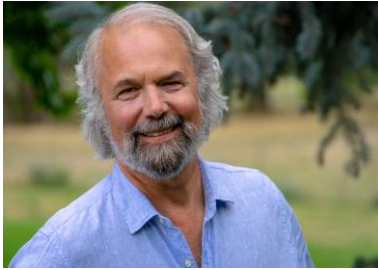


Leaders Make a Place for Other Leaders

Pulse of Spirit
July 10, 2019



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.

I'd like to share with you a reading from the inscription on the Statue of Liberty. It's a poem by Emma Lazarus entitled "The New Colossus."

*Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to
land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes
command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.*

*"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!"
cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your
poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe
free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.*

*Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to
me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

This is my America. For us who are Americans, perhaps you claim the same country as I do, and claim her spirit, expressed so beautifully through these words. And whether or not you are American, I think the words may resonate with you as being an expression of your spirit as well.

I am also a New Yorker, having grown up fifty miles outside of the city. My father commuted on the New Haven Railroad in the early years of my life. Later on, I lived in and around New York for another eighteen years.

Last week I had the opportunity to be in the city. Karen Pritchard and I flew up over the harbor on our way to LaGuardia Airport and saw the Statue of Liberty, which inspires me to

this day. It represents the city that I love and which is still a home to me.

I've shared this poem in part to give an answer to the horrific situation perpetrated by the government of my country as they bring people, largely from Central America and Mexico, into detention centers along the border and elsewhere in the country. I decry what is happening in those detention centers. On a different day, I'd discuss the politics of it. But I'm not talking about the politics of it today. I'm talking about the fact that it's a moral obscenity and it does not represent the spirit of America. I decry it. I am for an America that embodies the values of this gorgeous poem.

It's one thing to look back at history with horror at the Nazi death camps, or the Japanese detention centers here in the United States during the Second World War, and wonder, *How could America have let that happen? How could the world have allowed Nazi death camps?* But right now, in this very moment, our country is keeping children in absolutely appalling conditions. And I won't be silent.

What happens when one person denies the place of another? That is really what's going on. In essence, the people in the detention centers are being told, *You don't have a place in the world. You have no safe place to live where you came from and there is no place for you here.*

By the mere fact that we're born, we obviously do have a place, all of us. And yet one human being can attempt to take away the place of another. For the person who is doing that, the question is raised as to *their* place. It is seemingly so easy to deny another person their place in the world, but when we do so, we call in to question the validity of *our* place, and the worthwhileness of *our* life. By our very act we deny our own place as we think we are going to deny the place of another.

Let's take the attitude of Emma Lazarus' poem, which acknowledges the rightful place of another. We could be critical of those other people who perhaps look different from us. Someone said they could look into the eyes of one of the children from Central America and see a future gang member. *Really?* Where are the people who look upon another and see the wonder of God in them? Who moves past the limitations of another to extend their faith in that person, and to care for their wellbeing?

We have a recording of Lloyd Arthur Meeker teaching a remarkable class on faith. He tells a story from his own life and then says in passionate language that what the people need first from you is not to be persuaded to gain faith in God, or even faith in you as someone who is serving them. They need to have *you* place *your* faith in them so that they can regain faith in themselves. And how few people there are who know the wonder of the gift that they

have to give by investing their faith in another person.

I want to tell you how that is for me in my life. When I was eighteen, somebody gave me my life back. How could that be? We all already have a life. But the life I was living was tortuous at the time because I didn't see a way forward for myself, and I didn't see a way forward for the world. With the vision that somebody gave me and the faith they placed in me, they gave me back my life.

You can imagine the love I felt for the person who did that. And actually it was *people*, not just one person. Tremendous love. And I also had a tremendous love for what they had shown me that was inside myself, and in fact within all people: this amazing potential, this amazing urge of love, the truth that is present, latent in all people and in the world in which we live. They brought me the awareness of the Wonderful One within, the Reality of Being that's within us all. And having been given the opportunity to see that Reality and know it for myself, my love for it just went through the roof. It gave me my life back.

