

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

MY NEW WORLD

31 MARCH 2008

Last week I was very interested in the talk about a new world. What is my new world? What am I on the threshold of? What am I choosing to bring at this time?

Some words that my father (David Karchere) spoke at the service expansion time stuck with me, and I wanted to mention them and some of my meditations on them. He said he was realizing that the invisible reality of being doesn't need protecting, but if it's going to be here on earth in our experience, we need to defend and protect it.

There's something both comforting and challenging about that. The holy place is what it is. I have no fear of losing it, of not knowing it, or of desecrating it. It will always be there. And that is the sense of joy, comfort and trust that we are born with and can be in touch with our whole lives.

But if it's going to be experienced among us, it has to be nurtured, cared for, protected in some way. When someone expresses the very truth of their being, the very core of what we all are, that essence must be cared for, above all things. When someone is bringing that truth of who I am, everything in me wants to stand up with that and wants to care for it. And I'm willing to use all of my thoughts and my actions to defend it, should it be challenged or hit with something. That's, I think, a lot of what friendship is for me: helping bring out the finest in those I'm with, and then protecting it when it comes. It's about not letting it get trampled by my own reactions in a difficult moment or by anyone else feeling lost and taking it out on that very sweet essence that's coming forth.

I always think about how great community is and how we can really prove so much out in this place, and also how natural it is for there to be conflicts. The question is: How do we build up this community substance, collective understanding, tools, so that we can handle conflict when it comes?

We must ask each other questions and not always assume that we know. I thought about what is my most precious value when those conflicts arise. And it is that the true beauty of God be expressed—that I will find a way to say what needs to be said in a way that does not cut across Spirit, that actually uses spiritual current as a means for delivering the message. I thought that was really fascinating. I started thinking, well, what does it mean to actually ride on the current of spirit as you're giving someone feedback?

I think sometimes we go about our spiritual lives, and when a conflict arises we almost step out of that. We think, "Well, this isn't spiritual. I'd better get all tense and figure this out separately from my spiritual life." But imagine the difference when we actually tell a friend, "When you did this, it was difficult for me because it brought up this and it made me think this and feel this, and I just want to know what you're thinking." If we can actually be expressing that truth and that spirit that we all know as we're delivering some hard facts or as we're mentioning things to our friends, it will be so much better received and so much better for that person than trying to accuse them of "being bad."

I wrote a poem last night that I wanted to share with you; it's called "My New World":

*My new world
Is a choice,
A stance taken
In the minutes
Between ritualistic
Hits of the snooze button
In which I wear
A silly grin
And cuddle my pillow one last time.
My lover and I playfully push each other
Out of bed
And into our day,
 Our responsibilities,
 Our victory.*

*My new world
Is a choice,
A stance taken
When one lost friend
Cruelly blames another
And I extend
Strong, clear support
For the blamed
And a powerful message
To the blaming:
Leave this hell
Made of your own hate
Return home with me
You can ask forgiveness
Of our friend there.*

*My new world
Is a choice,
A stance taken
In the dawn of rough realizations.
My close friend, lover, or mother
Recoil from sharp
Things I've spoken
Turn away from my ugly,
Hidden little well of self-hate
From which all of our blaming springs.
They ask me to change
And I do
And I love them for it.*

*My new world
Is a choice,
A stance taken
Taken because I will not live
The dying life
Of a humanity
Caught in the
Old worlds
Of pains past
Forever loving tragedy
Forever hating tragedy,
Forever being tragic.*

*My new world
Is a choice,
A stance taken
By myself
As a woman
In God power
A stance taken
With family
As a whole
Eternal, unbreakable in Love.*

There is such a passion, such a welling up in me, a desire to protect the most sacred things of my heart and of those of my friends. And I will do anything to be by their side, do anything to be by the Lord's side, no matter what happens—not being bitter when things happen that I don't think should have happened that way, but loving, loving, loving, loving powerfully, a

loving committed to holding myself and each other accountable.

I was thinking about some of the ways that I know I and others in my world are not doing that sometimes, some of the things that are a bit of a reality check. And funny enough, it reminded me of the Jeff Foxworthy jokes—“You’re probably a redneck if…” Does anyone know those?—along the lines of reality checks. So he has a few lines. One of them is: “If your family tree doesn’t fork, you’re probably a redneck.” “If your hairdo has ever been ruined by a ceiling fan, you’re probably a redneck.”

So that’s probably not the most appropriate thing to say in the Dome. But it led me to a way of speaking to a different audience, a spiritual audience. It’s along the lines of “You’ve probably got some more work to do if…” Here are some of the examples:

- * “...you frequently find yourself convinced someone else has *totally* ruined your life.”
- * “...you say to people, in written or spoken word, that they’re a bad person in any kind of smart, unique terminology. You are lacking something as a person, something about yourself is not whole, something about who you are has ruined my life.”
- * “...you oscillate between niceness and cruelty.”
- * “...you feel justified in gossiping about someone because *they’ll never find out.*”
- * “...you make it easy for others to be a victim and blame their friends for their experience.”

I probably have a lot more reality checks than that, and I’m sure you’ve got your own too. But a clear one is “You’ve probably got some more work to do if...you think it’s okay to attack someone’s character.” I think we’ve all had situations where all of a sudden we find ourselves doing that. I had a falling-out with a friend in the MBA program last year, who I had been quite close with. I won’t go into the details, but one day we were happy and friends, and we’d hang out, and then the next day I was going home to Victor and saying, “This girl is such a mean, terrible person, and she’s ruining my experience in the classroom, and she’s not talking to me, and I didn’t do anything.” I remember him saying, “Really? Because yesterday you guys were best friends.” But that was what I thought the reality was—that she was totally at fault, and I started attacking her character as a person.

You probably have more work to do if that happens! So I gradually was able to speak with her, and we actually decided not to be friends anymore, that enough had happened that it wasn’t right for us to be friends anymore. I haven’t had too many experiences like that, so it had a deep impact on me to actually have a conversation where we realized “We’re going to go separate ways. Many blessings on you, but I no longer trust that you can keep my heart safe.” At least then we were talking about something, and I was talking about the facts related

to what had come between us. If you find yourself saying about another person, “You’re lacking very important things, and I can’t even talk to you,” then you know you’ve got some problems.

So the question I was asking myself is: What’s going on when I find myself attacking character, attacking who someone is—not just their actions but actually getting to that other level? The questions I ask myself are: What am I hoping to accomplish when I give someone feedback? What are my motives? What are my needs in this? What’s been triggered? If I feel a boundary has been crossed, that’s an important thing. It’s a built-in mechanism for seeing what we really value. If I feel a boundary has been crossed by someone else’s actions, what does that tell me about myself and what I really love? Those are important messages. And how else could I express my needs?

Those are important thought processes. Is this really what I want to be doing? Is this really the kind of community or the friendship I want? I have found that whenever I go into that other place, whenever I don’t ask myself those important questions, I regret it terribly; because instead of taking the opportunity to be clear and focused and strong in my love, I can be cruel. I don’t want to do that.

My new world is a choice, a stance taken in all the moments that we have together. I am deeply in love with that commitment, and humble in my past and possibly future moments of failure in that. They’re all part of the process. But I agree to be held accountable in those moments. What we’re doing together is so special, I prize it very highly.

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