

SISTER WHO'S PERSPECTIVE

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Overview

I often wonder whether it is in the very nature of paradoxes to be true, but it is equally by the extreme contrast between the primary components of any paradox, that possibilities too often remain invisible. My sincere hope is that this month's essays bring empowering vision to all who read them.

Timeless within Time

Everything I've read about autism suggests that mental combinations are quirky at best, but sufficiently consistent to indicate that brain wiring is simply different and not actually dysfunctional. The particular concern here is that my short-term memory has always been a bit limited, but moments that are in any way emotionally charged, are retained for literally decades. The desire to maintain interpersonal connections, for example, has always been strong within me, so I still write letters and did much more so in the past--so much so that I still remember the postal code of where I lived in New York City in 1981.

Yet as I go forward through time, I am often surrounded by people who do not seem to have this timeless connection with various past experiences--which often means that in a room full of people who were all present for specific experiences, I'm the only one who remembers those times in any detail. This too seems to have contributed to me being socially an outsider. What makes this all the more perplexing is how deeply I understand the importance of communication and relationship.

This seems to be one more evidence of how damaging the pandemic of narcissism ultimately is. Whatever is personally irrelevant or inconvenient to recall, is simply forgotten--thus devaluing every associated person. The further subtle danger is that the more one devalues others, the more one inadvertently and subconsciously devalues one's self.

Too much devaluing and life is no longer

worth living--which may partially explain an increase in the numbers of people choosing suicide rather than ongoing emotional and mental pain. Suicide prevention, therefore, begins with loving one another throughout every moment throughout life's curious and winding progression. If my experience is in any way typical, it would seem that far too many people are having to face overwhelming challenges all alone.

Yet this too is timeless, because narcissism is not a new invention, nor is facing challenges all alone. Thankfully, love, community, and family are not new inventions either--it is only that they don't seem to be getting the attention they need within the present time. Any process of healing nonetheless includes making them a priority and acting accordingly.

Essentially, individually and collectively, humanity is invited to be timeless within the times of its experiences. Over and over again, what makes us most human, is being more than any present moment directly includes. In the multidimensional convergence of all that is unseen within past, present, and future, is the most complete expression of a human spirit.

It seems, however, that most people have forgotten this. As distasteful as I found the preoccupation with zombies within recent years of cinematic and television programming, I did recognize that it was a very literal interpretation of the mindless way large numbers of people have slipped into relating to life--metaphorically consuming each other while devoid of mental and emotional health. The possibilities that I'm not sure any such depiction included, however, are genuine healing, recovery, and waking up.

Yet such healing will require once again integrating timelessness within time. The result would be the reintroduction of wholeness and, more directly, holiness. When spirit, mind, and body come together harmoniously--collectively as well as individually--life will once again be truly worth living, for every single person.

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

Honest within Dishonesty

From one perhaps cynical perspective, being compulsively honest and consequently inclined to trust rather than be suspicious, means I have been more often victimized by bullies and opportunists. From a contrasting point of view, however, it means that my rather consistently troubled life experience has known moments within which I was able to express genuinely unconditional love. Far too many, it seems, have no idea what that is.

I'm uncertain, however, of whether I ever met anyone willing and ready to do the same--most clearly obvious within the absence of support or any sort of advocacy during the most terrible and disastrous moments. I can think of a few individuals whom I believe would have done so, if they'd had sufficient resources, but, like me, they have often been persons of amazing integrity preoccupied with fighting for survival also. I've often said that for an epitaph on a tombstone, I would choose, "I would have created so much more, if I hadn't spent so much time fighting for survival," but I'm inclined to think this could be said of many individuals whom I've known as well.

All of which makes it so peculiar that so many live in denial of others' struggles--imagining that governmental and societal systems work far better than they actually do. I can only shake my head in sadness at the circumstances that are thereby created, quietly promising to set a better example of abundant resources ever come my way. The definition of abundance, however, is often problematic.