What I found was that how I related to people wasn't so very different to how I related to what I had found. I had put my faith in what had been shown to me of something within myself, but then how could I deny that of anybody else I met? And so, when I met another person who was on the journey with me, I had the same

urge to place my faith in them—to love them, to invest the light of who I am in them. That required that I move past whatever limitations were there, as someone else had done for me, and invest my faith in their future, in their ability, in their potential. It was the most natural thing in the world. And I didn't see much difference between that love and faith that I was placing in another person, to the love and faith that I was placing in the light and the love within myself.

Because after all, isn't it the same? Is there a difference between what's within me and what's within another person, and what's within all things? I wasn't placing faith in their limitations, or in their human heredity or the background of their past experience. I was placing faith in the love and the light that I see and know in other people. Without that quality of faith, among some people anyway, we are sunk as humanity. Because otherwise, we end up reacting to all the limitations that are present in the people around us and the people in the world. That goes absolutely no place.

Placing your faith in others is a cornerstone of what it means to lead. I have been thinking of another essential quality of leadership. To lead, you must be going someplace. The origin of the word literally means *to go*.

Last year, I wrote a *Pulse of Spirit* entitled [*Face the Headwinds and Fly*](#). I was speaking about how we take off when we fly into the headwind, ³

not away from it. That's how planes take off, and that's how we as human beings take off. When we fly into the headwinds of the world, we take off. And we become like unto a flock of geese. We are going someplace.

Notice that while there is a lead goose, the rest of them are not all exactly following the lead goose. It's not as if you see a line of geese trailing across the sky with everybody behind that lead goose. They are in a V, and in that sense they're all encountering the air in front of them. When they look forward, they're all seeing sky. Beside them there are other geese, and they are gaining an aerodynamic advantage from the V formation.

That is a symbol of leadership and how we, as human beings, may move together. The very essence of leadership is to go someplace. You are not leading if you're not going someplace! When you go someplace, you could end up going there alone. But there might be others who decide to go with you, if you're lucky. Would you stop going because they don't? A liberated man or a liberated woman goes to where they're called to go, not because there are people following them, but because they're called to go there. And then there's an invitation.

I love this poem by Robert Frost, "The Pasture":

*I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away*

*(And wait to watch the water clear, I
may):
I sha'n't be gone long.—You come too.*

*I'm going out to fetch the little calf
That's standing by the mother. It's so
young,
It totters when she licks it with her tongue.
I sha'n't be gone long.—You come too.*

There is that invitation: *You come too*. But I'm going. We all have the natural right to go where we want to go. Where we go is a choice. I wouldn't inflict my choice on anyone else. I have my choice and you have yours. I simply say, *You come too*—not following after me, but, as the geese, flying together to the same destination. Let's go.

In a team of dogs pulling a sled, the only dogs with a clear view are in the lead. The view of all the rest of the dogs is obstructed by the hindquarters of the dog in front of them. By our nature, we are more like the geese, each of whom are flying into the clear blue sky. They are each called to a common destination. They are not just following a goose in front of them. In the formation of the V, each one is given its place, and it is easy to keep track of every goose in the flock. Flying in formation assists with the communication and the coordination of the flock.

Geese travel on land, water and air. When they're on land they're waddling about. It 4

looks slightly awkward, as if they don't quite belong as land animals. But they manage to get about okay. They look more elegant when they're in the water. Their little feet are paddling under the water harder than you might think, and they're gliding along, looking lovely as they glide. But geese were built to fly. They have wings to fly. A lot of them *is* wings. And they're set free in the air.

The same is true of us as human beings. We are meant to fly. And yes, we can waddle around with our petty concerns in the world as it is, but we are meant to fly.

May we all lead. May we find our way to lead together. May we take off and fly into the headwinds of the world in which we are living, and, in so doing, bring our unique gift. Ultimately, for me, it is something *I* have to

bring. And I hope you feel the same way for yourself. I place my faith in you to bring the gift you have to bring. Then, perhaps we find we are going someplace together. We are airborne, flying in formation.

Leaders make a place for the other leaders around them.

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