

Minister's Letter

DO YOU REMEMBER PAPA JOHN?

In the 1980's, my husband and I had a restaurant on Smurr Street in Indio, CA and we met a man up in years who expressed qualities of friendship and helpfulness, though sometimes he was annoying, cantankerous and argumentative. He could argue any subject and he was always right, though where he got his information, one could only guess. His name was Papa John and, if he had a last name, I never heard it. He lived in the Hotel Indio in downtown Indio. His friends included the nearby shop owners, the bartenders, deliverymen, his fellow roomers from the hotel as well as some shady characters and street people. He was friend to all.

Many times he would come into the restaurant and get a cup of coffee or a Coke for one of his friends who was either too busy to get it themselves, or someone who felt embarrassed to come in. He took it upon himself to check all the doors at night for the businesses, making sure everything was locked up and secure. And sometimes, when we were working late in the restaurant, we would be jarred by the rattle of the door as he made his rounds. Then, came a time when the streets got a little rougher and he didn't get out much at night. As far as anyone knew, he had no family, and he had had various jobs in the past having to do with construction and agriculture.

One spring, we realized we had not seen Papa John out walking around for some time and we checked around and discovered he was in the hospital. He was in a state of confusion and wasn't eating well. The doctors were ready to put him in a rest home, but he wasn't having any of that.

When the people from the downtown area heard of his plight, they began to visit him, talk to him and coax him to eat. And soon his confusion cleared up, and he was eating better. Because they could see that people cared, the hospital cared more, too. Then one day, one of the people from downtown offered to take him to her home. He was so proud to be able to walk around a little and he felt happy to be in a family home. The recognition and the caring made him feel like a valued person and, in this feeling of clarity and contentment, he passed away.

We all have people in our lives for whom we can honor the qualities of friendship Papa John expressed and so many qualities of friendship, caring and compassion expressed by people like those who reached out to him during his last days, making it possible for him to leave with a clear mind and knowing he was cared for. He left with a sense of dignity and well-being given to him by the family who brought him to their home. He left with a sense of love and acceptance from all the people who knew him, the people who saw him every day as he walked with his cane up and down the streets of Indio.

We all know people like these, people who give the gifts of love, joy, peace, integrity and acceptance that become part of who we are. And, in that way, we honor forever those we have known.

Blessings of All Good.

Rev Lynn

*"A man is not where he lives, but where he loves."
~Latin Proverb*

Sequim
Center for Spiritual Living

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Cathy Hamborg

MUSIC

Al Harris, Pianist
Terry Barrett, Pianist and Vocalist
Mary Ellen Bartholomew, Vocalist

EDITOR

Kathy Purcell, R.Sc.P.

Sequim Center for
Spiritual Living Sunday Hybrid Services
10:00 a.m.

In person at Pioneer Memorial Park
387 W. Washington, Sequim

For information contact:
Rev. Lynn Osborne
community@cslsequim.org
or visit us at
www.cslsequim.org



*I set my bow in the clouds
and it shall be a sign
of a covenant between me
and the earth. – Genesis 9:13*

EDITOR'S ESPRIT

Dear Friends,

Blue and I were on our morning walk recently. It was early enough that the sun hadn't risen yet. The area of the trail we were traversing runs parallel with the highway. There are no lights on the pathway, but much of it is illuminated by the lights from across the road. I saw Blue sniffing in the grass along the side, and I saw my shadow on the trail. Then I noticed something else—another shadow further back. For a moment my heart started to race. Who is following me? I asked myself.

I kept walking—nervous, but hyper-vigilant. I turned slightly towards the direction of the second shadow—which appeared to be getting closer. My headlight provided more information. Suddenly I started to smile. The second shadow was my own, created by a second streetlight. There is a bit of a curve in the road where the rays of light overlap. I never noticed that in the past.

Still smiling as we continued our walk, my thoughts went to the shadow. We've heard that if we turn to the light the shadow disappears. The shadow represents our old beliefs that keep us from seeing the light of the One Source that shines through us. We lessen the impact of the old beliefs by muting and neutralizing them with our spiritual practices. We use positive affirmations, meditation, prayer Treatment and contemplation.

The second shadow I saw reminded me how sometimes—even when we think we've gotten rid of an old belief—a worn-out thought creeps in to question our resolve. Or maybe it is a different belief we didn't recognize until now. It was a thought buried deeper in our subconscious. Something triggered it to surface. We know we can re-solve things—by returning to the Light.

Dictionary.com shows the word *shadow* to mean: *(n.) a dark area or shape made by an object blocking rays of light.* Any thoughts we have that are unloving create a seemingly dim place, blocking the rays of light from being seen. They shape a negative experience for us—something that Spirit cannot even recognize—for it sees only Good.