I recall working within a social services office at one point, within which a request for services was received, that suggested it would be somehow mentally and emotionally painful to be forced to live below the affluent standard to which the individuals were accustomed. As much as I seem to have the ability to empathize with anyone and any thing, I am also aware that affluence is not self-supporting, but rather a burden someone must bear, to prevent such economic configurations from imploding. That being the case, the most frequent traveling companion of affluence is narcissism.

The effect is ultimately, like zombies, to suck the life out of others instead of committing one's self to life for all. Honesty, in contrast, is

the fundamental ability to see and respect the value of each person with whom one interacts--including one's self. Dishonesty, ultimately, is self-sabotaging and counter-productive, which is perhaps why *Star Trek* Vulcans considered it to be illogical and fundamentally wrong.

Honest relationships are ultimately the ones by which communities survive and dishonest ones the means by which they falter and die. I have had direct experience with several such communities that, to the best of my knowledge, are sadly still on their way down. I suspect that I was merely one of many opportunities for them to reverse direction, that they rejected.

From one perspective, I'm honored to have served that possibility, but from another, such service was accomplished at a very high personal cost. I sometimes wonder whether the deep mental and emotional wounds I carry from being willing to give those communities another chance, will ever heal. Nonetheless, at the time at least, it seemed the right thing to do.

Perhaps that is among the most challenging aspects of honesty, however, that one does not know in advance what decision any individual or community will make. As long as the future is unwritten and can go either way, even going backward in time after a bad choice has been made by others, to refrain from giving the opportunity they rejected, denies the honest reality of their ability to choose. No matter how many repetitions of going backward in time to once again offer the choice, there is nothing compelling those persons to alter or maintain the choice that was made; every incidence has the freedom to be completely unique.

An honest reflection upon my life, therefore, suggests that while numerous choices did not turn out well, none of them were necessarily wrong. Far more important, is what I learned by making the choices that were made. At the heart of virtually every choice, however, was that I chose to love unconditionally and have faith in the possibility of good things happening.

As devastating as disappointment can be, I am not certain I would want to live within a world within which disappointment was not possible. Being fully alive, is knowing that life could go either way and then having the opportunity to push it in positive directions.

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

Proactive within Inactivity

I don't apologize for being proactive, but I often get the feeling from others that they think I should, because my being proactive creates more work for them. Perhaps they're already overworked, but unable to manage that quality constructively. For my part, I have always been aware of how fleeting life is, such that every moment needs to be wisely utilized.

Perhaps that's why I have accomplished so many things within my life that are typically considered to be more than a single person could ever do. Be that as it may, I'm certain that I will still feel when my life comes to an end, that there is so much I would have liked to do, but there wasn't enough time. The current time, however, unfortunately contains multiple tasks that are unable to move any faster than the responses I receive--or more often don't receive--from collaborators.

I often find myself exploring the possibilities indicated by Miss Ferenzi within the movie, "Gryphon," that "What seems disastrous often works out for the best, although it may not be apparent at the time." If I am unable to create positive progress within any particular moment, however, I don't want that to be because I didn't try. Phrased another way, I choose to fully live for as long as I am able to do so.

There is no shortage, however, of people who will insist that I must do this their way instead of in the way that is individually more effective and appropriate for me. What they do not experientially know, are the times of quiet self-reflection within which I listen to my own heart, mind, and spirit and have conversations with what I perceive to be the Divine. Important understandings and discoveries are common within that intellectual and spiritual landscape, which would otherwise remain unknown to me.

Viewed from the outside, such "activity" seems to be a paradox, because taking time for those of self-reflection and spiritual chat is often accompanied by minimal physical activity. It's as if the physical movement is as distracting

and even adversarial as attempting to have a conversation with someone while standing in the middle of Grand Central Station in New York City. The movement and background noise of others would likewise be adversarial.

The gift of individuality within such times is found within the ability to choose one's mental, emotional, and spiritual focus as well as one's physical stillness or activity. The fact that others are moving and speaking in a frenzied manner, does not require me to do the same. I can be an oasis of peacefulness, love, wisdom, sensitivity, and consideration that may actually empower those around me to be less victimized by the noise, movement, and chaos.

