

Sister Who's Perspective

Sister Who's Perspective, Issue #158, August 2012, copyright

Life is a collaborative effort, encompassing more than we know. In a time of abundant "information overload," news, communication, and travel across great distances, we often talk at each other without listening, communicating, or understanding.

Humanity needs its icons, but also its iconoclasts to grow beyond the good and bad qualities that now limit and describe us. The essences of both Godde and us remain, in the midst of questions, to be discovered, experienced, and expressed.

Please share in this ongoing dialogue, remembering to indicate whether and how you wish to be identified.

Blessings, love, and peace to you. ---Sister Who

Overview

There are many ways to describe the foundations of our multi-dimensional lives. For this month's articles, the primary components are body, mind, and spirit. My contention is that all three are essential, of equal importance, and symbiotically related. For those unfamiliar with symbiosis, the basic understanding is that each produces something the other needs, which the other cannot produce by itself. A basic example of this is that people inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide, while plants inhale carbon dioxide and exhale oxygen. More simply phrased, people and plants really do need each other in order to survive.

Similarly, without a full integration of body, mind, and spirit, life is diminished and perhaps even threatened with extinction. There is so much to learn about this integration, however, that even an entire lifetime may not be enough to learn it all.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

Body, Mind, and Spirit

Imagine for a moment that you've decided to cultivate a vegetable garden, but that you have also decided to accomplish this with visualization and energetic intention while seated in a comfortable reclining chair in your living room. What about pulling weeds? Ugh—too dirty, too sweaty, and too tiring. What about purchasing and planting good seeds? Ugh—too expensive, too confusing, and too uncertain. What about providing water throughout the hot, dry days of summer? Ugh—too messy, too challenging, and too time-consuming. So what are you going to eat during the colder months of the year—the vegetables you've visualized in your garden? I suspect you're going to be very hungry.

Consider now that your concern is the health and strength of your surrounding community. Once again, you go to your sacred reclining chair, raise the footrest and close your eyes in order to put the most effort possible into your visualization and prayers. Within your mind, you see everyone's needs being met, everyone's relationships unfolding

peacefully, and every bit of unpleasantness being removed (by someone other than yourself). Upon rising from the chair, however, you lock your doors at nights, speak in only a distant manner to anyone you meet at the grocery store, and focus your eyes exclusively upon your own path as you journey from one task on your daily list to the next.

Finally, consider that your concern is world peace and harmonious global community. Once again, you settle into your comfortable chair and go through the usual prayerful visualization in as much detail and specificity as possible. Printed and electronic media, however, continues to report increasing problems from economic disparity, dysfunctional relationships, and narcissistic politicians.

My point is that because the wounds of reality are a complex integration of body, mind, and spirit, a similar combination is required to effect any healing—whether or not the effort involved is all that comfortable or convenient.

To wish the problem of homelessness away, one must consider what spirit and body are required. To wish the problem of interpersonal conflict away, one must consider what material manifestations and emotional shifts are essential. To wish the problem of inequitable distribution within one's community away, one must actually get involved in supporting and creating equitable systems of distribution (not a hand-out, but a process by which goods and services are in fact effectively transferred from one person to another).

If those in need can legitimately and truthfully claim that essential resources are not available—by any process—none is to blame for the negative consequences but ourselves.

Prayers and meditations without a body or a mind acting upon their behalf, are devoid of truth and consequently acts of oppression. To be part of the world's healing, we must remember that we are part of the world—body, mind, and spirit—and that the world is part of us.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

Mind, Spirit, and Body

My basic education included reading the book, "All Quiet on the Western Front," which essentially described World War II from the perspective of one who would have been described by the Allied military forces as being "the enemy." Looking at World War II from a contrasting perspective introduced students to how multi-dimensional and complex a complete understanding of any such conflict actually is. Learning to view things from multiple perspectives, it also became clear, is the first step toward active and effective compassion and thereafter the healing of the world—one person at a time.

On a similar note, a common witticism within a number of different cultural, religious, and ethnic contexts is that of withholding judgment of another person until one has walked a mile in his or her shoes. The expectation is that a mile would be long enough to at least begin to perceive and experience life as it is perceived and experienced by the other person. If one could perceive, experience, and understand life especially from the perspectives of those who are directly affected by one's own actions, it would seem that one would make wiser decisions than ignorance of such concerns would ever produce.

