

THE NOTHINGNESS OF EVIL

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT

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My two sisters traveled by train to Washington, D.C., yesterday, one from Boston and the other from Princeton, for the Women’s March. Through the day, they were posting photos and videos of the time. My daughter, Helena, marched in Denver. Many other women I know, and some men with them, in many places, were active in the March. I understand there were millions of marchers around the world.

The March, and other issues that are up in my life, have called me to ponder the true nature of evil—a weighty topic. I’m interested in a deeper understanding of what evil is and what it isn’t, and how to be a spiritual warrior in the face of evil in our life.

Recently I’ve been talking about what it means to be a being of love in a world laced with hate. There is an art to learning to let the reality of the Universal Love that’s within you remain uncompromised in your own experience in being in the world. Another word for being laced with hate is *evil*. It is possible to

compromise your own integrity of love by being reactive to evil. So when we face what appears to us to be evil, we should ask, “How am I going to be present in a way that retains my integrity, so that I don’t get slimed by what it is I’m facing?”

I’d like to begin this exploration with the idea that evil lacks substantiality. Traditionally, great faith was placed in the devil, in Satan, in evil spirits, as if they were entities that had power and authority of themselves. While the number of people in the developed world who believe in a Satan with a forked tail has declined, nonetheless the underlying attitudes related to a belief in the devil die hard.

Evil has no power of itself. So any power that appears as evil in our life and looks evil to us is all borrowed. It is stolen from the only power there is—the power that runs the whole universe. There is no other power. There’s the power that’s in your atoms, that’s in the sun and in stars. There’s the power that enters your

heart and inspires your mind. Whatever that power is, that's the only power there is. That power is Universal Love. There is no other power. There is no evil power. Evil power is all just stolen power. There is no scientific basis for evil in the universe.

Evil has no power of itself, and it also has no beingness of itself. In that sense, it's nothing. It's nobody. It's vacuous. A person who is perpetrating evil acts is not being a somebody—there is nobody there, to the extent that they're doing evil. There's no evil entity. It's something like a zombie. It's human flesh and human mind and heart, walking around as if it was a somebody, but actually it's vacuous. There is nobody there. There is no devil, there is no Satan. There's only the appearance of that from the borrowed energy of the universe working through human consciousness.

You might say, *And yet there it is: it looks pretty evil to me.* What is that? Evil is a diseased state of heart and mind. Behind the diseased heart and mind is a diseased spirit. So evil is a diseased state in consciousness and the spirit of humanity. But even saying that can give it substantiality and credibility that it doesn't deserve. More plainly put, evil is a dysfunction.

Does it help to be a fighter of disease? Well, sometimes we do fight disease. Sometimes we take an antibiotic, sometimes we have a surgery. So there are sometimes measures to be taken related to disease, and there are measures to be taken in the world related to people doing evil things. I'm not suggesting a naïve approach here.

However, don't mistake a surgery, of itself, as the promotion of health. It may be necessary for the promotion of health but it doesn't guarantee it. An antibiotic doesn't guarantee health. It may be necessary along the way. I'd like to live my life so it isn't necessary and you are probably thinking the same thing. I'd like to be so full of vitality that I don't need to take an antibiotic.

I noticed that every year, just about this time, I got a cold and a sore throat. I noticed that it lingered. It went on for about six weeks, all told, from the time I first got it to the time it was really gone and that icky feeling in my body wasn't there anymore. I thought, *I don't like that! And I'm going to up the level of my health so that it doesn't happen to me.* So far, so good this year.

If we're wise, we take that approach to our own physical health, but also our own mental health, our own emotional health, and our own spiritual health. Yes, there are things to note that need to be addressed. We need to be eyes-wide-open and see if there's a pattern of thought or a pattern of feeling that's taking us down. But you can't stamp out destructive thoughts and emotions without a creative flow of thought and feeling. I know I can't. When that creative flow is the focus of your life, it empowers and it has influence. It brings mental, emotional and spiritual health.