When we meet a curve along our journey, we don't have to be led astray by fear or doubt as we once were. We can notice the shadow but then release it to the past. We don't have to live in the shadows.

It is February and the hours of light each day are increasing. Soon the lights along the highway will no longer be lit when Blue and I do our early walks. I reflect back on how my heart started to race that morning, and how my headlight helped me see what was really there. I see the headlight representing a higher level of consciousness—the Ah ha! Moment—the knowing of Truth. There is one Reality. The Universe is for our highest and best. It knows Good and only Good. Spirit lives Itself through us, as us. It illumines our path and guides us with Love to what we desire. Our hearts race when we discover our passion and live it.

Let us raise our consciousness and step out of the shadows. As we recognize and accept our Good, we lovingly express the One and radiate Love to our world. I know it is already so!

Light and Love,
Kathy Purcell, *Editor*

**“Inherent within your soul is a greater light,
recognize and radiate it.” ~Lailah Gifty Akita**

TREATMENT

UNCHAINED SPIRITUALITY

Taking a deep breath in, I feel centered and grounded in the truth of my being. I remember that God is all there is and I am completely connected to the Infinite Intelligence of Spirit. I know the Divine energy and essence of love fills and connects absolutely everything seen and unseen.

I embody unchained spirituality and know it is awakening to truth. It is discovering more and more of who I really am and releasing that which I am not. It is realizing that there is no separation. All beings are connected to me and I am connected to all beings. The spirit of all is the One, and the One breathes itself forth as the many.

Embodying Truth requires me to let go. I let go of trying to figure out the whys of physicality. I let go of trying to justify what is occurring or not occurring. I let go of inner turmoil of cause and effect. Releasing worry and concern, I embrace the truth. I know that the more I reside in love, peace, power, joy and beauty the more my consciousness expands and I feel my spirit soar on the wings of the Divine.

As I awaken to the truth of my being, I feel a shift occur within my heart revealing a space so tender and pure I am in tears. I embrace unchained spirituality as I become more aware of the depth and power of my love and the love that created me.

With this awareness comes gratitude. I am grateful to experience compassion and to know the truth and the depth of my soul as a being of love.

I am grateful to realize the power of compassion so strong it dissolves walls that have seemingly separated us from each other. It bridges the gaps segregating families, communities and nations. Compassion is the force that brings our hearts together and lets us know we are all created of love.

In gratitude I release this knowing that is closer than the air I breathe and deeper than the beating of my heart.

I allow it to be and so it is.

Rev. Julie Lobato

“Spiritual evolution should make the infinite not more distant, but more intimate.” ~Ernest Holmes

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

All Members and non-members are invited to our **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** on Sunday, **MARCH 29, 2026** following our morning Service. In addition to the required Center’s business reports, we will hold an election for the eighth Board member. There will be music and food will be provided. We will be recognizing those who have served our Center. We hope you will join us to celebrate the accomplishments of the past year and welcome the abundance around us with open arms and open hearts.



APPRECIATION

VOLUNTEERS:

Terry Barrett
 Mary Ellen Bartholomew
 Barb Bolles
 Cathy Hamborg
 Sharon Hamson
 Rev. Victoria Kelley
 Jean Kipper
 Rev. Michael Laakso
 Rev. Julie Lobato
 Alice McCracken
 Kathy Purcell
 Jerry Rhodes
 Glenda Totten-Hatch
 Pam Wilson

BOOK REPORTS:

Glenda Totten-Hatch

WORKSHOPS:

Terry Barrett
 Rev. Michael Laakso
 Rev. Lynn Osborne

SPEAKERS:

Terry Barrett
 Rev. Victoria Kelley
 Rev. Michael Laakso
 Rev. Julie Lobato
 Rev. Lynn Osborne
 Kathy Purcell
 Glenda Totten-Hatch

MUSIC:

Terry Barrett
 Mary Ellen Bartholomew
 Al Harris
 Jean Kipper

FLOWERS:

Terry Barrett
 Rev. Victoria Kelley

ZOOM HOSTING:

Terry Barrett
 Mary Ellen Bartholomew
 Rev. Michael Laakso
 Kathy Purcell

HYBRID SERVICE TEAM:

Terry Barrett
 Mary Ellen Bartholomew
 Cathy Hamborg
 Sharon Hamson
 Jerry Rhodes
 Amberwight Schaper

USHERS:

Barb Bolles
 Glenda Totten-Hatch
 Pam Wilson

PROGRAMS / WEBSITE / NEWSLETTER:

Kathy Purcell

“Every man feels instinctively that all the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action.” ~*Author Unknown*

GRATITUDE FOR SUNDAY TALKS

Our Center thanks
 Terry Barrett R.Sc.P., Rev. Michael Laakso,
 Rev. Julie Lobato, Glenda Totten-Hatch. R.Sc.P.,
 and Kathy Purcell, R.Sc.P.
 for doing talks this quarter.

