



Sacred Circle
PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

Everyone Counts
Fall 2009

Weekly Titles

The Power of One
Falling into Grace
Being the Difference
Everyone Counts

Created by

The Power of One - Jackie Mayo, RScP
Falling into Grace - Rev. Barbara Novak
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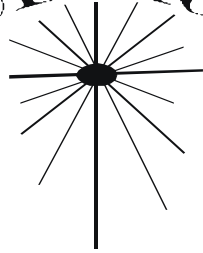
Everyone Counts — Fall 2009 Sacred Circle

Week 1:	Power of One
Week 2:	Falling Into Grace
Week 3:	Being the Difference
Week 4:	Everyone Counts

Participant Guidelines

- Confidentiality** I agree to keep what is shared in this group confidential, because it is sacred (not secretive).
- Sharing** I agree to share my insights on spiritual growth rather than lengthy stories of the process of getting there.
- Respect** I agree to treat fellow participants with the same respect I expect from others.
- Punctuality** I agree to be conscientious about time. Arriving on time makes it a better experience for all concerned.
- Listening** I agree that listening is an important part of personal growth and makes for an intimate exchange. I agree to listen without interruptions to the participant sharing.
- Commitment** I agree to take seriously my participation in this group experience. I agree to engage in the exercises, homework and group sharing.
- Focus** I agree to stay focused on the topic presented each meeting. I agree to be concise in my sharing so others have a chance to share as well.

Sacred Circles



Fall 2009

Everyone Counts

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Week 1

November 1 - 8

“The Power of One”

By Jackie Mayo , RScP

Overview

There is a power for good in the universe, available to everyone, and you can use it.

Ernest Holmes

We begin this Sacred Circle - Everyone Counts with a Mindful Breathing Exercise with the intention to relax and breath into the power of one that you are. The breath is a powerful tool to use to bring yourself into relaxation, present time, and connection to all that is. Then this week we together we take a look at Power. How is your relationship with Power and all that it has to offer in life.

Meditation

Week 1—The Power of One

MINDFUL BREATHING MEDITATION

Make yourself comfortable. Allow your body to relax. Be aware of the floor if you are lying down, or the chair on which you are sitting. Become aware of your breathing, in and out. Be aware of your abdomen rising and falling as you breathe in and out...rising...falling...rising...(pause)...rising...falling.

Breathing in breathing out...your whole body feels light...like a water lily floating on the water...you have nowhere to go...nothing to do...you are as free as the cloud floating in the sky.

Breathing in, bring your awareness to your eyes. Breathing out, allow your eyes to relax. Allow your eyes to sink back into your head...Let go of any tension in all the tiny muscles around your eyes. ...The eyes allow us to see through both inner and outer vision....Now, allow your eyes to rest....Send love and gratitude to your eyes.

Breathing in, bring your awareness to your mouth. Breathing out, allow your mouth to relax. Release the tension around your mouth...your lips are the petals of a flower...Let a gentle smile bloom on your lips. Smiling releases the tension in the hundreds of muscles in your face. Feel tension release in your cheeks...your jaw...your throat.

Breathing in, bring your awareness to your shoulders. Breathing out, allow your shoulders to relax. Let them sink into the floor...Notice if you are carrying tension in the shoulder area...Now, let them relax as you bring attention to caring for your shoulders... Let all the accumulated tension flow into the floor. Breathing in, become aware of your arms. Breathing out, relax your arms. Let your arms drop...your upper arms...your elbows...your lower arms, your wrists, hands, finger, all the tiny muscles. Move your fingers a little if you need to and help the muscles relax.

Breathing in, bring your awareness to your heart. Breathing out, allow your heart to relax. Notice how you pay attention to your heart. Do you recognize the importance of it in your life? Are you caring for it through making good choices or have you neglected your heart for a long time by the way you work, eat, or deal with anxiety and stress. Your heart beats for you day and night. Embrace your heart with mindfulness and tenderness, reconciling with and taking care of your heart.

