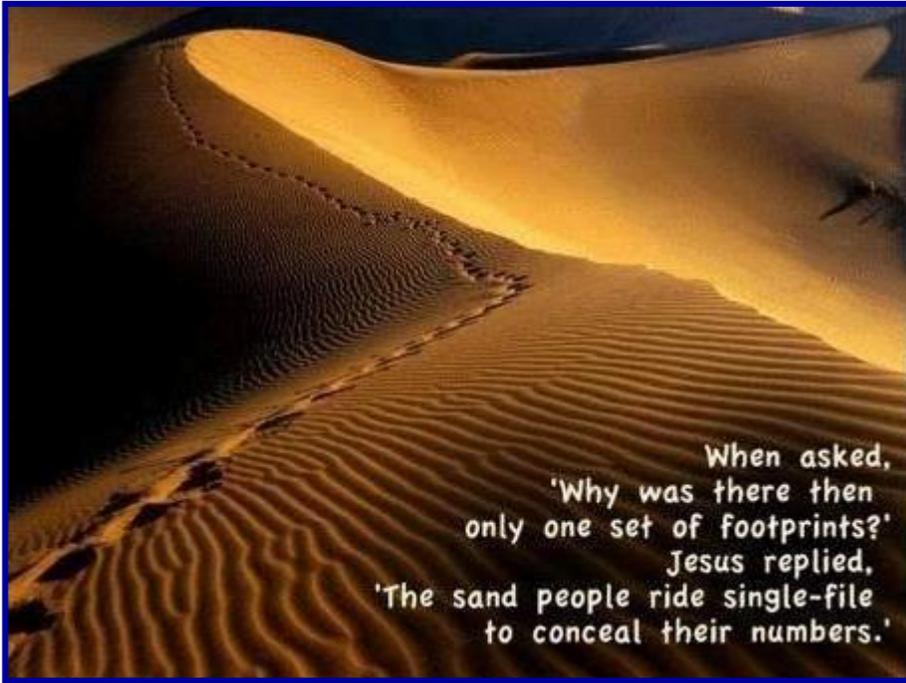
... & *keep Doing!*

“Never tell me the odds.” ~ Han Solo

“Do or do not -- There is no try.” ~ Yoda

“In my experience, there is no such thing as luck.” ~ Obi-Wan Kenobi

[Human history & quantum physics both agree, Mr. Kenobi .]



When asked,  
'Why was there then  
only one set of footprints?'  
Jesus replied,  
'The sand people ride single-file  
to conceal their numbers.'



## *Putting your life to Music* (01/01/2016)

You may not know this, my Friends, but each and every one of you are living an absolutely **EPIC** adventure ... Each & every one of you is tempted every day to take care of yourself first & foremost -- to strive for wealth & comfort & pleasure & power (even if it means hurting others to get them), *AND* each & every one of you is constantly given the opportunity to choose differently.

And this is what makes our lives so phenomenal -- this is the “soundtrack” that is not-so-subtly accompanying our every moment; a score of inspiration & intrigue; always encouraging us (see, in-Couraging us) to make selfless choices -- to transcend our primitive, selfish instincts and sacrifice for the betterment of others instead; to be Kind instead of lashing out in “self-defense”, to be generous instead of “being responsible with our money”, to be gentle & uplifting instead of critical or condemnatory or callous.

This beautiful “soundtrack” is often hard to hear, of course -- often drowned out by the raucous clamors of fear & anger & hope & desire -- and yet it is always there nonetheless; always there within us; calling us to be better than they say we can be -- better than they say we should be -- better than they say we are.

Well, my dear Friends, I'm here to remind you that your “soundtrack” is *who you really are* ... I'm here to remind you that you are amazing and that you are courageous and that you are kind and that you are moral and that you are important ... I'm here to remind you that you can be the Hero of your own life's story ... And I am here to remind you that all you have to do to **BE that Hero** is listen for your “inner soundtrack” -- and live accordingly.

*Amen* ... Let it be so.



*To sit UP, and Sing*  
(01/14/2016)

“Oh Justice, to you I open up my Heart and say – that even at the very end of my life; even with only a single breath remaining within me, if you come to me, I will rise up from my deathbed -- and to you I will sing.” ~ inspired by Rumi



*The Great Lights*  
(01/18/2016)

Every now & then, a Great Light shines forth upon humanity ... Once or twice in every generation (if that generation is a fortunate one), a Man of Honor or a Woman of Integrity stands up to the darkness and loudly proclaims:

“NO! We will **NOT** sink meekly into the shadows of immorality & barbarism -- NO! We will **NOT** fall headlong into the abyss of cruelty & callousness.”

Every now and then, a Great Light shines forth upon humanity ...  
... Thank you, Martin, for being such a Great Light.

May we one day have the humility to hear your Call -- and one day thereafter the Courage to walk your Path.

*Amen* ... Let it be so.

