

Tyre Nichols January 10, Photo “Volunteer Bridge”

Our human story FOR EONS is filled with moments of magnificence and moments of horror. Here is the full text of Psalm 43

Psalm 43

1 Vindicate me, my God,
and plead my cause
against an unfaithful nation.

Rescue me from those who are
deceitful and wicked.

2 You are God my stronghold.
Why have you rejected me?

Why must I go about mourning,
oppressed by the enemy?

3 O Send out your light and your truth,
let them lead me;

let them bring me to your holy mountain,
to the place where you dwell.

4 Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God, my joy and my delight.

Last night the coffeehouse was a celebration of light, laughter, music, dancing, talking safety cones... and a powerful demonstration by Sandesh and his valiant volunteers of the POWER of our minds. His experiential experiment inspired me to shift and reimagine the talk I'd planned.

In one sense, like every week, my message is a revelation of my spiritual journey, the situations, the inspiration, the wrestling that was alive in my heart and mind during the previous week. When Roger and I talk about possible themes and music, that sets my journey in motion... and Sweet Spirit often surprises me!

Where I THINK I'm heading at the beginning of the week isn't always where I land on Sunday.

Last week I shared how Rob Geyer's three little phrases played into my spiritual practices, and the energetics of **CLAIMING** my path. I want. I choose. I claim...

I CLAIM Joy and Sorrow. I CLAIM Light and SHADOW. I CLAIM Blessing of what IS and Blessing of the infinite possibilities of WHAT CAN BE.

I CLAIM my broken-open heart and its willingness to know grief and joy as beloved of each other, as inseparable. I CLAIM my broken-open heart and its willingness to hold SHADOW and LIGHT as beloved of each other, as inseparable.

Here are a few of the reminders I've had this week– I offer them only as possible ways to see what reminders *you* might have...

- **Wednesday night and Consciousness/Conditions** The Things that can't be done!!!! (prayer!!)
- Looking at the magnificent photos of Tyre Nichols then
- Listening to Austin Channing Brown call on her listeners to SEE the SHADOW side of UNITY– unified voices of oppression, of CONDITIONS that rely on whole groups to stay silent
- Thursday night at the Board Meeting- in my moment of small room meltdown, my whole perspective and emotional response changed in receiving the gift of BLESSING from my beloved community.

Inspiration for meditation:

From **What If** by Jan Phillips

What if the real truth of your life
is that you came here to be a mighty light?

And when you left those radiant beings at the gate
waving and cheering you on—you promised
you wouldn't forget where you came from,
but look at you now, hanging by a thread,
every day wondering if it even matters.

What if you closed your eyes and sat still for awhile?

Would you remember that Light is still Who You Are—
that flame inside you, that tongue a-blazing,
that burning star in the sky of your mind,
all light, all yours, all joyful and triumphant.

Excerpt from Maryanne Williamson

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.
We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant,
gorgeous, talented, fabulous?

Actually, who are you *not* to be?
You are a child of God.
Your playing small doesn't serve the world...

We were born to make manifest

the glory of God that is within us.
It's not just in some of us;
it's in everyone.
And as we let our own light shine,
we unconsciously give other people
permission to do the same.
As we are liberated from our own fear,
Our presence automatically liberates others.

A prayer by Benedictine nun, Sr. Ruth Fox

May God bless you with discontent at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart. May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, equity and peace. May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain to joy. And may God bless you with enough foolishness to think that you can make a difference in the world, so you will do the things which others say cannot be done. Amen!