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Community

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THE POWER TO HANDLE CHALLENGE

By Michael Strelcheck

Things have been a kind of a downer lately. The recent violent storms that have criss-crossed the country have left havoc in their wake, issuing forth windy and watery destruction (not to mention the raging wild fires out West). And if that wasn't enough, we hear from the media that our economy is again faltering and we're faced with a gargantuan national debt that's choking-off our future prosperity. One begins to wonder, what'll be the next problem?

Recently, I dug out my old LP of the classic rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* – perhaps unknowingly looking for inspiration. As I did I vividly recalled 1970 when this musical piece was groundbreaking as well as highly controversial. I guess I was unconsciously trying to reconnect to the progressive spirit of that time – you know, as Bob Dylan had wrote, *“the times, they're a changing.”* I gingerly blew the dust off the old grooved vinyl and gave the “platter” a spin!

Curiously, as I listened, I found that time had mellowed the once radical edge to the play and that it seemed almost quaint - by today's standards. Then gradually, as I listened, it dawned on me that what mattered in 1970 as well as at the time of the Christ was the same thing that's important today. Then, as in the 70's and now, a beaten-up and suffering public was crying out for deliverance.

In one of the more moving moments of the play, an inspired disciple, Simon, called upon Jesus to use his accumulated glory (popularity) and its power to evict the Romans from their lands. Jesus replied – and this is line that got my attention – “. . . nor the Romans, nor the Jews, nor Judas, nor the Priests, nor the Scribes, nor doomed Jerusalem itself understands what power is, understands what glory is, understands at all.”

Now, I make no claim that the authors of the play were enlightened souls (Andrew Lloyd Weber also co-wrote the twisted and melodramatic “The Phantom of the Opera”), but the line seemed rather “otherworldly.” The Jesus they were portraying seemed dead-set against violence towards the

establishment in lieu of some other type of “supernatural” response, like he knew something no one else did. It got me *thinking* about the meaning of power?

My thoughts led me back to political science class and a particular lecture. “Individuals are forced to “adapt” to ever changing conditions in their society.” Proclaimed the instructor. As a young adult I didn't realize the ‘gravity’ of that comment and walked away disagreeing, thinking that a powerful person could do just the opposite – make life adapt to them! Oh the folly of youth!

After some years of life experience I've learned that the one sure thing a person can count on in life is change – and the challenges it brings. You know the problem, as soon as you finally get things the way you want them – something unexpected comes along and messes everything up, and then you have to start the hard work all over again. It's those times when we wish we could take life by the scruff of the neck and force it to behave!

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So, if power isn't the ability to force life to do your bidding – then what could it be?

Perhaps the answer lies in a person's attitude. Rather than concentrating on protecting oneself from unexpected difficulties a person could be actively anticipating change in their life. Why? I recall reading a statement - by someone who was pretty wise (their name slips my mind right now) that shared this profundity!

"Those individuals who seize the opportunities that change brings gain power over those who struggle to cope."

Could the answer be that simple? Could a simple shift of perspective lead one to gain the upper hand on unexpected difficulties? In other words, if a person would stop worrying or fearing the unexpected and rework their thinking so that they were ready to take advantage of the unexpected - they would put themselves in a position of power.

Although this may sound easy, in order to do this one must learn to look forward and not backward in their life. Meaning, to progressively embrace change one must be willing to "let-go" of old things in order to make room for the new things that they will acquire. To illustrate this idea we can consider a simple analogy; if a person's hands were full and they were offered something new, that excited them, they would have to put something down so that they would have a free hand to grasp the new treasure. Hence, **power** would be expressed by making the choice to accept the new. Whereas, an unwillingness to take what's offered could trap a person in the past (just like someone who still values old vinyl LP's over modern digital recordings.)

Consequently, in the reworking of one's attitude towards challenge there needs to be a willingness to exchange present things of value for the new things that become available. In this way a person's life keeps up with the constant changes that confront them.

Politics

I Am Not Responsible

By Dale Lucht

The other day I was at the annual meeting of the "Friends of the Beloit/Janesville Symphony". I was seated at the table with the new president of the organization and an older couple. In small talk, the president asked the elderly couple what they would be able to help her with. The elderly woman replied, "Oh Dear, we are just not responsible,

anymore." She meant that they traveled often, and they couldn't be sure when they would be in town. I told them when I left that I was going to file that saying away and pull it out when I was older.