SPECIAL THANKS

For many years **Glenda Totten-Hatch and Barb Bolles** have headed up the Hospitality Committee. They have decided to step back from this and allow some other members of the congregation to step into that role. We are ever-grateful to both of them for the time and caring they have put into making our Service inviting to all who attend.

CELEBRATE LIFE!



February

3 Nancy Brody
 7 Meg Kagle
 12 Liz Lohmann
 14 Joanne Johnson
 17 Lou Foldoe
 18 Rev. Julie Lobato
 23 Al Harris

March

3 Cathy Hathaway
 3 Kira Kersting
 8 Alethea Mari
 17 Susan Pennington
 18 Lynda Marinics
 20 Robert (Spider) Medsker
 22 Pam Bedford
 22 Roger Maes
 24 Connie Jenkins
 29 Tom Cunningham
 30 Stephen Landess

April

1 Steve Curtis
 3 Patrick Michael Jones
 10 Isabel Paniagua-Stevens
 12 Jan Marshall
 16 Dinah Day
 20 Rebecca Hall
 29 Barbara Baker

MISSION STATEMENT

*To Serve and Support each other
in Living from Spirit.*



VISION STATEMENT

*We are a growing spiritual community
expressing Love and Oneness with all.*

SOM CLASS—STARTING AGAIN SOON

COURSE IN MIRACLES

Meets Thursdays from 2:00 pm–3:30 pm
Rhonda Coats home*
51 W. Rue Lavande Lane, Sequim
Facilitated by: Rev. Michael Laakso
Love Offering

Sequim Center for Spiritual Living
is “Open at the Top.”
We welcome members of the
community to join us.
For membership information,
please contact Rev. Lynn at 681-0177

*Rhonda Coats home located at the south end of Sequim Avenue. Warning: be cautious when traveling past the restaurant Nourish. Please park along the street, not blocking our driveway and also allowing ample parking for contractors’ vehicles working on the new construction directly across the street.



INCOME & EXPENSE REPORT

	<u>NOV 25</u>	<u>DEC 25</u>
Income	\$4,396	\$4,485
Expenses	\$4,196	\$3,864
Income minus Expenses	\$200	\$621
Attendance	146	178

HYBRID SUNDAY SERVICES

	<u>NOV25</u>	<u>DEC 25</u>
Attendance	ZOOM = 27 In Person = 119 Total = 146	ZOOM = 26 In Person = 152 Total = 178



FUNDRAISER for Sequim Center for Spiritual Living (SCSL)

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Anybody who gives Walter Clark a real estate lead that results in a closing, 10% will come back to our Center—which is anywhere from \$5 to \$1,000. Contact Walter and he’ll do the rest.

WHAT'S IN A WORD?

Sometimes we read or hear a word or phrase, and something quite different than the typical meaning comes to mind. This column is a place to share what's in a word for you. Below are three examples. If you have any meaningful words you would like to share, we welcome you to submit them to Kathy Purcell.

STARTLE / START ALL –We **STARTLE** the ego when we **START ALL** our thoughts from Truth.

ADJUST / ADD JUST –What we desire is already ours. We **ADJUST** what shows up in our experience when we **ADD JUST** thoughts of what we desire.

REPAIR / RE-PAIR – When we want to **REPAIR** what we've deemed wrong in our life, we merely need to **RE-PAIR** our thoughts with Truth.

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“We all flow from one fountain; - *Soul*. All are expressions of one love. God does not appear, and flow out, only from narrow chinks and round bored wells here and there in favored races and places, but He flows in grand undivided currents, shoreless and boundless over creeds and forms and all kinds of civilizations and peoples and beasts, saturating all and fountainizing all.” ~*John Muir*



DELIVERING THE GIFTS

Once again our SCSL family adopted a family for Christmas through Healthy Families of Clallam County. Members of our congregation purchased gifts for the mother and her children. These were collected and delivered in mid-December.

Rev. Lynn and Terry Barrett got to meet the family and experience some of the joy our gifts brought to this family. Their Joy became our Joy! It must be so because we are all One.

Rev. Lynn and Terry Barrett deliver a car full of gifts to the family we adopted for Christmas.

“Define yourself radically as one beloved by God. This is the true self. Every other is illusion.” ~*Brennan Manning*

SELF-LOVE FOR VALENTINE'S DAY

Valentine's Day is here but this year I invite you to start by celebrating self-love before you shower your loved one with gifts of Love. We've been told that it's selfish to love oneself, but I think it's important to take another look. You could call self-love spiritual practice. It is more than self-care as it becomes an act of spiritual alignment. If we are to be present to others in this world, we need to remember our inherent worth and divine nature. Ask yourself: What becomes possible when we truly love ourselves?



