

# HOPE

"The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.  
Don't go back to sleep.  
You must ask for what you really want.  
Don't go back to sleep.  
People are going back and forth across the doorsill  
Where the two worlds touch.  
The door is round and open.  
Don't go back to sleep."

Rumi

Within our personal lives, in difficult or painful times, it is tempting to dig a hole and roll up into a little ball of despair. However, many people have experienced through their woundedness a pathway towards wholeness. Meister Eckhart wrote, "Truly, it is in the darkness that one finds the light, so when we are in sorrow, then this light is nearest to us." Joseph Campbell said that "One thing that comes out in myths is that at the bottom of the abyss comes the voice of salvation. The black moment is the moment when the real message of transformation is going to come. At the darkest moment comes the light."

Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen is a physician whose specialty is working with dying patients and their families, or patients who have a chronic condition. She writes in her book, My Grandfather's Blessings, about illness and healing. "The soul is the basis for the value of every human life, and the

foundation of our experience of wholeness and integrity, despite physical change. It may also be the source of our healing.

It is only recently that illness and healing have been defined in terms of the body. At the beginnings of medicine, the shamans, or medicine men, defined illness not in terms of pathology but in terms of the soul. According to these ancients, illness was 'soul loss,' a loss of direction, purpose, meaning, mystery, and awe. Healing involved not only the recovery of the body but the recovery of the soul....

The language of the soul is meaning. We may first discover the soul when life events awaken in us the need for meaning. In serious or chronic illness, even people who have never considered this dimension of experience before instinctively reach for a personal meaning in events that have disrupted their lives. Meaning helps us to see in the dark...

Finding meaning does not require us to live differently; it requires us to see our lives differently. Many of us already live far more meaningful lives than we know. When we go beyond the superficial to the essential, things that are familiar and even commonplace are revealed in new ways. Meaning may change the way we see ourselves and the world. People who have felt themselves to be victims may be surprised to realize they are heroes.

An oyster is soft, tender, and vulnerable. Without the sanctuary of its shell it could not survive. But oysters must open their shells in order to breathe water. Sometimes while an oyster is breathing, a grain of sand will enter its shell and become a part of its life from then on. Such grains of sand cause pain, but an oyster does not alter its soft nature because of this. It does not become hard and leathery in order not to feel it. It continues to entrust itself to the ocean, to open and breathe in order to live. But it does respond. Slowly and patiently, the oyster wraps the grain of sand in thin transparent layers until, over time, it had created something of great value in the place where it was most vulnerable to its pain. A pearl might be thought of as an oyster's response to its suffering.....

Disappointment and loss are a part of every life....These are the places where wisdom begins to grow in us. It begins with suffering that we do not avoid or rationalize or put behind us. It starts with the realization that our loss, whatever it is, has become a part of us and has altered our lives so profoundly that we cannot go back to the way it was before."

On this planet, we are living in interesting times. Our dualistic history of the past 5000 years was spawned by the collapse of the Golden Age as we discovered the concept of "good and evil". It was this dualistic way of thinking which subsequently pitted cultures, nations and religions against each other. Wars are primarily the result of conflicts between groups of people dominated by different energies and levels of

consciousness. As time accelerates and spirals, it is not an accident that the conflicts occurring today in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Libya, are in exactly the areas where the world's oldest civilizations - - Egypt, Sumer, Persia, and the Indus Valley - - first saw the light of day.

Beyond wars, our current world events also include tsunamis, earthquakes, economic struggles, and global climate change with the potential for global ecological disaster.

Where lies the hope for our present reality in a global sense? Dr. Carl Johan Calleman, in his book The Mayan Calendar and the Transformation of Consciousness, said, "It is fundamentally about healing, about creating balance both on a global and an individual scale. It is about unifying the East and West, intuition and logic, spirit and matter. It is also about unifying the body and soul and healing the traumas that prevent us from being fully present." He goes on to say, " We need to let the two opposing dualities merge rather than engage in their respective dominance games. This is not about changing negative thinking to positive or engaging in wishful thinking about peace, but about something more difficult, which is to altogether transcend the yin/yang polarity through which we experience our reality. The road to peace involves creating peace within ourselves, between our own brain hemispheres, and then projecting peace externally. "

Joseph Campbell said, "The world as we know it is coming to an end. The world as the center of the Universe, the world

divided from the heavens, the world bound by horizons in which love is reserved for the members of the 'in group': that is the world that is passing away. Apocalypse does not point to a fiery Armageddon but to the fact that our ignorance and our complacency are coming to an end."

What can we as individuals do in co-creating the hope for a global new harmony and peace on this planet? We can prepare ourselves by transcending the influence of dualistic thinking, acting, and being. We can appreciate the contributions of indigenous cultures. We can experience ways to still our mind through meditation, tai chi, yoga, and chi gung. We can personally explore ways to enhance our own intuition, with submission to our inner voice and the divine sacredness within ourselves which manifests as our consciousness. Rudolf Steiner said, "Anyone who can meet the future in this calm, relaxed way, without impairing his active strength and energy, will be able to develop the powers of his soul freely and intensively."

Albert Einstein said, "There are two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle." In his book, Love, Medicine and Miracles, Dr. Bernie Siegel wrote: "God has given us free will to make love and life meaningful. This creates a critical risk because we now have the ability to destroy our universe if we choose not to love. However, it is only in this critical time that the archetype of the miracle can appear. When one believes in love and miracles, divine intervention can occur."

We have an infinite number of choices ahead, but a finite number of endings. They are destruction and death or love and healing. If we choose the path of love we save ourselves and our universe. Let us choose love and life."

Hope ultimately leads us to unconditional and universal love.