**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.*

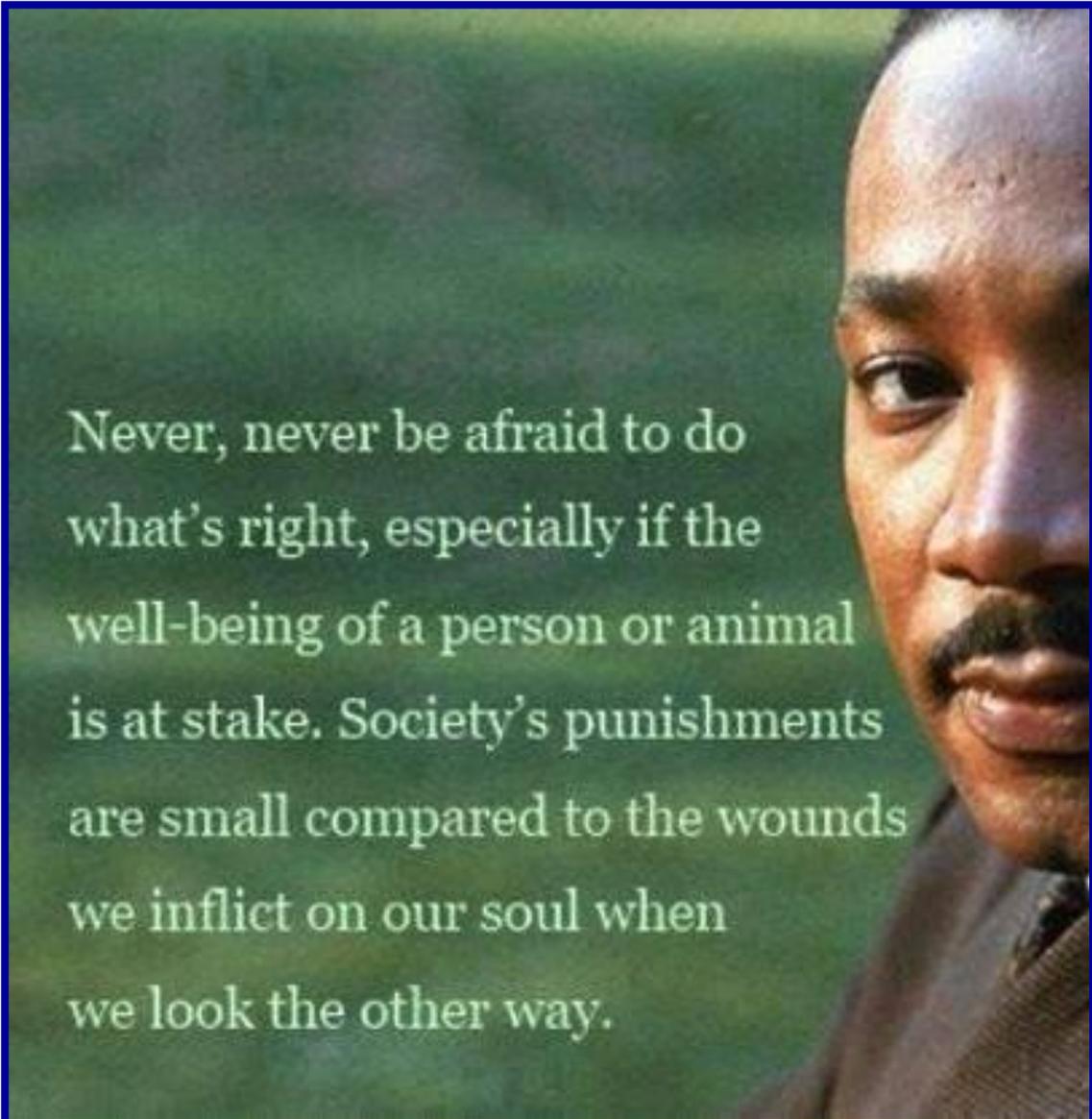
thinkvegan.net



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.

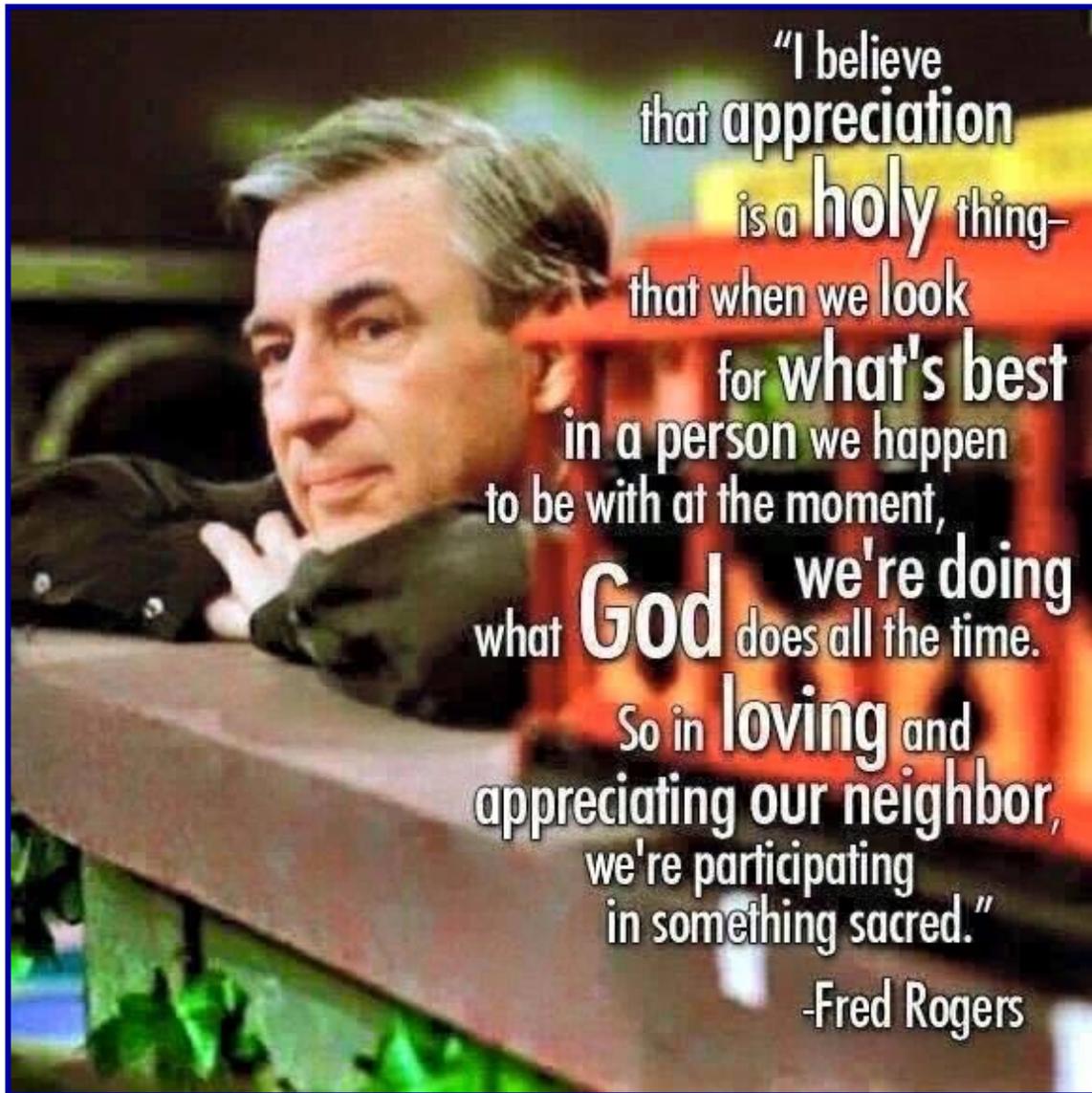
Martin Luther King, Jr.

*Peace to ALL*  
(01/18/2016)



Never, never be afraid to do what's right, especially if the well-being of a person or animal is at stake. Society's punishments are small compared to the wounds we inflict on our soul when we look the other way.

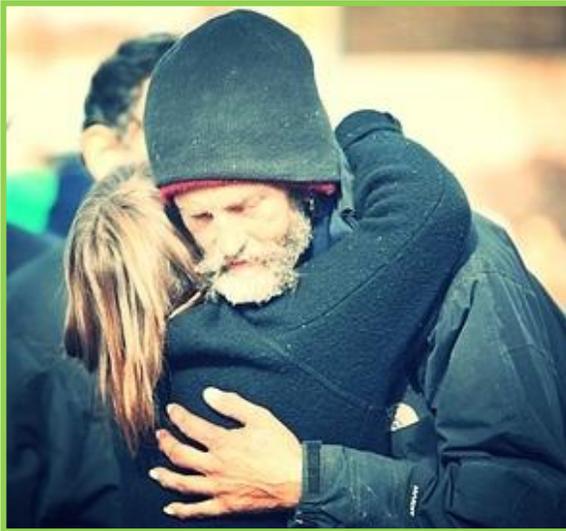
*Welcome to the Neighborhood*  
(01/24/2016)



*Life as a loose garment*  
(02/11/2016)

