

# REAL FRIENDSHIP

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT  
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Here we are in a new year, 2015. Over the holidays I was vividly aware of the true message that Jesus brought. His birth brought the possibility of a conscious life. His invitation was a great deal about friendship—friendship with the Divine, friendship with the Father, friendship in love. Repeatedly, he told those with him to love their friends as he loved them. His relationship with the Father was consistent. His relationship with the higher realms of Being was consistently true and he offered the invitation to others to know that as well.

Usually, human friendship is a bargaining situation. You give me some of what I want, I'll give you some of what you want, and we'll consider that friendship. And then most friendships waver. The truth is that consistent loving is our nature. It is the true nature of friendship. So when things come into a true friendship, they don't come to derail us. They

come to allow our human experience to have an encounter with the Divine. If we don't know that, then every challenge will come as a difficulty. We will feel victimized by our human experience.

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to see the movie *Exodus*, with Christian Bale as Moses. He makes a very nice-looking Moses!

In the story, Pharaoh issues an edict commanding that all Hebrew male infants be killed, as it was foretold that there would be a leader among them. As a result of a lot of cleverness, Moses, as a Hebrew baby, was saved and then raised in the house of the Egyptian Pharaoh. At that period of time in Egypt, the Hebrews were slaves. Moses' story develops as he grows up in Pharaoh's house and, as a man, becomes one of the Pharaoh's generals, along with Pharaoh's natural-born son.

After fleeing from Egypt and tending his father-in-law's sheep in Midian, Moses has a realization of who he is and what he must do. He is to be a leader of the Hebrew people and release them from slavery.

I was reflecting on the shift in his reality. He grew up learning how to be a leader in Pharaoh's house. And then he received very different instructions. He was called to be a leader who challenges Pharaoh.

Does that sound like your life? It sounds like mine. My upbringing, my education and the aspiration I felt was for something far greater than I ever imagined. Because there is a big difference between being an excellent conformer and being a person who leads a passionate, powerful life.

Moses' realization seems to come to him out of a mysterious burning bush that is not consumed. Isn't that where all true information comes from? From within the burning, living reality that is at the heart of our own Being, and which is within all people and all of Creation? This was my experience of awakening. I was hearing things as if I'd never heard them before, and the messages seemed to be coming from unexpected places and people. Ultimately, like Moses, I realized they were coming from the wisdom of the Invisible within me.

Following your own path requires you to see that you've learned a certain way to be, a

certain thing to respect, a certain way to be inspired. Then you must either own that as true or find what is. You have to see that you have learned certain guidelines and believe you know the rules. And then find out that that was Pharaoh's way. And it doesn't mean that Pharaoh was necessarily a bad man—for Moses, he was his father. Pharaoh loved Moses and he was the man Moses loved and respected.

Many people come from an upbringing with elders they loved and respected—people who trained them to “do the right thing.” The drama in the story of Moses—and in my own story—lies in the way in which a person receives new direction for their life. When they do, they have choices to make about what their life will be about.

So how does the Invisible get your attention? Maureen Waller wrote recently about *staying restless*. Being on the edge of what's comfortable keeps you restless and keeps you open to learn and open to the possible.

I remember a teacher who inspired me more than any other. I was fifteen years old, and he taught American history. He was teaching from the perspective of Native Americans and black Americans. This was during the Civil Rights Movement, which was a tumultuous time in this country. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy were having a big impact on the thinking of the people of this country. No one who was raised the way I was raised was

thinking about why this was going on. I wasn't seeing the issues of race and civil rights from the perspective of the black men and women in our country. Growing up in urban Buffalo, New York, I believed I had to protect myself from them. So my American history class was a humbling learning time.

My point is not just the virtue of the Civil Rights Movement. I am grateful for a person who made me think—who showed me that what I had been thinking was limited. What I had been thinking was something I was previously taught, and I needed to move on.

I questioned: *Wait a minute! Says who?* That can look like a rebellious stance to take, but how else do you come to know your own authority as a Moses in the world—as someone who inspires and leads people?

One of the things that I was trained to believe was that there were only certain people who could have a relationship with God. They were chosen; they were holy people, people who realized they had a calling and then dedicated their lives to become priests and nuns and bishops, and joined the sacred orders. So to have this longing to know the communion with God while believing in certain things you had to do to get it—that was really a tricky conundrum to break through, because I had to break through the understanding of who God is and how God actually works. It's interesting, as I see it now, to grok that I learned the beliefs I was holding

from nuns, priests and bishops who bought into that reality and had been declared special holy people!

I don't know exactly when I had my burning-bush experience, but at some point this thought came into my mind: "Can I be friends with God?" What a revolutionary thought that was for me. Could I open and be set free, and know that I am already holy? Blasphemy!

Can you break through the things in your own consciousness that are blasphemous, to know the glory of a human life in communion with the Divine? That is a life full of joy. I'm talking about the courage to cherish every moment you have and the courage to share it with friends. To be a real friend to people means you know this, you share it, and you invite others to know it with you.

It's an intense commitment to say, *I will do that and I will do my best not to wander away from what it is I know to be true. And if I do wander, could you help me?* Isn't it glorious to say, *If you are my friend, can you help me instead of judging me and walking away?*

Moses was a Hebrew surrounded by his people as slaves. Some of the people in my life are slaves. They're slaves to the human condition. And I have been called to remembrance by the Invisible, which says to me, "Set them free, Jane."

Haven't you been awakened enough to say to

the people in your world, “Enough!”? Enough of buying into the lie that being a human being is some kind of sin. Enough of believing that the only way to transcend that sin and be holy is to die.

Whoever made this world and this planet would have some bizarre sense of humor if their intention was to create a planet where angels can all go and suffer and then come back home. That’s what goes on in the mind of someone who believes that the only way to know and love God is to be very good and suffer, according to religious standards, and then die.

Let us be friends and leaders who are set free by the spiritual calling within us. Being set free, we find our friends, rally together, love and support each other and set others free, just as Moses did.

When you are surrounded by friends who know how to do this, the air is lustring with the joy of being alive and being in this holy flesh. O come, O come, Emmanuel, into this experience to set it free. There is the sounding of the Tone from the Invisible and brilliance in the darkness to remind you. Be brave, be true, and be freed by your friendship with the reality within you.

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