Self-Love from the inner world is “For Me.” The components that make up self-love are acceptance, compassion, and honesty. From here we are able to build inner peace and emotional resilience. Through spiritual practice that knows and respects the good that we each are, we are encouraged to set healthier boundaries for ourselves. Our choices reflect the awareness that we develop through genuine caring for ourselves.

Self-Love in relationship is “For the Community.” Love for the Self changes how we show up with others. We listen more deeply. From self-criticism to empathy and compassion, we respond instead of reacting, and celebrate others without comparison.

As we Love ourselves, we create a foundation for authentic connection and unity, and community serves to mirror our inner state.

Self-Love as the expanding impact is “Beyond Us.” When we love ourselves, a ripple extends into the world. Embodied self-love inspires service without burnout and models wholeness and worth for others. It contributes to collective healing and consciousness. Love, expressed through action, presence, and intention shows up as personal transformation. Our personal transformation is global transformation.

At a time like this, expanding our awareness through the daily practice of self-love is so very important. We continue to understand that self-love is not selfish. It is a sacred practice through rest, kind self-talk, and forgiveness supported by meditation, prayer, and time in nature. As we love ourselves, we inspire and invite love of self and each other everywhere.

Happy Valentine's Day!
Terry Barrett, R.Sc.P.

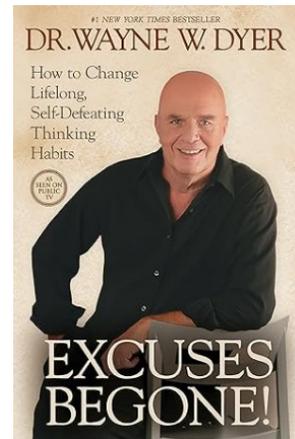
**“Sometimes we fight who we are, struggling against ourselves and our natures.
But we must learn to accept who we are and appreciate who we become.
We must love ourselves for what and who we are, and believe in our talents.”
~Harley King**

HAPPY BOOKER

Excuses Begone

By Wayne W. Dyer

The book I have chosen to write about is another Wayne Dyer gem called EXCUSES BEGONE. I enjoyed the sharp wit and deep wisdom Mr. Dyer brings to his writing. This book addresses a subject that is so ingrained in the human psyche that most people hardly notice how much and how often excuses are used to negotiate their way through life. One example presented was the excuse that old habits die hard, suggesting that changing how we do something is almost impossible. This assumes that life-long ways of habitual thinking cannot be changed despite the desire to do so. And so, too often, a person carries on with a life that is unsatisfying.



In the opening chapter, two big excuses that everyone uses are identified.

The first is: I can 't really help the way I am, after all, people can 't change their DNA. My genetic makeup is the culprit. The second big excuse is rooted in your early history and family conditioning. This impacts people in so many ways that people likely feel it 's impossible to be free of that aspect of their lives. The big take-away the author makes about these two excuses is that they are not set in stone and can be changed. The reasons for why and how these seemingly impossible mind sets can be changed are laid out in the rest of the book.

Mr. Dyer relies on modern science, his own experiences with excuses, and the wisdom of the sages as the backbone of his approach to changing the paradigm of the excuse laden mind set. First the reasons why this change appears impossible are presented. One of the major obstacles to changing is that the expectations and judgments of others can sabotage any effort that people make to change. After exploring why changing old thinking habits can be difficult, the author presents a new way of looking at changing the old thinking habits.

This book presents an interesting, insightful and useful take on improving life through changing how a person utilizes excuses. This book is a how to map that helps you to change old habitual thinking patterns and change your life. Sounds familiar and is a refreshing approach that supports the SOM principles our philosophy is based on.

~Glenda Totten-Hatch

“The value of a principle is the number of things it will explain.” ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORT

by Cathy Hamborg
Board Secretary



In the spirit of openness and unity, I want to share with you the key discussions and decisions from our recent Board meetings. November, December and March are the busiest months of the year at the Center. Since the last Board of Directors' Report in November, the Board has mostly concentrated on the events at the Center.

On November 23, we held our annual Thanksgiving Potluck at the Suncrest Apartments. The event had a large turnout, resulting in an abundance of food. We have hosted this potluck at the Suncrest Apartments for many years; however, it is uncertain whether we will be able to continue using this location in the future. We will not know for sure until the planning for this year's event begins. This may become an issue for the Board to discuss at that time.

One of the most popular events planned by the Board is the Healthy Families Gift Drive. December's drive was no exception, and the generosity of this congregation was truly outstanding. Through the combined efforts of purchasing and wrapping gifts from the family's wish list, Mom and her three boys experienced a truly remarkable Christmas.