Breathing in, bring your awareness to your legs. Breathing out, allow your legs to relax. Release all the tension in your legs...your thighs...your knees...your calves...your ankles...your feet...your toes...all the tiny muscles in your toes...You may want to move your toes a little to help them relax...Send your love and care to your toes.

Now simply sit and breath, breath in and out relaxing...Breath, In, Out.....Breath, Deep, Slow.....Breath, Calm, Ease.....Breath, Smile, Release.....Breath, Present Moment, Wonderful Moment.....
Feeling relaxed, breath into the One..... into peace.....into Love.....into Joy.....into Presence.....
(pause)

Now, bring your awareness back to your physical breath...to your abdomen rising and falling. Following your breathing...become aware of your arms and legs feeling the chair beneath you supporting you...move and stretch your arms and legs a little, become aware of your hands and feet...wiggle your fingers and your toes...become aware of your neck and shoulders...roll them, and your eyes...blink. When you feel ready open your eyes and take in the room and the people sitting in circle...smile...be here now.

Inspirational Quotes

Week 1—The Power of One

The power of one man or one woman doing the thing for the right reason and at the right time, is the greatest influence in our society.

~ Jack Kemp ~

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has.

~ Margaret Mead ~

Our ultimate freedom is the right and power to decide how anybody or anything outside ourselves will affect us.

~ Stephen Covey ~

The greatest revolution of our generation is the discovery that human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds can change the outer aspects of their lives.

~ William James ~

When we align our thoughts, emotions, and actions with the highest part of ourselves, we are filled with enthusiasm, purpose, and meaning. When the personality comes fully to serve the energy of its soul, that is authentic empowerment.

~ Gary Zukav ~

There is no real power without spiritual power. A power that comes from the core of who you are and reflects all that you were meant to be. A power that's connected to the source of things. When you see this kind of power shining through someone in all its truth and certainty, it's irresistible, inspiring, elevating....

~ Oprah Winfrey ~

We all have the power to speak up---and out. A voice can get a party started, shout down opponents, or lead a country.

~ Anna Deavere Smith ~

THE WORD HAS POWER ONLY AS IT IS ONE WITH POWER. When our word is spoken in this consciousness of life, power and action, then our word IS life, power and action.

~ Ernest Holmes ~

A river of Truth ends at a dam of bias---Truth floods and moves on.

~ Gloria Steinem ~

Peace is the power at the heart of God. It is through the revelation of the self, to the self, that one understands life; that he approaches the power which is at the heart of God.

~ Ernest Holmes ~

Inspirational Reading

Week 1—The Power of One

The Seat of the Soul

~ Gary Zukav ~

What is the nature of power? What does it mean to be a truly powerful human being?

Power is not the ability to exert your will upon another person. There is no inner security in that kind of power. That is an attribute of time, and as time changes, that changes too. Do you have a strong body that others cannot challenge? That will change. What will you do then? Do you have a physical beauty that can be used to influence others? That will change. What will you do then? Do you have a cleverness that maneuvers others? What happens when you are too tired to use it, or you miss the opportunity?

If you are not at home in the world, you live in the fear of one who can never truly relax and enjoy Life. Is this power? There is no power in fear, or in any of the activities that are generated by fear. There is no power in a thought form of fear, even if it is supported by armies. The armies of Rome disappeared more than a millennia ago, but the force of the life of a single human that Roman soldiers put to death continues to shape the development of our species. Who had the power?

You are only as powerful as that for which you stand. Do you stand for more money in the bank and a bigger house? Do you stand for an attractive mate? Do you stand for imposing your way of thinking on others? These are the stands of the personality seeking to satisfy its wants. Do you stand for perfection, for the beauty and compassion of each soul? Do you stand for the power of love and the clarity of wisdom? Do you stand for forgiveness and humbleness? These are the stands of the personality that has aligned itself with its soul. This is the position of a truly powerful personality.