All of which is to say that once we have moved to a willingness to involve our bodies, it is vital that we involve our minds as well—reflecting upon what affects the ways that we perceive, what responds to all that crosses our paths, what are our own characteristics and ways of behaving, and what is the full and complete contribution we are making to the world around us. It is not just a matter, for example, of creating jobs within a factory, but also of not polluting the water those who work within the factory will drink when they go home at the end of each day's work. The body knows the work, but it is the mind which must know the relationship, the effects, and the results.

Socrates claimed that "the unexamined life is not worth living." If I approach the living of my life each day with anything less than my complete body, mind, and spirit, the day will never know its maximum potential or beauty and, at the end of the day, I will be less than I could have been. The body could tell how things feel and the spirit could identify the values and meanings from which determination, curiosity, and joy arise, but the mind will be the historian—relating the past, evaluating the present, and projecting the future.

The mind is what blesses us with conscious

awareness, memory, and the ability to learn. Although it may not always know why, the mind can always think of yet another question to ask in order to move toward ever greater understanding of virtually anything. Without the mind's questions, it is probable that all forward progress would stop.

Yet sometimes that is the mind's greatest temptation: to stop within a particular pleasant moment or place. To do so, however, could curse the body with atrophied muscles and the spirit with suffocation. To mentally stop is, in a sense, to enslave one's self to a present understanding, abiding ever after according to its limitations and directives. Within a particular moment, those limitations and directives may have been wise advice. When the context of that moment has passed, however, retaining commitment to those same limitations and directives becomes a form of paralysis within which there is no longer truly the freedom to live.

Spiritually, the mind seeks the revelation of the Divine, to some extent conditioning which form would be most effective. For some the Divine consequently appears as a scientific principle illustrated by photos from the Hubble telescope. For others, the Divine is the Mother of the Universe. For still others, the Divine is held to be the Father of Time. All of these and every atom that constitutes language rely upon the mind to translate their meaning into something usable to humanity, individually and collectively. An additional challenge for the mind, as if things actually needed to be even more difficult, is that in order to be meaningful and effective, language must include intellectual agreements between two or more people, regarding the meanings of symbols and sounds.

In a very real sense, the mind is what allows us to relate to each other. Even basic awareness of a feeling or of a movement is an activity of the mind. It would be difficult, in fact, to assert that the body and spirit exist at all, without utilizing the mind in some way or another to assign words, understandings, and relationships to the realities that all three (body, mind, and spirit) experience.

Among the first things the mind must learn, however, are that the world is a shared space and that this space is shared with forms of life that are in various ways greater and lesser than ourselves, but as equally essential as every contribution of wisdom and love we are able to make during the many or few years we are blessed to be here.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

Spirit, Body, and Mind

I noticed early, within the performance of plays while still in high school, the difference between memorizing lines and "getting into character." In most cases, the audience was already familiar with the story. What they could not know, however, was what sort of intangible additional quality each performer would add, that would make the particular presentation unique.

I later heard someone comment that there is always something more within a song's performance if the one performing the song is the original composer of the lyrics—because that would be the person who really understands more than all others what the song truly means. Many people can sing the words; what ultimately matters is being able to sing the meanings.

Similarly, many exceptionally skilled experts have blessed the world with everything from artistic works to technological marvels, but there remains some additional mysterious something that people sense within a work done by a person with an especially powerful vision, dream, or aspiration. It's as if he or she has somehow mysteriously put a bit of him or herself into the work, so much so that others can somehow sense that extra bit of presence, whenever they are in the presence of the creative work.

I suggest that the difference is spirit; that when we actually, deeply, truly, passionately, humbly, enthusiastically, and perhaps even reverently believe in what we are doing, we touch the fingertips of something beyond ourselves and create something equally transcendent. Unlike Narcissus, we reach beyond the reflection to the energy of life hidden therein and immerse ourselves in the relationships that surround us—giving to them what we can and (as much as we are able) receiving what they have to give.

Perhaps the most significant problem of

"When inclusivity becomes optional, participation is rendered meaningless and personal best is sabotaged."

-- Sister Who

doing anything according to the status quo, the current popular trend, or latest market reports, is that the bold trail-blazing spirit of life is left out. The mind and the body may be fully present, but where is the spirit and what sort of spirit is it?

It is within the interconnected relationships with body and mind, that spirit finds its greatest empowerment. Being neither subservient nor dominant in relation to the thoughts of the mind and the abilities of the body, the three can form a consensus that is synonymous with wholeness and (for those who understand) with holiness.

Finding the courage to stand alone is ultimately a matter of finding a way to let Godde into whatever circumstance or situation within which we find ourselves. When we are instead more concerned about who might be offended and whether the profit margin will be maximized, than about whether the quality or integrity of the work will suffer, we can be sure that the quality and integrity of the work will in fact suffer and that we have declined Godde's invitation to serve some miraculous possibility.

