

# REAL SELF EXPRESSION

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT

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**DAVID KARCHERE** is a speaker and workshop leader who assists people to renew their Primal Spirituality—an experience that virtually all human beings know at birth, and that ideally grows as they mature.

This is from *The Hidden Antidote for Depression*, an article by Nanice Ellis:

*It is no secret that depression is a worldwide epidemic, but did you know that a hidden cause of depression is the fear of self-expression? If you often sacrifice self-expression in exchange for acceptance, appreciation or approval—or to avoid negative consequences like rejection or conflict—you may become depressed.*

*Every time you shut down self-expression in order to get your emotional needs met by others, you are actually rejecting your Real Self—cutting yourself off from your intrinsic source of energy and power, and thereby diminishing your natural state of peace, joy and love. The result is often what we refer to as depression.*

And then she says:

*Depression is the unavoidable by-product of not being who you really are and a direct result of repressing your Real Self.*

(from <http://wakeup-world.com/2015/06/01/the-hidden-antidote-for-depression/>)

I write with compassion for anyone who is suffering from depression, and with the understanding that there are many factors behind this mental disease. I don't mean to imply that the total answer for depression for any individual is purely spiritual. Yet still, Nanice Ellis is pointing to a vital factor in anyone's life and for humanity as a whole. This is humanity's journey—the birth of the Real Self through the outpouring of creative expression. It is also the journey for every individual.

The Real Self, for you and for me, is the Creator—an aspect of the Creator of All. At the same time, the Real Self, which is the truest aspect of each of us, is a creator in its

own right. We are each creating a world. As a baby, we are *born* into a world. As the Real Self comes forth we are *creating* a world.

A creator has total responsibility for their creation. There are certainly a myriad of factors that affect the creation. Other people play their part. Yet still, it is the creator who is the one whose creation it is.

Nowhere is this more true than for a human life and for the individual world that a human being creates. Even if the person believes that the individual world in which they live is being formed by forces outside of themselves, they are the one to whom that world comes. They have the joys and burdens of ownership when it comes to their life.

As an individual human being, that can seem to be dreadfully burdensome. *There is so much going on in my life that is so crazy; how could I take responsibility for all that?*

But to the Creator it isn't burdensome. It's just the reality of how things are. Whatever happens, I am responsible. It's my world. There is no one else on whom I could unload my responsibility.

In the face of difficulty in a child's life, the child may run to its mother or father, shouting, "Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!" or "Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!"

When we become awake and aware adults, it's our world. There is nobody to run to

other than the Creator, who is your Real Self. It doesn't mean that people don't try. They may demand that the government fix their world. They may go to the leaders of whatever organization with which they are associated, demanding, *Make it better*. They may even go to a friend or partner to demand that they make their life happy.

From a practical standpoint, there may be a reason to make demands on our government or upon an organizational leader. Or to ask a friend or partner to change a behavior. But that is a very poor substitute for accepting one's own creatorship—the power of the Creator that is our human destiny. It is the nature of a human being to be responsible. It is the nature of being a creator to be responsible for your creation.

When we accept our creatorship, we are accepting the fast path to spiritual awakening. In the end, it's not *just* the fast path. It's the only path. No spiritual practice other than accepting your own creatorship in the living of your life—not prayer, not meditation, not yoga, no seminar or workshop or anything else—will bring the experience of being an awake and aware human being. It is only by expressing the Creator who we are in our moment-by-moment living that we have the experience of being spiritually awake. If you don't practice the mindfulness of thinking about what you're expressing, putting your whole heart into what you're expressing and taking responsibility for the results that appear, you aren't awake. This is true self-

expression by which the Real Self—the Creator—is born into the world. It is an antidote for depression. Beyond that, it is the destiny of every individual human being and our common destiny as humanity.

There are so many human habits that fall short of that. One of those habits is the self-righteousness of *doing my part*. When things don't go well between people, one of them can say, "I did my part." Implicit in that is the judgment "They didn't do theirs." "I did my part—I did what *I* was supposed to do. I was a good person in this. But they didn't." The truth is that no matter what anyone did, you are the Creator of your world. You are responsible. That is why they say that creative relationships are not a 50-50 proposition. A relationship is creative when both parties take 100% responsibility.

