

# THE BIG RECONNECTION

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT  
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I just returned this morning from two days in the Rocky Mountains. My mind is filled with visions of frozen lakes, all kinds of birds, a rushing river, and a magnificent time with three other men. It was a time of reconnecting with the real world. We used many adjectives to describe what we were seeing: *majestic, beautiful, magical*... For me, the most relevant word was *real*. Up in the mountains where we were, there are not many people. There is pristine wilderness, and you can feel the heartbeat of Creation in such a place and feel your own heartbeat connected to it. I felt reconnected with reality.

It's wonderful just because it's the mountains, and mountains are majestic and beautiful. It's also wonderful because human commercial efforts haven't intruded too much in the high peaks in the way they have in other places. This is partly due to conservation efforts, but also due to the expense of extracting resources out of remote, hard to access mountains.

The whole world is wonderful and the whole world is real. But usually, the more that human beings become involved, the more that the patterns of Creation are disrupted. So in some places it can be harder to feel the rhythms of Creation that are present all around us. And then we as human beings get caught up in our human world which is all too often *out* of rhythm with Creation.

I spent nearly ten years of my life in New York City where there is a lot of asphalt, concrete and tall buildings. There is also a large mass of humanity. If you drive over the George Washington Bridge, across the Hudson River, you can feel its energy. Living in Manhattan, I came to appreciate that underneath all of that civilization, the *planet* is still there. You can still tune into the magnificence of the rivers and harbors and the palisades overlooking the Hudson River.

Most people don't know that in the middle of Manhattan, Central Park is a favorite landing spot for migrating birds going up and down the East Coast. Birds see this large patch of green in the middle of skyscrapers and the sprawling megalopolis that cover so much of the eastern seaboard of the United States. They are tuned into the rhythms of Creation, not to the Dow Jones Industrial Average.

A phrase that came to us on our time in the mountains was *The Big Reconnection*. As humanity, we are ready for a big reconnection with the planet itself, with each other, and with the heartbeat of Creation that's within us. We are facing the necessity of that. There are things that are happening in our world that are calling attention to our disconnection. Escalating population—it has multiplied 2.7 times in my lifetime thus far. Global warming, terrorism, the nuclear threat... Shall I name all the bad things happening in our world today?

There is a great tendency to look away and fail to acknowledge that anything wrong is happening. It seems we only get worried when it begins to affect us. So if you go up into the Rocky Mountains and see the beetle kill on whole hillsides of dead trees, and you see the forest fire destruction that follows it, you might worry that your hiking trails aren't as beautiful as they used to be. But that's the least of the consequences of global warming.

Here we see the planet self-correcting. With global warming, it's not getting cold enough for the pine beetles to be killed off, and so there are dead pine trees, and then there are forest fires. All of that is planetary re-correction. The planet

has a way of taking care of things. But somewhere along the way, we see that self-correction is going to involve us. We might be self-corrected by the planet. And then we get worried. I love the bumper sticker with a picture of a whale on it that says, "Save the Humans."

By some estimates, while the human population doubled between 1960 and 2000, the animal population declined by 30 per cent. From 1970 to 2005, the biodiversity of our planet plummeted by almost a third. Generally speaking, people don't care about the impact humanity is having on the planet. We only become worried when we see that we, ourselves, could suffer from the self-correction of the planet.

There is a process called the 5 Whys. In the face of an important issue, it has you asking "why?" five times. Take global warming. Of course, the first step is to acknowledge that there is an issue. Collectively, it took us a while to acknowledge that there was an issue, and then it took us a while longer to admit that we had something to do with the issue. The issue has to be acknowledged before a person will even begin to ask why. But if you can acknowledge that there is some kind of issue to address, the process goes like this: You ask why. Why is there global warming? Well, because there are smokestacks, because there's desertification. Well, why is there desertification and why are there smokestacks? Then you get behind that.

If you keep asking why, you may get back to the need for the big reconnection. It is alienation from the planet, alienation from each other, and

alienation from the rhythms of Creation that is the ultimate cause of global warming.

The past two nights, we camped at the top of a gorge. Down below, the Big Thompson River flowed, having just received water from Fern Creek, Spruce Creek and many other places. This is a period of maximum flow due to warm weather and the snowmelt. It was so easy to connect with the power of Creation and to feel that power in my own body. I could feel that same life energy, rushing through me.

That connection isn't just something intellectual. I can share the thought, but the big reconnection is happening at a heart level if we let it. It is happening when all the suspicion that's present about that connection is released so that the reality of the connection can be made. We can stop being afraid of this planet and afraid of each other and afraid of the very rhythms of Creation that are surging through us. Only then there can be a heart reconnection.