I didn't think that I would use that phrase this soon. The current political scene in Wisconsin and Washington, D.C. makes me want to shout out that I am not responsible. I didn't vote for these politicians, is this the best that we can do? Can't we find anyone that will represent the common man? I need a bumper sticker made up, that reads: "I Am Not Responsible".

Even Paul Ryan, my representative, is against me. I've said before that I believe Paul Ryan is as honest as any politician can be. However his view on life is 180 degrees from mine.

Let us take a quick look at his "Roadmap for America's Future." He leaves Medicare and Social Security alone for those 55 and above. In effect what he wants to do is privatize these programs. As I have said before Privatization is just a nice way of referring to theft. Public money is given to Corporations (insurance firms and investment counselors). Look how well they have performed in the last decade. George W. Bush never met a tax he liked. He raised the debt limit 6 or 7 times in his 8 years, and cut taxes when he could.

Any person who tries to live on budget knows that you can't borrow your way out of debt. You either cut expenses or earn more money. The democrats and republicans agree on cutting expenses. They can't agree on which expenses to cut. Of course the republicans believe it is sacrilegious to raise taxes. I believe that the republican's real god is greed.

Ryan has also bought into the Republican's big lie. Tax breaks increase investment in businesses and increases jobs. This hasn't worked in the last thirty years since Reagan first came out with his "Voodoo Economics", as George H.W. Bush called it.

"Trickle Down" economy doesn't trickle down or seep down. It's as if the economist have erected a dam. So all the money stays behind the dam. The only people who make money are the rich people living on the high ground. The people living downstream don't receive any benefits. They get the wastewater.

Paul Ryan wants to lower taxes 10 % for \$50,000 individual income. Above this 25% tax is suggested. No tax on interest, capital gains and dividends; also eliminates the death tax. I've got nothing so I already don't pay tax on this. In the Clinton years the tax rate went from 31% to 39%. Financially the country was in pretty good shape then. When Bush came in they gradually lowered the rate to 35%. Then of course he spent trillions on unnecessary wars. However there is another way to look at taxes and that is the Effective Tax Rate. After deductions this is what actually is paid. On the richest 400 Americans the effective tax rate on capital gains went from 33% to 15%. The effective tax rate on income went from 28% to 17%. This is why we lowly peons think that the rich don't pay enough.

I believe that Paul Ryan needs an intervention. When a friend or family member is getting into drugs, gambling, drinking, etc, friends get together to try and straighten him out and gets him some help. We have to find a family that is barely surviving on their income from their job at Wal-Mart. Let the congressman pay the bills and do the grocery shopping, and pay the doctor. Any congressman would benefit from this intervention.

The problem with our style of government is that the politicians lose touch with those that he represents. The only solution to the problem is to elect capable incorruptible politicians. How do we make it so?

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I have heard it said that it takes 9 months to manifest what you want. The election of 2012 is 17 months away. I propose that for the next 8 months we think about what qualities we want in our representatives. If Walker gets recalled we'll have less time to manifest his replacement. So we have to start now. I want honesty, tact, and enough intelligence not to have naked pictures on the internet. What do you want? Let me know. I foresee this as ripples in a pond that spread out to infinity. Southern Wisconsin is the epicenter of this movement clean honest representation. Please let me know what qualities you want in our representatives, and keep that pond in your mind's eye until we drop that pebble.

**The Next American Revolution:
Sustainable Activism for the Twenty-First Century**
by Grace Lee Boggs
A book report by Jeanie Johnson

It is becoming apparent from many different perspectives that We The People need some revitalization in our personal and collective politic. What is working and what is not working as we, particularly in Wisconsin, struggle with a Governor's administration that is clearly bent on pulling supports out from under the poor and the middle class while shifting the wealth of the state to private corporations and their masters.

Many people have written to this over the past months and there is little I can add of consequence but I hope that by reporting on **The Next American Revolution** by Grace Lee Boggs I might add something to the discussion, (as well as encourage others to read Grace), that must happen in serious ways not only in Wisconsin but across the country.

