

THE “I” SOLUTION

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT
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Our legacy is great. As Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés says, we come from a long line of survivors—and if we didn’t, we would not be here. So we come from strong roots, all of us. And while human history is full of terrible things, it’s also true of human history that there have been noble, honorable, inspired, awake human beings who stood in the face of the dysfunctional culture that surrounded them and knew something different. They brought a different opportunity into the world. That is our legacy, if we just claim it for ourselves.

When we claim that legacy, we’re also claiming our own presence as Creator-beings here and now. We are an individualized aspect of the Creator of all things. And when we claim that for ourselves and claim our legacy, we are also claiming a creative destiny for ourselves and for humankind.

It’s easy to see that humanity seems determined to go down a path of self-sabotage and self-destruction. But from the standpoint of the Creator that we are, we see a different opportunity to be known and lived into, and to be acted upon in our life.

The world around us is certainly beset with seemingly intractable problems. In 2012, Peter H. Diamandis and Steven Kotler published a best-selling book on the future of humanity entitled *Abundance: The Future Is Better Than You Think*. The authors claimed that the future of humanity is positive because of the escalating level of technology that’s being created. They cited Moore’s Law, which says that the amount of information contained on computer chips is doubling annually. They applied a similar theory to the rest of human technology.

Do you believe that our technology is going to save us? Our civilization has shown a remarkable ability to use an enlightened understanding of Creation for the worst possible purposes. Technological genius alone doesn't guarantee anything positive if the way we are using technology is born from a culture of hate and fear. *Let's see, atomic power in the hands of angry, fearful people.* Something else has to happen for humanity to solve the problems that it is busy creating for itself. If technological innovation is not accompanied by radical transformation of the mental, emotional and spiritual state of humanity, we have a recipe for disaster.

How did the problems we currently face as humanity originate? I would think that should be an important question to ask because, depending on the accuracy of our understanding of how we get into the messes we get ourselves into, so will be our ability to get out of them. If we don't understand what's causing the problems, then our solution to the problems that we're in will be half-baked at best, and possibly our “solutions” will only bring us more of the same.

From the individual standpoint or from the global standpoint, the problems we face are so often seen in terms of what other people have done. The problem is seen in terms of what has happened to us. It may stem from out of our past; it

may stem from parents or teachers in our own upbringing; it may stem from powerful forces that are at work in the world—cigar-smoking characters in back rooms who are manipulating the financial systems of the world, a media that is distorting what's happening, and people of power in multinational corporations—all can be blamed. All of those entities have done plenty to deserve some blame. But nonetheless, if we are seeing our problems, as humanity, as having to do with somebody else or something else, we make ourselves victims. We put ourselves in the position of not understanding the problem and being incapable of solving it.

I propose that the original cause of all human problems is experienced in the first person. It's true for us individually, and it's true for all humanity. And that as long as we see the problem we are facing as humanity exclusively in the second person or the third person, we're not understanding it. And because we're not understanding it, we're not in position to solve it. The problem is not a “you” problem. It's not a “them” problem. The problem is an “I” problem and a “we” problem.

All our problems start as “I” problems. When I say that, what I'm saying is that problems start when someone or some ones accept an identity for themselves

that is not accurate. The truth is that you and I are creators. We’re here to create. We’re given amazing creative power, amazing inventiveness, amazing wisdom—wisdom with which we can build bridges and create symphonies; wisdom with which we can write poetry and create social systems. We can create magnificent works of art. We are not only imbued with creative spirit, but the truth of us is the Creator in living form.

Are you thinking as the Creator? When you wake up in the morning and you start to think about what’s going on in your life and what’s next, when you pass through your day, are you thinking with the thoughts of the Creator? “What do I have to create here? How shall my creative spirit work in this instance?” Of course, if you do that, you have to face, and in some way endure, all the negative things that may be going on in your field.

