

A CONVERSATION OF TRUTH: A CONVERSATION OF LOVE

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT
JULY 13, 2016



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The nation is in anguish over the deaths of this past week. Just when we thought we were getting over race issues in this country, America has been witness to the deaths of two black men at the hands of the police, and five police officers at the hands of a black man. When the United States elected Barack Obama as its first black president, we hoped that he would help bridge the gap between races. Yet his election and re-election haven't been a magic potion healing the wound of racism, and there's still anguish and division in the country.

Heather Whitman was a young girl in a spiritual community where I lived when I was a young man in my twenties. Recently, she expressed her thoughts following the events of this past week:

To one and all in this world, in response to the current condition of this world, it is a WE proposition, not a ME proposition, which is the truth of what IS. Like it or not, we belong to each other; therefore, we are our brother's keeper. If we would simply choose to encourage one another

instead of harshly criticizing and judging each other, the world, as well as our own experience, would take a mere instant to change for the better. I claim you all with love!

True words, spoken from the heart.

I posted this on my Facebook page:

Until we see that our race problem is really a people problem, a love problem, and an integrity problem, there will be no answer.

As long as we see the issues that are up as being only about race, I don't believe there's any answer. We have to recognize that there's a history that has a racial component. But only when we engage in a deeper truth is there the possibility of healing the wound. If I keep responding as a white person to the issue of race, there won't be an answer.

We are called to carry on two conversations in our life; a conversation of truth and a conversation of love. Certainly, America needs to engage in those two conversations regarding the

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racial issues in this country. Our creativity as a human being has a whole lot to do with our ability to carry on those two conversations.

The conversation of truth is about being intelligent. It's about understanding. It's about seeing at depth what's really happening in our life. It's about carrying on a conversation that allows a new idea, a new concept, a new vision, a new dream to be present.

Arrogance is the enemy of an intelligent conversation. It's impossible to carry on an intelligent conversation from an arrogant stance. The conversation becomes about something else. It becomes about being right, it becomes about showing off, about trying to prove one's stature, perhaps even the stature of your intellect.

It's such a joy to carry on a truly intelligent conversation which is not about any of those things. Such a conversation is allowed to go to what is really true, not just what is really ultimately true but what's really true in the situation—what's true of you, what's true of me, what's true of the creative field in which we're working, what's really happening. If your car isn't working, why? If you need to improve your health, what will you do? Whatever the field, what do you need to know? And how can you, and the other people involved, come to that knowing? Or does the conversation stop with people pretending to know something they don't? Does it become bogged down in the swamps of arrogance?

When we are selfless we enter the conversation of truth deeply, and it's fun and creative.

There's another conversation to have, the conversation of love. Using that word, you may think of romance. But every relationship has the possibility of a conversation of love. It may not be

the head-over-heels kind of love, but it can be a conversation about care, or about affection, or about bringing out the best of another. A conversation of love builds connection. It's a conversation that confirms our oneness. It confirms our togetherness. It confirms our belonging. It confirms our nobility.

Envy is the enemy of a conversation of love. If you're envious of another person and what they have, it's hard to be loving; particularly if you allow yourself to be controlled by your envy. If you're afraid that there is something that you have that will be taken from you, it's hard to carry on a conversation of love.

Love is, by its nature, generous. Love is giving. To carry on a conversation of love, you have to have a sense of inner abundance, a sense that you have something to give to another person, and that when you give it you have yet more to give—that this isn't a zero-sum game so that when you've given something of yourself to another person you have less. The conversation of love is conducted by people who know that when they engage in that conversation, that they have more; that when they've given something, they're enhanced, and not diminished. The conversation of love amplifies our connection, our oneness, and our togetherness. It confirms that we have something to do together and that we have the opportunity to know our nobility all the more in that conversation when we are loving.

