

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

COMPASSION

12 SEPTEMBER 2011

Compassion is part of the authentic human spirit. Compassion is the proactive extension of love, and particularly to another person. It requires that we are not reactive to the people and circumstances around us, but that we are taking the positive step of extending love.

Do you ever wonder how the pattern of relationships among the people who inhabit your world will ever clarify? How it will ever come to a place of peace and love? On the global scene, how will the Israelis and the Arabs ever understand each other? How will Republicans and Democrats ever get along? Closer to home, how does this family member get along with that one? It all seems so hopeless.

If humanity is to reclaim its authentic spirit, there has to be the proactive extension of love in the face of whatever has happened, in the face of whatever history there may be. This teaching was central to what Jesus brought. He said it this way:

*Forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.*

In this simplest of spiritual teachings, he points to the means by which the whole pattern of human relations can be clarified. We don't have to wait for someone else to forgive us. We don't have to wait to be forgiven by the Divine. It happens as surely as night follows day when we proactively extend it. When we offer compassion, we have done our part to clarify the whole pattern of human relations.

Of course, it's frustrating, because I haven't found out yet how to *make* other people forgive. It would be nice to have a solution that you could implement and force on other people. But apparently this is not how the real solution works. The real solution has to be implemented personally, and it's really the only way it could be implemented: as a person, starting with me, taking personal responsibility for being compassionate. And it could be catching! Because when you offer compassion, you offer care, you inspire and offer forgiveness and the release of shame.

Do you believe you have the capacity to extend that to another person, so that when another person comes into your presence, you extend some kind of magic bubble in which they can release the sense of shame that they may be carrying and feel a greater sense of freedom and openness, and feel the inspiration themselves to find their own gift of compassion? I believe we all have that power. A truly compassionate person offers an envelope of atmosphere filled with love.

Sometimes we may single someone out as a particularly compassionate or loving person, as if they just rolled out of bed that way. Perhaps it does come more easily for some people than for others. But I believe that, for all adults, compassion is a choice. That choice is born out of our values. I choose to be compassionate because someplace inside me I've just decided that that's who I am. That is the way a human being ought to act; that is the way I ought to act. I've decided that if I am to be my authentic self, I must offer the proactive extension of love to other people. And sometimes that's easy—sometimes I might think someone deserves it. We might say some people are easier to love than others. And sometimes it is hard. Sometimes the decision to be compassionate has to trump your own habitual emotional pattern, your habitual personality pattern, with the larger desire that's present in your heart to be authentic, knowing that at the heart of authenticity is love. I don't know how one could be an authentic person without loving.

For spirituality to be real, it has to be expressed by a person—made available on earth because someone lives and breathes it, and someone makes a choice to trump their emotional habits, their own personal psychology, with the proactive expression of love. Only when the imperative of spiritual expression trumps the reactive human state can the authentic human spirit come out.

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