

# TRANSFIGURATION

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT  
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**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.

The *Public Broadcasting System* recently aired a *Frontline* program, *Secrets, Politics and Torture*. It depicted the United States' use of EIT, which was the CIA's acronym for *Enhanced Interrogation Technique*.

The show gave the history of EIT following 9/11. It was a time of great fear in this country after the loss of life on American soil. There was fear of further death and the attack upon American culture through terrorism. In that environment of fear we ended up, as a country, sanctioning torture. It's clear that governmental officials lost their sense of perspective and their sense of reason. They lost their moral compass. And because they did, we as a country lost our moral compass. We lost our spiritual True North.

When people get profoundly out of touch

with who they are, they can end up doing things that are so far from their nature. At times I've been shocked to see friends act in ways that demonstrated that they had lost their sense of the ethical and spiritual context in which we all live. In some cases, their avowed purpose for their life didn't end up being embodied by them. Their own inner spiritual nature and character ended up being betrayed in the living of their life, in the deeds and acts and in the words that they spoke.

It can happen. Many of us have seen it, whether in the public square in situations like the one reported on by the *Frontline* program, or in more private areas of our life. When we see it in government officials, it's very easy to point the finger, as well we should, because they are representing us and we need to hold such people accountable. But I'm far more

interested in my own experience and what I share with others. I'm more interested in you and me and what steps we can take to change, to become more fully who we are in expression, to embody the values that we espouse or that we hold; to be true to those values, and ultimately to be true to who we are, and to do what who we are has to do in this lifetime on earth. This is the passion of not wanting our life to pass us by without us doing what we were born to do. It is the passion of wanting to be sure that our life is a statement of what we know to be true. For all of us, there comes a time when the cycle of our life as we know it is over, and at that point we've either done what we came to do or not.

When I moved to Sunrise Ranch in 2000 and then began to do the work I do full-time in 2004, I heard from friends about the risk of not having sufficient financial reserves for my old age. And then they had those wonderful advertisements on television from financial investment companies that, in very soothing tones, threaten you that you may run out of money in your old age. When I considered those issues, it struck me that it's a far greater issue that I could reach my old age and not have done what I came to do. I have no issue with a person being responsible about their senior years. But the specter of not fulfilling my calling haunted me far more than the image of myself, poorly clothed, out on the street someplace with a tin cup in my hand.

I don't know anyone who fulfills their true life calling without being willing to undergo profound spiritual change. There is a word we don't often use for that kind of change: *transfiguration*. Here are some definitions of the word:

*A complete change of form or appearance into a more beautiful or spiritual state.*

*A change in form or appearance; metamorphosis; an exalting, glorifying, or spiritual change.*

If you didn't know the meaning of the word, it might suggest that we're becoming more beautiful, or somehow our figure is improving. But the word actually refers to a complete *transmutation* of the human experience. We're not just changing the outer form of our life. This is a complete change of form from caterpillar to butterfly. It takes that, so that everything that's happening in the human experience is coming from a different place. It is of a different nature and texture, partaking of a different reality.

It takes transfiguration if a person is going to live in heaven on earth. The word *heaven* could evoke all kinds of images—harps and clouds and angels and all the rest. Heaven is where the angel dwells. We say that our true nature, the core of who we are as human beings, is divine; that at the core of who we are is the angel

who we are. Where does that angel live? We say angels live in heaven. We might even believe that who we are incarnated from some kind of heavenly realm. But there is a heavenly dimension to what we know now. There's a heaven that we share now. We have the opportunity to accept that reality as real, to live in that place, and then, from that place, to embody and express who we are into the affairs of men and women, into the world as we know it.

What is so backwards about so much of spiritual practice and religious practice is that it is an attempt to take a person from an experience of being enmeshed in the human world, and somehow give them a view of what it would be to live in a heavenly world. Most often the best that's achieved is a few moments of bliss, a little nirvana to keep them going; a moment of inspiration and insight. Or heaven is simply postponed to after you die, or after you reincarnate multiple times. But there's something so terribly undermining about the whole attempt because the premise of it in the person's mind is that what's real and important is their human life and the human world as it is. They're identified as that person, living in that human world, who is then trying to have a spiritual experience.

Our primal spirituality is the spirituality that we were born with. We came into this world with it. I love to say that that little baby doesn't have to become any

more spiritual than it is—and neither do you or I, at any point in our life. The truth of us is already in that place of heaven. There are all kinds of things already happening in that place.

We can become so absorbed in the world as it is, with all its human drama. For instance, we can be all absorbed with the news. Personally, I swore off the news for several years there, after being a bit of a news junkie. Because I thought it was such a distraction from what's really happening in the human experience, which is happening in the heaven.

I'd like to read the story of the Transfiguration that's in the Bible. There are just a few verses that describe it. At the same time it is a story of illumination and enlightenment and it is a sad story, when you read between the lines. What you'll see in the reading of it is that the three disciples who were with Jesus didn't quite know what to do and couldn't be with him in it. And then, if you can look past the sorrow in what occurred, it is also a terribly comical story. If you are familiar with a context in which there is real spiritual work occurring, all the funny things that people do in the presence of a real spiritual teaching are all-too-familiar. It recalls all those awkward moments when people don't know quite what to do in the light of the presence of the Divine.

The story begs for transparency. That's

what comes with the transfiguration. With a real transfiguration in someone's experience, there is transparency. And you might say it works both ways: transparency brings transfiguration.