A poor leader blames their failures on those around them. A real leader owns all their failures and all their successes. This is what it means to bottom-line an area of responsibility.

At Sunrise Ranch we are enduring winter illnesses that have kept many people from going to work. This meant that more than half of the people who had signed up for our Attunement School were unable to complete the initial four days of our course. Suzanne Rouge was one of the participants and early before one of the sessions she was sweeping the front steps of the Pavilion, where we were holding the course. Suzanne is

responsible for Homekeeping at Sunrise Ranch, and others who might have swept the steps were sick. So simple an act! Yet a picture of being a creator. Understanding that there are practical limits to what one person can do, real leaders bottom-line their world.

If you really undertake leadership seriously, you are likely to get a front-row seat to people saying, "I did my part and they didn't do theirs." Then, "And by the way, oh leader, it's up to you to make it all come out right." In America, we do that to the President.

The idea of a democracy is that a community of people—or a nation—takes responsibility for the collective endeavor and takes responsibility for its governance. That's the theory. But all too often the reality is that we elect somebody to do the impossible, to do what we won't do, which is to take responsibility for it all coming out right. And then it doesn't, and we point the finger at them and say, "Shame on you—you didn't make me happy." "Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!" Sometimes, it amounts to little more than that.

A person who has yet to accept that they are the Creator for their world often develops a habit of lazy, negative, circular thinking. They have yet to fully discover that their mind is designed to create a world. They have yet to accept the mental discipline that is natural to someone who knows they are the Creator, so that their thoughts are meant for Creation. Without that discipline, the mind

goes easily to thoughts born from victimhood, resentment and fear.

While I can't make anyone else do what they are unwilling to do, that doesn't mean I'm not responsible. That doesn't mean I can put my head on my pillow and be happy: "Well, I did my part." If I truly do my part, I am happy. Truly doing my part is the way I take responsibility for all of my world.

It seems so awesome, the idea that as the Creator I am responsible. I am responsible, not for just doing my part. I'm responsible for all that doesn't come together. I'm responsible for every relationship that doesn't quite meet my expectation. Responsibility is different from self-blame. I am the Creator, not Atlas. Atlas holds up the world with a bent back. The Creator is creating a new world.

This is from a comedy sketch starring Bob Newhart. He is playing the part of a psychotherapist who has a woman come to his office to address her claustrophobia.

**Therapist:** *I charge \$5 for the first five minutes and absolutely nothing after that... I can almost guarantee you that the session won't last the full five minutes.*

**Client:** *I have this fear of being buried alive in a box.*

**Therapist:** *Has anyone ever tried to bury you alive in a box?*

**Client:** *No. But truly, thinking about it makes my life horrible.*

**Therapist:** *I'm going to say two words to you right now. I want you to listen to them very, very carefully, and then I want you to take them out of the office with you and incorporate them into your life.*

**Client:** *Shall I write them down?*

**Therapist:** *Well, if it makes you comfortable. It's just two words. We find most people can remember them.*

*Are you ready? Here they are.*

*STOP IT!*

The client seems totally bewildered, and the sketch goes on from there. The therapist re-administers the remedy several times regarding other problems: bulimia, self-destructive relationships with men, and fear of driving. *Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!*

It is hilarious because there is something about it that is true. It is a factual portrayal, and you might not be too happy if you went to a therapist who gave you that kind of remedy. But what it points out is that we have disempowering beliefs that lead to destructive habits of thought and behavior. The truth is that we are empowered to create our lives, and to re-create them every day.

I'd like to read one of my favorite stories. It is

a story of empowerment from Jesus' life in the Book of John.