The Board then turned its attention to the Candlelight Service on December 18. A committee of Board members was formed, and through careful planning, the event became a truly fantastic evening. Along with beautiful music from a variety of musicians, everyone joined together in singing beloved Christmas carols. The Clubhouse was transformed into a candlelit dream—it was absolutely stunning. Seven readers lit their candles as they read the candle attributes, adding a meaningful and touching element to the service. It was, by far, a wonderful event, and I can't wait for this year's celebration.

As noted in a prior report, there are two Sundays this year when the Garden Clubhouse is unavailable for our Sunday Service: March 8 and April 26. The Board's options for those dates are to hold the service at Sequim Valley Chapel, meet at the new Sequim Library, or gather via Zoom. I have been unable to connect with the Chapel, so while I do not have a definitive "no," I also do not have a "yes." The library does not appear likely to open before the dates we need. As a result, we may need to hold these services on Zoom. Everyone will be notified as we get closer to the dates.

March is traditionally the month of our Annual Congregational Meeting, and we are pleased to announce that it will be held on Sunday, March 29, at the Garden Clubhouse, following the Sunday Service. While we are still finalizing the program, it promises to be both informative and enjoyable. In addition to the required Center's business reports, we will hold an election for the eighth Board member, and there will be music, food, and a few surprises yet to be announced. One thing we know for certain—it will be a wonderful experience. Please be sure to mark your calendars and plan to join us on March 29 after the service at the Garden Clubhouse.

*"Love is a symbol of eternity. It wipes out all sense of time, destroying all memory of a beginning and all fear of an end."
~Author Unknown*

CELEBRATING BIRTH DAYS



In our last newsletter there was a photo of Rev. Lynn at Las Palomas Restaurant sitting at a table full of friends celebrating her 90th birthday. Pam Wilson had written an article to go with it which included a lovely poem. That got missed. Each day brings us new births in consciousness, so celebrating birth days is timeless. Below are the article and poem. ~kp

It's Monday, September 8, 2025-a day of festivity and gratitude! Reverend Lynn is now 90 Years young! She arrives at Las Palomas Restaurant to happily discover that a large and excited group of CSL members are there to assist with the celebration.

Lynn sits at the head of an extremely long table, wearing a huge, decorative sombrero. She listens, laughs and participates in the sharing of memories. We all muse about her spryness, courage and attitude concerning her recent injury, expressing gratitude for her progress on the healing path!

Orders are delivered, gifts are opened, Terry presents a huge birthday cake. We all break out in song. The water glasses clink as Pam reads her "Journeying with Lynn" birthday "toast":

Reverend Lynn, our mentor, has much to share
Wherever she is, there is love in the air
At ninety, she is vital and fit
We're truly amazed, we choose to admit
Healing, guidance, transformation are Lynn's "M O" (mode of operation)
A path of wholeness, it's All Systems Go!
With joy and gratitude, we're all One by Design
And are celebrating Lynn, one moment at a time.

With that, we all continue to send prayers of gratitude and requests for healing for Lynn.
~Pam Wilson

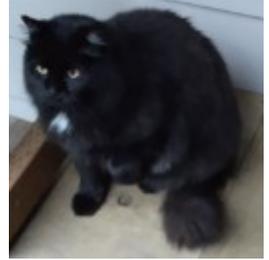


Candlelighting Service



TALES OF STU, THE CAT

It's been a little over two years since Stu showed up for the first time at our house. His move-in date—well, he actually is an outside cat—was around April 19, 2024. I guess he waited until after Tax Day. He still is not using his house—except the top; he will sit, lay and sometimes sleep on top of his house.



In my last Stu update I mentioned how I was bringing out a towel that I would sit on and stretch out my legs. Stu would walk up between them and lay down. Sometimes he would curl up and go to sleep.

Since then, we've gotten two stools—one for me and one for Stu. Mine has a wooden frame with a little padding on top and a removable/washable cover. It is 15" long and 11.4" high. Stu's stool is plastic, 12.5" wide and 9" high. I fold a hand towel in half and put it on the top to give it some cushion for him.

I place my stool a few inches from the wall; it faces Stu's water and food bowls which are about three feet away. I sit on the stool and put Stu's stool in front of me. I straddle his stool, my legs folded at the knees. I take an old bath towel out with me and lay it over my lap and down my legs; that is very useful on the cold mornings and chilly evenings. Because Stu's stool is slightly narrower and shorter than mine, it puts him in a perfect position. My legs are a windbreaker for him.