This is the best book I have read in a long time. Why? Because Grace has written down distilled wisdom from a long life in only 150 pages. Because her life of activism is current – yes, she is still active in her home community of Detroit where she and her late husband, Jimmy Boggs, energized people during the 60's, 70's, 80's, 90's and she is still participating right now at age ninety-five. Because Grace is the most dedicated thinker writing on peace, justice and community building I have heard of and because of her clear process she is able to speak to present concerns and challenges as she encourages us to study Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X for their radical thinking.

Grace Lee was raised in Rhode Island the daughter of Chinese immigrants. She received her PhD in philosophy from Bryn Mawr College in 1940. When she was unable to find a position within the good old white boys' network she moved to Chicago and began her transformation into a movement activist. Grace was witness to and participant in all of the earth-shaking movements of the twentieth century from the civil rights movement to the labor movement, the women's movement and the environmental movement. Grace's biggest contribution to the political landscape as the twentieth century progressed was her imperative to think dialectically. Wikipedia gives the following definition of the method:

The **dialectical method** is dialogue between two or more people holding different points of view about a subject, who wish to establish the truth of the matter by dialogue, with reasoned arguments. The purpose of the **dialectic method** of reasoning is resolution of disagreement through rational discussion, and, ultimately, the search for truth.

Grace Lee Boggs was committed to performing a constant and rigorous exercise of this type of thinking because she was also committed to change and growth. It produced a woman of immense courage and foresight who has never been afraid to reassess the form of something

so it could become more responsive and stronger. Her belief that everything changes and so the forms of one day do not always continue to serve another day is a key to deeply relevant activism. Her questions are critical to significant shifts in the way we do protest and how we confront injustices from the issues of race relations to environmental devastation. From the book: "What is our response to the economic crisis and financial meltdown?" "How are we going to build twenty-first-century America in which people of all races and ethnicities live together in harmony, and European Americans in particular embrace their new role as one among many minorities constituting the new multiethnic majority?" "What is going to motivate us to start caring for our biosphere instead of using our mastery of technology to increase the volume and speed at which we are making our planet uninhabitable for other species and eventually for ourselves?" Grace goes on to ask how we will finally draw forth the courage to depart from the wars we have become bogged down in and in the aftermath how do we find reconciliation with two-thirds of the world's peoples who resent our domination?

The Next American Revolution is not a tragic or frightening book. I think anyone who has lived for ninety-five years has a clear perspective on the strangeness of life as well as the beauty and resiliency of it. Grace offers a myriad of stories from Detroit that present a picture of what true grassroots organizing, effective political action and the deep ecology of conflict resolution can bring as help and healing to a broken, angry community. What must each of us do to address materialism and decline in Janesville, Beloit, Edgerton, Evansville, wherever each of us lives? What can we bring in energy and leadership to our communities, even our neighborhoods to combat violence and apathy? What do our towns need to pull together resources that will provide right livelihood for each citizen regardless of what happens in Madison under Scott Walker? How do we teach ourselves to think dialectically about these and other important issues?

Grace encourages us to undergo a paradigm shift and reminds us that shifts such as these need to be an ongoing part of how we encounter our lives in the very personal and the collective. She repeats throughout the book that change can only occur from the bottom up. We are the ones we have been waiting for, the ones who have all the skills and knowledge and courage we need to build sustainable communities.

The Next American Revolution begins with and within each one of us.

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Health & Healing

Is Everyone Reiki?

By Arline Rowden, RMT

Recently, one of my Reiki students asked me: "Is everyone Reiki?" She also told me that someone who is very aware of energy had made the statement that everyone is Reiki. So she wanted to know my opinion.

When I took Reiki I back in 1987 few people that I encountered had even heard of Reiki much less knew anything about it. Now there are too many Reiki books to even count and Reiki is seemingly everywhere on the internet. What a shift in a little over 20 years!

As I started to teach Reiki in 1990 one of my main focuses was to spread the word about Reiki and how useful it is for one's self and others as we share it. Now it's rare for someone to ask me what's Reiki and why would I want to know about it.

