

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

THE PRIMAL BOND

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There is a primal bond that holds all things together—from the atom to the cell to the solar system and throughout the universe. It is this bond that connects us as human beings. It is the bond that holds each of us together from the inside. There is one energy that forms that bond and we call it *love*.

The name is relevant for our human experience. It can imply romance and affection, but the primal bond is universal, relating to all facets of human experience and to all creation. Nonetheless, the word *love* is associated with human emotion, and for us as human beings, love is, first of all, a matter of the heart. The primal bond for us is rooted in our heart, in our emotional body. We come into the world learning about that primal bond in relationship to our parents. We even learn about it in utero. You can't be any more bonded than that! It is already in place in all the cells and all the atoms of our body, but we are learning about it as an organism in utero. Then, when we are held in the arms of mother and father, we are learning about that primal bond as a human being. All the other kinds of relationships we are going to have in our life are built on that primal bond.

You may be thinking, "I'm out of luck. If my experience of the primal bond depends on *my* relationship with *my* parents, there's no hope." The good news is that there is always the chance for remedial work. So if there was something missing in your childhood experience—and who wouldn't say there was—there are always opportunities to make up for it, to fill in the blanks, whatever they may be. Even if that experience with parents was perfect, there still is more to learn, there still is more to fill in around that primal bond. We can grow our capacity to experience it. And then there is all the work to do to develop all the other dimensions of relationship.

If that primal bond is not rock-solid, we are building our relationships on a foundation of shifting sand. All the relationships in business, all the love relationships, all the friendships are on shifting

sand if the primal bond is not in place. If that primal bond of love *is* in place, if we know what it is to be loved and to love in return, and we know that's how the world is made and held together, that bond is like a trump card in a game of cards. It trumps everything else. And it has to.

Say you are partners with someone on a project, and you are coming up against something challenging; a situation in which you both need to lock arms and take this thing on, and you are going to have to push and you are going to have to work, you are going to have to bring some kind of power to that situation to overcome the difficulties. Do you think that the primal bond is relevant in that situation? This might be a business partner; it may be someone who is in the same organization as you are. You may not think of that relationship as a love relationship, but do you think the primal bond created by universal love is relevant? Do you think your ability to invoke that bond is important?

If the primal bond is not in place in your experience, when there is a challenge to be faced, all that pushing may not go just to whatever really needs your creative effort. It may go to that person by your side, or they may be pushing at you in the pressure of that situation. That is a situation where the primal bond has to be in place. The primal bond within you has to trump all that tendency to be overwhelmed and to blame it on the other person. And if the primal bond isn't in place, there's going to be trouble.

The primal bond is firstly a matter of the heart. There was a bumper sticker that said, "Jesus loves you." I always saw an unspoken subtext: "I don't really care about you myself, but at least Jesus does." A person may believe that God loves them but that does not necessarily mean that the primal bond is in place. It doesn't help to have a belief about love or about God, about Jesus or anybody else, if the reality of the experience in the heart is without that love.

We can create times for ourselves when we fall in love all over again with life itself. It doesn't matter very much how you do it. If it happens for you, it happens. It could be a walk in the snow, like I had this morning. It could be a time of deep and profound worship. It could be a creative sharing with another person. However it occurs, renewal of the primal bond involves intensification in the heart.

The primal bond that is renewed in times of intensification is maintained through mindfulness—the art of living moment by moment; the practice of being self-aware, and asking: What is happening in my emotional body, and what am I doing with what's happening there? How am I letting myself open up? What kind of energetic current is moving through me? And what is trumping what in my experience?

In a relationship with another person, there are often points where we look across the table at them and think, "I'm not so sure about this person." And if we're not careful, suspicion can trump the primal bond if the primal bond isn't strong in us. Suspicion can take over, fear can take over, disillusionment can take over. Who has the eyes to see what they see without undoing the experience of the primal bond between themselves and another person? I'm talking about having

the realism to see what you see in other people, including the apparent limitations and mistakes. You can't help yourself from seeing such things if you are an aware person. But what you *can* do is allow the primal bond that you already have with this person to be more important than the limitations you see. You can allow that person to be held in the primal bond, and then watch what happens. That could trump everything.