It's very interesting to watch these issues play out in the media related to the new President of the United States. They have been learning how to report the news in the face of apparent evil. While it gives me no joy to speak plainly about

the President's behavior, that behavior is a factual matter that he created. So without disparaging the office, and without making a political statement, I believe it is right for me to address the facts.

Through the campaign and up to the present day, I see the press going through a process that is reflective of the process that we're all going through. At first, when faced with factual inaccuracies from one of the candidates, their report would go, "Oh, this candidate is saying this, and this one is saying that. We're being fair and balanced in reporting both statements." After a while they caught on that there's a difference between a lie and a truth, and to report them the same doesn't fulfill the obligation of the press. The obligation of the press is to report the truth, is it not? At the most basic level, the truth is about facts. And so a fact is either a fact or it's not a fact. Or at least there are some facts that are like that.

And so they began to learn to say, *Well, actually, what this person just said is not true, and what this person said is true. Not because we're for this person or against this person, but because we're the press and we're responsible to report the truth.* Somewhere in this discussion is logic. Some things are illogical and some things are logical, and the press is also responsible for reporting that.

This morning on the news, I noticed that they've got some of that down. So when Donald Trump said that the inauguration had the biggest audience that there's ever been, they showed a photo taken at noon for President Obama's first

inauguration, and then one taken at noon on Friday, for President Trump's inauguration, and they looked different. The one on Friday didn't have so many.

But here's the next thing they are struggling with: Yesterday there were millions of women around the world who were marching in the face of the election of the American President. That was a somewhat unprecedented event. And yet Donald Trump managed to stand in front of a placard honoring those who lost their lives in service to America and talk about how many people were at his inauguration in a way that was not true.

What the press is struggling with is that even in reporting the President's statement accurately as a falsehood, they were playing into his ability to steal the show—to gain attention by speaking an untruth. This raised the issue that truthful reporting is not only reporting the facts and being logical about it, but it is about noting what's important and what is not, and making calls about that. They were stressing over it on a morning news show, and well they should. Part of the press's problem is they have been led around by the nose by the current President because they are reactive to him. Thankfully, they are facing that issue.

Now think of your own life. What gets your attention? And how do the things that you judge to be evil get your attention? And then, how much energy are you putting into those things, worrying about them, fighting about them, stressing over them, and even maybe, in some

cases, venerating them and worshipping them? O great and powerful evil!

If you don't like our current President, my question is this, very simply: Do you have as much passion or more for the people in your life that you love, uphold, support, and co-create with as you do for the people that you don't like, that you're afraid of, that you believe are evil? There's a way that passion about evil breeds more evil, if you hadn't noticed.

Obsession with evil also does something else. The old phrase is *If you have a finger pointing at somebody else, you have three fingers pointing back at you*. So when we are seeing evil in others and then becoming obsessed with it, there's a way we take our eyes off our own experience and our own actions. And then we justify something less than wholesome on *our* part because we've got our eyes fixated on this evil person or evil thing, and we excuse something less than the love that we are expressing, based on this apparently evil person.

It is hard to be a being of love in a world laced with hate. It's not an easy thing to do, at one level, but the core practice of it is easy. The man who founded Sunrise Ranch said it so clearly and so beautifully and so accurately: "Let love radiate without concern for results." In other words, just keep on being who you are. And when we say "love" we don't mean just an affectionate kind of love or romantic kind of love; we're talking about the power of the creator that you are, which is the Creator of all things. Keep letting that flow out with the greatest integrity

that you can find in yourself.

Is that a naïve approach to life? I was grateful that some of the people who spoke yesterday at the Women's March were expressing this: *We are here to participate in a movement of love*. Love is powerful. The people for whom I have the greatest respect are those who know what it means to be a being of love in a world laced with hate; to express love unconditionally and just keep letting it come out. I suggest to you that that's the most powerful way to live your life. I know it's the most powerful way for me to live mine. And not only that, it is the only answer for us as humanity.

