

## *The Abundance of Life*

Unfortunately, a lot of spiritual people are searching for the possible but not actually having what is possible manifest. They continue living in the dream state, as though it really isn't possible. There are beliefs that maybe *someday* something wonderful will happen—when I am whole enough, I am good enough, or when I have done all my personal work. *Maybe I'll have the experience of a wonderful life someday.* And the person totally misses the opportunity to be present and excited about what's actually happening right now.

I spent the last two days canning tomatoes. My counters have been covered by tomatoes for days—okay, weeks. It took me a long time to finally start canning the tomatoes. That job could be seen as drudgery. I was talking to my sister Debbie the other day because one of my fondest memories was canning tomatoes with my mother and my Aunt Laura in the basement. As an Italian family we had spaghetti all the time, and we had to can a lot of tomatoes to make sure we made it through the year. So I'm not sure if it was spending time with my aunt and my mother, if it was my love for tomatoes, or just the knowing that it was all going to be spaghetti someday, but the memory is sweet.

But here I am, with the joy of the abundance of the garden's provision. I had yellow tomatoes, orange tomatoes, and heirloom tomatoes. I had so many different varieties, so my jars are filled with color. Growing up, they used to only be red. But now I have lots of yellow, because the man across the street loves yellow tomatoes and I get to share in his bounty. Is that drudgery or is it the thrill of my life to not only have these gorgeous tomatoes to work with but to be canning them, knowing I'll be making spaghetti for somebody, somewhere, in the fall or in the spring?

That could be the promise or the vision of tomorrow. But my participation in what's happening right in front of me is a joy now—even though my feet were sticking to the floor from all the tomato drippings and there was a mess everywhere—and the joy of the future, putting this food that was given to me by the earth into preservation for the future of my life. There is the feeling of the abundance of that and the possibility of what can happen in the future. It's all in those tomatoes right now. And it's all in my own heart, the joy of having the experience of doing it; the joy of remembering my love of my mother and my Aunt Laura and the amazing process of canning tomatoes.

It might seem as though I am living in my own little fantasy. But the bigger fantasy is the belief that life isn't full of this kind of joy. That fantasy is more like a nightmare. It is the nightmare of living a life that doesn't make you happy. It is worshipping the impossibility of your life working out and being wonderful. I have people in my life that I love very much, who very much like that kind of drama. They don't think they like it, but they keep making tragic drama for themselves. So some part of me has to think that they don't feel like they are fully alive. Fighting and yelling and frustration makes them feel like they are alive.

I want to invite all your passion into the possibility that in every moment of your life you could be in glory and in peace. Does that sound dull or boring? It might to someone who is addicted to tragic drama. But for me, I live with the passion of being larger than I was yesterday because I am open to more creation, because I keep pouring myself out and more of me is present, and I see more and I become more invested in the people in front of me. My love is creating magic all around me. And it is the largeness of who I am that is doing it. It is not some fantasy that is coming out of the ethers and I just happened to be lucky enough to be there. Do you ever feel, when something wonderful happens, you were just lucky? Did you ever think that it was because you were there that it happened?

Many years ago, I saw the most beautiful rainbow while driving. It was against a dark sky that was almost totally black. When I tried to describe it to a friend, she said something that has stayed with me ever since: “Sometimes it’s because you’re there and you’re willing to see something that it presents itself.” And trying to explain it, while it might be you sharing your joy, will not result in someone seeing it like you saw it, because you were there and you were participating in it. At first I thought that was limiting. But I also realize that the power of my appreciation of beauty makes it even more beautiful. When it comes to people in my life, my appreciation makes them even more lovable. I see people and I think, “Wow, how lucky am I!”

I’m interested in allowing all the cylinders that are within me to be firing all the time. That could sound exhausting, but I don’t believe that life is exhausting. I think life is invigorating. I rest better when all my pistons have been firing. I am tired in a creative way when I’ve lived a day like that, when I get under these great sheets and sigh, *Ah! What a day!*

This is about being in love with life, not just with the particular people we like to be around. Living a fulfilling life is just being in love, passionately living into the possibility of peace and joy and wonder. We can consciously live a life of privilege. We know privilege when we let ourselves bless our world and then reap the harvest.

Many people will eat spaghetti at my house this coming year. Maybe it will be you. And right now, you can bless the abundance of life by pouring out your joy, giving thanks for the abundance of life—what has come before and what is yet to come and, most of all, the opportunity before you now.

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