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Richard M. Fewkes
Editor

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PREFACE

The Rev. Wayne B. Arnason, Minister of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church in Charlottesville, Virginia, and President of the UU Ministers Association, was our keynote speaker at the Unitarian Universalist Association's General Assembly in Fort Worth, Texas last June. His address on "The Geography of UU Spirituality" was very well received and many expressed that they were looking forward to its publication in the Psi Symposium Annual Journal. We are pleased to present it to our readers as the lead article in this issue of the Journal.

Dr. James Luther Adams, retired professor of theology and ethics at Harvard University, died this past July at age 92. He is without doubt the most renowned Unitarian Universalist theologian and social ethicist in the 20th century. He was a mentor to many across all denominations. He was the occasional preacher at the Editor's installation service in Norwell 25 years ago in 1969. A great raconteur with an encyclopedic mind he could talk about anything under the sun including sleep and dreams. We are pleased to reprint his article "In Praise of Sleep" which first appeared in the Summer 1977 issue of KAIROS, a UU theological Quarterly. At the time your Editor was Chair of the Board of Governors of KAIROS.

As a follow-up to Dr. Adams article, the Editor, Richard M. Fewkes, publishes "A Sermon On Sleep," which was first preached from the pulpit of the First Parish in Norwell around 1980. He's not saying how many congregants were put to sleep by his oration, but it was appropriate to the occasion.

Rev. Webster Kitchell has degrees in the ministry as well as psychology. After serving UU Societies in New York, Missouri, and Texas he has been settled in Santa Fe, New Mexico since 1981. At some point Coyote, "the trickster" from the stories of the Native Peoples of America came into Web's life, eating donuts, hanging out, and discussing philosophy with him. This is their discussion on *The Celestine Prophecy* by James Redfield.

The Rev. Dr. Cynthia K. Edson has served a number of UU churches including Maine, Massachusetts, North Carolina, California and Alaska. Her article on "A Brief Visit to the Land of Snows" tells about her two week study and initiation into Tibetan religious practices in the fall of 1991. Her visit was not to Tibet, but to Manhattan, along with five lamas all of whom received a major initiation from the Dalai Lama. Dr. Edson is currently studying library science in the graduate school at Simmons College in Boston.

Edgar Peara, minister of the UU Community Church in Park Forest, Illinois, is a former Christian Science practitioner who still applies the laws of mental healing to the work of the ministry. His article on "Ideas for Doing Creative Thinking and Mental Healing Work" is an explication of the use of mental concentration and affirmation to effect healing in self and others.

For many years Suzanne Adams has been the lay coordinator of the Merrimack Valley Psi Symposium which meets at the North Parish Church in North Andover, Massachusetts. She also edits the Psi Symposium Chapter Newsletter and does a good deal of the writing herself. She was invited by the minister, David Blanchard, to preach and lead the service last February 1994. Her sermon "Looking at Life from the Inside Out" is the result of that effort, which we are pleased to share with our readers.

The concluding article is unusual in that it is a piece of channeled writing from a spiritual entity named "Vywamus" through the instrumentality of UU minister and teacher, Glen Snowden. This selection, entitled, "Celebrating Universal Life," is a chapter from a larger yet to be published book, and gives special focus to the creation of "some elements of a Universal Liturgy," or what I would call a cosmic liturgy. Are there any other UU channelers out there? Let us hear from you.

RICHARD M. FEWKES
EDITOR

THE GEOGRAPHY OF UU SPIRITUALITY

by Rev. Wayne B. Arnason

An address delivered to the UU Psi Symposium Annual Meeting
Ft. Worth Texas - June 25, 1994

It is an honor and a delight to be invited to make this presentation to you this afternoon, in the 25th year of the UU Psi Symposium's activity among us. I'm sure that there are plenty of Unitarian Universalists who have not followed the evolution of the Psi Symposium from an organization that seemed at first concerned only with the phenomena associated with ESP, to its present state as an organization with such a broad range of interests, described in your statement of purpose as "metaphysics, holistic health, meditation, psi, spiritual development and related subjects." Throughout the past 25 years, the Psi Symposium has led the way in creating a greater openness among Unitarian Universalists to new non-dogmatic ways of understanding the religious life, ways that are in companionship with the familiar rationality that has been the hallmark of our faith.

Today, in addition to listening to my words, I'd like to invite you to form your own answers to some questions I'll be asking, and to share them with a partner sitting near you.