Power is energy that is formed by the intentions of the soul. It is Light shaped by the intentions of love and compassion guided by wisdom. It is energy that is focused and directed toward the fulfillment of the tasks of the soul upon the Earth, and the development of the personality as a physical instrument of the soul that is appropriate to those tasks. It is the force that shapes the illusion into the images of the souls that are creating it, and not those of their personalities.

By remaining in your power you do not become a static energy system, one that hoards energy to itself. You become a stable energy system, capable of conscious acts of focus and attentions. You become a magnet for those who are illumined and those who want to be. At issue is the manner in which energy flows from you. When energy leaves you in any way except in strength and trust it cannot bring back to you anything but pain and discomfort. An authentically empowered human being, therefore, is a human being that does not release its energy except in love and trust.

Humbleness, forgiveness, clarity and love are the dynamics of freedom. They are the foundations of authentic power.

Experiential Exercise

Week 1—The Power of One

Questions regarding Power

1. I feel true power when.....
2. The most powerful person I have ever met was.....
3. Too often people confuse power and.....
4. I feel most powerful when.....
5. When I need a power boost.....

Spiritual Practice

Week 1—The Power of One

Read this daily. Contemplate.
If you choose, commit it to memory.

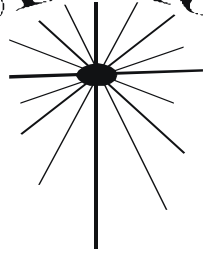
*In joy I go within to meet this Life.
I expect It to respond knowing It is going to.
I relax and trust----I breathe and I believe. I accept.*

If, or whenever, you encounter the darkness of unbelief, or find yourself overcome by negative suggestions, begin with the essence of affirmative and constructive thinking you know for yourself and then build on that.

Or, simply use the affirmation above and allow it to work for and through you. Boldly step through the place of doubt and plant your feet on the solid rock of faith.

And, Breathe!

Sacred Circles



Fall 2009

Everyone Counts

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Week 2

November 8 - 15

“Falling into Grace”

Rev. Barbara Novak

Overview

*How much life can any man experience? As much as he can embody.
There is nothing fatalistic about this. We are so constituted that we can continuously
increase our embodiment. We grow in grace, as it were.*

*We grow in power and theoretically there should be no limit to that growth.
But right today we can expect to demonstrate or to have our prayers answered
according to our belief and the embodiment of that belief.*

Ernest Holmes

This week we explore Grace, how you define it, how Science of Mind defines it?
What is Grace? How is it showing up in your life? How do you see it, and how others see it.
The intention is to expand in grace...to grow in grace, as it were!

Inspirational Quotes

Week 2—Falling into Grace

Grace – Grace is the givingness of Spirit to Its Creation and is not a special law, but a specialized one. In other words, Grace is, but we need to recognize it. It is not something God imposed upon us, but is the logical result of the correct acceptance of life and of a correct relationship to the Spirit. We are saved by Grace to the extent that we believe in, accept, and seek to embody, the Law of Good; for the Law of Good is ever a Law of Liberty and never of limitation. Limitation is not a thing, not an entity, but a belief. Freedom is a Divine Reality.
~ Ernest Holmes – The Science of Mind Glossary ~

The whole teaching of Jesus was based on the theory that we are surrounded by an intelligent Law, which does unto each as he believes. He implied the necessity of faith, conviction, and acceptance. That is, it must be measured out to us according to our own measuring. We must not only believe, we must know that our belief measures the extent and degree of our blessing. If our belief is limited only a little can come to us, because that is what we believe. We call this the law of mental equivalents. How much life can any man experience? As much as he can embody. There is nothing fatalistic about this. We are constituted that we continuously increase our embodiment. We grow in grace as it were. We grow in power and theoretically there should be no limit to that growth. But right today we can expect to demonstrate or to have our prayers answered according to our belief and the embodiment of that belief.
~ Ernest Holmes -The Science of Mind. 280 ~

