HONORING OUR PAIN



THE SPIRAL OF THE WORK THAT RECONNECTS









A NUMBER OF WISDOM TRADITIONS TELL US THAT, PARADOXICALLY, HEALING IS FOUND WHERE WE MIGHT LEAST EXPECT IT: IN THE WOUND, IN THE PAIN, IN THE SUFFERING

"MAY YOU HAVE THE COMMITMENT TO KNOW WHAT HAS HURT YOU, TO ALLOW IT COME CLOSER TO YOU, AND IN THE END TO BECOME ONE WITH YOU."

ST FINTAN

"YOUR DEFECTS ARE THE WAY THAT GLORY GETS MANIFESTED. WHOEVER SEES CLEARLY WHAT'S DISEASED IN HIMSELF BEGINS TO GALLOP ON THE WAY... SELF-COMPLACENCY BLOCKS THE WORKMANSHIP. ... DON'T TURN YOUR HEAD. KEEP LOOKING AT THE BANDAGED PLACE. THAT'S WHERE THE LIGHT ENTERS YOU."

"RING THE BELLS THAT STILL CAN RING, FORGET YOUR PERFECT OFFERING. THERE'S A CRACK, A CRACK IN EVERYTHING; THAT'S HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN."

LEONARD COHEN

"WE ARE CALLED NOT TO RUN FROM THE DISCOMFORT, OR RUN FROM THE GRIEF, OR THE FEELINGS OF OUTRAGE, OR EVEN FEAR. FOR IF WE CAN BE FEARLESS WITH OUR PAIN, IT TURNS; IT DOESN'T STAY STATIC. IT ONLY DOESN'T CHANGE IF WE REFUSE TO LOOK AT IT. BUT WHEN WE LOOK AT IT, WHEN WE TAKE IT IN OUR HANDS, WHEN WE CAN JUST BE WITH IT AND KEEP BREATHING, IT TURNS. IT TURNS TO REVEAL ITS OTHER FACE; AND THE OTHER FACE OF OUR PAIN FOR THE WORLD IS OUR LOVE FOR THE WORLD; OUR ABSOLUTE, INSEPARABLE CONNECTEDNESS TO ALL LIFE."

JOANNA MACY

EXPERIENCING PAIN IS AN INEVITABLE SYMPTOM OF BEING ALIVE AS SENTIENT BEINGS IN A WORLD OF CHANGE.

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WHILE WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE ABOUT THIS, WE DO HAVE A CHOICE ABOUT HOW WE ARE WITH AND WHAT WE DO WITH OUR PAIN

EVEN THOUGH IT'S COMMON SENSE TO TAKE OUR FINGER OUT OF THE FLAME, THE THORN OUT OF OUR FOOT (IF IT'S POSSIBLE TO DO SO), THESE TEACHERS (AND OUR OWN EXPERIENCE) TELL US THAT THERE COULD BE SOMETHING OF VALUE IN FINDING A NON-HARMFUL WAY OF BEING WITH OUR PAIN.

BUT EVEN IF WHAT THESE WISDOM TEACHERS TELL US IS TRUE, IT'S HARD, AND COUNTERINTUITIVE, TO TURN TOWARDS, YET ALONE "LEAN INTO," OUR PAIN?

DO WE REALLY HAVE TO?

UNFORTUNATELY, I THINK WE DO.

I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANY WAY AROUND IT.

IF WE WANT TO KEEP MOVING ON THE SPIRITUAL PATH WE HAVE

TO FIND A CREATIVE WAY OF BEING WITH OUR PAIN.

WHAT IF WE DON'T?

EVEN IF WE CAN FIX THE PAIN, WE LOSE SOME POTENTIAL FOR HEALING IF WE SIMPLY AVOID THE EXPERIENCE.

