

# THE BIG RECONNECT

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT  
AUGUST 10, 2016



**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.

*David Karchere's words at the Arise Festival Dome Event and the International Teleconference Service of the Creative Field on August 7, 2016.*

I want to address something that's mundane and yet so important. It is a reality that is indicative of how we've estranged ourselves from the whole circle of life. It's all about what Joel Salatin calls "poop." If you live on a ranch, poop is important. Did anybody notice the poop out there in the fields? The cow pies that by now have become somewhat disintegrated into the soil? They're out there, and for a reason. Cows belong on grass. They don't belong in a pen, eating corn. And when they're out there on the grass, not only are they taking in that grass, but they're pooping on it and they're building the field in a beautiful way. That's the circle of life. That's the way it's meant to be.

If you look at the cows at Sunrise Ranch you will see that they are happy. They are happy cows because they're in the circle of life. We

let them graze up on the hills of Green Ridge on the west side of the valley. Did you know that cows like hills, and they like to climb around rocks and trees? We think of cows as being on a pasture or, worse yet, in a pen. But they love it up there. They are meant to be free.

So how about us as human beings? What is happening with our poop? The EPA has recently lowered its nitrogen standards for sewage treatment plants. The amount of nitrogen that can leak out into the soil was lowered, and therefore the existing Sunrise Ranch sewage treatment plant, including the two pools we use in the treatment, are no longer acceptable to the state, who has to follow the rulings of the EPA. When I heard about this several years ago, I scratched my head and thought, *As farmers, we want nitrogen in the soil. What's going on?*

Well, the answer is that we're out of the circle of life and we don't know what to do

with our poop. It comes down to that. So we take something that's meant for the benefit of Creation—our poop—and we try to disinfect it. We try to sanitize it and then find a place to put it. We try to eliminate the negative impact of our poop, instead of realizing that it's supposed to be a very positive thing. We've so lost track of our role in Creation that we can't figure that out.

Well, that's just one thing—not a small thing, really, if you think about all of these portable toilets out here for the Arise Festival. What if we found a way to recycle all that poop? It would be a huge blessing to Sunrise Ranch—we'd be paying people to come here for the Festival! But instead, we put all kinds of chemicals in the toilet, and then who knows where it goes after that?

Patrick Padden is a permaculture teacher at Sunrise Ranch. He was saying, *Wouldn't it be cool if we could dig a big trench and take the same Porta Potties, put a big hole in the bottom of them and locate them directly over the trench? In the trench would be straw. We would put dirt over it all and let it compost.*

The point is that, apparently, we as human beings have an important role to play in the circle of life. Whether you are talking about the politics of America today, global warming, or whether you're talking about the poop at Sunrise Ranch, we are playing a pivotal role on this planet. We know that we can have a hugely negative impact because of our role. We have yet to prove that, all together, we could have a positive impact.

How we play our role all comes down to what we're doing and how we're thinking about things, and how we're oriented. And then, underneath all that, the kind of heart connection that we have with each other and with the planet, and then with the very reality of life that's in us. How are we relating to the circle of life? Are we accepting it in joy and then having the courage to be in it?

If you didn't notice, life takes courage. This festival takes courage. It did for us, sitting in a room five years ago, talking about it. *Wow, you mean we're going to have ten thousand people out here in our pastures?* Every step we take in life has to be filled with the boldness of acting on the powerful compulsion in ourselves to participate in the circle of life.

It turns out that the step into creatorship and our step into the circle of life begins with the greatest humility, being brought to our knees. It can feel like a crushing moment that brings us to our knees when we are faced with our own frailty as a human being. But even though we get brought to our knees in such a moment, we're being called to something great and beautiful in this world: ultimately, to be the Creator that's at the heart of all Creation. That's our role as human beings.

If you look at spiritual traditions around the world, at the heart of them it is being said that there is a special place for us as humanity. We have to take our place in humility. And when we play that special part that we have to play as a conscious creator in

this world, we enter the circle of life and play our part. Creation can come together around us.

I've noticed I cannot be creative in reaction. Anybody else noticing that in their own life? I can't be creative when I'm reacting to what other people are giving to me. I can be creative when I keep coming back to that creative impulse inside myself, and then have the courage to give it expression and live out of that and create. Following that courage is joy, pleasure and delight, because the Big Reconnect is a lot of fun. It is embracing our creatorship, each one of us—our creative thinking, our creative heart and creative action in the world in which we live.

I'm delighted that we get to put on the Arise Festival year by year. And we signed up for another seven years! Something happens when you commit—to a cycle, a process, another person, or to your own life. Creative magic follows. If you don't commit—you don't climb up into that tree, as Julia Butterfly Hill did in California to protest the destruction of old-growth forests, or do whatever it is for you—all the magic that follows after that doesn't happen. If you commit, you're on a wonderful ride. So good to be on that ride with you.

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