

THE WONDER OF MULTIGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY

PULSE OF SPIRIT
AUGUST 8, 2018



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.

These words are from a service at Sunrise Ranch during the Arise Music and Camping Festival. The song “What a Wonderful World” was sung with a pantomime of everyday human interchanges.

HELENA KARCHERE: It is a wonderful world. And events like this, and the community, and the blessings that we share together in intentional time like this, are so important to remind us of that—that we can bathe in it. Really, I felt this weekend like I was swimming in reminders and reflections of how beautiful the world is, and our responsibility for it, and our power to impact it in beautiful ways.

TIERRO LEE: I’d just like to say that the Arise Music Festival family, all the staff who help put it together, all the volunteers, and all the people of Sunrise Ranch who help put it together, all the hard work, has created a very,

very large extended family around the Arise Festival event. I’m just so grateful to watch that blossom. It’s the thing that most resonates with me in my heart, of what we’re doing.

It reminds me that the more we come together and the more we get good at working together, the more our lines of communication are closer and stronger and tighter, the more we can accomplish things. We’ve accomplished a great deal this weekend here at the Ranch, and I think we can accomplish anything on this earth. I truly believe we can overcome any problem we have as a culture, as a race, and as a planet. And I believe communication and heart and love and understanding between family, extended or otherwise, is how we’ll do that.

BRIDGET LAW: Sunrise Ranch is such an incredible place, and I feel that the

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moment I step onto this land. It's not just a gorgeous spot on the planet—which it absolutely is, but that's not what makes me feel that way. It's the work that you all are doing here, that you just shared with us through the children, which was incredible. But I'm not the only one who picks up on that. *All* of these people who come here feel that way, whether they realize it or not. Let this be the ripple and the example. If this can happen on this plot of land and ripples outward and expands, we heal our planet through that action.

PAUL BASSIS: Young people don't know what they can't do until older people tell them they can't do it. The late actress Audrey Hepburn said, "Nothing is impossible. Even the word itself says 'I'm possible.'"

Speaking of family—my oldest daughter, who started working with the first Arise Festival when she was thirteen years old, is about to turn nineteen, and this is her sixth year working the Festival. She would be here now but she's out working the Festival and is going off to college in about ten days. There is nothing in her life that has made her grow up more than the experience of being part of this family that is the Arise Festival and Sunrise Ranch. And I am so grateful to have had that opportunity as a parent, to be able to have this experience for

my daughter. My other daughter is turning fourteen this month, and I think she's doing her hair right now. No, that's for real! I really think she's doing her hair right now.

I just have so much gratitude in my heart. I think I've said this before, and I'm going to say it again, because it is even more true. "The truth" sounds like it's absolute, but actually something can become even more true. And what is more true is that I came here to this experience of collaborating with others to produce the Arise Festival, and we knew that collectively we had a lot of intention. That intention is forever, shall I say, arising, and much of that comes from the inspiration from you, David; from the community here at Sunrise Ranch, the amount of love that we feel from all of you. And stop saying "Welcome back" to me when I get here, okay? I've never really left! I'm always here, okay?

DAVID KARCHERE: I want to speak on behalf of Sunrise Ranch and just say how fortunate we feel to have this Festival here, and how proud we are of you who produce it; and we are proud of the tone of what this is about, and all that has been growing.

I'd love to share a few thoughts on what it means to live in multigenerational community. It's an amazing thing, set within the larger culture in

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which we live where people of different ages are separated. They are often separated in space, so that seniors go to assisted-living facilities and children go off to school. But even under the same roof, generations can become separated and there can be misunderstanding. We have labels for different generations, and those labels emphasize even more the separation we feel. The labels can convey a lack of respect for those who come after. We talk about Gen X or the Millennials, and there are all kinds of descriptions from people my age as to how people of younger generations aren't following in our footsteps in the way we think they should. And of course, how long has that kind of generational misunderstanding been going on? A long time.