AND THIS HAS EVEN GREATER CONSEQUENCES WITH PAIN THAT WE CANNOT FIX

"PAIN + RESISTANCE = SUFFERING"

UNATTENDED PAIN IS BAD FOR OUR HEALTH

- · IT EXHAUSTS US (BURNOUT)
- · IT CAN MAKE USILL
- IT DISCONNECTS US -- FROM OURSELVES,
 FROM OTHERS, AND FROM OUR WORLD

QUESTION:

ARE THERE WAYS OF BEING WITH OUR PAIN THAT CAN SUSTAIN RATHER THAN DRAIN US?

THAT CAN ALLOW OUR HEARTS TO STAY SOFT AND OPEN, EVEN IN THE MOST CHALLENGING OF SITUATIONS?

HEROIC

- · MEDICAL MODEL
- "TREAT OR RETREAT" (FIGHT, FLIGHT, OR FREEZE)
- · TRUST INFORMATION, EXPERTISE, TECHNOLOGY
- · A POWER OVER/DOWN MODEL
- · POTENTIAL FOR CURE

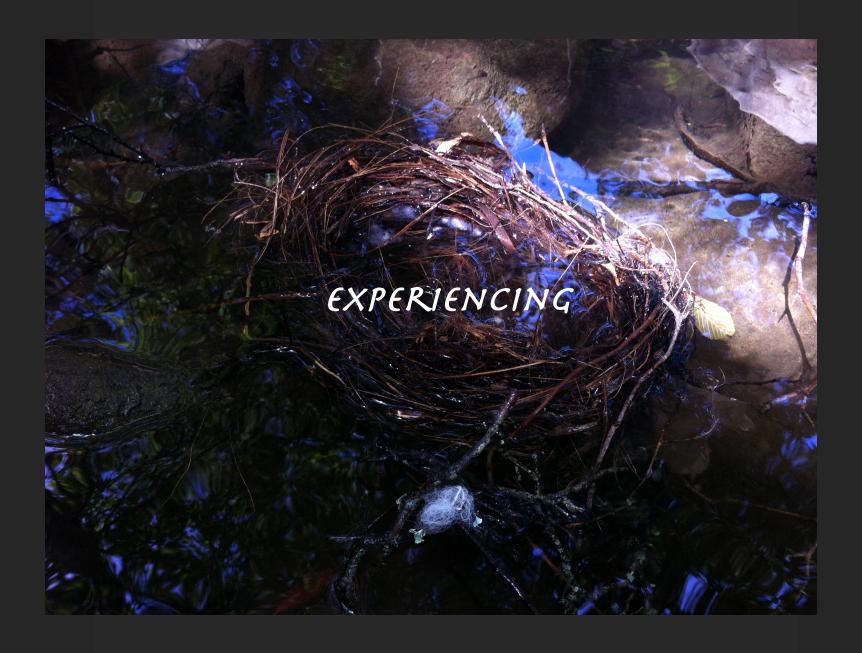
WOUNDED HEALER

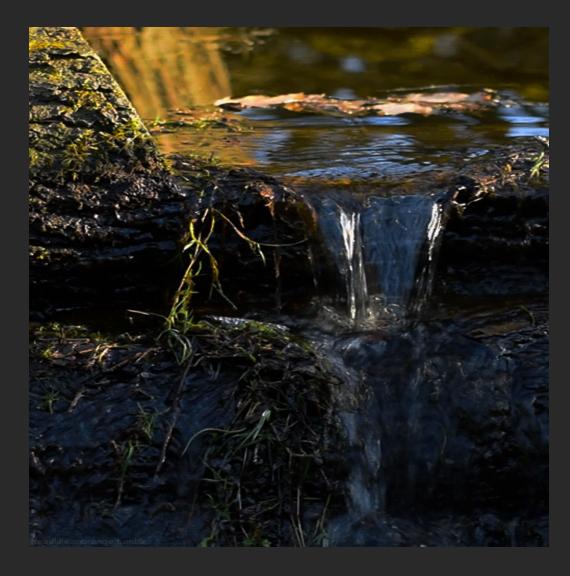
- MINDFULNESS, SELF-KNOWLEDGE, SELF-COMPASSION
- · "BEING PRESENT TO" "HOLDING" "WAITING"
- TRUST IN OUR OWN EXPERIENCE AND THE INNATE
 HEALING POTENTIAL IN THE OTHER
- · AN EGALITARIAN MODEL
- · POTENTIAL FOR HEALING