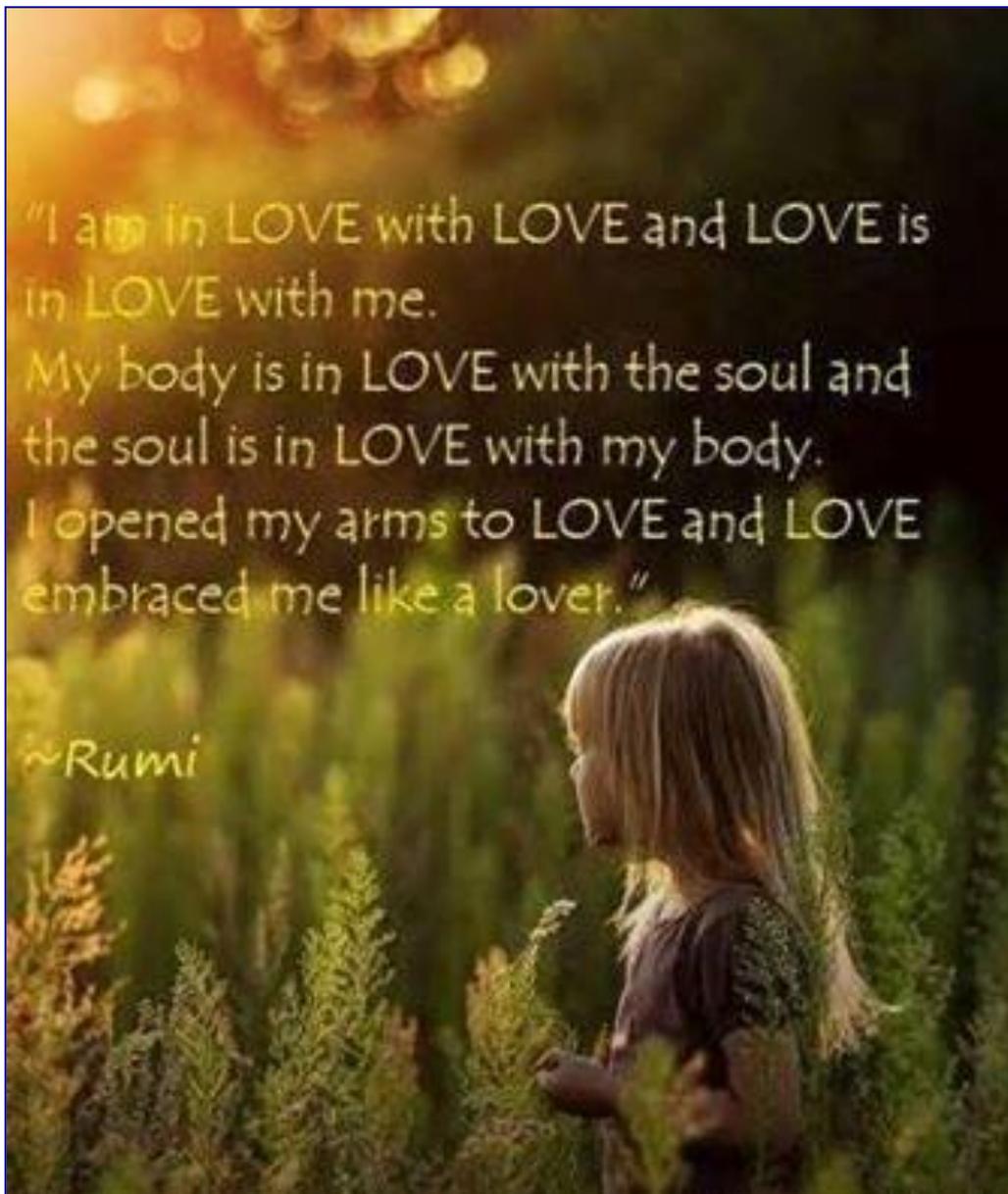
“Today we need not think about whether our wishes will come true or our fears will fade. Today we can simply set ourselves aside, take gentle action for others, and let go of the results ... In this way, we come to wear Life like a loose garment ... In this way, we come to know – and further – real Peace.”

(~ inspired by Helene Lerner-Robbins)



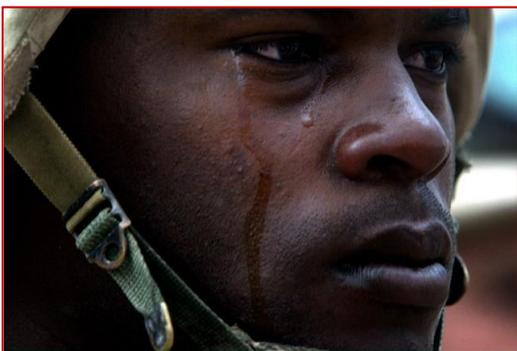
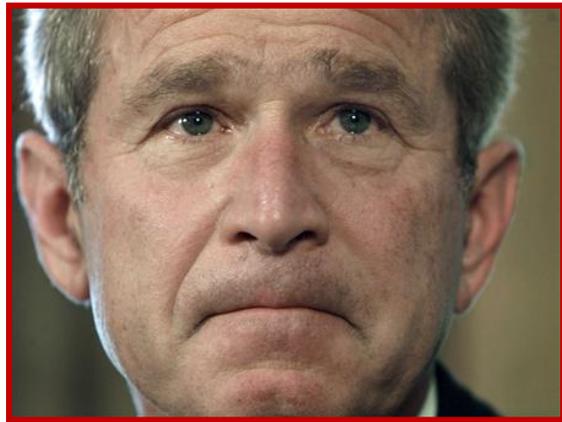
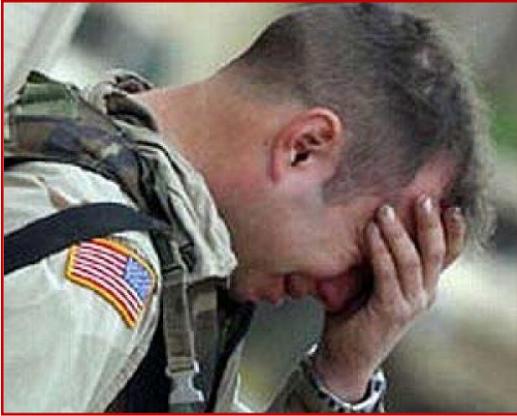
*What LOVE is*  
(02/14/2016)

LOVE is not what we feel when we are “in love”, and LOVE is not the adoration we receive from those who “love” us ... No, my Friends, the only thing LOVE truly is, is what we *do* for others in their time of need. And as such, the only way we will ever come to know real LOVE ourselves, is by stepping boldly into our surroundings and Giving ourselves deeply & completely to everyone nearby & everything close at hand ... **Peace.**



*To gaze Within*  
(03/20/2016)

“I just want to hug the Souls of every soldier and beam them Love --  
acknowledge their road; recognize their loss ... And I just want to stare into the  
eyes of every politician who sends those same soldiers to their premature deaths  
and beam them the same ...



And I just want to connect and send waves of Compassion into every crevice, every crack, and every cranny of every being's Being ... I just want to gaze into them so powerfully, so permeably, so purely --- I want to stare right down to their very Center and hold that gaze until they *feel* the Peace of our Oneness; until they *feel* our Unity so deeply that they never want to go back to their old, ignorant lives of selfishness and division and fear and greed.

I just want to stare them into a place of re-Membering -- a place where we can all begin anew; a place where we never want to speak with hardened voices ever again -- only with our softened Hearts.” ~ inspired by Vanessa Curley



*Sowing the Seeds of Love*  
(04/09/2016)

“We all have the seeds of Love in us. And we can all develop this wonderful source of energy, nurturing an unconditional regard for others that does not expect anything in return.” ~ inspired by Thich Nhat Hanh



Please consider setting this latent TRUTH in motion today -- especially for all those you deem to be “least deserving” of the same ...