Let me begin by telling you a bit about my own spiritual journey and orientation. Twenty-five years ago when the Psi Symposium was first organized, I believed the only way to measure true religion was whether or not it made a difference in the world, an understandable opinion for a kid who had grown up UU during the sixties. Social action was my spiritual discipline. I spent the 1969 General Assembly totally immersed in the politics of the black caucus debates, and if I had noticed that there was a program sponsored by Unitarian Universalists interested in ESP, I would have expressed disdain for it. Put yourself back 25 years ago if you can, and reflect for a minute on what your attitudes towards personal spirituality were back then.

Where were you then? What occupied your time? Did you have something that you would have described as a spiritual life at that time?

It was in my college and seminary years from 1970-75 that I slowly realized it was not heretical to be a Unitarian Universalist who was interested in non-rational non-political disciplines of the heart and mind that could provide insight into dimensions of the self, and of the universe around us, that we at present only dimly perceive.

My personal vehicles for exploring new dimensions of spirituality followed both the cultural fads that were available to me at the time, and traditional paths. I took psychedelic drugs, I practiced kundalini yoga, I participated in liturgy

and rituals based in prayer, in chanting, and in music, and I learned transcendental meditation. Both the fads and the traditional practices all were vehicles helpful for me in developing an appreciation for non-rational contemplative experience and spiritual disciplines in various forms as common elements in deepening religious life in faiths all around the world. By the time I was ordained in 1976, I had settled down into a consistent meditation discipline and an attraction to Buddhism.

That year, when my UU Ministers Association chapter in the Pacific Central District gave me the opportunity to plan the program section of one of our chapter retreats, I chose to make spiritual discipline the theme. The idea was cautiously received, but proved quite satisfying for all concerned, because so many ministers in that chapter were closet spiritual practitioners. They had a daily spiritual discipline but perhaps they didn't call it that, or they didn't talk about it because they were afraid staunchly rationalist parishioners would be disapproving. It was both a relief and an inspiration to be able to share what we did and how we understood the spiritual disciplines that helped keep us sane and whole.

At the time that we organized that UUMA retreat on spiritual disciplines, the word "spirituality" was not widely used in our congregations. It has since become a hot button all over the denomination. While it still may be today among some members of every congregation, the phrase "UU spirituality" no longer sounds to us like a contradiction in terms. In the early 1980's, when I was working for the UUA's education department, I was given the opportunity to join a team writing curriculum material on "spirituality" for youth and adults. The result was *On The Path*, a curriculum that has received a very positive response from UU adults all over the continent.

The success of *On The Path*, and the continuing strength of the Psi Symposium suggests that Unitarian Universalist interest in spirituality is strong and growing. However, we also reflect the current cultural eclecticism in our definitions of what spirituality involves. Recently I received in the mail a catalogue from the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies, which functions most prominently as a summer university of spiritual studies on a campus about 90 miles north of New York City. Omega is a fine example of what has happened in our understanding of what constitutes spirituality.

Omega offers over 200 workshops, training, and conferences, on their campus between June and September. They divide their offerings not according to any traditional taxonomy of academic disciplines, but into these five groupings: self, others, expression, world, and wisdom. Some of the courses and workshops offered are listed under subheadings that include: holistic health, psychological development, addictions, martial arts, writing, play, sports, caring for the earth, music, leadership, family, myth and shamanism, and spiritual practice. Do all of these workshops have to do with spiritual growth? And what about the relationship between spirituality and Christian doctrine? Under the heading "spiritual practice" you do find a course entitled "Christian Mysteries" being offered by a nun. But that is the only title I could find in this catalogue that has an exclusively Christian

reference. Times have indeed changed! It was inconceivable even 25 years ago that such a broad range of offerings could be brought together under the umbrella of an institute for spiritual studies. Certainly most of the Unitarians and Universalists of a century ago would scratch their heads if presented with this catalogue and wonder what all this has to do with the spiritual life.

There was a time in this country, two centuries ago, when it was much easier to talk about "spirituality." Everybody knew where the realm of the spiritual lay. It was inside the doors of a church. The "spiritual" life had to do with how you related to, understood, and practiced the doctrines and teachings of Christianity. Anyone writing or thinking about spirituality throughout the 18th and most of the 19th century had to respond to, contend with, and relate to Christian doctrine. Between 1838 and 1860, the movement in American literature and theology we know as Transcendentalism helped create a different foundation for the spiritual life. Although its chief spokespersons had their roots in Unitarian churches, the branches of their spiritual explorations and proclamations reached higher and farther than the institutionally-Christian boundaries of their Unitarian churches would allow. The Transcendentalists looked for religious authority in human religious intuition. They saw personal spirituality not so much as a response to church doctrines, teachings, and disciplines, but rather as a response to an inner quickening, a response to life, to the natural world, to the suffering and joys it brought, and through this response, to the discovery of a deeper relationship to God.