If you bring forth what is within you, what you bring forth will save you. If you do not bring forth what is within you, what you do not bring forth will destroy you.
~ Jesus - Gospel of Thomas ~

*I will not die an unlived life.
I will not live in fear of falling or catching fire.
I choose to inhabit my days to allow my living to open me, to make me less afraid, more accessible; to loosen my heart until it becomes a wing, a torch, a promise.
I choose to risk my significance, to live so that which came to me as seed goes to the next as blossom, and that which came to me as blossom, goes on as fruit.*
~ Dawna Markova ~

We are to think on those things which are of good report. (phil. 4;8, 13) That is we are to think on those things which are of the Truth. If we do this, we can accomplish because of our inner mind, which is Christ. This Mind is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and all they that dwell therein.

And God will supply all our needs. This is the beautiful thought; that we are fed from the table of the Universe, Whose board is ever spread with blessedness and peace; Whose loving-kindness has never been fathomed; whose grace and truth are the cornerstones of Reality.
~ Ernest Holmes - The Science of Mind, 496

Inspirational Reading

Week 2—Falling into Grace

SOME WORDS JUST DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE.

They attach themselves to my heels like Peter Pan's shadow and follow me through the strip malls of my mind. They follow me until I'm willing to get curious about their message and meaning. For a very long time, so long I'm embarrassed to tell you, the word attached to my right foot was *educare*. I ignored it the way I do dreams sometimes figuring it was just my mind playing with the noun that described what I did for years in classrooms. Little did I know I was supposed to get curious about the root of the verb, which means "leading out that which is within," and it would become a brand of my life's purpose.

The word stuck on my left foot was *grace*. I ignored that one even longer, because where I grew up, Jewish people don't even think about grace. To understand what grace finally led me to, I have to tell you about my grandmother, and what she taught me about walking, which was really more about finding your purpose, than with physical fitness. She explained that we all walk a spiral path she called wisdom trail, and we walk on the foot of risk, and the foot of mastery, then back on the foot of risk. As I understood it, if a person stays on the foot of risk too long, they find themselves nervously hopping from thing to thing, never settling in and developing mastery. On the other hand, if they stay in their mastery too long, they get stuck in the mud and their soul never really gets to develop fully.

Each time we shift from the foot of mastery to the foot of risk it takes a leap of faith, a little gasp in the unknown where God can enter.

Maybe that's where grace comes in.

Dawna Markova – from I will not die an unlived life – Reclaiming Purpose and Passion

GRACE

When one can step out of the universal hypnotic trance of cause and effect or shake free from the tabloid consciousness of the dramas of this world, then there is a chance for God's Grace to express through your world. The more one can surrender the self appointed desires the more Spirit can function as the individual mind and body. What a tremendous satisfaction comes in the realization, "I and the Father are One," as no longer are there worries about tomorrow; there is only the now.

To rest in Spirit, ones desires vanish and needs disappear because every need was met before becoming aware of it. Living by grace allows spirit to express to Its end, not yours. In this pure state of being, prayers are no longer for something because that means there is a desire. Prayers become simply listening, this allows the power of the God thought through. Of course it's I who first starts the listening but that disappears and the prayer becomes a Divine proclamation. This graceful approach lets in the warmth, color and love of God's kingdom made manifest as your life.

To be able to enter the silence without a problem just for the joy of communing with God is magical. To abide in the peace until one feels the grace take form as a healing, upliftment and manifestation of supplying is to surrender to ease. It's an attitude of self-surrender that allows one to rise above wanting and achieving to trusting that God's direction is revealed. The miracle is not just that struggle has been dissolved, discomfort has disappeared or that an unhappiness has given way to Joy; it's that the world of form has been over come through the ease and grace of God. You'll come to know nothing has been with held. Grace takes one out of being, as Ernest Homes writes in the Voice Celestial, "Victim to the law of cause and it's effect," into the divine space of God's Grace. Living by grace is not just a trend it is a way of being. You'll find yourself living in a new dimension that is fulfilling and soul satisfying. You can go through life with struggle, or with ease and grace, the choice is yours.