The word Reiki is a Japanese word meaning Universal Life Energy. So it is certainly true that everyone who is alive has Universal Life Energy flowing through them. It's also in animals, plants, crystals, etc. So when I think about it, I can understand why someone would have the opinion that everyone is Reiki.

Often when someone calls or emails me to sign up for a Reiki I class, they mention that they have been using Reiki but now want to have some formal training. And when I ask if they have had the Reiki I attunement they almost always say no. So I've been aware for some time about this area of confusion around Reiki.

As a Reiki teacher I want to educate people about Reiki and to try to eliminate areas of confusion. When I first became aware of this confusion about Reiki, I pondered how to approach it. So what I share with people who say they are doing Reiki but have not had a Reiki attunement* is: Even though Reiki means Universal Life Energy and we all have that within us and have access to it we wouldn't refer to ourselves as Reiki practitioners unless we have received a Reiki attunement. So, in my opinion, Reiki is the name of a specific way of working with Universal Life Energy and that way starts with a Reiki attunement from a Reiki Master Teacher.

It seems that more and more people have been able to access a greater flow of Universal Life Energy through meditation or intuitively drawing it to them in some way. It is not necessary to have a Reiki attunement and take a Reiki class to be able to bring through more Universal Life Energy. But many people are intuitively feeling drawn to have that formal training. The Reiki Method of Natural Healing is easy to learn since it doesn't have a lot of technique involved. So even though in my opinion not everyone is Reiki, I do feel that anyone who wants to be Reiki can learn this simple Healing Art.

*A Reiki Attunement is a sacred ceremony facilitated by a fully attuned Reiki Master Teacher. It involves the use of Reiki symbols and a Reiki breathing technique. There are three attunements given in a series of Reiki classes. The first attunement given in a Reiki I Attunement class connects the student to a greater flow of Universal (Life Force) Energy so they can access that flow for themselves and others when desired. The second attunement is given in a Reiki II Attunement class and it opens the Reiki I student to a greater flow of Reiki than they were able to access at Reiki I. Then the 3rd and final attunement which is the Reiki Master attunement is generally given in a Reiki Master Practitioner Attunement class. This opens the Reiki II student to the full flow of Reiki energy.

Just Peace

By Mary Summerbell

"Ding dong, the witch is dead!" This catchy little ditty we all know from the movie "The Wizard of Oz" pops into my head as I watch the scene, televised live from Jackson Park, in front of the White House, mere minutes after President Obama's announcement that Osama bin Laden is dead. Hundreds, then thousands of people quickly amass, gleefully screaming, shouting, jumping up and down, waving flags and banners, chanting "Obama got Osama," and "U.S.A., U.S.A., U.S.A...." One fellow climbs up a sapling that is barely able to hold his weight, to gain his conspicuous place in the revelry.

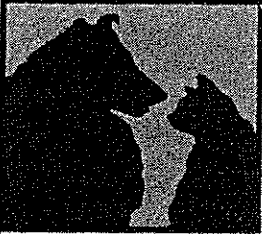
Sitting in my living room, long distance witness, I feel - what? Shocked. No. Appalled? Almost. Surprised? A little. Taken aback? Yes, I am taken aback by what I see. Later I learn of many similar gatherings across this country and around the world. In interviews of participants there is testimony of solemnity at the scenes, but something disturbing still lingers in me as I consider public reactions to this historic event.

No one I know personally was killed in this conflict. So I can't speak to the grief and pain of such loss, or how I would respond to it. But, as millions of others, even from a distance I was impacted - viscerally, psychologically, emotionally and financially. It's hard to imagine anyone in America untouched by terrorism, especially 911. To mention it is to enter a minefield of emotion, beliefs and ideas, to move through thought and feelings strong and deep in many people. Though I tread carefully, it still feels treacherous....

Even in agreement that the world is better off without a particular individual, since when do we as a nation take to the streets in blatant jubilation of someone's death? What precedent is there for this behavior in our culture? "Where did this come from?" I ask myself. The Ding Dong Song is my immediate internal answer.

There it is. Plain. Obvious. Simple. Munchkin simple. These little people, even as adults childlike in size, blur the boundaries of maturity and status. In this ambiguity they are the perfect icon of the little kid in all of us, with no hint of ambivalence keeping them from utter delight in the death of the wicked witch.

