

BUSTING THROUGH THE CEILING

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT
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What do you do when you hit a ceiling?
When you reach the limit of your understanding, your ability or your capacity?

I believe this is one of the most crucial questions a person faces in their life. Up until that point, life rolls merrily along. When a person reaches their personal limit, the game changes.

Looking at our world as a whole, we are witnessing humanity hitting a ceiling. How we navigate that ceiling will tell the story of our collective destiny.

At an individual level, we reach our ceiling in many ways. I once had a friend who hit a ceiling professionally. He had defined his professional abilities based on his education and past experience. As it turned out, the role he was playing in the organization that employed him called for something more than that. But instead of seeing the

opportunity to rise to another level of function, he attempted to be very good at living under his ceiling. Ultimately, the organization had to find someone else to do the job.

As almost anyone who has led in an organization quickly discovers, people have professional ceilings of all kinds. Helping them navigate those ceilings and move past them is a large part of what organizational leadership is all about.

Often, personal relationships are significant to us because they call us to move through a ceiling. What a gift! When I think of my best friends, I realize they are people who demonstrate personal qualities I don't have—at least not the way they do. I am fascinated by those qualities, and hope that they will rub off on me in some way. Those friends call me to move past my ceilings at a personal level.

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I believe that the ceilings that determine the life of most human beings are essentially spiritual in nature. They relate to the core issues in our life—our beliefs about ourselves, our level of happiness and joy, our ability to love and our way of relating to the potentiality of our life. And certainly, our way of relating to God and our very conception of who and what God is.

These ceilings are unique to each one of us. But they are not just ours. In fact, as long as we think of them that way, we are unlikely to move past them. If we believe they are *just ours*, they can easily become our defining reality.

To move past a ceiling is to see it for what it is. And then to distinguish what is part of life below the ceiling and what is the opportunity to ascend above it.

In this *Pulse of Spirit* I am focusing on these three powerful factors:

1. The spiritual core of the ceilings that govern people's lives
2. The commonality of the ceilings under which most people function
3. A clear understanding of the nature of the ceilings we face

Taken together, these factors create a powerful formula for transcending the limitations that have held humanity back for millennia.

The spiritual ceiling that humanity faces creates victimhood. A person experiences themselves as a victim in their life when they attribute the cause of their experience to something outside of themselves.

That cause could be another person. *They were mean to me!* It could be a circumstance. *I don't have enough money!* It could be deemed to be something spiritual or cosmic in nature. *Mercury is in retrograde and my whole world is in chaos!* Or that external cause can be seen as God. *I'm a sinner and God is punishing me.*

To move through the spiritual ceiling, a person enters the experience of the causative factors of Creation, which are not outside of themselves. They experience those causative factors as being within them. They come to know that they, themselves, are part of what is causing the world to unfold as it is.

The way this issue presents itself in people's lives today varies from person to person. The way it has presented itself through the ages has been shaped and changed by the evolution of human civilization. The way the issue presents itself changes from culture to culture around the world today. The ceiling, itself, has not changed.

The antidote has not changed either. It is spiritual awakening. When a person awakens, they are awakening to the cause of Creation that is within themselves.

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Often, when a person is awakening spiritually, that Cause appears, at first, to be something that is separate from them. Unless a person decides to go back to spiritual somnolence, they discover that they are one with that Cause. It is who they are, all wrapped up within their human experience.

Historically, people who have had a spiritual experience have sought to share it with others through their spiritual teaching. It is fascinating to track the stories of their awakening and then see the teaching that came afterward, offered by the one who awakened or by their followers. The awakening stories are full of wonder and magic—the Buddha under the Bodhi tree, Jacob wrestling with the angel, and Jesus' Prayer of Intercession, for instance. The stories of the teachings are full of human interpretation and application.

Realistically, how else would it be? What is important for anyone who desires to move out of victimhood into being a creator in their life is to remember that, ultimately, it is only firsthand spiritual experience that moves a person out of victimhood.