By Rev. Christian Sorensen, D.D.

Experiential Exercise

Week 2—Falling into Grace

When we are living in Grace, all goes smoothly.

Events happen effortlessly.

Old angers and resentments just dissolve.

*Everything unfolds seamlessly and
we need do nothing to make this happen.*

Rev. Alice Bandy

How am I living in Grace? What aspects of life feel grace driven to me? In these areas, how is it that I am in alignment with the Spirit of Life?

On the contrary, what aspects of life feel absent of grace? How are they absent of grace? Am I feeling angry, resentful, ungrateful or otherwise? How is it that I am out of alignment with the Spirit of Life? Is this ok with me? If not, what am I willing to change and/or what aspect of Spirit am I willing to embrace?

*God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.*

Reinhold Niebuhr

The Thing Itself, then, can only do for us what it can do through us and is us always.

Ernest Holmes

Spiritual Practice

Week 2—Falling into Grace

Practice the Mindful Breathing Meditation!

Take some time for yourself - and
allow yourself to exercise this muscle!

Here is a short rhythm poem suggested to help you in the practice of Mindful Breathing. Say these words to yourself as you breath. You can say them silently, murmur them, or speak them out loud. Experiment. Exercise Mindful Breathing in a way that works for you.

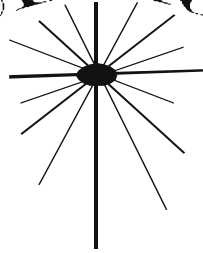
In, Out.....
Deep, Slow.....
Calm, Ease.....
Smile, Release.....
Present Moment, Wonderful Moment.....
**

**Add other words or phrases you would like to remember and experience.

Reflect upon Grace in Your Life!

Grace is not something that is given to us or withheld from us. Grace is a state of being which comes into active expression the moment consciousness has been purified, just as the law of gravity comes into operation when an object is dropped. The law of gravity is always present and in operation, but nothing happens until an object is released. Divine Grace is forever present in our consciousness, but it cannot operate, that is, It cannot manifest or express in the presence of fear or hate. It cannot exist side by side with the belief of a selfhood apart from God or an activity or substance or law apart from good.
—Joel Goldsmith

Sacred Circles



Fall 2009

Everyone Counts

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Week 3

November 15 - 21

“Being the Difference”

By Lori Sheets, RScP

Overview

*I am a center in the Divine Mind, a point of God-conscious life, truth and action.
My affairs are divinely guided and guarded into right action, into correct results.
Everything I do, say or think is stimulated by the Truth.*

Ernest Holmes

This week we will take a look at “Being the Difference” ...in our lives, in each other’s lives and the life of this planet. Stay with me. This concept need not be over whelming or auspicious. This idea is about each day centering with the Beloved, the Divine Presence within. Then as your day unfolds, be in the present moment and **pay attention**, for you will be guided to a myriad of ways that you can *be* the difference.

Inspirational Quotes

Week 3—Being the Difference

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.

~ Winston Churchill ~

Be the change you wish to see in the world.

~ Mahatma Gandhi ~

To put the world right in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must first put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must first cultivate our personal life; we must first set our hearts right.

~ Confucius ~

We all have ability. The difference is how we use it.

~ Stevie Wonder ~

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.

~ Anne Frank ~

Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.

~ William James ~

The purpose of life is not to be happy - but to matter, to be productive, to be useful, to have it make some difference that you have lived at all.

~ Leo Rosten ~

Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.

~ Dr. Seuss ~

Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.

~ John Wooden, *They Call Me Coach* ~

Inspirational Reading

Week 3—Being the Difference

Being the Difference

by Lori Sheets, RScP

Helice Bridges is an incredible woman who lives here in Encinitas. She started a company whose sole purpose was to recognize and acknowledge people for the ways they made a difference to others. Her company is called The Difference Makers. She has traveled the globe conducting “You Make a Difference” ceremonies and giving out her famous blue ribbons.