So many people would likewise do well to remember that there is nothing about meeting someone different, that compels conformity or change. No matter what clothes others are wearing or what colors they may have added to their hair, neither my clothes nor my hair are mysteriously thereby changed. They remain themselves and so do I, each acting--ideally--with integrity and perhaps even engaging in insightful conversation that dispels questions.

Being proactive is ultimately how I get more out of life during the limited moments available to me. Part of that, includes embracing unseen and consequently spiritual realities, in whatever ways I choose. Pretending that those realities do not exist, only limits my experience--not the myriad of possibilities that actually exist.

I suppose it's possible, but I have never argued for having more limited experiences. I find that my spirit grows in response to what I am willing to embrace and I have never wanted to instead remain small or limited--although I do try to set an appropriate pace by which I am not overwhelmed or unwisely exhausted. Even when that does happen, however, I can still proactively adapt to changes within my abilities and environment, so that life can still be as creatively empowered as possible.

What remains central, is that what can be seen from the outside, is never all that I am--or that anyone else is either. How different our world would be, if we remembered within each moment that each individual we encounter or pass on the street, is virtually a universe of diverse activity and creative possibilities.

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

"My existence is Godde's opinion that humanity requires renewal."

– Sister Who

Infinite within Finiteness

It seems every moment of life is a paradox, within which one's packaging usually cannot effectively express the limitless dimensions of its internal spirit. Interactions and relationships, however, are too often grounded within the superficial characteristics of the packaging. In trying to set a better example, I often seem to inadvertently create problems--like patiently waiting for the car on the on-ramp of the highway to speed up and merge into traffic ahead of me, while the driver is apparently expecting me to selfishly accelerate in front of him, such that we are both slowing down instead of effectively merging.

I try to create safety and freedom for others to be honest around me, but too often meet individuals who have been so often victimized that, given an opportunity for self-expression, they have difficulty finding sufficient courage to do so. It is only by embracing their own honest expressions, however, that they can move beyond the limited notions of self that the surrounding world has too often encouraged.

It's analogous to suggesting that the only way birds learn how to fly is by doing it. I hold to the belief, nonetheless, that people are not ostriches; that each and every person really does possess the ability to fly. The loveless competition which is currently so common, however, has persuaded far too many to refrain from even trying and thereby limited humanity as a whole as well.

So a big part of being infinite within limited forms and systems, is connecting and finding ways to collaborate with what is infinite within others. I am again drawn back to the African word, Ubuntu: "I am because we are and we are because I am." It is not a question of one or the other, but rather of embracing both in an egalitarian and symbiotic way.

Embracing paradox is consequently part of how miracles and empowering development become real. Those with rigid and limited thinking, however, rarely manage to do this.

When we give ourselves permission to be unique and different, however, dreams may find a way to come true--and humanity will thereby be infinitely blessed.

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

On a Personal Note

It's been a little odd making comments within this column throughout the past few months, because of the time lapse that's developed. I am often creating the newsletter a month or more in advance, because it then needs to be translated into Spanish and now also German, proofread, and the alternate translations graphically composed on my computer. Consequently, anything I type here will be several weeks past before it is read.

I trust therefore that my doctoral degree will be resolved by the time anyone reads this, but at the moment am discouraged by further delays in completion of the degree. First I was told that it would happen by the end of August, then by early September, but now it seems that completion by the end of September may be a more realistic goal, because of how slowly the wheels of bureaucracy turn.

Throughout all of that, I seem to be stuck in a very solitary experience of life that all of my best efforts have been unable to change--as if I'm living in solitary confinement, because of how very unique I am. Each and every day is consequently a mental and emotional struggle.

Yet my life's purpose as an interfaith minister persists, so through prayer and a very stubborn sort of dedication to service, I endure.

I am increasingly concerned, however, by the aging of my service dog, wondering if some sort of retirement and replacement are needed, but not knowing how this could happen. I can only hope for an answer when the time is right.

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

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Sister Who a/k/a Rev. Denver NeVaar, MTS

POB 16074, Golden, CO 80402

Email: dn@SisterWho.com

Internet website: www.SisterWho.com

Additional Informational Websites:

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