*Thank you.*

*Not the only Traveler*  
(04/11/2016)



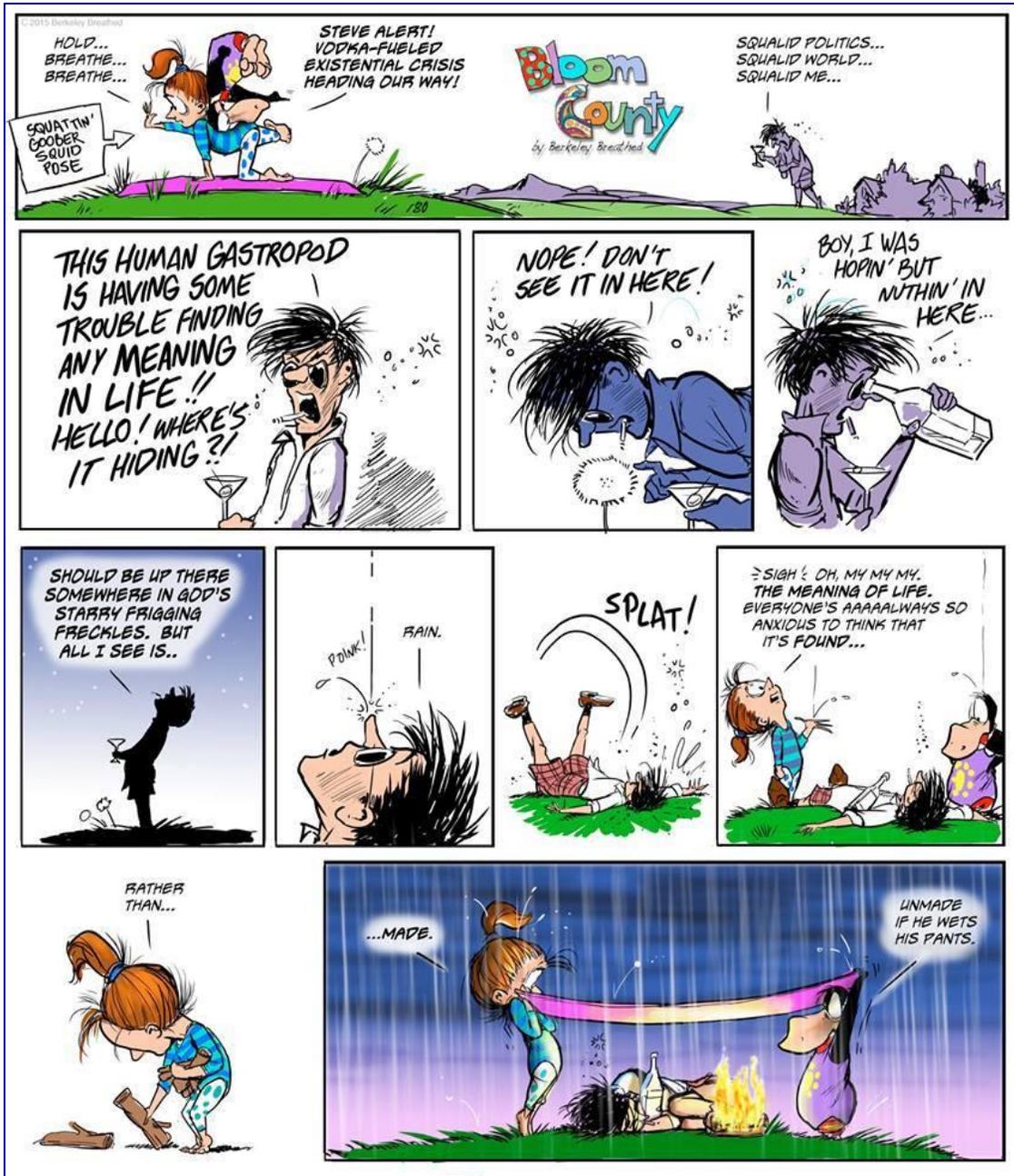
One is never “too young” to serve others ... and one is never “too wealthy” or “too privileged” to not equally deserve an open Heart & open hands ... **Peace.**

# The Meaning of LIFE

(04/10/2016)

And then, of course, there's this ...

“The Meaning of Life cannot be found until one stops selfishly searching for the same.” ~ anonymous



What we mere humans falsely believe to be “love” is indeed a matter of “balance” and “healthy boundaries” and “give & take”, just like many imply ... And that is why this kind of faux “love” is nothing more than a hazy mirage; nothing more than a delusion that actually leads us *away* from real & true LOVE (what many to this day often call “the Love of Christ”) .....

\*True Love is a LOVE that gives everything and asks for nothing in return;

\* True Love is a LOVE that dismantles **all** boundaries -- especially those between us & our enemies;

\* True Love is a LOVE that does not even recognize receiving -- a LOVE that only longs to Give -- often anonymously, and even more often to those who might even turn up their noses at that giving;

\* True Love is a LOVE that acquires “unity” not from finding a partner who cherishes our giving, but rather from simply finding & engaging a brother or a sister in need of the same;

\* True Love is a LOVE that neither desires nor needs to be either acknowledged or appreciated -- a LOVE that always arrives whenever it is perfectly (i.e. humbly & selflessly) given.

You are right, of course, in saying that “without love life has no meaning”, for as the cartoon on the opposing page so brilliantly illustrates, truly LOVING others -- humbly reaching out to Care for them whether they recognize our Love or not -- *is* the Meaning of Life!!!

LOVE -- when purely given -- has IMMENSE purpose whether “unity” is achieved thereby or not. Relieving another’s suffering is enough ... Letting others know they are loved is enough ... Anonymously bringing Joy is enough ... Offering assistance to those seemingly in need is enough ... Extending Kindness to an enemy is enough ... Reaching out to strangers is enough.

Indeed, if we are in it for mere “unity” -- if we are in any relationship to get *anything* in return **at all**, then we are not truly Loving, and do not comprehend true LOVE ... And *that* is EXACTLY what Jesus came to say -- and to emote -- and indeed to show us all.