So many times we don’t realize how we impact others and how we make a difference in peoples lives. Helice creates a space for people to recognize those who are doing the uplifting. We know from Ernest Holmes that , “*I uplift, therefore I am uplifted*” (SOM-299). We know from experience that it feels good to help others, to be of service and to make another’s life a little easier.

We have all learned at one time the difference between “being” and “doing”. Doing is an active verb and usually means taking action. Being is the state of full presence to the moment at hand. When we are “being” we are at peace with ourselves, we are at ease and centered in the place where God resides within us.

In Science of Mind, we say “Treat but move your feet”. As we are looking at “Being the Difference” in the world, we have to tap into just “being” who we are—authentically and humbly. That’s what we bring to each situation we encounter...that’s what we bring to life. From this state of being we *also* need to take action.

We all have ability. The difference is how we use it. ~ Stevie Wonder ~

Guess what? If you see the woman with twins in a double stroller with one child screaming her lungs out, trying to get out the door at McDonalds –YOU need to help her. *Please* don’t look around waiting for someone else to move. If you would like to live in a world where we see that we are all emanations of the Beloved, and we are all in this together, then our actions must reflect the belief.

Be the change you wish to see in the world. ~ Mahatma Gandhi ~

If we desire to change the world, according to Gandhi, we must become that change. If we desire to have peace on our planet we must first create that very peace in our hearts. If we desire to have more harmony in the world, we must first forgive the others in our lives, let them know that we love them, spend time with them and keep communicating clearly.

*This week for our inspirational reading time,
let us share how it is that we inspire and uplift each other.*

Experiential Exercise

Week 3—Being the Difference

The intention of this exercise is to be a gentle reminder of how we can and why we all need to work together to create what it is we are manifesting. Your facilitator will guide you in this exercise. Use this space to journal about your experience.

Spiritual Practice

Week 3—Being the Difference

Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.

~ John Wooden, *They Call Me Coach* ~

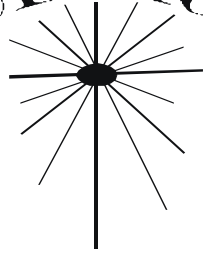
In this quotation John Wooden talks about keeping your eye/attention/awareness on what you **can** do. Overwhelm over all that must be done in our world comes when we focus on all we **can not** do.

You have just completely wrapped a box with one arm tied behind your back!! Something you thought you could not do...you have done! Now, fueled with the desire to **be the difference** in here and now, focus on **doing what you can do**. *Be in the present moment and pay attention...that's all!!*

This week pay attention from the consciousness of the Beloved and the knowledge of our Oneness with All and be guided to situations and circumstances where you know you are the difference. Develop a heightened sense of awareness of your surroundings and how you might “step up to the plate”.

This week create your own Random Act of Kindness. Step forward in some way when it seems that help is needed. Get out of your comfort zone and be willing to look silly if needed. You *are the difference* that is being prayed for in each situation!

Sacred Circles



Fall 2009

Everyone Counts

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Week 4

November 22 - 23

“Everyone Counts”

By Jina Bjelland, RScP

Overview

This week we step into the heart of knowing that everyone counts.

This is the culmination of “The Power of One”, “Falling into Grace”, and “Being the Difference”. The true progression is, all of us are ONE, therefore, everyONE counts!

A wonderful song that Rev. Fran sings is: We are all so much greater, than any ONE of us can be. We are all joined in our hearts, our souls, our mind. Something so much greater!

You are not an observer. Each of us are of God, perfect, whole and complete, right here, right now. Each of us was created out of love, in perfection to be a part of the whole and complete picture. Spirit, the brilliant Artist is expressing through each of us – each of us incredible beings, here for a special purpose, an important part of the great Artist’s canvas that we call life. For without each and everyone of us, the “big picture” would not be complete!