Does this clever image from a classic, beloved story, with countless other examples in history, literature and contemporary media, give us



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grown-ups permission to act like kids on occasion? If so, and that's the fantasy, then in reality how do we know when whimsical, verging on irreverent, becomes downright disrespectful?

And why do I care about how Osama bin Laden is treated? After the immense, immeasurable damage he has done, why would any civilized person feel anything for him but anger, hatred and contempt?

Words cannot convey how much I hate what Osama bin Laden did. But I also hate what we did to him. As a pacifist I find no joy in the killing of killers. For me, it's too easy to defend death as punishment for destructive deeds, and slide into escalating retaliation as everyone feels justified and the killing continues. My heart hurts and my belly aches as I write this, my mind trying to grasp a fraction of the totality of these issues, to reconcile all aspects of it in a comprehensive, comprehensible way.

How can I hold killer and killed in One Heart, hoping for healing for both? Is it foolishly, stupidly naive to even try? I try because I strongly, deeply believe that all people are one family - literally, biologically, genetically. I sincerely believe we are all children of God. And if I am true to this spiritual principle I must say it; in a spiritual sense Osama bin Laden was my brother. Though it's sickening for me to think of myself being related to him, I can't betray myself by denying his humanity. I care about him as I care about his victims because none of us can act without affecting all others.

Paradoxically, I support President Obama in his decision to stop bin Laden. Not that I condone military solutions to international problems. But I trust that in this insanely complicated situation, with limited options, the president did what he considered best, or necessary for the safety and welfare of the whole world. Often, in life, there is no ideal answer, no theoretical solution in which to take refuge. Sometimes when bad things happen something needs to be done. We are left to choose between lesser and greater harm, as the president was.

I admire Barack Obama for making a clear choice, then acting on it as quickly, efficiently and humanely as possible. Yes, we shot down a momentarily defenseless enemy, caught off guard in his own home. This was not pretty, or easy. It took bravery and skill. Even those of us who loathe violence cannot escape the tactical issues of dealing with someone who is so dangerous and so extremely uncompromising.

What this whole thing has stirred up in me is a stew of questions - hypothetical, ethical, and practical - of what it means to try to live in peace in the violence, conflicts and controversies of this world. Is it possible to honor all people equally, respect all perspectives, without being contradictory or hypocritical? How can I speak for everyone's right to their truth without compromising my own truth? In daily little decisions and actions, what does it mean to be a peacekeeper on Earth?

Peace is about valuing the whole more than our part in it. And doing our part, through sacrifice, or reason, or love - whatever it takes to let go; to give up our right to retribution for what we perceive as wrongdoing, for the sake of a greater good. How many of us are willing to reach beyond our loss, our pain, to say, "Enough. This cycle of violence ends with me." With or without forgiveness, I am willing to face my enemy and ask, "Why do you hate me? How does anyone come to hate so much that they kill themselves to kill those they hate?"

If we really want peace we need to value peace over justice. The first step is in realizing that justice, if it is even achievable, is not peace, and will not bring peace. Justice is kindergarten in the school of true peace. Justice is about litigation, a weighing and measuring in a system assuming some sense of fairness and accountability in society of

Arline Rowden, Reiki Master Teacher

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perceived wrongs. It is a means of paying back what is deemed owed for damage done.

The problem with this is that once someone takes more than they can possibly pay back, there is no chance of justice. After that, the harder we try to balance the scales, the more justice begins to resemble revenge as we once again approach the slippery slope of doing evil in the name of good. Isn't that where bin Laden went? and maybe us, after him?

It remains to be seen if people on this planet will ever be able to reconcile our differences well enough to find lasting ways to live together peacefully. Hoping it happens in my lifetime is much of what motivates me to get up each morning, to see what I can do to nudge along the process. It's why I'm writing this. And it's why, whoever you are, if you ever happen to find me dancing in the street, I'd like it to be in celebration of life - yours and mine.

Relating

Knowledge or Ignorance?