Some years back, Jane Anetrini and I wrote two pieces for *The Pulse of Spirit*. The first one was *A Plus B Equals C*, and the second one was *A Plus B Equals C, # 2*. We were saying that a conversation of truth and a conversation of love brings creativity and life.

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These are not two separate conversations, actually, because truth ceases to have meaning when it becomes separated from love. There is no such thing as real truth outside of love because in reality truth is the truth of love. It's the true pattern in which the oneness of things is revealed. It's the design of the unfoldment of the power of the universe.

And love has no meaning without truth. Do you feel drawn to a loving liar? Or is there any real meaning to the oxymoron "loving liar"? An untruthful person isn't truly loving. To be loving we have to be truthful. We have to carry on the conversation of truth or love breaks down. Love becomes something less than that. It becomes niceness and niceness is a very poor substitute for love. It might become a two-faced-ness, because without truth we might be nice to someone's face but not really mean it, and then be resentful behind their back.

It is a lifelong art to carry on a conversation of truth and a conversation of love. That art is worthy of our lifelong commitment. Who has it all figured out?

Carrying on the conversation of truth and love is an unfolding adventure. It demands that we ask these questions:

*How do I express something loving here?
How do I do it in a truthful way?
How do I shine light on this situation,
knowing that would be the truly loving
thing to do?*

I had the realization personally that the project that I lead requires my sharp mind. I have one. Early in my life, I became suspicious of a sharp intellect, including my own, because I saw how much damage it could do at the personal level and at the global level. There were some very

sharp intellects who created the atom bomb. And I saw people with sharp minds around me be cruel at a personal level. So I learned to temper my sharp intellect and balance it with other elements of my life experience. I learned that a sharp intellect works best under the control of spirit within a person. I learned that a sharp intellect goes much better with a caring heart in personal relationships.

And yet I had the thought this week that my world needs my sharp intellect and I can't be shy about using it. At times, my world needs my sharp tongue, too. A sharp tongue can do a lot of damage as well. So, for myself, perhaps like you, I've curbed my sharp tongue. Some might say, *Not enough*. But there are times when a sharp tongue is needed. There's something sharp that needs to be said, something that will cut through the lethargy and fog that can be present in consciousness.

A sharp tongue is a dangerous instrument, so it has to be used cautiously, with restraint and under spiritual control. And yet there are times when what's true deserves to be said for the sake of the conversation of truth that we are having together.

I know this is relevant in my immediate life. It's relevant in the world in which we're living. Related to race relations in this country, do you think there's some incisive thinking needed? A conversation of truth? Dime-store philosophy doesn't get us very far when it comes to race relations. Cheap slogans don't take us very far. We need a penetrating truth. True things need to be said—in a loving way and with a loving intent. But they need to be said.

It is our nature as human beings to bring the impetus of being. We are world changers by our nature. The question is, for better or for worse? 3

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There are three choices in how that nature is expressed.

We can sit on it and shut down our creative impulse. And if we don't have the courage to bring it, we die. Not a very good choice.

The second option is to bring it badly, inaccurately, without intelligence, without wisdom. We can bring it without love, in which case it's a force of destruction.

The third option is to admit that we do bring the impetus of being; that when we're on the scene we are changing that scene, we make a difference. We are powerful people. We are love. We are beauty. We are peace. We are powerful. We can learn to bring that world-changing ability in a clear, creative and light-filled way; in a loving way.

Certainly, it's high time that we did that as America. Let's call to this country to be great.

Let's call to this country not to go flatline, not to forget who America is and what America is all about. *We are better than this. We are bigger than this. We are more loving than this. We are more truthful than this.*

We ourselves can treat people not as we judge them to be, but as they're becoming. We can speak to the evolution force within them. That creates a forward-moving conversation; that's an uplifting conversation; that's a creative conversation.

Would you be willing to take on the practice this week—and then in the months and years to come—of having that kind of conversation with the people in your life?

Let us practice carrying on a conversation of truth and a conversation of love.

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