I was reading an insightful article this morning, a diagnosis of what's happening for humanity. The author of the article suggested that if there were an alien species that somehow beamed down to earth and saw how we're functioning as humankind, they would see us as diseased, because we're doing things that have the possibility of taking us down as a species. He gave a brilliant diagnosis, which is helpful, because if we can see the issue, perhaps we do something about it.

But I say we need more than a diagnosis. We need a remedy. And it is, first of all, a self-help remedy in all cases. It's a self-help remedy available from within the human being, within each of us. It seems so improbable that the answer to the world's problems lies within each individual in humanity. You might think, *Well, good luck—we'll wait for that day, when all humanity decides to be good*. Truly, there is no

other answer than the creativity within humanity needs to flow out. There is no other way that we're getting out of this alive as a species other than to live in integrity with the power of love that's within us. No antibiotic, no attack ad, no pesticide, no nuclear bomb is going to save us.

I do believe that there are increasing numbers of us who are finding the only answer to evil—the expression of the power of Universal Love.

When that power is unleashed through us together in solidarity, we release into the consciousness of humanity a power about which we have almost no idea. There is a transforming power that changes consciousness, because while the things that we may judge to be evil are syphoning off from the great font of creative power, we're going right to the source. As human beings, we're built to be right at that source and drinking from it and having it go through us. It moves through consciousness because we are conscious beings. This isn't just happening in the material world. It's happening in the conscious world. We're meant to drink right from the source of Creation and have it fill consciousness. And because consciousness is connected for all of us as human beings, there is set loose in the collective consciousness of humanity, by people who are awake and people who are expressing the power of the universe directly, a transformative power that is overwhelming and uplifting.

I will not, I shall not, use that power to be against things, understanding that in the outworking of my life there are things about which I have to say no, and I do. There are times

to take a protective stance, and there are times when it is right to block the actions of evil. That doesn't make me against anyone or anything other than dysfunction and ignorance.

The other day, I was facing something that somebody had done, and the first thought I had is, *Wow, they could do that? They could be that evil?* And then I thought, *Don't venerate or worship evil. It is nothing.*

It still surprises me when somebody does something that is out of integrity. But I don't want to be living my life venerating or worshipping that. I don't want to spend my life letting the energy of my life revolve around that.

Evil is “evol.” In other words, things are evolving in the creative process, and what they will become in their completeness is not what they are now. Very simply put, that's how Creation goes. You have the beautiful, complete idea, a vision, a seed for the future. In our human life, it is the essence of what we are creating. All the way through the process of Creation, it is only partly built. We may think, *Wow, this doesn't look quite right.* And then, at some point, if you see the process through, it's complete and whole and beautiful. It's been in a process of evol. But it is possible for us to take what's evolving and call it evil and wrong.

Now, you add into the mix people doing bad things, and that can really upset us as human beings. “Oh, my god, look what somebody did.” Because we're living not just in a world of things, like a house getting built, but we're

living in a world of people, and things are evolving in people. And we can look at the picture halfway through and say, “Oh, my god, that looks awful, and it’s evil.” And in some sense it is, or may be. It may even be diseased. But even disease is a process that can go to health.

There’s a powerful differentiator in how a human life goes. It is the difference between success and creativity and happiness in one’s life, the fulfillment of the reason why we’re here, and failure and misery—not to put too fine a point on it. But it is. That powerful differentiator is our answer, in life, to this question: *What do we do when things don’t go as we think they should go?*

Most people have dreams, and some commit themselves to those dreams. But just because you have a dream or a vision doesn’t guarantee anything, because there comes a point when you’re following out that vision and that dream that you have when things don’t go as you think they should go. It is a time when perhaps you think that what is happening around you is evil and wrong and shouldn’t have happened. You think that something else should have happened. And what you do at that point is the difference maker.