By Isaac Evenson

Ignorance is bliss. I find this statement and the mentality that follows it to be one of the most bewildering phenomena in today's society. Maybe it is because I've always been one to search for the truth that it seems so odd to me, but the thought that one would rather not know the truth when given the option is confusing.

Being a vegetarian, I do not push my beliefs on others but when somebody asks me why I choose to live this way I give my reasons. I tell them that going vegetarian eliminates over a metric ton of carbon emissions being sent into the atmosphere through energy used in raising the animals, killing them, preparing, storing and shipping the meat each year. I tell them that cattle produce methane and the massive populations of them that we breed for consumption emit more greenhouse gases than the emissions from auto-transportation. I tell them that the average life expectancy for vegetarians is longer than those who consume meat, and they are generally healthier and aren't as overweight. I tell them that I don't support the raising of animals for the sole purpose to kill and eat them. I tell them that I believe they have a right to live just as much as you and I. Almost every time I give my answer to the question "Why are you a vegetarian?" Though, I am stopped by the one who asked the question because they would "rather not know".

Why is this? The only reason I could possibly think of why

someone would rather not hear information is because they know the information given would make them question themselves and people would rather assume they are always in the right. When it gets to the point where they feel their resolve slipping, instead of doing the logical thing and looking at their actions and changing what they feel to be wrong, they retreat into tradition and block out information. They justify their actions by choosing to not know the pro's and con's and, in turn, choose to be ignorant.

There are of course those people who step up to the plate and give what seem to be valid reasons why they choose to eat meat. They listen to the opposite side and choose to stick to their own decision and one cannot be faulted for this. They are both valid choices as long as one makes the choice based on accurate information delivering valid points.

This is just an example that seems to pop up often in my personal life, but it is much broader than the issue of whether or not to eat meat. It is a common flaw in the human mind to retreat to ignorance when faced with any moral dilemma.

When people's faith in their religion is questioned by empirical scientific evidence, many choose to just ignore the information or to avoid it. This question often arises; why is the recreational use of marijuana in this country illegal when smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol are legal? Smoking cigarettes kills 450,000 people a year in America and alcohol kills 75,000 a year while the numbers are significantly lower for marijuana, and the majority of the deaths are related to illegal dealing and smuggling (which could be eliminated by legalizing its distribution). On this issue people once again tend to hide from the logic or create false claims. When people use religious claims to defend laws against abortion and are asked about the "separation between church and state", many turn a blind eye.

Why is it so hard for people to consider that they might not always be right? When shopping for toilet paper and there are two brands side-by-side; one is from all recycled paper, the other is made from trees ripped down and turned into a product used once and flushed, why do some people not even consider the pro's and con's? When people attend local rodeos and circuses, in which the animals are abused during training, just so they can amuse people for an hour or so, why do they look down upon the people who offer information against it?

Information is meant for your benefit, for all our benefits. It is meant to help us make rational decisions and yet people disregard it frequently because they don't want to feel questioned or ashamed if they have made the "wrong" choice. Be one of the people who thinks about the outcome of their decisions, whether they be good or bad. When somebody questions you about your decisions, have the ability

to stand up for yourself and back up your claims. Ignorance may be bliss to some, but knowledge is power to all.

Spirituality

Discovering Inner Divinity

By Doris Deits

Here in the West, we are obsessed with low self esteem. Nobody loves us, we're not smart enough or pretty enough, we're too nice or not nice enough. Our physical flaws are endless – thank heavens for liposuction and botox! It seems we are always searching for an answer to 'who am I' and 'what am I doing here?' We tend to measure ourselves and others against our ideals of perfection, which are constantly changing and never really attainable. It's a set up for disappointment – constant disappointment.

At home, work, school or church, we are encouraged to constantly do better and BE better. Better grades, better productivity, better morals, and dare I say better 'obedience'. While I believe it's true that we all strive and desire to better ourselves and we do need to coexist in a harmonious way, it seems that the other side of this coin is a constant reminder that we aren't enough. There are few places in our society that provide a comfort or assurance that we (all humans) are important, divine beings (higher consciousness) with a magical vehicle (human body) that holds the mysteries and intelligence of the universe within its DNA (Discovery Channel).

