Transformation

December 16, 2013 By Matt Starr

I've spent a lot of time over the last couple of months thinking, planning, reflecting, writing, consulting, and in general, getting ready to offer help to others. My work comes from my past teaching and school committee leadership, my personal healing journey from liver disease, conversations with healers and wise ones, and my research. I am called by a desire to attend to a purpose beyond my own story, as if the bumps and incredible challenges of the last 7 years were, ultimately, part of a deep plan to illuminate me, to help evoke transformation, to lead me to be resourceful, to focus on my whole self, and to dance in this moment of appreciation for this life and this world.

That leads me to think of transformation, and how we all want to have full, balanced, rewarding lives. When we are living in the fast paced, result-oriented culture that surrounds us, it is sometimes difficult to slow down, to appreciate the love that is around us, to be in the moment rather than hurtling forward to achieve and thrive in an age of massive information, rampant materialism, and strongly competitive lives. It takes special management of Self to stay open, soft, and aware enough to really listen and find the deep peace we all hope for.

So, how do we bring about transformation, align ourselves with our purpose, our hopes and dreams, our deepest peace and love? Well, that's quite a lot to aspire to, and for all people it is different. But one thing is certain. It takes dedication and hard work.

It's like someone who has an alcohol problem but is resistant to reaching out for support from organizations like AA or from the closest people in their lives. Or a stressed out 60 hour a week professional who attends a week of yoga retreat in Mexico, finds some level of relaxation, but goes back home to the same lifestyles, without applying what they may have experienced or learned. Or finding ways to mask one's pain through food, sex, drugs, television, more work, acquisitions, or other distractions.

As author and New Spirit spiritual teacher and international speaker Iyanla Vanzant says, "We can all bandage the bleeding from the wounds of our past, but eventually those wounds will ooze through and stain your life... You must find the strength to open the wounds, pull out the core of the pain that is hiding you in your past, the memories, and make peace with them."

I had to look hard at the pain of my past. The lifestyle of my young adulthood was an unhealthy one, offering a way to deal with the pain of my past, the lack of shared love and affection from my mother, the lack of accountability, without actually dealing with it. So, I screamed out for help with

outrageous and obvious messages, over and over, that were not answered.

This period of my life left me with scars, lost relationships, disappointments, opportunities wasted, potential unrealized, and eventually, a diagnosis of hepatitis that, decades later, led to aggressive hepatitis and a liver transplant. Over time, on my own, I dug in, dealt with the pain, and decided to live as fully as possible, and to open myself to the grace of love and beauty that surrounded me in my personal life and the world.

Now, I can look at my hepatitis, liver disease, transplant, and post surgical complications as blessings. That took some time, some real application of techniques: yoga and long, consistent meditation; energy healing; a spiritist healer in Brazil; replacing my western medical reliance to far reaching naturopathic care; along with desire, hard work, and some good spiritual and practical guidance.

Yes, finding self realization without all the pain would be preferable, but it seems that those are not things we get to choose. As the saying goes, shit happens. We can let that shit stink and fester around us, and it's hard to see any goodness in that. Conversely, we can go into it, stir it up, work in some more organic material, turn it, pay attention to it, and produce life giving soil (my farming side can't ignore compost!) that will bring more richness and strong life to what we grow next season.

I grow garlic, onions, tomatoes, greens, carrots, squash, and much more in the fields. In my life, and in the lives of those around me, I grow peace and love as much as I can, which, no matter where our illness takes us, is really the point of it all, the reason to be, a life fulfilled that touches others and makes yourself and others better.

My coaching business, working as a guide for those looking for the blessings of grace through whatever hardships have befallen them, is the next part of my path. It is with gratitude that I serve the glory of personal change, of healing, and therefore, of making a better world. If you are interested in using me to help you, I will do all that I can, really ALL that I can, to help you love the life you live, to be more well, more whole, and, in a variety of ways that knows no bounds, healed.

One of the techniques I have found helpful, and that I suggest for others, is to embrace and access the healing qualities of an open heart, both metaphorically and concretely.

Anything and Everything is Possible,
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