*Amen.*

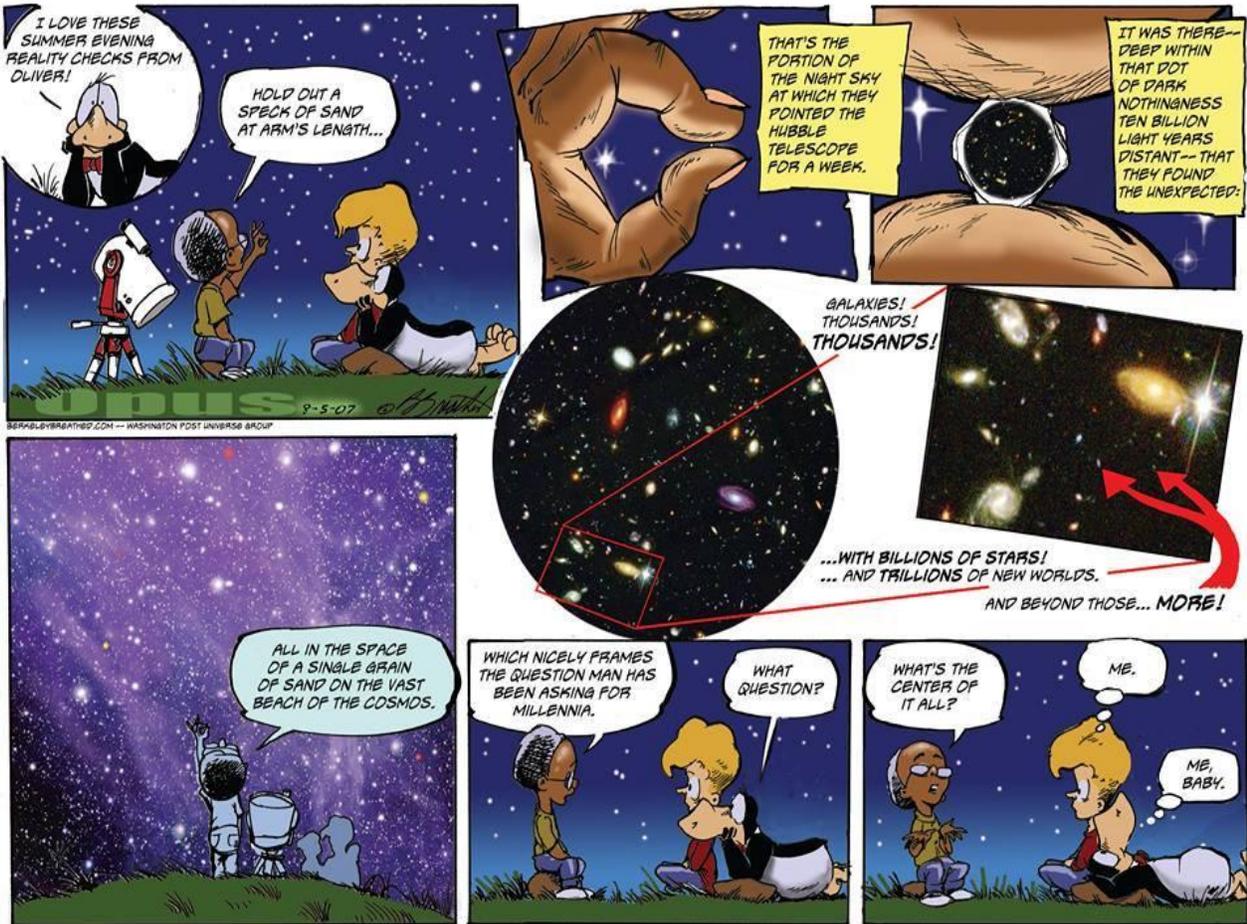
# The Center of the Universe

(04/13/2016)

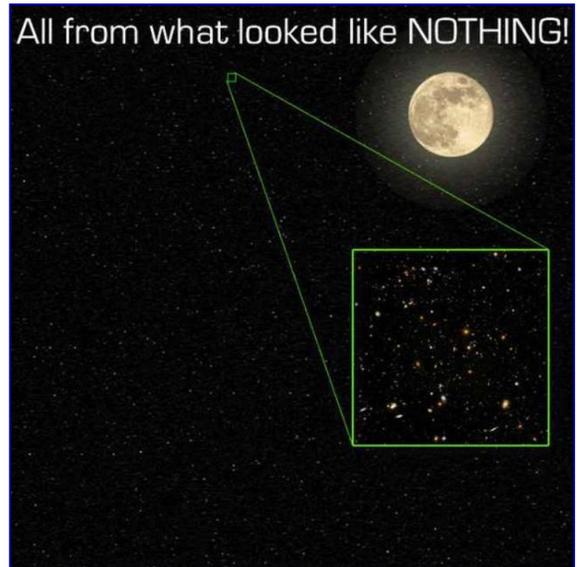
Actually, it is only possible to truly access the true Center of the Universe when we use *our own* "center" thereof to ease the suffering found in another's.

Peace to ALL ... S

2007

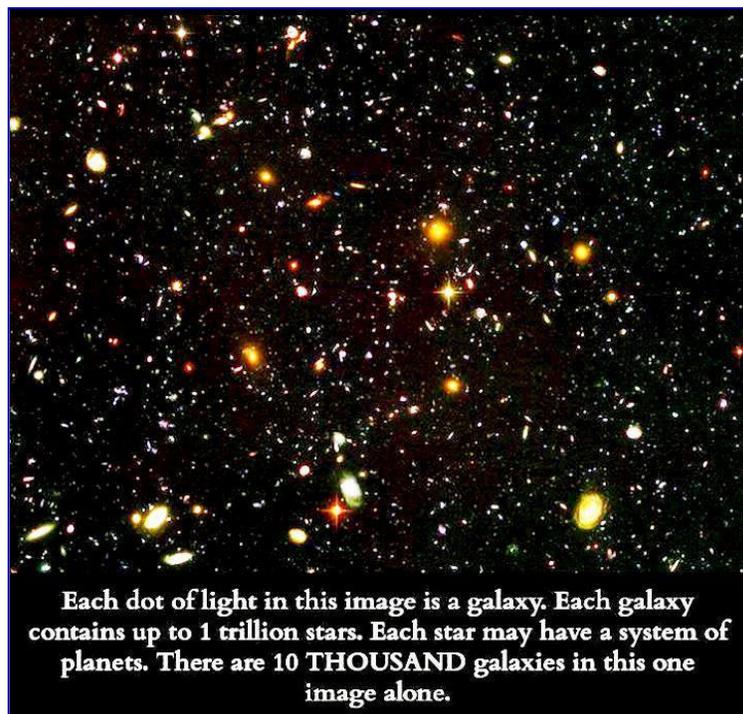


**P.S.** Here is the night-sky location mentioned in the previous comic ...



And here is what the Hubble astronomers found when they did so -- 13.2 **BILLION** years worth of brilliance ...

And to put it all in a bit more perspective (as if that were even possible):



*On happiness & JOY*  
(04/18/2016)

Mere happiness comes primarily from tactile pleasures that are ultimately fleeting or economic successes that inevitably ring hollow ... True & lasting JOY, on the other hand, comes from willingly & happily doing what is least liked, for those least liked, at a time & in a manner where success seems least likely.

Kindness can be difficult to give and even more challenging to get received.

That having been said -- **BE KIND ANYWAY!**

**Peace to ALL ... S**

"THE SUN NEVER SAYS TO THE EARTH,  
'YOU OWE ME.' LOOK WHAT HAPPENS  
WITH A LOVE LIKE THAT.  
IT LIGHTS UP THE WHOLE SKY."

HAFIZ



*The Beauty with IN*  
(04/19/2016)

The stars bear witness every night to the Truth that there is an immense (and immensely beautiful) vastness all around us ... The ability to sacrifice for others bears witness to the fact that there is a similar (and similarly Beauty-full) vastness within.

When we have the humility see all other sentient beings as the Brothers & Sisters they innately are, *and* the courage to treat them accordingly -- especially when society tells us we shouldn't or don't have to do so -- then & only then can we know all of Life's Glories (the inner & the outer); then & only then can we know how Great our lives can indeed become -- and indeed how Amazing they already truly are.

*Amen* ... Let it be so for you & yours today.