The Transcendentalists were great at writing poetry and books and terrible at founding and sustaining institutions. Their influence changed our denomination's way of looking at itself and at the religious task, however. By the end of the 19th century, we were the American denomination most receptive to the new scholarly trends such as literary study of the Bible, and reading and appreciation of the scriptures and texts of other religions. By the early 20th century, we were able to embrace religious humanism as a legitimate spiritual path, as a way of being religious without necessarily having to believe in Jesus or God, as they had been conventionally depicted and understood.

In doing so, however, the question of where the secular life ended and the spiritual life began became a little more confused. If, like Thoreau, you could find your church in the woods, was there still a place for institutional worship and the devotional aspects of the church? And if worship and preaching did not have to be exclusively based on Biblical passages and texts, but could draw from "the scriptures of humanity," what was to be understood as sacred? I think we still struggle with these questions of authority and discipline for our spiritual lives.

Let me invite you to ask these questions of yourself: What sources of authority do you draw on for your spiritual life? Are there teachings or a teacher that you regularly turn to for guidance in your spiritual life?

Today the word "spirituality" may still be a hot button for some Unitarian Universalists. We are closer to acknowledging across our association that this

word refers to something real about us and how we live our lives. Minimally, UU's acknowledge that we each have a lively inner life, which is shaped by our personalities, our intellects, our characters, and our emotions. We are curious about this strange sense of continuity within ourselves, this "self" inside the bag of skin that goes by our name. Our awareness of this self combines with an awareness of change, of growth, hopefully of maturity over time, that helps us realize we are both the person we always were, and someone quite different than we used to be. This is the nature of our inner life. It is both identity and change. This is the beginning point for an exploration of what we might call "spirituality" that most Unitarian Universalists can recognize and celebrate.

A willingness to explore spirituality as that which is encompassed by the continuity and change of our inner experience need not acknowledge a transcendent dimension of life. However, many UU's will not be satisfied to limit their exploration or their experience of spirituality in that way. A key issue for me is whether you are able to accept spirituality as not just something that happens inside you, something that is totally concerned with the evolution of the self, but something that is a relationship between you and that which is beyond you, beyond thought, beyond self, beyond the limits of our senses and experience.

Let me offer you one of my favorite UU definitions of the "spiritual" offered by Jacob Trapp, who said that the "spiritual" is where "the window of the moment opens to the sky of the eternal." Each moment of our lives has the possibility of such a window which can be thrown open to the eternal. We usually think about "spiritual experience" as those moments of infinite joy when our sense of connection with the universe around us is strong. Yet there is also a similar window in our moments of infinite suffering, when loss and pain remind us of the limits of self. Spirituality has to do with how we integrate our moments of infinite joy and infinite suffering into our lives, and what they mean for how we choose to live. Spiritual growth involves how we integrate and harmonize the physical, emotional, and intellectual realms of our being so that we are receptive to the possibility of those infinite moments that open like windows to an eternal sky and then close again.

To grow spiritually does not mean collecting those moments, like butterflies preserved under glass. To grow spiritually does not mean longing to recreate the emotional intensity of those moments. To grow spiritually does not mean studying those moments in hopes of understanding them completely.

Instead spiritual growth means simply cultivating our capacity to accept those moments when they come, the moments of infinity, whether they be joy or suffering, that help us to see our lives in a larger context. Whether you want to identify that context with God seems less important to me than whether you understand that the meaning of our being here goes far beyond the knowledge that we acquire, and the deeds we accomplish, and the things we accumulate.

In my struggle to find an appropriate metaphor to use in talking about

spirituality, I have often returned to the familiar image of a journey. Most of us see our lives traversing a journey along a straight line of time, moving from infancy to childhood through all the stages of adulthood. We also use this "journey" metaphor to describe our inner lives.

When you travel, you cross over a piece of territory that has different elevations and vegetation and markers along the landscape. Geography is the study of that landscape. I've always enjoyed geography as a part of any journey that I take. I love to read maps as I travel and see where I'm going, to anticipate what kind of landscape I'll be crossing, what the names of the rivers and lakes might be, and where I'll get the best views. In preparing this talk, I thought a lot about the geography of the inner life. Religious literature and storytelling often use images of mountains and hills, rivers and bridges, forests and deserts to describe spiritual experience. If we are comfortable with the metaphor of life as a journey, if that is a helpful metaphor to talk about this changing interior world of emotions, ideas, disciplines, ambitions, and understandings which form our inner lives, then perhaps it would also be helpful to talk about the geography of such a journey, the geography of the spiritual life. The notion of a geography of spirituality is hardly original to me. Geography often influences the spirituality of a particular culture. The desert spirituality of Islam and the high mountain spirituality of Tibetan Buddhism evoke their geographic homelands. A recently published book entitled *Dakota* takes the geography of the Plains states as a metaphor for spiritual experience. There is no shortage of spiritual writing that evokes geography as a metaphor.