So what we end up with is an overabundance of energy that says we are not good enough on the mental, physical or spiritual level. Emotionally, many of us are train wrecks trying to feel whole and accepted in a society that says we need to do or be more. And yet, in this human bottomless pit of 'not enough' we can find our divinity, or connection to a larger intelligence. Who we are, what we are – these answers may lie within our form, cells, atoms and energy field. I guess the real trick is figuring out how to access this universe of information.

History tells us the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans seriously studied the idea that human beings were made in God's image. Many famous philosophers tried to understand how the body is divine in its nature, and asked themselves what is being reflected in the human body that is God or God-like. It is believed that through trying to understand this concept ancient civilizations figured out some amazing things about themselves and the environment.

The pyramids and other ancient structures that still stand today are a testament to some greater wisdom and understanding by the people of that time. We marvel at their ability to navigate via the stars and their prophecies. Did these civilizations discover mathematics and other things while pondering the mysteries of the human form and its divine nature?

It seems we've collectively written off the human body, its miracles and intelligence as 'not so much'. Self empowerment is a popular concept being utilized to overcome ideas of powerlessness and low self esteem. Perhaps it's time to take things to the next level and reclaim our divine nature, study it openly and in earnest, like the great philosophers of our time.

So let us make a difference by acknowledging, discussing and pondering the mystery, power and intelligence of the human form – we all have one, so we are all equal in being fabulous! Discard the old

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habits of low self esteem and celebrate the wonderment of being a 'divine' human.

Metaphysical

What Secret Powers Do You Hold?

By Pamela L. Brann

I like to play the computer game of "Call To Atlantis". When you have earned the crystals to restore Atlantis you learn the powers of the "Gods" of each land. Why was I drawn to these secrets and how could they apply to my life?

Power is based on a choice; accumulate choices, accumulate your "inner" powers.

What powers have we earned from our life's understandings or have we repeated and repeated the "lessons" and still haven't figured out the qualities that we could have learned from the experience?

The rhythm of choices can build the power we need (like powering up the wheel in the game) to keep making new choices in our life; to grow - to enhance our quality of life - to create the joy we all long for.

Choosing to pay attention to the things around us in our daily lives brings us the power of being in the now. To me, noticing the sound of a bird singing can bring a lightness to my heart. That moment of happiness of watching my cat get all wound-up, acting silly, jumping and climbing all over things is enjoying being in the now.

What if? My mind often runs around in the - What if? - game. What if we already have the power of the "Gods". Except it's not from the gods; it's learned from our inner self, our souls.

"Mars" had the Power of Will - the ability to overcome any obstacle. The power to make a choice can work on our "obstacles". Even if it isn't the best choice it's a choice. Then we can always make another choice when we know more.

"Apollo" had the Power of the Earth - the ability to create. Everyone has the ability to create everyday, to develop new ideas. The great thing about creating something is that you can allow it to change as needed, as you go along and receive new info, letting it grow.

"Aphrodite" had the Power of Air - the ability to unveil the hidden secrets. We can learn to uncover the secrets of life, to use our mental abilities to study the universe, the people and things around us. But most importantly, to study our own self. We can use some alone time to explore our own inner being. Once we are on our way to figuring out ourselves the rest of the world will start making sense.

"El" had the Power of the Sun - to radiate. We can radiate our light or energy. We can share whatever it is that we alone can create: music we can play or sing, art we create, our poetry or stories, food we bake, our ability to paint or decorate a room, installing/repairing household items, or having the ability to just really listen when someone needs to talk. Become the Sunshine radiating -- share!

"Semiramis" had the Power of Water - to bring people together. The Power of Water is the Power of our emotions. We can either let them drown us or we can acknowledge them, understand them and let them work for us, not against us.

"Amon" had the Power of Gold - to never be misled by deceitful words or glittering false promises of gold. We can learn to know our own truth


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and allow that truth to be flexible - "This is my truth now but if I learn more I can change that truth and let it grow".

"Queen Dido" had the Power of Fire - the ability to put light in people's hearts and make them confident in their future and abilities. Fire can destroy but also makes way for the new. We can be like the ancient City of Troy and rise up from the ashes. If we have a belief in ourselves it will inspire others. The Age of Aquarius is all about "group"; not just one but the whole will create and thrive.