The recent movie *Exodus: Gods and Kings* portrays these dynamics in the life of Moses, an important figure in the Judeo-Christian world. He meets God in a burning bush, and God introduces Himself as I AM, and I AM THAT I AM. But this is not a widespread teaching in either Judaism or Christianity.

The teaching we most remember from Moses is the teaching of the Ten Commandments, with such straightforward instruction as *Thou shalt not kill* and *Thou shalt not steal*.

We can only imagine that there was a very good reason for these commandments; that there was killing and stealing and more that had to be addressed.

As the movie depicts, Moses was leading a mixed multitude out of slavery, escaping from Pharaoh through a desert into the land of Canaan, which was filled with people who would seek to kill them when they showed up. So while the experience of spiritual awakening was the point, Moses still had to navigate all the human factors that were at play.

Among the factors Moses was dealing with was superstition. The belief in moody gods affecting humanity was rife in the ancient world. Often, it was believed that those gods had to be appeased by some form of human sacrifice to win their favor. That was one way the ceiling of victimhood showed up in that era.

So we remember the teaching that was relevant to all those human factors and often dismiss the spiritual awakening that was behind the teaching. Today, superstition and victimhood remain in our world, though they take different forms than they did in Moses' time.

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Jesus was born into a culture that was filled with all the Mosaic laws, but which had not awoken to the spiritual experience of the burning bush and the voice I AM that spoke out of it. In the minds of people then, that left the image of a wrathful God who prescribed rules and laws. Except for Genesis, the first five books of the Bible (sometimes referred to as the Books of Moses) are filled with those rules and laws.

Jesus sought to change the way people of his world related to God. Though he introduced a new relationship with a God of love, he was ultimately unsuccessful at moving humanity as a whole, or even his own followers, out of an experience of God as something separate from themselves—out of an experience of victimhood.

These issues at a macro level—for humanity as a whole—remain today. Even though, as a whole, humanity has created global warming, decimated species, and brought the world to the brink of nuclear annihilation, few people accept that they, themselves, are part of creating these things. So, as a whole, humanity is creating these realities and then feeling victimized by them. Victimhood prevails without spiritual awakening.

Realizing the universal nature of the ceiling we face as humanity, and realizing that our individual experience is influenced by that universal experience, what are we to do? With the mass of humanity mired in a victim

experience, it is tempting to think that a mass movement would bring us out of it. A massive spiritual awakening!

My experience has shown me that a massive spiritual awakening is elusive. Many of us in the '60s and early '70s thought it might be under way then. For many, Woodstock seemed to be ushering in a new era. It didn't. Neither did *The Aquarian Conspiracy* or *The Harmonic Convergence* (look it up if you like) or the end of the Mayan calendar on December 21, 2012. Or the *Occupy* movement.

The truth is that, even though we face a ceiling of global proportion, the way through that ceiling is highly personal and individual. It has to come to focus in some number of people who will penetrate the ceiling personally—individuals who experience their own spiritual awakening.

I can easily imagine that if there were a critical mass of spiritual pioneers, there could be a mass awakening within humanity. But I don't believe that a mass awakening is possible without individuals who personally break through the ceiling currently affecting humanity as a whole.

Here is what I am called to in my own spiritual awakening. This is how I bust through the spiritual ceiling affecting humanity (including my own humanity). And this is what I recommend to you:

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1. *Listen.* When the voice of Being within you speaks to you out of your burning bush, you have to be there to receive it. You have to want to hear it. Even if it is disturbing. It is the calling deep within your own soul. You have to let it in.
2. *Be radically honest.* When the light comes on, you can't help but see what is happening in your own humanity and in the experience of other people. Don't try to justify it. Be courageous enough to see it for what it is. Admit it.
3. *Be a friend to a reality you can't see.* Our commitment as a human being is to fulfill the incredible potential that's within us. A reality that is not yet visible. Welcome it. We are being a friend to that reality when we say, *I will do it. I will live it. I will be it.*
4. *Never stop.* There are so many things that can persuade a person to give up. It is a simple issue. Just don't stop. Ever. If you do, you lose. You won't move through the ceiling.
5. *Rally together with other awakened souls.* In spirit. In consciousness. In fact.

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