I don't think there's any question that there's something pretty fabulous happening in our world today—fabulous and terrible, all at the same time. At one level, it seems that there is an accelerating race towards our ultimate destruction. And then there is something popping open in human experience. There is an awakening that's going on. It's not happening homogeneously, to everyone at the same time. Not everybody is waking up at the same time. There are plenty of people who are deep in their slumbers, unaware of what's going on on the planet, and feeling very disconnected and not awake to the possibility of the big reconnection.

But then there are some people who are awakening to that possibility. Perhaps you are one? If so, I couldn't tell you why it is so. I can't tell you why it's me and I can't tell you why it's you who are awakening. But if it is you, that's the reality, that's what's happening. You can call it the marathon effect—not everybody starts or finishes the marathon at the same time. You can call it the hundredth-monkey effect, or the tipping point.

That's how we change as human beings. It doesn't happen all at once. Change starts someplace, and if you are awake, it's starting with you. I could say I'm sorry about that. Or we could just celebrate it and acknowledge that awakening is a wondrous thing. We get to be that person who is bringing the new.

In Ken Wilber's address to the Global Purpose Movement Synergy Forum on May 21st, he expressed the view that 5% of the world's population is now awake and it will take 10% to create massive global change. Five percent to go!

The truth is, it's not always easy being an awake person. Did your life become easier just because you began to wake up? That's not *my* experience! My life has been wonderful and incredibly creative, and I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world, but in the usual understanding of what's easy, no, it's not been that. How about you?

Last year, when Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés was at Sunrise Ranch, I had a chance to converse with her over lunch. One of the things she said touched me deeply: "You're carrying a long train." Five words: "You're carrying a long

train.” I knew instantly what she was saying. In those five words, she expressed understanding and compassion in a way only she can do. I could feel my whole heart relaxing and my breathing deepening. It felt so good to be understood. And it helped so much to see my life in that context.

I didn’t take it in a pessimistic way. It felt freeing to acknowledge, yes, I am carrying a long train. Yes, I am on the vanguard, I am bringing something new. I’m bringing a challenge to the world. I’m bringing an enlightened state of awareness to the world. I’m an explorer, I’m a pioneer, I’m a discoverer. I’m carrying a long train, and I could feel that train behind me. And if you’re carrying a long train, you can feel it. If you are a pioneer, you feel that train.

So I’ll pass Dr. Estés’ words on to you. *You are carrying a long train.* Thank you.

Odessa Lake in the Rocky Mountains was majestic and beautiful. I loved the journey there and back, trudging through the snow. I didn’t tell you about the backache, or the sore arms and sore legs. That’s not important to me. But they are there, even though they are not what stand out in my mind. If you are a spiritual pioneer, it is like that. You are pulling a long train, and it is work. But that’s not what matters. You are waking up the world, if you are an awake person.

Celebrate it! And celebrate the people around you who are doing it with you. All those flawless, wonderful, perfect people who are waking up with you! And they’re almost as perfect as you are! Of course, that’s not how it really is.

Think about this: We live in a culture that is largely bought and paid for. We’re being run by a government that is largely bought and paid for. We have a media that is largely bought and paid for and that is defining our culture. We can each find our nice, comfortable place to fit in, in that culture. It’s comfortable—and deadly, particularly for an awake person.

Creating a real culture that’s in the rhythm of Creation—a culture that is connected with the planet and connected with the genius of the creator that we are—now, *that’s* pioneering. And in doing that pioneering, we are meeting a lot of weird people. They’re not all perfect people, and they’re not people who just fit in to the existing culture. These are people who are awakening and creating new culture, and making it up as they go along.

Have some compassion! And have some compassion on yourself. You could have chosen something different. You could have just followed a way that everybody else is following, but you didn’t do that. Have some compassion on yourself, and have compassion on your friends.

We’re coming together to create a new world and a new culture. We’re not satisfied with the bought-and-paid-for culture. In this new culture, you have to have some compassion and be willing to wake up, grow up, and clean up. You have to be willing to do that for yourself, and then hold the space for your friends to do it too.

You’re pulling a long train. Don’t make it any worse for yourself, and don’t make it any worse for your neighbors. Hold them in compassion. Lift them up if they’re struggling. Just because

we wake up doesn't make us perfect. I found that out a long time ago. I've met many imperfect people on my path.

As a friend of mine says, if this was easy, everybody would be doing it. In the largest sense, it is easy, because the path of least resistance is to wake up and grow up and clean up. It is the easiest thing to do, even though your legs might be tired at some point.

I celebrate that we, with awakening people all over the world, are connected. Together, we are not awakening simply to create some little new culture off to the side of everything else. We are part of a universal culture that is spreading to all

humanity and we are part of this great planetary self-correction. Some parts of that, like the pine beetle infestation, and worse, seem unfortunate. But when we see the self-correction, we have to be willing to embrace it, because that's what the planet is doing. Can we be with that in an enlightened way?

Let us allow the big reconnection to happen for us; reconnection to the planet, to each other and to a new future for this world.

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