

Celebrating Inter-dependence Day Rev Brigid Beckman July 3, 2022

My friends, today I'm going to end with a time of meditation, but let's begin here breathing together and coming into our center...

With thanks to a former student, Jenn, for introducing me to this poem, here is **Jigsaw** by Rabbi Lawrence Kushner.

Jigsaw

Each lifetime is the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.
For some there are more pieces.
For others the puzzle is more difficult to assemble.

Some seem to be born with a nearly completed puzzle.
And so it goes.
Souls going this way and that
Trying to assemble the myriad parts.

But know this. No one has within themselves
All the pieces to their puzzle.
Like before the days when they used to seal
jigsaw puzzles in cellophane. Insuring that
all the pieces were there.

Everyone carries with them at least one and probably
Many pieces to someone else's puzzle.
Sometimes they know it.
Sometimes they don't.

And when you present your piece
Which is worthless to you,
To another, whether you know it or not,
Whether they know it or not,
You are a messenger from the Most High.

On the one hand the images in this poem present a dualistic concept of "The Most High" as outside of us. But if we invite in the truth that we are individual

expressions of the One Divine Source, there is power in this image of how the picture of our lives becomes revealed over time and through connections.

Kushner writes this as well:

If everything is connected to everything else, then everyone is ultimately responsible for everything. We can blame nothing on anyone else. The more we comprehend our mutual interdependence, the more we fathom the implications of our most trivial acts. We find ourselves within a luminous organism of sacred responsibility. (READ TWICE!)

— [Lawrence Kushner, Invisible Lines of Connection](#)

We can blame nothing on anyone else. You don't need me to do a litany of all the ways we live in a time of "pernicious polarity" as my friend Rev Sue recently called it. When I read the news, or scroll mindlessly on social media, it is so easy to slide into self-righteousness, rage, frustration and "othering." Yet over and over again, I keep finding reminders to look into my own heart:

- Patricia Pearce- where is cross consciousness alive in me? And how am I waking up to Christ consciousness alive in ALL?
- Otto Sharmer-- the call to face my own blindspots and cross the abyss of our divides by true presencing, instead of "absencing"
- Our Unity of Albany core values, vision, mission, agreeing and disagreeing in love, all are welcome-- how am I speaking truth, and doing truth?

When I consider ALL the turmoil, injustice, peril around the world, and in our own country today, it's easy to forget that as a species, we humans have wreaked havoc before-- and that the havoc has never been the full truth. The other day after a long session of reading article after article, I felt the weight of grief and despair settle on the bricks formerly known as my shoulders!

Then I happened to glance at a book my friend Janet recently passed along. I haven't even read it yet, but the title stopped me in my tracks. **We Shall Not**

Shatter: A WWII story of Friendship, Family and Hope Against All Odds.

We shall not shatter. “The more we comprehend our mutual interdependence, the more we fathom the implications of our most trivial acts. We find ourselves within a luminous organism of sacred responsibility.” (Kushner)

In this luminous organism of sacred responsibility, what do we mean when we say every week, “I behold the Divine Essence in ALL BEINGS?” If I behold it in YOU-- which is SO easy-- then I must behold it in me. And I must behold it even in those beings I sometimes rage and curse about-- who are most blind to that Essence alive in themselves.

Yesterday’s 4 hour class on The History of New Thought and Unity, reminded me that the New Thought movement-- and the Fillmores-- call us to use reason and intuition to discern the Truth-- the truth that is found by going within. We question, we discover for ourselves, we listen to the inner voice of Divine wisdom. And once we do, we realize-- make real-- that “If I speak Truth, but do not DO Truth, then I am silent.”

The truth of our interconnection, our interdependence, our Oneness-- that Truth is not always easy to speak, let alone do. And we hold a paradoxical relationship to silence: as we land in THE Great Silence to hear the voice of the ineffable within, we are then called to not remain silent, but live and speak our truth in every circumstance. We shall not shatter.

Our meditation today will be a practice together of “rowing our boats away from shore.” Not so we can ignore or forget the concerns we hold about our close to home worlds, about our country, about the world around us. We row to gain the High Watch perspective, to hold our concerns with a higher consciousness, and to gain the clarity to DO truth from the wellspring of our deepest being.

MY INSPIRATION:

Eric Butterworth writes in the chapter, "How to Pray for Others,"

The important need is not to try to effect some change in other people, but to make some changes in your thoughts about them. Don't try to set them right, but rather to see them rightly. And to see them rightly you must get rid of some narrow frames of reference, and get out of the feeling of concern...

Research has revealed that plants in a room show a measurable response on an EKG to strong thoughts and emotions about them. Praise and love them, and they tend to flourish. Curse or criticize them, and they may be stunted. If it is true of plants, it seems more than likely that it is also true of people.

TAKE THE HIGH WATCH...

From *Awaken Every Day* By Thubten Chodron

"Reflect for a minute on the kindness of others -- the kindness not only of friends and family, but also of strangers whose work in society helps us. Reflect on the benefit you receive from people who challenge you: they help you to discover resources within yourself that you didn't know you had.

"Seeing how dependent you are on others to stay alive and how much benefit you've received from them, respond from your heart with a wish to repay that kindness. Wish to make a positive contribution to the welfare of other living beings.

"Your spiritual practice is one way to make a positive impact, because by progressing along the path, your capability to be of direct benefit to others and to work for their welfare increases by leaps and bounds."