*After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*

*Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.*

*In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.*

*For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.*

*And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.*

*When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?*

*The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.*

*Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.*

*And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked.*

Unlike the therapist in Bob Newhart's sketch, Jesus doesn't address the negative belief and the negative behavior that went with it. He didn't tell the lame man to stop lying there or to stop waiting for outside influences to solve his problems. He went right to the positive, empowering command that we receive all the time from the Creator who lives inside us:

*Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.*

*Live! Create!*

I have lived in intentional, spiritual community most of my adult life, as I do now at Sunrise Ranch. There are many fulfilling opportunities I have found in community—deep friendships, creative collaboration and profound collective experiences, to name a few.

As wonderful as it has been, it can also be stultifying at times. That was my experience when I was in my twenties and I couldn't find a way to be myself and be accepted.

As things worked out, almost without me thinking about it or trying to make it so, I ended up with an entry-level corporate job, working for International Business Machines in downtown New York. You might think *that* would be stultifying—that it would cramp my self-expression. In some ways it did, until I had the radical idea that maybe it

would work for me to just be myself in that situation and see what happened—express my creativity and let the chips fall where they may.

I was dumbfounded: nobody seemed to mind! I could apply all the creativity that was in me, with all of the ferocity of my soul, to something I didn't really care that much about. But nonetheless, there was huge gratification in the fact that I was being a creator and I was expressing myself, and *I was free*. Once that happened for me, nobody could take that freedom back. Wherever I went, I was a free man, free to express myself, free to be the Creator who I am.

This is the gift that I would love to give to anyone who is willing to receive it, knowing that it's not the kind of gift you can just dole out in a package. But what I pray is that to whatever degree I am a free man who allows the very essence and power of Creation to come through me, that other people will see it not as an intimidation or a call for them to be smaller, to make room for me, but as an invitation to be free and to create themselves. Let us all be creators.

I said to the managers at Sunrise Ranch early this week that the challenge we face is not to find weak, willing people who will follow our direction. Our challenge as a community is to come together as strong people who find their own individual responsibility for the world we share.

Personally, I have no interest in shepherding a flock of meek, docile people. I have an interest in strong people who know how to come together and who take responsibility in relationship, not for fifty percent but for a hundred percent of their relationships, and who take responsibility for their world. If we are to bring something to the *whole world*, how do we begin to do that if we don't take responsibility for the very *immediate world* in which we live? My experience is that most people woefully underestimate the power that they have in the world in which they are living. And then they feel victimized by what happens all around them. They don't accept the Creator that is with them and so they don't inherit the power of Creation.

There's a wonderful book entitled *The Art of Possibility*, by Ros Zander. She talks about how, in an organization, a person can lead from wherever they are in that organization. An organizationally oriented person doesn't think so. If they see themselves as an underling in the organization, they believe they have no power. Or if they are given some kind of organizational power, they grasp onto it as an internally weak person who now has the right to lord it over other people, sometimes in horribly destructive ways.

The truly spiritual person knows that their power isn't organizational. Their power is spiritual in nature. It is the very Power of Creation. A truly spiritual person is free in expressing that. They don't compromise their

integrity, so the Power of Creation comes through them and changes the world. They change their immediate world. My experience is that the people around me start changing when I show up in a circumstance. Individuals change. Some people start going and other people start coming. In the beginning, it can seem to be an uncreative place. But if I refuse to compromise *my* integrity, and I bring the self-expression of who *I* am into that situation, that world changes miraculously. Sometimes it's a month or two and sometimes it's years before the change fully comes. In some way it doesn't matter. I'm not waiting for my circumstance to change. I am being myself, I am expressing myself. As a matter of fact, that's what I'm doing right now in writing this Pulse of Spirit. When the Real Self shows up, a new world is created.

When the Real Self expresses, you are bringing the vibration of life. The Creator brings life. I am sharing that vibration right now. You too, I presume. We are amping up the life current. That's what happens when you express the Real Self: it comes out. It is exhilarating to express yourself.

We call forth life. Inherent in that vibration is the creative command: *Stop it!* Probably seldom said in quite those words. There is also life's invitation to *rise, take up your bed, and walk. Live.*

When the Real Self is born through our creative expression, a new world is born too.

David Karchere

[dkarchere@emnet.org](mailto:dkarchere@emnet.org)



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