ALLOWING, LETTING BE, LETTING GO

HEROIC

· PERSONAL PAIN THAT CAN BE FIXED

WOUNDED HEALER

· PERSONAL PAIN THAN CAN'T BE FIXED

FLOWING THROUGH

· OVERWHELMING PSYCHOLOGICAL PAIN

HEROIC

· PERSONAL PAIN THAT CAN BE FIXED

WOUNDED HEALER

· PERSONAL PAIN THAN CAN'T BE FIXED

FLOWING THROUGH

- · OVERWHELMING PSYCHOLOGICAL PAIN
- AT ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE THAT CAN INFUSE AND INFORM
 HOW WE APPROACH ALL KINDS OF PAIN

THE FLOWING THROUGH WAY OF BEING WITH PAIN

- BUDDHIST TONGLEN MEDITATION
- JOANNA MACY'S "BREATHING THROUGH MEDITATION"
- · WOLF WAHPEPAH'S ORAL TEACHING
- THE NEST IN THE STREAM: NOTICING HOW NATURE DOES IT

THE FLOWING THROUGH WAY OF BEING WITH PAIN

- · REALIZING (RE-MEMBERING) OUR ONENESS WITH NATURE
- · BEING WITH A FELT-SENSE OF GRATITUDE
- · OPENING & RECEIVING
- ALLOWING OURSELVES TO EXPERIENCE THE FELT-SENSE OF PAIN IN OUR HEARTS
- LETTING THIS BE, JUST AS IT IS
- · RETURNING TO THE SENSATIONS OF THE BREATH-STREAM
- NOTICING THAT THIS FLOWING THROUGH IS HAPPENING ALL BY ITSELF
- RELEASING ALL, SURRENDERING ALL TO THE FLOWING THROUGH
- WITHOUT EXPECTATION OF ANY PARTICULAR OUTCOME
- · FOR THE SAKE OF ALL BEINGS

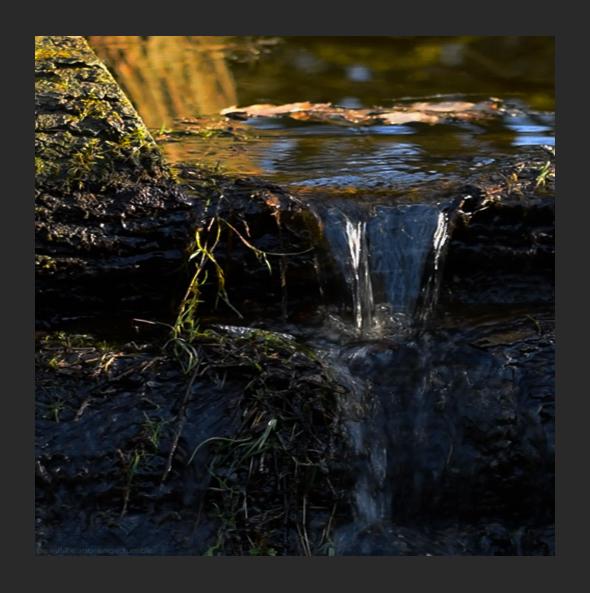
THE FLOW THROUGH OF THE NEST IN THE STREAM IS ABOUT AN ATTITUDE OF OPENNESS TO LIFE;

ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE OF DEEP CONNECTION THAT COMES WITH THIS;

AND ABOUT THE YEARNING TO ACT THAT
THEN EMERGES;

NATURALLY AND SPONTANEOUSLY

IT'S ABOUT REALIZING OUR DEEPER IDENTITY



BECOMING THE FLOW-THROUGHS WE ALREADY ARE

SKYPE EXERCISE



1. WHAT IS MY DE-FAULT RELATIONSHIP WITH PAIN?

· HEROIC

· WOUNDED HEALER

· FLOWING THROUGH

1. WHAT IS MY DE-FAULT RELATIONSHIP WITH PAIN?

2. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THESE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS?