There are many people judging the current election results. They think they should have been another way. It’s easy for me to think that there could have been a better choice. I think long and hard about public policy and what would be best for America. And I have beliefs

about that, which aren’t my current topic of consideration. The relevant question now is this: *How do we use the circumstance that we have to the greatest advantage, seeing that it’s part of the process of what’s evolving and being created? How do we make the best of it? How do we gain the greatest creative advantage from it?*

There is a saying, inaccurately attributed to Winston Churchill:

If you’re going through hell, keep going.

Whether or not Churchill ever said it, it is good advice. When things are in process and not looking good, keep on going. Don’t stop there.

The best basketball player to ever play the game, Michael Jordan, said this:

I’ve missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed.

When I think of my life, I’m in the Michael Jordan camp when it comes to failure. And when I think of all the things that have failed at Sunrise Ranch, and realize that we are still here with all the amazing, magical things that are happening now, I praise the virtue of how the human experience evolves. There are all these little deaths along the way, all these little failures, and yet life is ongoing, full of promise, and full of possibility.

I'm not worshipping the failures. I'm worshipping the potentiality that's present right here and right now, for me and for us to do something great. I'm centered in that. Isn't this the remedy for the apparent evil in the world?

To be a being of love in a world that's laced with hate, you have to be consciously, personally centered in that love that is at your core. You have to relate to it. You have to be drinking from that source. You have to be focused in it, giving your response to it, worshipping it, venerating it in the invisible, within yourself, within all things, and within all people—not worshipping at the feet of hate or evil, even in a person who is being hateful or evil. I'm not interested in letting my life revolve around the evil acts, the evil ideas, or the hateful things that others do. Those things are only tangentially relevant to the reason I am here.

If someone is suffering from a sickness of the soul, I'm interested in relating to what's true in that person. And by the way, I think that that gives the greatest opportunity for something creative to happen, even if I have to stand in the face of what they're doing and give them a big fat "No."

Evil is nothing more than a temporary state of disorder. It has to become nothing to us for us to become the powerful creators that we're meant to be. It has to be made irrelevant by us. Making evil irrelevant is a worthy process for us in our life and in the life of humanity. Our life as humanity can't be all about those evil people, wherever they may be. I'm not saying there

aren't evil people. I'm just saying that they have to become irrelevant. What is relevant is the very act of Creation that we're participating in together because we're connected to the source of that Creation. It's the appearance of the Creator of all things through human consciousness. That's what's relevant.

Do you think that if there's some number of us for whom that's what it's all about, that won't have some powerful influence in the world? And by the way, if that doesn't happen, nothing else helps. You can't actually stamp out disease without creating health. Even in the world of antibiotics, you get supergerms. You keep trying to roll out more powerful antibiotics, and then the germs just get more powerful. Surgery can remove a diseased organ. But what about the health of the rest of the body? These days, on the world political scene, the powerful antibiotics are nuclear weapons. It is easy to see that the remedy of nuclear weapons is a very poor antibiotic for evil. If nuclear weapons are used as a surgery for evil, you might be able to say that the operation was a success but the patient died.

I am interested in creating a body of consciousness in people around the world who come to a deep understanding of these things, and therefore bring an overwhelmingly powerful transformative influence into the world. Clearly there's got to be a shift in consciousness for each of us if that's to happen, so that our spiritual centering is absolute and unalterable. If that is true for me, then in the face of what appears to be evil, my centering only strengthens. I do not become reactive to that evil thing. In the face of

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it, I just get stronger and clearer. I become more myself. I drink more from the wisdom that's within me and the power that's within me. Shouldn't *that* be our response to the appearance of evil in our world? There is a *no* to deliver to the appearance of evil in our world. But that *no* will only carry power and authority if it is backed by spiritual centering that is absolute and unalterable.

I say we reserve our greatest passion for this, in ourselves and in each other. I love and support you in being great, a whole lot more than I get

passionate about somebody doing something wrong. How about you? When I see you being beautiful and being yourself and creating, I get excited by *that*.

Let's come together in love for what is beautiful. And in that we'll be powerful and we'll be able to deal with all that shows itself in our world, and show a way forward.

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