

GOING TO THE NEXT LEVEL IN 2023

PULSE OF SPIRIT
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Wishing all a Happy New Year! May 2023 bring the experience that our souls are longing for.

A previous version of me would be setting goals at this time of year—making resolutions to change so that I would be “good enough” for my world and my internal programming. I am so grateful this form of resolution is no longer part of my New Year’s ritual!

I find more inspiration in a powerful question than in a list of goals. In my meditations on the coming cycle, the questions I have been sitting with are:

How can I show up more fully for the people in my life?

How can I dance more deeply with the Divine?

What can I do to increase my awareness and my capacities?

What can I do to assist this community in going to the next level in our connection and care?

I know that as I ask questions like these and open to the inspiration of Spirit, I receive a download of what is mine to do and to become in my world.

In last week’s *Pulse of Spirit*, we explored the research on the epidemics of loneliness and addiction in our culture and how participation in a spiritual community can be a remedy for these conditions. I know that my life took a major turn for the better when I became an active member of such a community. I want to point out a keyword here—*active*. If we are to reap the benefits of spiritual community, we must show up and be willing to act—to connect, get out of our comfort zone,

explore our inner landscape and be of service to others. This way of living keeps me on a steady course of evolution and transformation.

Even being in a close-knit secular community has positive effects on our health. A 1964 study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* researched a community of Italian immigrants in Roseto, Pennsylvania. The study was instigated because this little town's doctor was perplexed by the community's seeming immunity to heart disease. No one in Roseto under the age of 47 had died of a heart attack. There was a complete absence of heart disease in men under the age of 55, and the rate of heart attacks in men over 65 was half the national average. The death rates from all causes were 35% lower than anywhere else!

You might think that this group of Italian immigrants was living a wholesome lifestyle to have such results. On the contrary, many were coal miners who had high-fat diets, smoked cigarettes, and drank alcohol on a regular basis.

So, what was the secret to their good health? It was brotherly love. This group of immigrants often ate together, celebrated life events together, and helped each other in times of need. They adored the young and revered the elders in their community. Everyone belonged. The study showed that being in a loving and supportive community is good for our health and well-being.

The researchers called the positive health benefits of community the *Roseto Effect*.

Sadly, things changed for Roseto as the years went by. As the younger generations left home to explore the world and as families drifted apart, the culture changed. The people of Roseto lost that sense of community and connection. They began to have higher rates of heart disease.

What does this tell us about ourselves?

It tells me that we belong together. Being together and caring for each other is part of our primal spirituality, the innate relationship we have with the source of life and each other. When we deviate from this, it can make us sick at all levels—mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically.

Can you see this playing out in your world?

The day after Christmas, I received a call from a relative that my younger cousin, Jimmy, had passed away. He had fallen out of touch with most of the family and had endured a series of devastating losses over the last several years. At the age of 53, his soul tapped out of this experience. There was no community and no family surrounding him.

This circumstance is so sad for my family and me. It makes me wonder, *What can I do to bring healing to this situation and to my family as a whole?* As I sit with this question and remain open to divine inspiration and guidance, I know the answers will come. Until then, I hold my family in my heart and pray for grace as we find our way back to each other.

I am grateful that I could take some time for solitude and reflection over the holidays. As much as I love being with my friends and family, I relish those times when I can march to the beat of my own drum and indulge in some self-care. They give me time and space to ask the questions that are most significant for me.

I went to see the movie *Avatar: The Way of Water*. After waiting over a decade for the next installment of the series, I was beyond excited to see what James Cameron would bring to life on the big screen. What I wasn't expecting was to feel the depth of the timely spiritual message. Here is a quote that struck me to the core,

The way of water has no beginning and no end. . . . Our hearts beat in the womb of the world. . . . Water connects all things, life to death, darkness to light.

I couldn't help but think that *Spirit* and *water* are interchangeable in that quote. *The way of Spirit has no beginning and no end. . . . Spirit connects all things.*

The themes of family and tribe (community) were vivid and stirring. Evidence of the Great Mother was palpable. I walked away from the three-hour experience feeling changed and inspired.

The movie reminded me that there are forces at work in the world that put our liberty and our health at risk in the name of greed and power. Our ability to form strong and coherent communities and to care fiercely for them shifts culture. It

heals our planet and transmutes these destructive energies.

I welcome this new year with fire in the belly. What I am called to do and to become is clear. I have a renewed sense of mission.

For us, as a spiritual community, deepening our own Attunement with Spirit is vital if we are to accomplish our mission together. Then the power of Love heals, transforms, and makes all things new. I know this is true because I have seen it play out time and time again in my own experience.

As we know this for ourselves, we have the gift of Attunement to bring to the world and divine vision to come into form through us as a body of people.

The keystone practice for humanity is Attunement. As we are purified by the fire of Spirit, we become our true selves. We are blessed, and we are a blessing. We are guided, we are protected, we are led by wisdom.

Spirit brings us understanding of ourselves and each other. And as we allow this Attunement current to do its perfect work, something new is born. We take action in service to Love, in service to truth, no longer reacting. We are *responding* to the One that dwells. We bring new life. We bring new creation.

In this new year, let us hold the vision of bringing Attunement to the world together. Let's go deeper into Love.

Let's send out a vibrational call to the collective field, knowing that the souls who are hungering and thirsting for Love, connection, and truth will find their way to Attunement.

Let's take our connection and care to the next level in 2023!

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