When I first take out his food in the morning and evening, I take out a small amount of chicken; an appetizer you might say. When Stu shows up on the ramp the first thing he does is put his front paws on his stool and rub his head on the back of my hands; all the while he is purring. Then I bring the chicken out of my pocket. I break off little pieces, and he takes each one from my fingers. One morning he put his paw up on my wrist; I guess I wasn't breaking off the pieces fast enough. Or maybe he was offering to help me. It made me smile.

When we first started using the stools, Stu would sometimes come up on his stool, lay down and stretch his neck to put his head near my knee. One day in December, he was sitting on his stool, and he put his paw on my leg. At first I didn't know what he wanted. Then it occurred to me that he was asking me to lower my legs, so that is what I did. He then laid down and put his head easily near my knee. Another time when he put his paw on my leg and I lowered it, he started kneading dough at the top part of my leg; all the while he was purring. He has fallen asleep on his stool, with his head on my knee. So far, no snoring.

Sometimes he will put his front paws on his stool and stretch his neck, touching his face to mine; all the while he is purring. I tell him how beautiful he is, that I love him and I thank him for choosing to spend some of his life with me. Often, he will then turn around and go eat some food. Is it a coincidence? It has been repeatable.

I don't know a lot about cats, but I am learning a lot from this one. I continue to be grateful for Stu's presence in my life.

~Kathy Purcell

"Love doesn't just sit there, like a stone; it has to be made, like bread, remade all the time, made new." ~Ursula K. LeGuin

BASIC SOM QUESTIONS By Rev. Michael Laakso

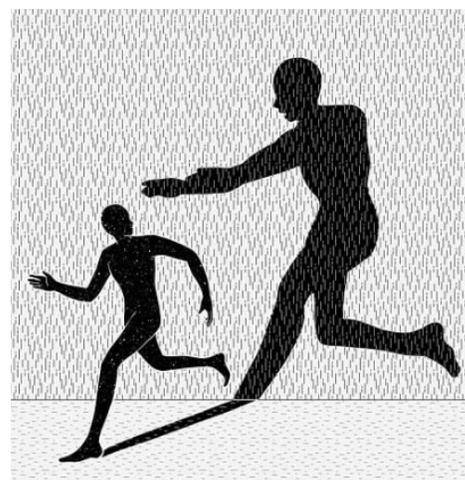
We have an ongoing column which is designed to answer some basic Science of Mind questions. We trust this will give you new insights, allowing you to better understand SOM principles.

What is Infinity? Part Fifty-Two

The A Course in Miracles Workbook has been a daily practice I have done for many years now. Some lessons seriously challenge resistance in my subconscious mind while others feel lackluster and others open new vistas of spiritual self-understanding. Usually by the end of the year most lessons are simply inspirational.

I have started another year working the Workbook and have been seriously whipsawed emotionally. This is not due to the Course but to my deep-seated fear and resistance to accepting the Truth in the daily idea. Where does this panic come from? What is its resolution?

First of all, this is called “shadow work.” The Course is helping me to touch and deal with Truths about my Self I have dis-owned at some time in my spiritual journey. Our dis-owned mental content Carl Jung called our Shadow. This dis-owned thought content does not evaporate away. It lies hidden and suppressed in our subconscious mind, creating our experience, hence the need to work through that material if we want a different life experience. He also noted that our Shadow is 90% gold. In it is every spiritual Truth the Infinite has shared with us as our Identity that we somehow became afraid of and so disclaimed and ran away from. The experiences that prompted that reaction will be very personal and likely traumatic at the time, and it will hold a strong and deep charge of fear. This fear and other fear-based emotions (rage, disgust, hatred, and many others) fuel the internal resistance to revisit that abandoned Truth and reassess our self-judgment. Why? We will have to brave feeling that powerful emotion once again that has been unconsciously “protecting” us from revisiting the triggering experience.



This is the “Hero’s Journey” and why we call it heroic. In ancient cultures, the intense fear-based feelings are the Temple Guardians; the Lions, the Fu dogs, the Dragons we must pass on our way to and through the Temple doors. Inside is the Sacred, the Holy, the Valuable, the Source. We are deferred from entering until we have faced down these imaginary Challengers. Yes, courage is required, and resolution and strength. All these and every other needed Quality is within us always, for the “Temple” is our innermost mind. So an aspect of this journey is locating what we need at the time, claiming (re-owning) it, and using that inner Resource to face down what has so frightened us. This cannot be forced. Part of the Journey is finding our readiness to take it on. Indeed, this is a very necessary part.

The moment will come when we know we are ready, when we see our choice now is continue to struggle and suffer and fail or find a way out. In 12-step Programs this moment is called “finding our bottom.” It is when we spontaneously know we cannot continue living, thinking, feeling and running away as we have been. This “running” is internal and it is always from those Temple Guardians, those remembered and pushed away feelings. Usually chaotic behavior comes with this running: often some sort of addiction that makes our life seriously unmanageable and affects the lives of those around us.