1. WHAT IS MY DE-FAULT RELATIONSHIP WITH PAIN?

2. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THESE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS?

3. WHAT MIGHT/COULD/WOULD I LIKE TO DO DIFFERENTLY?

REMEMBER

- · THERE'S NO HIERARCHY OF VALUE HERE
- · EACH APPROACH HAS IT'S TIME AND PLACE
- · NOT ABOUT SELF-BLAME OR JUDGMENT
- I PERSONALLY OPERATE FROM ALL THREE IN ANY GIVEN DAY (PROBABLY MOSTLY HEROIC, SOMETIMES WOUNDED HEALER, AND OCCASIONALLY NOT ENOUGH FLOWING-THROUGH)

I FIND IT HELPFUL TO BE MINDFUL OF HOW I AM WITH MY PAIN
IN ANY GIVEN MOMENT SO I'M ABLE TO CONSCIOUSLY CHOOSE
THE MODE OF BEING WITH PAIN, MY OWN AND ANOTHER'S,
THAT I THINK/FEEL MIGHT BE THE RIGHT/MOST HELPFUL
RESPONSE IN & TO ANY GIVEN SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES



MONTHLY ASSIGNMENT

- PRACTICE NATURE-GRATITUDE AND NEST-IN-THE-STREAM
 MEDITATIONS (MP3)
- IF HELPFUL, CONTINUE TO KEEP A "GRATITUDE JOURNAL" –
 ENTERING AT LEAST ONE THING AT THE END OF EACH DAY
 THAT YOU FEEL GRATEFUL FOR
- CONTINUE TO VISIT YOUR SIT SPOT AND GETTING TO KNOW THE NEIGHBORS
- READ ABOUT, LISTEN TO, AND PRACTICE AT LEAST ONE (IN ADDITION TO SIT SPOT) OF JON YOUNG'S "CORE ROUTINE OF DEEP NATURE CONNECTION"

CORE ROUTINES OF DEEP NATURE CONNECTION

(JON YOUNG - "8 SHIELDS MODEL" OR "COYOTE MENTORING")

- · THINGS PEOPLE DO TO LEARN NATURE'S WAY
- · NOT "LESSONS"
- · NOT "KNOWLEDGE"
- · LEARNING HABITS
- · COME AS SECOND NATURE TO ALL HUMAN BEINGS
- WHAT NATIVE AMERICAN PEOPLES CALL "OUR ORIGINAL INSTRUCTIONS"

"HUMAN BEINGS EVOLVED WITH ORIGINAL INSTRUCTIONS DESIGNED FOR DYNAMIC AWARENESS OF NATURE.

IF WE CAN INSPIRE PRACTICE OF THESE CORE ROUTINES, REMEMBERING OUR ORIGINAL INSTRUCTIONS WILL HAPPEN ON IT'S OWN"

JON YOUNG

CORE ROUTINES OF DEEP NATURE CONNECTION

(JON YOUNG - "COYOTE'S GUIDE TO CONNECTING WITH NATURE")

- 1. SIT SPOT
- 2. EXPANDING SENSORY AWARENESS
- 3. QUESTIONING AND TRACKING
- 4. ANIMAL FORMS
- 5. WANDERING
- 6. MAPPING
- 7. EXPLORING FIELD GUIDES
- 8. JOURNALING
- 9. SURVIVAL LIVING
- 10. MIND'S EYE IMAGINING
- 11. THANKSGIVING
- 12. STORY OF THE DAY
- 13. LISTENING FOR BIRD LANGUAGE

MONTH 5: SELF-COMPASSION PRACTICE



RADHULE WEININGER PHD