How could your life at this time relate to a story of the powers of the ancient gods?

We often want to know what our purpose or path is; it isn't a road laid ahead of us because we make small steps and choices as we go creating the path we are on. So we only can "see our path" when we turn around and look at the choices we made to get where we are at today.


So continue to choose - choose - choose, because a small choice builds your life now and the Power is always being in the now.

Core Changes

By Wm. Collett

Going back almost three years, to when the web site www.healingwingsretreat.org was first started, it no longer has the look

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necessary, as there are lives involved now. I have learned that it is not about me; rather it is about all of us. Many thought I was an angel for what I was doing. I'm just a guy, a guy who knows that change happens when we stand up & speak out, "It's not right". The system cannot and will not destroy us. We are the ones who speak for those who feel unable or are afraid. We are all citizens of the planet. Domestic abuse is everywhere. We have much work ahead of us, we who have been wronged and our brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers. I truly believe that I'm not here for you, but rather we are here for each other for the future of our children's children. All of us supporting the cause can move mountains. How? With just a little pressure from our thumbs! Yes, just a little pressure from millions and millions of us with the same thought, the same belief and the same voice in unison: It's not right and there will be change now! You know in your hearts that this is true...

We have joined together and are determined to never stop speaking for the victims of domestic abuse.

We have teamed up to develop a virtual wall. A wall of women and men who have died at the hands of domestic violence.

Those women and men who have died, let their voices be heard through this project.

'The Wall'

In our humble attempt to help we have started to create the wall! This WALL will travel as a powerful presentation and testament to those that can no longer cry out for help.

We all know that for numerous reasons it is very, very difficult to get out of an abusive relationship. We feel that this program will empower others to help themselves when they see that the people who have died are being remembered by so many who are standing tall for them – lest they not be forgotten. We will take this wall on the road in the future to bring awareness, education and action to the public eye.

The Wall - Let those friends and family members who have been silenced by violence SPEAK NOW through this program to help others. In no way do we want to perpetuate violence; what we want is a traveling silent vigil for those who cannot, or dare not speak for themselves!

Help us build the wall of names with this campaign –
Details can be found at - <http://www.healingwingsretreat.org>
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Inconvenience

By Janet Zimborski

It is an inconvenience to awaken to our consciousness. It is easier to do the same old thing and choose the same old choices, as if we are asleep. The truth is that there is a part of us that is asleep and it isn't until we desire a different outcome and choose to participate by making different choices, that we will begin to stir the creative mind. Each and every moment we make new choices we create a new outcome. Each time we choose to love and trust, forgive, honor, share and empower others, we increase the power, wisdom love and creativity in ourselves. We awaken to a higher way of living.

However, in order to participate I find the process feels like a huge inconvenience. Every emotion that you have hidden or repressed can surface in your awareness, and it does, and it will until you address it. The inherent reaction is to push it away, or stuff it deep down inside. When it surfaces it resembles a noisy, annoying alarm, you just want it to stop or go away. It seems there is no shortage of experiences that can put you over the edge in the beginning. What an inconvenience it is to awaken!

Consciously responding to stimuli and experiences is like learning to live life all over again. First of all, you will need to be aware of everything you are thinking each and every moment. You then begin to discover that your thoughts are and have been habitual and if one can become aware of what it is they are thinking, they can change their thoughts to resonate with a higher, truer reality. Until then, they continue to harbor inferior thoughts that have been programmed into their minds over the years by family, society and cultural traditions. These thoughts make up what is called your conditioned mind. To awaken to the greater part of you, you must learn to use the creative mind. This part of the mind operates in the present time and is freed up from any programming. Therefore it allows you to be in alignment with the highest aspect of your true self.

The power in creating different outcomes comes from the awareness of what you are creating in your life now and why. Stop and take the time to acknowledge what it is that the conditioned mind is creating. Then apply the love, wisdom, and courage to what you would like to create instead. This process changes the frequency or quality of thought and, in turn, changes you and the world around you into a higher expression. As for the inconvenience you must endure, it is worth all the discipline, determination, and innermost honesty you can muster up for yourself, to see your imaginary fears and inferiority fall away. Will the real YOU please stand up?



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