(inspired by Will Tuttle)



*You too are Loved*  
(05/12/2016)



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

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

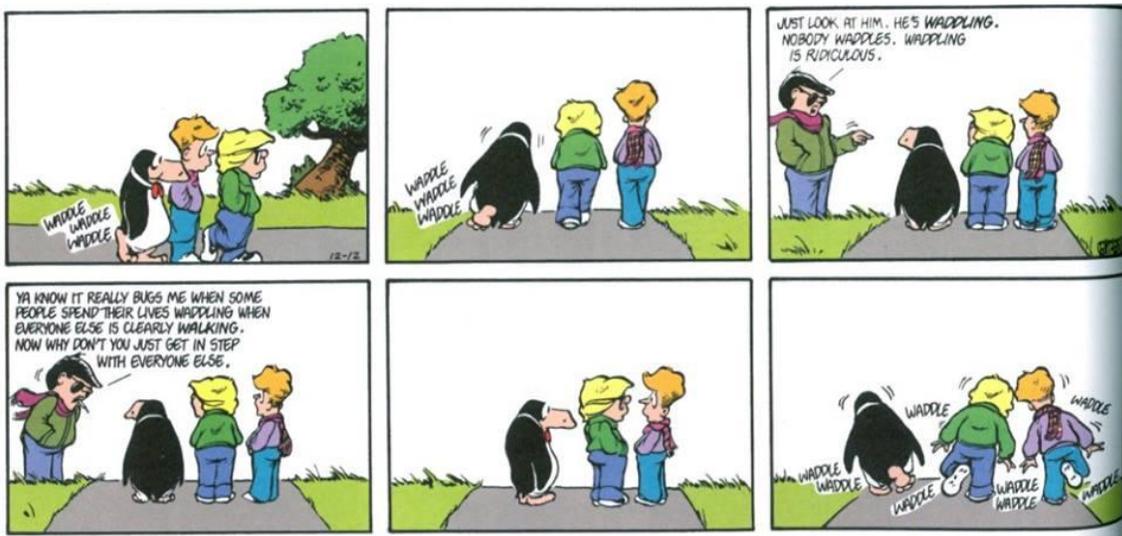
*- inspired by Jody Doty*

## The darkest side of the Light (05/16/2016)

“The darkest side of human nature is our ‘us versus them’ instinct. It is a form of selective sociopathy in which we place our family and close friends in a hierarchy above others. It's not the feelings that are ‘bad’ -- of course it's great to love our families, but we also need to explode that loving shit outward to the downtrodden, to the broken-hearted, and even to the fucking enemy ... And as if this hierarchy wasn't bad enough, our reflexive innate desire is to ‘outgroup’ people and animals who we arbitrarily deem to be different than us. History and social studies have proven time and time again that people are easily and naturally capable of being quite cruel to any being we perceive as the OTHER.

Well, the good news is that there is a cure to such cognitive dissonance. It starts with the mind and is carried through by the ‘Heart’ ... The moment you embrace the objective truth that no-one is inherently better than any other or any more worthy of life, this is your first true chance at freedom beyond instinctive bondage. Once this Truth is realized, you can awaken your humility and rediscover your true Human Potential ... Indeed, the potential Happiness of the entire world depends on it. So choose your intentions wisely, my Friends.”

(~ inspired by Scotty Mühleib)



*LOVE*, regardless of race ...



*LOVE*, regardless of gender or species ...



*Amen* ... Let it be so.

*A bit of Good News*  
... or “*The very best of Hair Days*”  
(06/04/2016)

“Going to Hell in a hand basket” is a phrase I've heard quite a bit these last few days -- and for seemingly good reason ... Rampant animal cruelty (a.k.a. “meat” & “milk”), America's next President (currently a choice between a bigoted narcissist and a war-mongering sociopath), and the world's poor fighting amongst themselves (instead of focusing their discontent on those who are truly responsible for their pain) are all daunting challenges looming on humanity's next horizon ...

Heck, sometimes it really does feel like a good hair day (see Opus on the opposing page) is all we've got going for us.

Of course, the only thing we *truly* have going for us is the thing we *always* have going for us – the ability we have every day to make Life more Peace-full:

\*... the ability to go vegan (and start living a life consistently based in Compassion); even the ability to protest loudly for animal rights -- to boldly stand up for Justice and help stop the madness ...

\*... the ability to reach out to conservatives & liberals alike and remind them that there are no more political solutions for problems caused by politics in the first place; and also the ability to join forces with our neighbors and start rebuilding our communities -- making them self-sustainable havens of Health & Caring ...

\*... the ability to reach out to all strangers with a smile of Kindness; even the ability to reach out to the downtrodden – to the poor, to the hungry, to the homeless, to the fearful -- with random acts of Respect-filled Kindness.

*This* is what I call “Love”, my Friends, and *this* is why I still get up every morning ... *This* is the only revolution worth fighting and it is the only revolution that will ever ultimately succeed.

In conclusion then, good hair days simply aren't enough ...

We've got to **WAKE UP** to what is actually going on around us ...

... and then we've got to **get out there and CARE!**

# Bloom County

by Berkeley Breathed

2.01

BAD. WHOA, IT'S BAD.

I'M SO DEPRESSED I CAN'T EAT MY DING DONG.

THEY'RE BACK!

THAT'S IT. WE'RE DONE. COOKED. PUT A FORK IN US.

IT WAS A GOOD TRY.

OH, EVERYTHING'S FINE.

THESE AREN'T BACK

WHADDYA MEAN "EVERYTHING'S FINE?" NOTHING'S "FINE."

YEP! FINE! FINE! FINE! FINE! FINE! FINE! FINE! FINE!

WHAT'S WITH THE SWAGGER?! YOU HAVE A CLEARLY DISCERNIBLE BOUNCE IN YOUR STEP!

I'M SURE I DON'T KNOW OF WHAT YOU SPEAK.

BOUNCE

YOU HAVE A BOUNCE!

DIDN'T NOTICE.

HOW DO YOU GET TO KEEP A BOUNCE IN YOUR STEP WHILE WE FACE EXISTENTIAL DEBACLE?!

OH, I THINK AMERICA PRECISELY UNDERSTANDS THE SECRET TO KEEPING A BOUNCE IN THE FACE OF DOOMNESS!!

A GOOD HAIR DAY.

Woo!

*Reborn in a New Morning*  
(06/10/2016)

With all the reasonable, injustice-fueled rage I was feeling this morning -- over war-mongering & Monsanto-pandering Hillary stealing the nomination from Bernie Sanders (and probably the election from the American people) ... over Bernie seemingly caving in and leaving millions of his decent-hearted and highly motivated supporters hanging ... over Elizabeth Warren & Al Franken both endorsing Killary for President (two of the mere handful of, I thought; moral folks left in the U.S. Congress -- WTH?!?!?) ... over Obama's smug, baby-killing mug doing the same ... over so many millions of Americans openly & avidly supporting either a bigoted narcissist or a deceitful sociopath ... So much sound cause for rage there was & is, and yet leave it to my dear Friend Scotty to bring me back to Peace. Leave it to him to remind me this glorious morning that our lives are Meaning-full and Good no matter what evils are whirling around us; that we always have the opportunity (many opportunities, actually) to go forth every single day and **be the Force for Good** that we wish our "leaders" would be.

Thanks for that, Scotty ... You're a Good Man.

"I don't talk much about God, because it is such a loaded term. But I do like to talk about Hell, because I've lived it. And every time I was there, it came in the form of a terrible psychosis in which reality and fantasy were merged. There was no weeping ... Weeping was long gone because it is a symptom of humanity. There was however, very much gnashing of teeth. I understand why Catholics believe in purgatory, because I've lived that too, after being not baptized by water, but by flame.

And yet regardless of the how literally correct or incorrect those metaphysical extrapolations may be, baptism by the flame of honesty always leads to a void-like state where an earnest person can learn, if they choose, to slowly build up meaning through compassion -- and thereby let past cruel intentions melt away into oblivion.