Here's the story:

*And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart. (Matthew 17:1)*

A beautiful story of raising human consciousness. Clearly Jesus sought to take them out of the usual circumstance in which they lived, to see something more. In essence, he was saying, *Yes, come. Let's have a greater experience. Let's not be embedded in the everyday life of what's happening.* For the disciples it was a context that included the religion of the day. The story continues:

*And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.*

*And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. (Matthew 17:2,3)*

This is a reference to something that is not so familiar to us today. It would have been very familiar to them. Elias is the New Testament name for Elijah, a prophet from the Old Testament. There was a belief that

there was a heavenly triumvirate embodied through these three men, Jesus and Moses and Elias. So this was a view of what was happening that was clothed in the forms of the Jewish religion at the time, but with a truth behind it. Obviously there was something happening.

*And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.*

*Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. (Matthew 17:3,4)*

We think of Peter as being rambunctious and overeager, and here that part of his character is coming out. And you can see how, immediately, in the middle of something heavenly being experienced, he's got all kinds of religious ideas and he wants to make it into something—a tabernacle, which is some kind of dwelling place. He doesn't know what to do and he doesn't know what to say and he's very uncomfortable, and so he blurted out what he did. The story goes on:

*While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased....*

*And when the disciples heard it, they  
fell on their face, and were sore afraid.*

*And Jesus came and touched them, and  
said, Arise, and be not afraid.*

*And when they had lifted up their eyes,  
they saw no man, save Jesus only.*

*(Matthew 17:5-8)*

If you read between the lines, I don't think it's hard to imagine that there was an opportunity missed. The vision that Jesus was opening up for them went away. It was short-circuited because they followed the compulsion to interpret it in terms familiar to their human world. It was a religious world, but the religious world is part of the human world, just as the political world, the family world, the community world, the social world are all part of the human world. They had seen something that was natural to the heaven in which they were living—but they saw it in religious terms. *Bang!* It was over, and they *were* sore afraid.

There needs to be a transfiguration in our own experience, so that our faces shine as the sun and our raiment is white as the light—not because we have some extraordinary spiritual experience from a human perspective but because we are simply being ourselves and we are living in the heaven that is the natural dwelling place of who we are.

There are great spiritual things afoot today. There's a great spiritual movement in the earth, and there's a rising tide in human consciousness, spiritually speaking, occurring within people throughout the world. There's a presence of the Divine that's rising in human consciousness.

*Maybe we can make a political party out of it... Maybe we could make a school and teach all about it.* Maybe so. But how quickly the presence of the Divine fades when its significance is seen solely in terms of its application to the human world.

Where is the person who is willing to simply be still in the heaven of Being, and watch and wait and keep silent until there's something to be said that is a clear and transparent expression of who one is in that heaven; until there's something clear and wonderful and beautiful and of light to be brought into the world that embodies what that heaven is all about? I would rather hear silence than cacophony. I would rather hear one beautiful note ringing than a cacophony of notes. I would rather hear one simple thing said than words that drone on about nothing.

Creative living requires that a person stop and be still and be with what's happening in the heaven of their Being. Do we dare do that? Do we dare lose track of all the human interactions that are going on all the time—who said what to whom, what somebody else is thinking, what are they thinking of me, and what am I thinking of

them? This is the turbulence of the human world.

There's something happening among us as heavenly Beings. There's something happening among us in the heaven. There's something being created by us in that heaven. We are touching in that heaven. We are knowing each other in that heaven. We are loving each other in that heaven. We are creating all the time in that heaven. We are calling down into the earth the holy spirit of Creation from that heaven. We are opening to the universe in that heaven and calling on that larger universe to come and be here with us. *We welcome your light, we welcome your truth, your power, your wisdom.*

Living in that heaven, there's a fitting word to be spoken at times, and there is a life to be lived that embodies what's in that heaven now, and now, and now, and always. You could make a life like that; I could make a life like that—being in the now, in the heaven, expressing and embodying who I am through my humanity.

If I do that, the human world doesn't go away. I still have my five-foot-ten walking around in the world of men and women. And there are people who look at my five-foot-ten and think they see me, and maybe they do—and maybe they don't.

I'm using myself as an example not

because I think I'm any different from you. There are people who see *your* earthly frame, who think they know you. They think they know where you come from and what you are about. There are people who think that who have no idea. But you can have not only an idea but you can know—not because you have a word that defines you or an expression that defines you, although it's rather nice to be able to say, "I am the angel."

The heaven in which we live becomes our spiritual context. It becomes our ethical context. We know ourselves for who we are in that heaven, and our actions in the world are held to the standard of who we are and where we come from.

We know who we are when we're willing to be still and be ourselves in the heaven—and, knowing that, to express ourselves in the earth from the heaven. And in the act of doing that, there is delight and joy. It is the joy of being who we are and knowing who we are as a creator. It is the joy of Creation.

The biggest risk in a human life is that a person could go through their entire life and not know that for themselves. Or maybe only know it for fleeting moments, because I do suspect that it's a rare person who walks through their whole life, never coming to that place of knowing who they are. I think we all have some glimpse of that reality. The distinction is that there

are some who are willing to let it be only a glimpse, and there are some who have the desire and the courage to say, *I want that now, and now, and now, and now. And there is no circumstance, there is no fear that will drive me to act in ways that are not an accurate expression of who I am. And if I catch myself having done that, I'll let go of that too, and come right back to the place of God-centering, the place of stillness, the place of transfiguration.*

My experience is that the path of transfiguration is filled with many steps for our humanity. And yet whatever we

experience, whatever our journey becomes, it is our determination to be fully present, to be transparently and accurately and fully who we are, that lets our steps be accurate, that allows us to say, *I'm on my path. I'm taking my steps. This is accurate because I'm present fully and I'm being who I am. In fact, I'm showing you who I am. I'm revealing to you who I am, if you have eyes to see.*

This is the path of transfiguration. Let us be ourselves and let us walk that path.

David Karchere  
[dkarchere@emnet.org](mailto:dkarchere@emnet.org)



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