Inspirational Quotes

Week 4—Everyone Counts

You are not an observer of the universe. You are a vital participant of the universe. Let no one ever again tell you of your unimportance. God did not make a mistake when you were born. Intelligence created you to live in these times because you are equipped to meet the challenges of these times. You are the right person, in the right place, to create the right world for yourself.

~Raymond Charles Barker (The Power of Decision) ~

You are one with the Infinite Presence which can inspire, one with a Universal Law which can execute. Say: There is nothing in me that hinders the Spirit from manifesting Itself through me in joy, happiness and peace.

It is the law of my life that wherever I go I shall meet with joy, with love, friendship, gratitude, compensation- with complete opportunity for the expression of every talent and ability I possess. Every door is open. Nothing can go forth from me but goodness, truth, love, kindness; therefore, nothing less than goodness can come back to me.

~ Ernest Holmes (This Thing Called You) ~

We are all children of One Living God-One Life that permeates all, without exception – One Intelligence that governs all – and, more important, every man and woman who abides in the universe is a significant entity in the One Universal Consciousness.

~ Ernest Holmes~

Inspirational Reading

Week 4—Everyone Counts

This Thing Called You

Ernest Holmes

You, like all others, are seeking the joy of living. You wish to be needed, to be loved, to be included in the great drama of life. This urge is in every individual. It is in everything. The rose exists to express beauty. Root and branch conspire with nature to give birth to blossom. An artist will starve in his garret that he may chisel an angelic form from a slab of marble, compelling the unyielding substance to accept his breath of creation.

Not only human beings, but everything in nature is endowed with this creative urge. When moisture is precipitated the desert receives it with gladness and breaks forth into a song of creation. Making the most of its brief season, it blossoms in joy, storing within its bosom the seed of a future flowering. It is impossible to escape this creative urge. Everything must find fulfillment or perish.

No man willed this so. Evolution is proof of an irresistible urge which pushes everything onward and upward. Man did not create life; he is something that lives in, from, and by it. He cannot escape life or the necessity of giving expression to it through living.

In some way which you know not of, through some process which never reveals its face, Life has entered into you add with it the irresistible impulse to create. Divine Intelligence has willed it so, nor you, nor any other person, nor all the wit, science or philosophy of man, nor the inspiration of saints or sages, can change one bit of it any more than man can arrest the eternal circuits of time, the revolutions of the planets or the desire of the fledgling to leave its nest, to soar and sing.

Create or perish is the eternal mandate of nature. Be constructive or become frustrated, is an equal demand. You cannot escape the conclusion that whatever this thing is which is seeking expression through everything, it can find satisfactory outlet only through constructive and life-giving creativeness. You may call this process good or evil, right or wrong, God or the devil, heaven or hell. Would it not be more simple to say that finally things work out for the best only when they are life-giving.

We are all some part of a universal order. The very urge for personal gratification is incomplete until it finds a universal outlet. This is the cause back of all upheavals in human history. The pattern is trying to fit the pieces into greater and greater units as though it could not accomplish its purpose through anything other than a democracy of Spirit, a union of all. This union, however, does not mean sameness, for while unity requires conformity to principles, unity never means uniformity. Every blade of grass, every crystal, every drop of water, like every individual, is a little different from any other one of its species.

Humanity is made up of innumerable individuals, no two alike, and yet society is a composite whole moving gradually toward some ultimate goal. What could this goal be other than that everyone, while remaining individual, shall find a more complete expression in and among all other individuals? This has been the dream of the ages, that the lion shall lie down with the lamb, and “a little child shall lead them.” As Jesus said, “. . .that they may be one, even as we are one.”

Inspirational Reading

Week 4—Everyone Counts (*continued*)

This Thing Called You

Ernest Holmes

You belong to the universe in which you live, you are one with the Creative Genius back of this vast array of ceaseless motion, this original flow of life. You are as much a part of it as the sun, the earth and the air. There is something in you telling you this—like a voice echoing from some mountain top of inward vision, like a light whose origin no man has seen, like an impulse welling up from an invisible source.