What is the geography of your home like? What natural environment surrounds you, and how do you relate to it?

I live in central Virginia, in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. I love the geography of where I live. It is the geography of my own immediate experience and it is the metaphor that helps me understand my own spirituality and that of the UU church I serve. So bear with me as I reflect a while on the geography of where I come from and how it reflects what Unitarian Universalist spirituality involves.

I live in the shadow of old mountains, some of the oldest mountains on our continent. I like to think about these mountains as the high country of UU spirituality. It is territory that is always there for our members, but territory that not everyone is interested in exploring. The high country of our inner lives has been there as long as human beings have lived. It is a territory of self-discipline and self-confrontation. It is a territory where it is hard to build cities, and where it is easier to travel and visit in small groups or alone. It is a territory removed from the world of action and reaction, of goals and maintenance and accomplishment. Not everyone wants to go up there. Not everyone needs to go up there.

Some of us in our Unitarian Universalist community are quite content to live in the territory of the flatlands and foothills, and to admire the mountains from afar. They are the backdrop to our sunsets, but we feel no need to climb up into

them and look them over first hand. We prefer the town and the city, where the discipline of our inner lives is to work to make the world over into the image of what we believe inside us to be true: that all people are worthy of respect and dignity, and that justice and mercy must be the hallmarks of our community. This is a legitimate and important spiritual path. The window of the moment will open to the sky of the eternal at times when your action has made a difference in the lives of those around you.

Some among us in our UU community live halfway between the mountains and the city. We feel that the high country has something important to teach us, and we take time when we can to hike up into it, and to talk to the people who have spent some time there. At the same time, we like the company of people and the challenges of the city. We find wisdom in the alteration between the quiet of the mountains and the activity of town. We are re-charged and re-connected by our times of disciplined journeying along unknown paths, so that we can bring to the familiar streets and hallways of our work lives a deeper clarity and purpose and effectiveness. We seek a blend in our lives between inner search and outer action that keeps us in balance, and we find our windows to the eternal in that balance.

A smaller group of Unitarian Universalists like to live in the high country and explore it as much as we can. We feel at home there, doing what we need to do in town and in city, but returning to the mountains with a sense of relief and excitement. We find in the smaller communities that are based in the high country and in periods of solitary exploration of the landscape inside a depth of living that satisfies our spiritual hunger. We are the people who would walk mountain paths every day if we could, who want to take the long excursions into the more remote places in our inner landscape. We are the people who admire those who have trekked some spiritual Appalachian Trail from one end to the other, and we consider doing the same thing ourselves. We seek to open wide the windows of every moment to that eternal sky, and believe in the possibility that this can happen.

It is a source of joy and of strength to me that we have all of these kinds of people in Unitarian Universalism, that we neither need nor seek a uniform consensus on the high country that surrounds us. Some will always admire it from afar, while others will benefit from the occasional excursion to a mountain path or a lookout of great beauty. Still others will make a home in the spiritual high country and come to the valley for company. Is there anything that you have found in the geography of where you live that provides a metaphor for understanding your spiritual life?

We need not typecast ourselves as one of these three kinds of people. My description is not only arbitrary—it misses the fact that we may each go through different stages of life where we need to seek out a home in the city or the high country or somewhere in between. Meditation teacher Jack Kornfield has written:

"In the beginning we may erroneously imagine spiritual practice to be a linear journey, travelling over a certain landscape to a faraway destination

of enlightenment. But it is better described as a widening circle or spiral, that opens our hearts and gradually infuses our consciousness to include all of life as a spiritual whole...Change comes to our lives not only from shifts in our inner needs, but also from shifts in our external circumstances. Each stage of our life holds the seeds for our spiritual growth. Our spiritual life matures when we consciously accept the life tasks appropriate for us...Whether in a monastery, in our place of business, or in our family life, we need to listen to what each cycle requires for our heart's development and accept its spiritual tasks. The natural cycles of growth—developing right livelihood, moving to a new home, the birth of a child, (joining a religious community)—all bring spiritual tasks that require our heart to grow in commitment, fearlessness, patience, and attention. The cycle of endings—our children leaving home, the aging and death of our parents, loss in business, leaving a marriage or community—bring our heart the spiritual tasks of grieving, of letting go gracefully, of releasing control, of finding equanimity and openhearted compassion in the face of loss. Occasionally, we get to choose the cycles we work with, such as choosing to get married or beginning a career...More often we don't get to choose. The great cycles of our life wash over us, presenting us with challenges and difficult rites of passage much bigger than our ideas of where we were going. Midlife crisis, threats of divorce, personal illness, sickness of our children, money problems, or just running yet again into our own insecurity or unfulfilled ambition can seem like difficult yet mundane parts of life to get over with so we can get peaceful and do our spiritual practice. But when we bring to them attention and respect, each of those tasks has a spiritual lesson in them."