I've had several near-death experiences over the course of my life, and to this day I still have doubts about every single one. But I do know they have all helped me to reformulate the person I want to be -- a person who embodies compassion, and thus feels pain instead of joy when witnessing the floundering of others. When you choose to deeply feel the pain of the other as if it's your own, you'll always much rather help than hurt."

~ Scotty Mühlleib



*To Weather the STORM*  
(06/25/2016)

When your life's next Great Storm begins to rage & bluster, know that there are two methods of approach that can bring Peace -- either flow around it and onward to horizons other;



... or remain steadfast, raise your hands to the heavens, and let the wind & rain cleanse the dust from your Soul.



*THE Answer*  
(07/01/2016)

If you are looking to lead a fulfilling life that is in harmony with what some call your Calling (and others call “God's Will”), I've got some Good News:

While walking it might indeed be ever-challenging,

... finding it is pretty darn simple.

**Peace** to ALL ... S

Life is not here to be wasted in harming others we have no need to harm. And love is not here to be wasted, it is here to be given.

- Ashley Capps

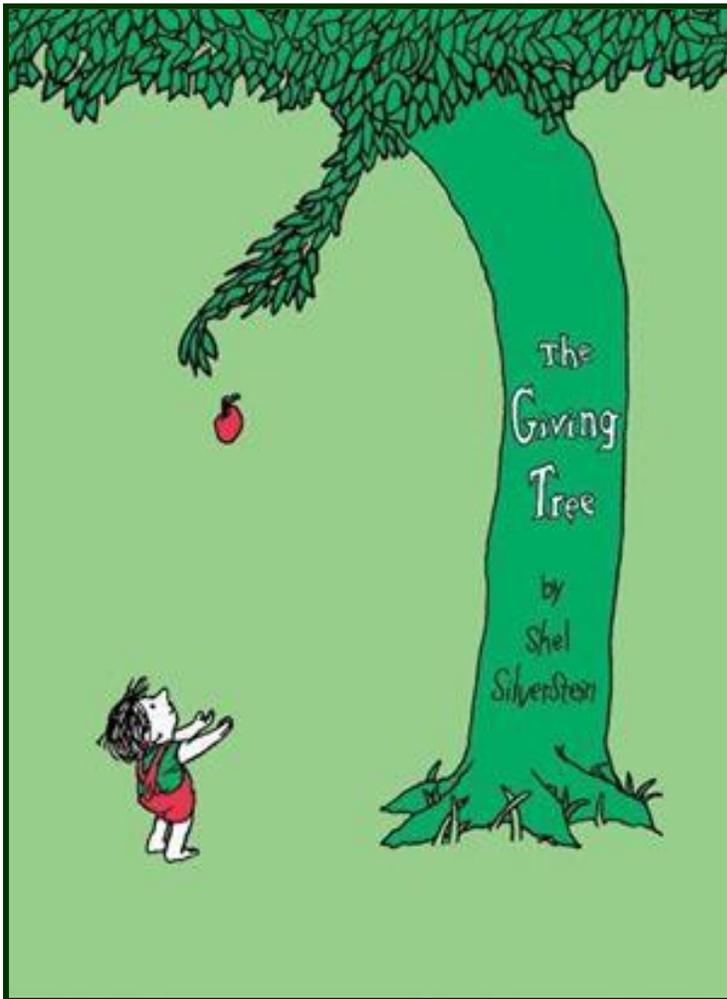


♥ Santuario Igualdad Interspecie

## *The Giving Tree* (07/02/2016)

The quote that follows is probably the best synopsis of the brilliant book “The Giving Tree” that I have ever read. It absolutely nails it -- just like the book absolutely nails it ... Some folks are starting to wake up to the fact that the only true Joy in life comes not merely when we give to others but rather when we Joy-fully *sacrifice* to give to them; and yet where Scotty takes the next step is in reminding us all that the greatest suffering we will ever know comes from wasting our preciously fleeting lives by steadily accumulating “wealth” & “comfort” & “success” for ourselves ...

Let go of the latter to enliven the former ... **Peace** to ALL.



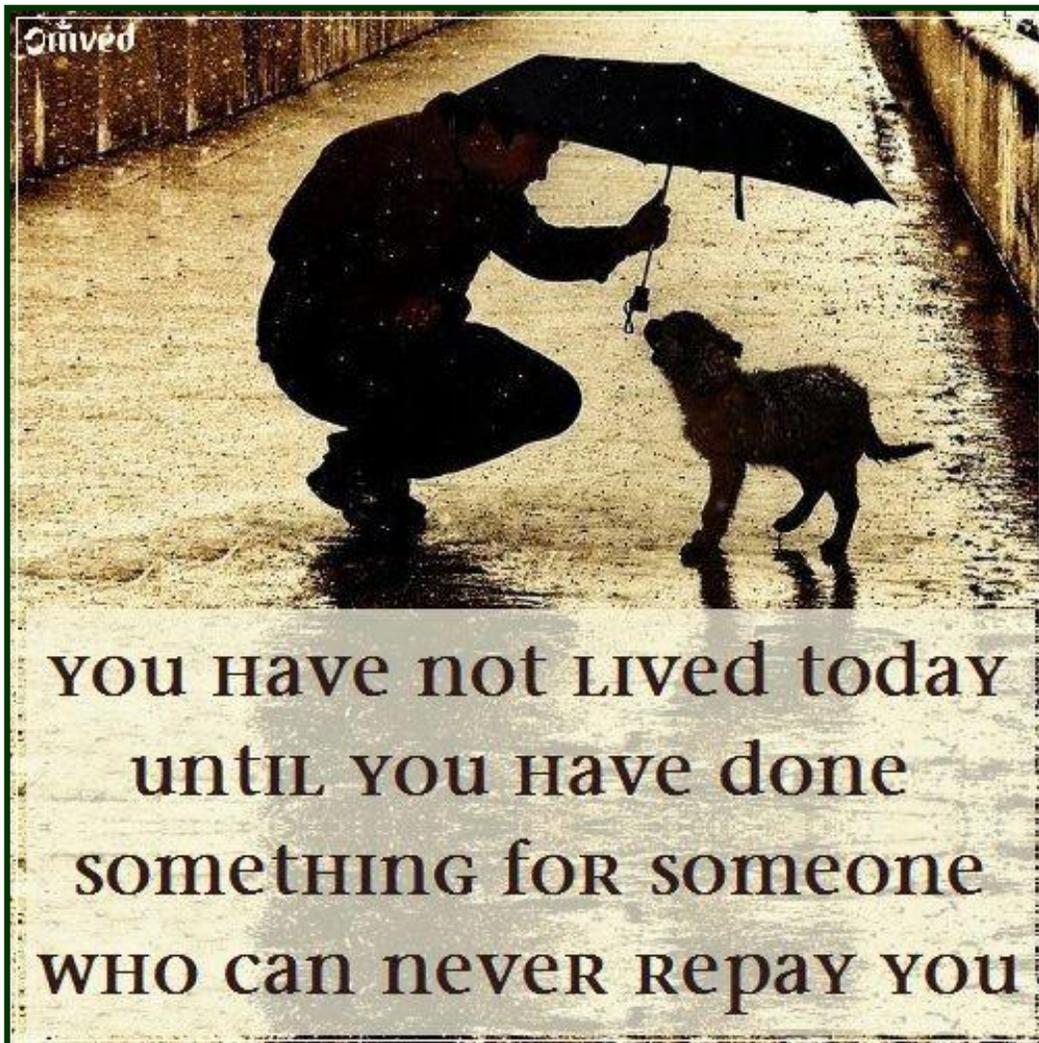
“*The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein is one of the greatest spiritual parables of modern times. When I was a kid, I couldn't understand why the tree was so damn happy while the little punk-ass kid was seemingly taking advantage of it. I hated this kid. I wanted to kick him in the nuts and throw rocks at him ... And yet now I get it. The Giving Tree is the meek and the all-powerful. Don't worry about the tree when you read the story -- The tree feels great. You need to worry about the kid ... Poor kid.”