Take this hypothetical morning. You may put on the morning news and find out who just got elected president. You might find out about an oil pipeline going through the Missouri River and through sacred ground for Native Americans. You may find mean-spirited words somebody just sent you in an e-mail or posted on Facebook. You may hear from somebody close to you something you didn’t want to hear. Identifying as the Creator, you nonetheless have to endure whatever is happening in the manifest

world around you and what is happening for the people around you. It is hugely tempting, in those moments, to abandon your identity as a Creator and become a disillusioned, frustrated, angry, fearful person who is reactive to what is happening. And thus the trouble begins.

That’s on a small scale. But what I’m saying here is that the global problem we are facing is an “I” problem, and *all* the things that go wrong in our world started with an “I” problem. And that the only way through them is an “I” solution, because in our identification with the Creator, *as* the Creator, as an individualized aspect of that creative spirit that’s within *all* things and within all people, there *is* a way through. There *is* something to do in the face of that news that you just heard, in the face of that Facebook post or what you just heard from somebody else. There is a creative act, always. And there is the power of Creation to bring as an individual.

Do you believe it? I’m not asking you to believe in Jesus Christ, Mohammed, or Allah or Buddha or anybody else. I’m asking whether you accept for yourself that the truest thing about you is that you are an individualized aspect of the Creator, and any other identity that you’ve assumed for yourself has got to be at least subservient to that highest level of who you are. And actually, while

believing it could be a start, belief alone doesn't quite get you there.

I have to not only believe in the “I” solution for it to be effective. I have to be it and act on it. And, in the face of the morning news or whatever it is, I have to endure all the manifest world—“to endure” meaning to face it without submitting to it, reacting to it, or accepting the prevailing culture as reality. No, I'm going to accommodate the culture of Creation. I'm going to accommodate the culture of the power of the Creator that I am—and the power of Creation is love. I have love to bring in this. I have prayer to bring to this; the powerful connection with the inner reality of the Creator that we are. And then it is the expression of the creative power that's within us into the world.

Did you notice this world wasn't made for wimps? It doesn't work very well to walk through life as a weak, submissive kind of person who lives their life as a victim of all the bad things that happen to them. Those things have to be met with power and with strength. Ultimately, that power and strength come from prayer. I'm not speaking just about the kind of prayer that has us folding our hands and closing our eyes. I'm talking about the kind of prayer that is a deep inner communion with the creative power that's in us. I'm talking about living a life that endures, in the sense that

it is nonreactive to what's happening around. Witnessing it, yes; experiencing it, yes; feeling it, yes. But my love response has to be turned to the Creator.

Sometimes I see something so awful and repugnant that it turns my stomach. It's awful to see such things on the evening news, or to read about them in social media or someplace else. But it's even more awful when someone close to you does something that you can't understand; you can't fathom why a person would make that choice. So it feels awful but, in the face of that, I make a conscious decision to live a life of prayer, to live a life of inner communion, where I'm accessing the power of the love that I am. I am living a life of the expression of that love.

Some years ago, we had spiritual theologian Matthew Fox speak at Sunrise Ranch. He led a workshop in which he had us write “I” poems. Try writing a poem in the first person, in which you are the essence within Creation. It is very powerful.

*I am the sacred presence
Which lives at the heart of all Creation.*

At first, you might think, *Who, little old me?* How often do we say that about ourselves, in effect: *Oh, little old me?* Yes, there is a little old me, just like there's a little old you. This is the sense of self

based in the outer dimensions of our being. We play small in so many ways when our sense of self doesn't go beyond that.

And yet we can speak for the Creator that we are. You might feel a little guilty about it, or like you are being a little arrogant. You might feel that you are putting on something that's not true of you. What I say is that the largeness of who you are is more true than all the small ways that you and I can tend to play in our lives. It is more true than any of the victimhood we might buy into, and any of the ways in which we might struggle with things that are beneath our dignity. No, I am the voice of Being, incarnate in this human body, and incarnate in this human personality with all these very human experiences. I am the voice of the Creator, the sacred presence of the One Who Dwells here.

This world in which we are living today certainly needs that presence. I've been thinking of those who are up at Standing Rock in North Dakota to express themselves regarding the pipeline. I know that for many of them it is an act of prayer. You might think of it as an act of protest, and maybe it's that too. But for many it is an act of prayer.