There is an opportunity to let the primal bond be formed as a baby, and then as a child, in relationship to our parents. As we mature, and outgrow that childhood experience in relationship to our parents, we don't have to lose our childlike attitude. In fact, there is something wonderful about retaining our child nature. We mature and we outgrow being just our parents' child. It is just too confining a reality. But do we ever outgrow being a child of the source of love within us? My own experience is that, in the light of that reality, there is something about me that will always be a boy. I will always be the child of that reality. That is part of my primal bond. It is known in my own childlike love and wonder, my own childlike openness, my own knowing that I am loved from above and from the inside, knowing in some way that I'm the darling child of the universe, right here on earth. I don't think it helps just to believe those things, but we can have an experience of them because they are true of every person. We can know that we are loved.

We need to have the primal bond in place when facing the coldness of other people. If you are doing great things in your life, if you are about living the wonder of your life, I can almost guarantee you that there will come a point when you are ridiculed by other people. I am not wishing it on you, but I just know that that's what tends to happen. What is the antidote to that ridicule, and the shaming that goes along with it?

Some say that you have to learn to love yourself. There is truth to that, but *how* do you learn to love yourself? On the face of it, it is an impossibility. It doesn't really do any good in the face of the kind of ridicule and shame that I'm talking about, to try to convince yourself that you're okay and then try to love yourself. That never worked very well for me.

But if I know deep in my heart that I am loved by the universe, and I am loved by my Creator, there is peace in that kind of vulnerability. Here is how it was said in that wonderful prose poem *Desiderata*:

You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here.

That is the trump card, because ultimately, while I don't like being ridiculed and I don't like being shamed by other people, it really doesn't matter that much because I am loved on the inside. And because I know I'm loved on the inside, I *can* love myself. I can love my silly humanity with all its limitations and all its quirks. And you know what I've found? My humanity does a lot better when it knows that it is loved.

Trying to improve ourselves so that we no longer feel the ridicule and shame of other people is like trying to hold back the ocean. Shame is never overcome on that basis, no matter how hard you try

and no matter what you accomplish. The true antidote for that kind of shame is the experience of the love that holds the primal bond.

There's more to relationship than this primal bond. There's more to experience with other people than this deep warmth and love in the heart, and then the giving of love to warm the heart of another person. There are all the other facets of relationship, as anyone who's been in any kind of depth of relationship knows. It could be a life partner, it could be a business partner, or it could be any kind of seemingly casual relationship. Even if it starts out with a honeymoon period, we know that pretty soon we're into other things, other kinds of challenges, other kinds of opportunities that are not all about just that love in the heart. But if there *isn't* love in the heart, all those other things that we could do with other people can't happen. They only go so far, and then they reach a breaking point. We're unable to sustain that relationship because the sustaining power is in the primal bond.

What if you and I held everything that happens in our relationships in that primal bond? It could be something challenging with another person. There could be some pushing against; there could be some hard talk to have with another person. And if it's held in the primal bond, there's the opportunity for something creative to happen.

The Book of Corinthians says that love endures all things. To me, this speaks of longevity. I don't mean just living long. It speaks to the endurance to fulfill why we are here. To fulfill why we're here, there has to be an unstoppable quality to us that is born from love.

My poem *My Love Is Long* is about love and endurance.

*My love is long
like this path in front of me,
with blind turns
around sandstone bluffs
and endless switchbacks
that climb to unknown places;
and like a young man
who would walk
such a mountain path,
enjoying the sweat
dripping down his torso,
thirsting for a gaze
from the yet distant peak.*

*O, yes, my love is long,
and it would climb that way
today,
tomorrow,*

*and for so many tomorrows to come,
until this earthly frame
could walk no more,
and the spirit of my love
walks on alone,
like a rustling wind,
a shimmering and a flickering
that could do naught else but continue
until I reach the end and aim
of all my climbing;
until I know
my hunger is complete,
at least for now,
that I have loved you
with every hidden part,
all given,
all consumed in living flame
until love alone continues,
informing all its wondrous shapes and colors with itself,
dancing and laughing free.*

Is it possible *all* our lives and all our relationships could be lived creatively if our primal bond was fully in place? That it would all go very differently if it was? I know that is true, and I would like to do whatever I can to convince you that renewing that primal bond in yourself and keeping it hot and active is totally worth it; that it is the trump card in every facet of your life.

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