I readily concede, however, that providing a passageway for Godde to enter a space within which Godde is not wanted, will most probably not be rewarded by whomever is both present and resisting Godde's presence. Within every spiritual, theological, and philosophical system known to humanity, choice remains inseparable from human beingness and this unfortunately means that finite beings can choose to pursue limitation rather than transcendent infinity.

The insanity, absurdity, and comedy of this, however, is analogous to a man with a glass of water in his hand who is dying of thirst, simply because he chooses not to drink (essentially refusing to integrate spirit, mind, and body). This is not, however, about believing in Godde. Godde is whatever Godde is and will (or will not) reveal Godde's self to each person in whatever way or ways Godde wishes. Believing or not believing has no effect upon that which is truly Godde. The effect upon us, conversely, is profound. Yet it is not a matter of persuasion but rather of awareness of that which is beyond ourselves.

We need not walk through life as the living dead. By the spirit within, we can dance through our days in ways the mind and body could never by themselves imagine or devise. By the spirit within—through joy, pain, and every other human emotion—we can truly live.

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.

Holistically Being

I often recall the advice of the author, Madeliene L'Engel, to regularly take time to "just be." Having acquired a small canoe at a remarkably low price, I hope to soon make my way to Barr Lake State Park. I am reminded that when all else is removed, what remains is the body, mind, and spirit that I am and that this combination can be applied to an infinite number and variety of circumstances. If I am excluded within one place, it is imperative that I remain vigilant for wherever I am to shine next; for whatever dark corner the Divine knows is needful and receptive to the unique light that I alone can share.

I persist in that original assertion from the very first years of this unconventional ministry, that a person is a person is a person and that every person deserves to be included and nurtured in every way possible, specifically because it is by the existence and contribution of unique persons that Godde continues to bless and heal the world.

Consequently, whenever I am bewildered by circumstances and peculiar life developments, I return to looking for any good I can do; for any way that I can shine in the unique way that only I can shine, to illuminate whatever darkness there is that only I can illuminate.

If I attempt to do this using only the accepted, approved, or popular parts of myself, it's a sure bet that the job of healing the world and living life to its fullest, will never get done. If, on the other hand, I trust Godde's wisdom and am willing to share whatever I find within myself in the wisest and most beautiful way possible, the world may never be the same. It is not for me to take credit for such, however, since the accomplishment is one of collaboration with Godde and with all of life around me. It is the wholeness (and holiness) of everything, after all, which is the final and most complete triumph.

Without our creativity, valuable pieces of life's potential will be left behind. This is why wholeness and holiness are closely aligned; why love and loveliness are often found together; and why becoming grows out of first learning to just be.

Yet as much as there is potential wholeness and holiness within us, we are equally potential pieces of whatever wholeness and holiness may surround us, specifically because of those who love and share their wholeness and holiness with those around them. So send the love around!

May one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be!

On a Personal Note

I am eagerly anticipating the Labor Day Metaphysical Fair (www.CelebrationFair.com) at the Denver Merchandise Mart, August 31-September 2. The convergence of resources and the sense of community that is created during those three days is amazing and typically manifests extraordinary and empowering diversity. I am eager to serve whatever inner and outer dialogues and opportunities for growth and development Godde provides there.

As for the motorcycle ride mentioned within the last newsletter, a parting of ways with a romantic interest prevented the trip from happening. Instead, I made a personal spiritual retreat of sorts to a location in western New Mexico, but descriptions of its facilities were very inaccurate so my extreme effort met with minimal success. Adversarial weather also made travel to and from that location extremely dangerous, but thankfully no mishap occurred. Curiously, the only time during that weekend when everything went "right," was during the hours I was dressed as Sister Who. Coincidence or guidance? I haven't completely decided yet.

With regard to God Space Sanctuary, the beautifully reconstructed meditation garden can be viewed at www.GodSpaceSanctuary.org and morning glories now cover nearly half the fence.

In regard to my dogs, Gareth had another violent outburst and I wondered if euthanasia was the only answer left. Nearly all of the veterinarians I've consulted wish to blame myself or the other dogs, but the limits of these outbursts (less than 1% of the time and exclusively toward other dogs) and the loving behavior which is otherwise the norm (more than 99% of the time) make it clear to me, that the true cause is perhaps neurological or psychological and not related to daily relationships or training. Needless to say, the struggle to cope with this has been heart-wrenching, but I am striving to find a loving and wise resolution.

Blessings, love, and peace to you, now and always. *Sister Who*

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