Years ago, when I was actively involved in the protest movement in the United States, we used to talk about

consciousness raising, and we used to talk about acts of protest as being opportunities to raise consciousness. For the most part, we had no idea of the larger implications of what we were talking about at the time. But a public act does have the potential of raising consciousness. That is the significance of it, actually. But of course, we could do that right here and now, wherever we are. We could rise to a new level of consciousness and inspire others to do the same. The most central aspect of consciousness is selfhood.

The origin of our problem, personally and globally, is an “I” problem, and therefore the solution is an “I” solution. You might ask, “How would that work? How can I get all the other people in my family to act the way I want them to act?” Been working on that for a while? How's the progress going? For those who live at Sunrise Ranch, we might say, “Let's see... Maybe if I could get all the people at Sunrise Ranch to act in this certain way and do what they're supposed to do, this would all go well.” Well, we've been here since 1945 and I can report our attempts in that regard have been thus far unsuccessful—happily so. No, the solution for Sunrise Ranch, the solution for any family, the solution for the world is an “I” solution because it is an answer to an “I” problem.

When we offer the “I” solution, the door

is open for something wonderful, because it could become an “I” solution for the person next to you if they see you living the “I” solution. And if it did, we’d have something else that we need, still in the first person, but the first person plural—a “we” solution.

People sometimes go looking for the “we” solution without an “I” solution: “Come on, everybody, let’s do it!” How well does that work? Usually, in my experience, it ends with a lot of discouragement, disillusionment and frustration. “Why doesn’t everybody want to come along and do this thing?” If you try to create a “we” solution without an “I” solution, it doesn’t work.

The “I” solution has to catch on, and then you really have something. If you have a company of people who are all implementing the “I” solution, then we have a *real* “we” solution. The real “we” solution is no small thing. It’s something to be reckoned with. It carries power, and it is formidable in the world. There is strength in the real “we” solution.

Sometimes that’s been known, to some degree anyway, down through history. It’s come out in political movements. It came out as the Solidarity movement in Poland. Behind that, and behind what happened in Eastern Europe, were the freeing ideas that the Pope at the time brought to Poland. He brought the “I”

solution, and it caught on like wildfire. People realized that they *were* free, that the chains that they’d known in their lives, seemingly imposed by Soviet Russia, were in their minds more than they were in actual reality. When their minds became free, there was an “I” solution and there was a “we” solution.

I don’t think you could have rallied the Solidarity movement in the streets with only tanks and guns. It wasn’t first of all a labor movement, a political movement or a military movement. It was, at its core, a spiritual movement, just like the civil rights movement in this country was first of all a spiritual movement: “We shall overcome.” And in the words of that old spiritual, you could feel the power of the “I” solution and then the “we” solution. *We shall overcome, we do overcome.*

We are formidable when there truly is a “we.” Not just a “we” of maligned victims who are protesting their victimhood; a “we” of Creator-beings who are creating together, who are truly free. When we are together, we are formidable as Creator-beings. We do great things. Through the things that we do, there is the power of love that is unleashed in the world, and the world changes.

As long as a people can be distracted in their protest, they will lack the power to create a new world. The individual has to

accept the “I” solution for himself or herself and feel the empowerment of that, and then inspire others to do likewise.

In doing so, we find that while we are surrounded by a culture that so often resorts to hate and meanness, domination and fear, even closer to us is a different culture. It’s present in our spiritual DNA. Our heredity isn’t just physical. There is a field of energy that is controlling our lives and affecting our physical DNA. Within that field of energy, there is the culture of love, there is the culture of Creation, even closer to us than the culture of hate and the culture of fear. This is our spiritual DNA, inherited from awake people down through the ages. It’s so close we can overlook it and relate to a culture out beyond it. But when we come to an “I” solution, we find that right at hand there is the culture of love that is present. It’s the most innate and natural thing to us as human beings. It’s the most innate and natural thing *between* us as human beings. We are designed to create together in the culture of love.

I mean to include affectionate love, romantic love, and even erotic love. But I’m talking about a love that’s so much bigger than those things, even though it includes them. I’m talking about Universal Love, the power of Creation, and the power of the Creator that you

and I are and that we are together. The culture of that love is present to be evoked by us in the expression of the Creator that we are.