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As anyone in 12-step Recovery will observe, the way can be long. Setbacks will likely happen. It can feel like two steps forward, one step back. The point is the overall movement toward sanity, self-understanding, forgiveness and peace of mind. Many people stay in Recovery through the rest of their time here. Our journey of re-owning the spiritual Truths of our Identity may take several lifetimes. Fortunately, we have all the time in the universe. Patience will always be necessary in this shadow work process. We are on Spirit's timing and not ego's. Ego is the hurrier, not God. Spirit knows the inner workings of the path we have taken up and knows when we are truly ready to take on another challenge. Sticking with our Higher Power we will move through this journey supported and prepared, though we likely will not always feel that way. Learning trust in our Source is another essential aspect of this work.

This is rather a long answer to where does the panic come from and what is its resolution? I see that as due to the complexifying we souls get into. After all, we are eternal beings. We have been at this business of experimenting for many lifetimes. For me, what is important is to keep at it once I am on my way. Persistence is key. Rest times will come spontaneously. I call them "consolidation periods." Something is quietly going on internally; an inner reordering, an edification, a settling into a new pattern of thinking and understanding.



My lesson for today (2/7) is "There is nothing my holiness cannot do." We will recognize this as a basic Science of Mind teaching. The Workbook has been teaching lessons on "my holiness" all this week, seeking to support us getting used to the earlier idea that "my mind is part of God's; I am very holy." Here is a very basic disowning many of us have taken on. Courageously, the Course introduces this thought in the second month. (I start on day-one of the new year so the lessons are numbered with the days of the year.)

Why would the idea of "my holiness" challenge so many of us? If my mind is a part of God's, I would have to share in God's holiness. In some families or even cultures we see a long time denial that there could be anything of God in us; we hear "don't be so conceited!" When Hallaj, a Twelfth Century Sufi uttered the phrase, "I am Truth!" in Baghdad one day, the mob was instantly so incensed they hustled him off to a gallows and hung him. As a Sufi, he studied the mysteries and his spiritual practices were geared to raise in him his natural awareness of his Unity with God. One of these practices is speaking the ninety-nine Names of Allah (found in the Quran) in the form of "I am" and say that Name. An example is "Ahn Noor (I am Light), Yah Fatah (I am Openness), Yah Haqq (I am Truth)," Hallaj spoke those words in a spiritual ecstasy. Rumi wrote poetry about him falling through the hole and received by his Source: Love Itself. (Sufis celebrate not the birthday of their valued teachers but the day they left the earth plane, considering it their moment of complete Unity with the Divine, the goal in which all of us share.)

In my twenties, going to Portland Community College, I joined for a time a Bible study group of the book of Mark moderated by a young Christian man. At one point after a few meetings I attended, something I said set him off. He started ranting that I am not God, shaming me for even thinking that. I do not remember what I said, but I certainly did not make that claim. I have always had trouble with Literalist thinking, so I sadly withdrew from that group. I do love Bible study. In a way this shows the race thought regarding our relationship with Spirit. Genesis' opening words recount that on the sixth day we were created in the image and likeness of That Which has no image and no likeness. Somehow I've never heard that mentioned in a mainline Christian church service.

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Such experiences indicate no surprise that this fear is deeply embedded in the group mind of humankind. Have we not all denied our Origin, or we would certainly be somewhere else? See how we support each other to not question that unfortunate decision. That inner event must have been a shattering trauma for each one of us and is still deeply repressed. Plenty of readiness is required to deal with a fear with so much charge on it. Again, we have all the time in the universe and God is infinitely patient. And yet the moment will inevitably come when we are ready to proceed. The call to Joy is unceasing, since our Source desires our conscious companionship. We all feel the pull.



To return to the lesson for today, My holiness is nothing I made up. It is the Presence of my Creator deeply here in the mind that I am. Being Infinite there is nowhere God isn't, including in my mind. As our teaching observes, God is that Infinite Mind and we are all making use of that Resource. We cannot help it. To think or feel or have awareness, we are using that Mind that called us into being. My holiness is the evidence of divinity accompanying me in every moment.

That there is nothing that my holiness cannot do, says I am not the accomplisher. Holiness is. This is a run around the ego. Jesus expressed it as, "Not I (ego) but the Power Within (Spirit) does the work." In the Science of Mind teaching, we concede that not I but the Law makes the demonstration. This release from "having to make it happen" is so important. It keeps ego out of the process. Ego is the false idea of myself. Since like produces like, falsehood can only replicate falsehood. If I use ego to force a demonstration how can that ultimately benefit me? Falsehood cannot work in a Truth-based system. Unintended consequences always go with ego's control. It is in basic contradiction to all that Spirit is, and Spirit is our only Healer.