~ Scotty Mühleib

“While it is not for me to encourage you to practice giving in any certain manner, it is my intention to re-mind you how powerful your opportunities to Give can become ... The most potent generous act is the one that gives more than is expected, without a desire for reimbursement, in times of personal discomfort and to those deemed ‘least deserving’ ...

Giving more than is expected assures that your generosity will not be tainted by others’ hopes or feelings of entitlement ... Giving without the desire for personal reward assures that your generosity will be witnessed as such ... And giving in times of personal distress to those deemed ‘least deserving’ radically enhances the effectiveness of that generosity – because quite simply the more difficult an act is to engage, the more powerful it becomes.”

~ anonymous



## *To Blaze the Trail* (07/03/2016)

Even though we as a species are indeed falling, we *can* use such times of fear & bewilderment to empower Great Acts of LOVE ... And, once just enough of us choose do so for just long enough, we as a species will indeed collectively awaken once more to the Truth that we are merely members of one, great Sentient Family -- and we will collectively start acting accordingly.

Of course, in order for us all to appreciate such great lives of great Joy & Wonder, some of us are going to have to step forth a little earlier than the rest -- some of us are going to have to **blaze the trail** upon which the masses will indeed one day follow.

And it can be a lonely task, this trail-blazing, and yet nothing is in the end more important, and thus nothing in the end can ever be more fulfilling ... There is risk involved, it's true, and indeed there is no guarantee of imminent revelry or short-term success, and yet The Way thereto remains ready for us nonetheless.

Yes, it is a path still strewn with the jagged boulders of angst & ignorance, and yes, it is indeed a route still clouded by the thick haze of fervors both nationalist & religious, and yet with selflessness as our Strength and LOVE as our Light, we *can* clear that trail and illuminate it for others to follow ... We *can* light the Way out of the Darkness -- *if* we work together to do so.

So, my dear Friends ...

... Will you help me do so today?

*“A human being is part of a whole ... a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and his feelings, as something separated from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of his independent consciousness. And it is this very delusion that forms a kind of prison for us; restricting us to our personal affections for the few people nearest us, and a subtle, wary enmity reserved for the rest. Our task, therefore, must be to free ourselves from this prison -- by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living beings as brothers & sisters, and the whole of nature as our Home.” ~ inspired by Albert Einstein*



*Stormy night, stormy Day*  
(07/07/2016)

“Here is tonight's stormy sunset ... I am grateful for this gentle reminder that I must simply change where I set my gaze in order to increase Peace. My heart beats through that vision ... When I am angry, frustrated, or afraid of the horrors and injustices going on in our world, it is easy to lose focus; easy to allow my actions of Love to be diluted by my emotions ... And yet tonight I look to the stormy sky and remember to keep my head pointed down to my Here&Now in those times of torment; to simply focus on each moment and find even the smallest way to serve those around me therein; not to live in fear of the thunder or to dread the horrors of the hilly horizon, but simply to shrug my shoulders -- and smile -- and then boldly set forth into that glorious uncertainty; to simply do whatever Good I can do and then let go of all that results.

This is the way great Beauty can come from every Storm.”

~ inspired by Vanessa Curley



*The brevity of Life*  
(07/16/2016)

“When we finally come to understand the incontrovertible brevity of life, its fleeting joys and unavoidable pains; when we finally come to accept the simple fact that all of us are every day steadily approaching an inevitable end: the mere awareness of this awesome Truth makes us more considerate of each other.

Knowing that we all have but this one, veil-thin life – this one whisper of a moment to do some Good before we go -- to make a mark for Justice or leave a legacy of Love, we automatically rekindle an inherent desire to put forth our best efforts to help all fellow travelers upon our road; to make the path just a bit brighter and just a bit smoother for others as we ourselves journey along its winding way.

Indeed, by awakening to the Truth of our patent & undeniable interconnection, we instantly feel a closer kinship – know a humbler understanding -- and remember a more heartfelt compassion for *all* our fellow wayfarers; for all those who must live in our common life, for all those who must suffer in our common pains, for all those who will revel in our common victory, and for all those who will indeed meet our common end.” ~ inspired by Clarence Darrow

*Amen* ... Let it be so.



## *To Become so much*

(07/24/16)

“Fiery sunsets remind me of who I have grown to be and who I have agreed to remain -- **Honest**; authentic with my Self by remaining Caring towards others. I am ever-able to offer my full presence; Giving what is necessary to Love fully by serving selflessly ... Tonight I remember these things, that tomorrow I will remember to bring passion to them by engaging others with courage & intimacy, knowing as I do so that merely 'tolerating' or 'accommodating' those nearby will not bring the same.

I choose to see things as they are -- if not err on the side of seeing them as a bit better than they are, and I do so while remaining true to my Calling of standing for Justice -- while remaining steadfast to my Vision of acting for Peace.

It is true that I might fail, and yet I will ever take responsibility for standing up again when I do. I will repeatedly remind my Self to be present in Service to others -- humbly & actively demonstrating the Power of Community and the Strength of truly unconditional Love.

What a wonderful mantra! What a wonderful reminder of Who I have chosen to BE and Who I truly AM! ... I had no idea a simple sunset could remind me of the Freedom I have to become so much.”

~ inspired by a sunset & Vanessa Curley



*To be filled with Glory*  
(08/03/2016)

“Look at everything always as though you were either seeing it for the first or the last time: Thus will your time on Earth ever be filled with glory ... **And** look at everyone always as though you were either seeing them for the first or the last time: Thus will your time on Earth ever be filled with Joy.”

~ inspired by Betty Smith



*The most Beauty-full thing*  
(08/06/2016)

“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious, for it is the numinous source of all true art and science ... Indeed, he to whom enraptured emotion is but a stranger, and she who can no longer pause enclosed in awe, are both as good as dead. Their eyes are truly closed even when remaining wide open. Their hearts are truly frigid even when pretending to radiate warmth.”

~ inspired by Albert Einstein

Wherever you are today, my Friends, remember to open your eyes ... There is great Beauty there with you. And then -- after you have opened your eyes to that Beauty, remember to open your Hearts to all those nearby -- and pass that Beauty on to them.



*Knowing the Enemy*  
(08/07/2016)

“It is not our abilities or our circumstances that define Who we Are -- It is our choices ...The enemy of Destiny is fear. We think it is our economic limitations or our physical challenges or the hatred & the ignorance of others around us, but the real enemy isn't any of those things at all. Our real enemy is our own fear; our fear & our fear alone.”

~ inspired by J. K. Rowling & M. Gandhi





*“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)*