I want to share my experience here at Sunrise Ranch. I came here eighteen years ago, and I think it's fair to say it was an aging community at the time. A few of us looked around, and it didn't take much thought to realize that if there weren't some younger people here we would be fading into oblivion. So it was an obvious thing to encourage a younger generation to come. My daughter, Helena, played a key part in that. She was living here at the time, and young people rallied around her, and then rallied around the young people that rallied around her—Patrick Padden, I see here, who is now living in

Fort Collins. And later, there was Keahi Ewa, and many, many others.

About a year ago I realized that something unexpected had happened. We didn't just have some younger people that would be good for our future. We had people of all ages. I did a little demographic study of the community here. There are about a hundred people who live on this property, and I saw that we are fairly evenly distributed throughout the age ranges—that we had young children, all the way up to Barbara Marx Hubbard, who is eighty-eight years old. And I told Barbara just the other day that her walking around at eighty-eight years old is an inspiration to all of us.

Something happened in the middle of all that, which was unexpected. Living with different ages, I began to forget how old or young they were and what generation they were from. And so did everyone else. We are all just people. I felt that so much from the children here this morning as they were sharing their vision. There it was, just the voice of a human being, expressing the deep wishes of the soul that are present within us all. That view begins to emerge for us all. We stop pegging each other as being in a particular generation or of a particular age. And in the middle of that, something else happens. We forget how old *we* are ourselves.

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I can tell you something we intended here this morning. It was to touch on the ordinary experiences of human relations and to feel the opportunity that we have in those everyday interchanges to know something else that isn't just ordinary. In the depth of appreciation for the opportunity that we have just to be alive and to be with each other, we sense something that is ageless and timeless, that is somehow infused into the space. Yes, we feel family and we feel the wonder of all the different personalities of the people who are in our lives. But we feel something else that is infusing personality and infusing family and infusing culture. It is a reality that elevates it all.

I believe that is so important and such a key to living in community. Like anyone anywhere, we face the issues of community at Sunrise Ranch. We are not exempt from that. And what we've found is that if it's all personality- and culture-based, and everyone is looking to obtain their meaning and their sense of fulfillment and enjoyment from the culture of the community around them, at some point that runs dry. Two or three months after somebody comes to Sunrise Ranch, they might feel disappointed. That is part of the common human experience. We expect happiness from the culture and the people around us, and in the end they can't give it to us. So at Sunrise

Ranch, we have to stand in front of that disappointed person and say, "Sorry, we can't give it to you." Because the experience of happiness in community is something *you give to community*. You *infuse* community with that.

And where does that happiness come from? We bring it from some timeless place. The culture in which we live has been so dominated by a scientific view of the world that the ancient view of the Eternal that is within every culture has been lost. The ancients, and the indigenous people of today, draw on a sense of what transcended the immediate. Yes, there is the culture in which we live—the family, the tribe, and the community. But there is another reality that we can draw upon to nourish and sustain us, to bring creativity into the community in which we live.

That reality animates personality and culture. Personality alone breaks down. We live in a world that is dominated by science but also by personality, often disconnected from the Eternal. If we look at personality and contemporary world culture, we often see a quality of personality that is not backed up by the transcendent experience of the Eternal. And so personality and culture erode and degenerate. We are desperate for expressions of personality that tap into something else.

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The religious institutions of our day have taken the awareness of the Eternal and booted it out into the future. It is called “heaven after you die,” or “your next incarnation.” And so, in our culture, we have lost touch with the immediate presence of the Eternal. We do not call upon it and bring it into the culture in which we live. The Eternal is the reality that animates our own personality, that brings us alive, that nourishes us and sustains us in the living of our life.

Heaven is where the angels live, is it not? It is the dwelling place of the Divine. It is the Eternal. And where is that? Do we allow it to be booted out into the future, irrelevant for our life now?