So what a gift to see that it is my holiness that does the accomplishing. Pressure is released. Responsibility for results is laid aside. The Law will demonstrate in the perfect way and in the perfect timing. But more than this, there is no accomplishment my holiness cannot do. Whatever the occasion, my holiness can rise to do it. Is some condition needing healing, repair, shifting or a new approach? My holiness is up for it. In the practice, we state:

"In the situation involving _____ in which I see myself, there is nothing my holiness cannot do."

Or:

"In the situation involving _____ in which _____ sees themselves, there is nothing my holiness cannot do."

Not only am I free from all obligation to "fix" something I have partial understanding of at best, my holiness has all the Intelligence, all the Awareness, all the Love and all the Power to perfectly move the situation into alignment with the Highest and Best. Holiness knows both what needs doing and how to do it. It also desires to love the person or persons involved, so all will unfold in everyone's best interest.

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"Nothing contributes so much to tranquilize the mind as a steady purpose—a point on which the soul may fix its intellectual eye. ~Mary Shelly

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Furthermore, nothing that comes to me is beyond the scope of my holiness to adequately address. How could Infinite Mind fail me – or fail Itself for that matter? Aware of every nuance of every condition and its causation, I could not be in better hands. As the practice indicates, my issues are not the only ones susceptible to my holiness. Everything for anyone is up for reassessment and re-harmonization. Because my holiness is a direct line to God's infinite Beingness, nothing is outside the scope of Its Love and Intelligence. Jesus' ministry directly demonstrates this Truth.



Another point in my processing this practice: I have always had an issue with power in this lifetime. I do not know the particulars, but it seems I have the belief that asserting power is an ego activity, so I choose to be the victim rather than do the victimizing. Power scares me. I don't know why. I expect this is related to some traumatic experience previous to this time on the earth plane.

That it is my holiness that does the accomplishing indicates to my mind that I am not called to wield the Power. That is a great relief to me. For this means ego is left out of the picture and Power is in the Hands of Spirit, the All Intelligent.

This idea is quietly clearing up this snag about not trusting myself to wisely make use of power. I as ego is not involved, only God is and I can and do trust Spirit, thanks in part to simple life experience. As it is said in the 12-step Program: "Progress makes better."

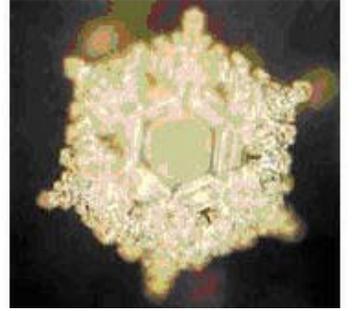
Before closing I want to observe that the Sufi program of metaphysical/mystical study and practice is very similar to Science of Mind. There are cultural differences, of course, but the goal and the exercises are so alike. Other spiritual traditions have centered on similar programs, like A Course in Miracles, for instance. Practicers are shifting the 'race consciousness' and our world is demonstrating their uplift. "Love pushes up everything unlike Itself," rebirthers used to say. We see this on the news every day. No one has died, for we are spirit, not a body. Bodies are a vehicle enabling spirit (us) to contribute here. Major shadow work is being done right now. A cleansing is taking place that must precede the New Order.

In the 1980's, Ilya Prigogine was given a Nobel prize for his research with open systems. He was using chemical reactions in Petri dishes. He wanted to see how open systems react to an increase of energy into that system. (Our body is an open system, rather than a closed system. It actively exchanges matter and energy with its environment.) What he demonstrated was as energy increased, the system went first through a chaotic phase, not able to organize this input. As the energy increased, so did the chaos until a tipping point was reached. Suddenly that system "knew how to organize itself" and the chemical reaction became a beautiful spiral around the dish. This is true of all open systems; our own body and consciousness as well as social and cultural systems – all open systems. We are currently in the chaotic phase. The shift is sudden and the beauty is surprising when the tipping point is reached. In the meantime, we watch, stay out of fear as much as possible, and find a strategy that keeps us calm. I like to pray our positive words: "Only Good is coming of this. No harm is being done. All is in Divine Right Order. I may not see it yet, but the Divine I trust is managing it all for the better. And so it is."



“When everything is moving and shifting, the only way to counteract chaos is stillness. When things feel extraordinary, strive for ordinary. When the surface is wavy, dive deeper for quieter waters.” ~Kristin Armstrong

Water exposed to
Gratitude & Love



Remember the prayer for water

TO: A Very Valuable, Worthwhile Person

Sequim Center for Spiritual Living
Rev. Lynn Osborne
PO Box 2708
Sequim, WA 98382



Please join us at
Sequim Center for Spiritual Living
Sunday Service
10:00 a.m.