We’ve spoken of this as primal spirituality. Our primal spirituality is our first spirituality. It’s our *innate* spirituality. It is our birthright as human beings to know our primal spirituality. Our primal spirituality has to become our *now* spirituality. And not only our now spirituality but for us, as human beings and for humankind, it has to become our *final* spirituality. We have to come back to the original, to the primal spirituality, and let it be the final spirituality—finally known by us as a race. If we don’t let it be our final spirituality, we’ll have a different kind of finality. That’s true for us individually and it’s true for us as humanity. I can’t imagine how we’re going to survive this era of humankind on Planet Earth without coming back to our primal spirituality and knowing it as our final spirituality, the spirituality that puts an end to the craziness of the world in which we’re living.

It’s said, “I am alpha and omega.” That is the voice of the Creator through me and through you. I am alpha—I am the beginning. Before this human life was the life of the Creator who made this human life. I am alpha, and I am omega, the first and the last and the always. The voice of

alpha and omega is being heard in this world because I am here.

We’re in the days of the ending. The ending of what? Are we talking about some kind of grand apocalypse, as it is usually thought of? I’m not talking about that. I’m talking about the end of the ability to go forward as humanity out of our right minds. Because if we’re not in the mind of the Creator, we’re not in our right minds and we act crazy. If it’s just a little bit crazy we can get away with it, and people look at us as normal because everybody else is doing it. If it gets too extreme and you witness it, you may say, “That’s crazy.” You may even catch yourself in a moment where you say, “That was crazy of me! Why did I do that? Why did I say that? Let me come back to my right mind.” And the right mind is the mind of the Creator that we are.

We are in the end days in terms of our ability to go forward as dysfunctional human beings. We can’t play around with global warming and atom bombs and decimation of species, creating more and more powerful technology, and yet having a state of consciousness that doesn’t change. I’m all for the technology, but certainly there has to be a change of consciousness or we’re looking at a kind of finality that none of us want to see. It will be finality one way or another, but let’s let it be the kind of

finality that lets the craziness end.

There is an “I” solution for all this. It’s not a “them” solution. It’s not a “you” solution. I’m not writing this to say, “You really ought to do this!” No, it’s an “I” solution. *I* am doing this. I’m letting this happen through me. You can feel how powerful that is, because nobody can stop me from letting there be an end to the old state of identity and all the crazy function that comes out of that, all the culture of hate and fear and domination that comes out of experiencing myself as somebody I’m not.

There’s power in that for the individual. When we together assume that power for ourselves and set ourselves free, we are free to create collectively. And when I say “create,” I mean all the outer things that we do in all the fields of human endeavor. But it’s also the culture we have the opportunity to create and share together. It is the culture of love. It’s the communion within that culture, because Creation is always a “we” activity. So yes, it’s the things that are created, but it’s also the culture and the energy that’s created in manifesting those things. It is the joy of Creation that we have to share together as truly free people—not free because some government set us free but because we set the power of love within us free.

THE “I” SOLUTION

That is the Christmas story—the story of this remarkable man who was free.

Sometimes what he did was looked upon as a political act, and it did have political repercussions. The governing powers at the time were well aware that what he was doing spiritually had political implications. For him, it wasn't a political act. For him, it was an act of declaring his freedom and living life as a free man, and saying to the people around him that they could do the same.

He said, “I and my Father are one.” The Creator that's within me? That's me. And I didn't hear it followed by “Not for you, just for me.”

“Thy kingdom come,” the kingdom of the Creator within me and within all things. “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.” In the

culture of love it's already done. Let it be done in the manifest.

“Love one another as I have loved you.” There's the “I” solution. This is not about a remote God, or about Jesus loving you. It was meaningful through Jesus because he was employing the “I” solution. “Love one another as I have loved you.” I love you. That's the “I” solution. He was advocating the implementation of the “I” solution and stating clearly that if we do that we have a “we” solution.

I will use this Christmastime to implement the “I” solution more fully in my life. Will you?

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