Your soul belongs to the universe. Your mind is an outlet through which the Creative Intelligence of the universe seeks fulfillment.

This is your starting point for investigating the meaning of those impulse, longings and desires which accompany you through life. You may accept that the universe is filled with a Divine and Infinite Presence, perhaps the infinite of yourself. Not the infinite of your limited self, but the infinite of the Divine Self you must be. There must be a pattern of yourself in this invisible.

The greatest minds of the ages have accepted that such a pattern exists. Socrates called it his spirit, Jesus his Father in Heaven. Some ancient mystics called it Atman. Why don't you call it just *you*, your complete self? For surely this is what they all have meant.

Just try to catch the larger vision and realize that there have been and are people, many of them, who have wooed and wed some invisible Presence until Its atmosphere and essence have become woven into the fabric of their own existences. Every man is a doorway, as Emerson said, through which the Infinite passes into the finite, through which God becomes man, through which the Universal becomes individual.

You are to believe with utmost simplicity and with complete faith that there is a pattern of your being, or a real spirit of you, which is as eternal as God, as indestructible as Reality, and as changeless as Truth. This pattern is seeking to manifest through you. Back of it is all the will and purpose of the universe, the irresistible laws of being. Finally it will win.

It is because it is there that you have these irresistible urges—the longing to live more fully, the feeling that life belongs to you. There is something within you beyond all doubt and fear, something which has never been limited by your acts or destroyed by your feeling. This is the only something that can make you whole.

Experiential Exercise

Week 4—Everyone Counts

Autumn Leaf Meditation and Journaling

Place your feet flat on floor and your hands open, palms up on your lap. Close your eyes and relax, take a big inhale, and then a big exhale....

Now open yourself to that wonderful space of quiet and listen....

You are strolling through a beautiful meadow in the autumn air; the sky is that subtle soft blue with light, fluffy clouds floating by. You can hear the birds sing their songs softly into the air. You can hear the crunch of freshly fallen leaves as you stroll. You can smell the fresh autumn air.

Listen to all of the wonderful things you are. Let all of the ideas and thoughts swirl around you like the wind blowing from the autumn trees, sit with this wonderful knowing.

Note that each of the leaves swirling out of the tree has a word or saying on it, just notice what they are as they float into a big wonderful pile on the tall, lush green grass below.

There is a bright light shining on the pile of leaves which draws you to it. You sit down on the soft, dewy grass and feel each and every word on each and every leaf. They perfectly describe who you are.....a great listener, a great lover, a great dancer, a terrific singer, a best friend, a gifted musician, a talented artist and on.....and on.....and on

Remain in this place for a while taking notice of how it feels as you read each one.... Sit with all of these wonderful knowing-s and hold them in your heart. Wrap your arms around yourself and feel the magnificence you are. (long pause)

Now let the leaves float back into the pile and recognize that while each of them is individual and different, they are all a part of the bigger autumn picture.

Now slowly stand up and amber back across the meadow and as you walk along, start to notice your breath, and feel your body, and begin to bring yourself back into the room. Feel your chair as you bring your awareness to this space, this time, slowly open your eyes.

Now take some time to write down what each and every one of the leaves had to tell you, reflecting upon and remembering all the time you write how it felt to read those words on those leaves.

Spiritual Practice

Week 4—Everyone Counts

Affirming Your Leaf Statements
And
Letting others know who they are!

Note: For this exercise you will need several 3x5 cards.

1) Pick three of the “leaf statements” and write them as affirmations of who you are each day. Carry them with you and be sure to affirm at least 4 times during the day each of the statements. Each time remembering how it felt when the leaves told you how wonderful you are, how you excel!

2) As you walk through your day, notice the people around you. How do you connect? How are you different? What can you learn from them? What can you share with them? And remember that Everyone Counts! *So, let them know who they are!*

We are all leaves from the big tree of the universe, all connected and all individual unique expressions of love and light!