We have the opportunity to call on that reality and to have a heart connection with it. Not so that we can tell simply fabulous stories of what it must be like, playing harps on clouds and whatever other imagination we might want to have. I’m talking about the innate sense that there is the presence of something that melts our hearts, that opens us up, that inspires us. And when we are opening to that inside ourselves and letting it come through, we can open to it in one another. It’s funny how that works. When you really do open to it in yourself to let it flow through, then I begin to see you in that flow. I begin to

see the origins that are within the depth of your soul, as they are in mine.

I think we need to be reminding each other of that. Do you not think so? We have the opportunity to resonate with the world of angels, a reality that we seem to have forgotten but which we are still a part of. In fact, we never left that reality. We can remember it now—we can bring it back into consciousness.

In thinking about the world in which we live and what it is facing today, I say that is *exactly* what is needed. It is quite possible that all the tragedy that we witness in the world—the cultural train wreck that is all around us—is enough to wake us up to our primal spirituality, the first spirituality that we have ever had, the one that we were born with, the one that is our birthright, the one that calls to our heart, that calls us to stand for what we know is true. We are now acting on it in the world and making it *real* with each other.

I believe this Festival is filled with nonbelievers. We don’t believe that the reality we are seeing in the culture around us is what is true of us and what we are destined to become. We are nonbelievers when it comes to the existing culture. And then we *are* believers in the creative current that is within us, and the nobility of what is

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present in the human soul. No matter how many times we feel disappointment in the culture around us, we have faith in the nobility that is present in the human soul. We affirm that faith every day in our own expression of it. And then, instead of running away from each other, we run *toward* each other. Because everything that is creative in us is looking to do that. We are in the swirl of Creation but, nonetheless, we are not running from each other.

That takes standing in the face of a personality that is broken in some way, in another person or in ourselves. It means standing in the face of a culture that has broken down in so many ways. It takes standing in the face of that, and then bringing the positive expression of what we know to be true and that we affirm with our every breath, with our every word, with our every deed.

We are the people who just don't stop. In the face of *whatever*, we do not stop. There is something more to be said, something more creative that trumps the human world as it is, that is more important than it, and that in the end wins, that always overcomes. The very lifeblood of Creation within us always wins. There are often setbacks and difficulties. But life always wins. Life on this planet is doing that right now. And it is taking care of whatever disease

is present, even the disease within human culture.

So we are here for that, I believe, every one of us. We are here to break down all the hardened forms of thought and feeling that are forms of disbelief, forms of a personality that has tried to survive without the Eternal. So in the community that we share, we are coming together. We are not running apart; we are not running away. We are showing up more and more.

That is why this community is coming alive. That is why it is becoming powerful. We are not just slogging it out on our own, nor were we ever meant to do that. We have the collective energy of awakened people who are tapping into what is creative at every level of the human experience, and sharing the synergy of it together.

The atoms in the sun are drawn from the edge of the sun by tremendous gravity to the very center of the sun, where there is enormous heat and enormous pressure. Does your life ever feel like that? Like there is a lot of heat and a lot of pressure? It takes that for the atoms on the sun to fuse. And for us as human beings, it's the same way. Whatever resistance we have to fusion is broken down by gravity that draws us together, and by the pressure of being together and the fire that is ignited when we are together. It takes all that

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to break down our resistance to fuse—
to fuse with the Eternal within
ourselves and in each other, to break
open, to be the sun that we are meant
to be.

Sunrise Ranch isn't named that just
because the sun rises over the rimrock
to the east. Sunrise Ranch is about the
sun rising in each and every one of us,
and the fusion we are knowing together
in multigenerational community. The
fusion on the sun emits tremendous
warmth and light. We are here to
create the warmth and light of fusion as
a community.

This is a community of loving,
hardworking people who have

committed themselves to be a sun
together. This is the wonder of this
multigenerational community.

*We invited the world and the world
came.*

*We are lit up by love, and backed
up by the Universe!*

Thank you today for being part of
Sunrise Ranch.

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