How much time we spend in the high country of our inner lives may well depend on where we are right now in our cycles, and the tasks that face us which are appropriate to each cycle. I'd like you to think for a moment about the life circumstance that is offering you your greatest spiritual challenge right now. Take a minute of quiet reflection on where you are in the journey and in the geography of that journey right now, and then share some thoughts with your partner. For wherever you are in this journey, let me offer you what little I have learned about the geography of spirituality, using this Blue Ridge Mountain metaphor which is so familiar to me.

I have learned that the map is not the territory. It is all well and good to read books and review charts that describe what the high country of spirituality is like. Reading a map is not the same as walking the trail, however. They are completely different experiences. While reading books is a form of spiritual discipline, a daily practice that involves both mind and body is taking your first footsteps on the trail. If you go to a national park, and get one of their trail maps and study it carefully, you might be able to describe to someone else exactly where

and how various trails intersect, and what kinds of vegetation and scenery a person might encounter on each one, without ever having been there yourself. I would recommend that you try walking the trail instead, one step at a time, every day.

I have learned that most spiritual practices that enrich our inner lives and make us more effective in the world require the development of the patience to sustain a different pace of activity than our society encourages. We are addicted to speed and to quick results in our world today, and whether your discipline is working for a particular piece of legislation, or developing a sitting meditation practice, or cleaning up the human damage to a watershed, or volunteering at the Salvation Army day care, any and all of these will demand far more patience and far fewer expectations than you ever believed possible.

I have learned that long summit views are nice to see, but that the views are equally inspiring at different levels up the mountain, and that when you get to the really high viewing places in spiritual practice you can't see the details any more. Since all lives are lived in the details, the question becomes how frequently and how long it is helpful to go looking for inspiration in big picture vistas. In this day and age, most of the prettiest big picture vistas have good roads that lead up to them, and plenty of signs to tell you what you are seeing. Similarly, there are plenty of well-articulated outlooks in spiritual life that give you a great overview. Riding up there on a tour bus and having the guide tell you all about it is much easier than walking there yourself, but nothing substitutes for walking. Once you've walked up there yourself and really know what the viewpoint looks down on because you've been there, the outlook takes on a whole different meaning.

I have learned that some trails going up into the mountains are dead ends, some have more poison ivy and mud than others, and some take a much steeper track up the side. I am no longer sure they all lead to the same place, as attractive as that may sound, because the geography of my inner life is more like the Blue Ridge than the Alps. There are very few well-defined peaks that command the valley below. There are instead a lot of high ridges and each one of them brings its own special perspective on the landscape below.

I have learned to greet the people that I meet walking in the high country with respect and appreciation, but not to follow them just because they are the only person I've run into for a long time. Sometimes the people I meet are on their way down the same trail I just came up. Sometimes they are lost and too proud to ask directions. Sometimes they are walking the Appalachian Trail and if I followed them I would end up in Maine. Get good maps from teachers who have been there, but don't lose confidence in your ability to find your own directions.

Jack Kornfield tells a story about a woman who was deeply involved in spiritual practice with a number of communities. The woman tragically lost her husband, and was lost in deep sorrow. She had friends in Tibetan, Christian, and Sufi religious communities, and they all rallied around to support her. As time went on, though, she could not let go of her grief. One day, one of her friends in

the Tibetan community came over and excitedly described a vision she'd had of the woman's husband entering the pure light of the western realm with the Bodhisattva Amitahba. The widow was heartened, but a few days later one of her Christian friends recounted a dream she'd had in which her husband was in the heaven of the ascended masters. The woman went to visit her Sufi teacher, and this venerable authority told her "Your husband is fine, you know. I've been following him in my meditations. He has already entered a womb, and will be reborn in a female body through parents living in Washington, D.C." The poor woman was left utterly confused by these contradicting visions and doctrines meant to reassure her about her husband and heal her grief. None of them helped. When she talked about her feelings with Kornfield he asked her this:

"If you were to put aside all these visions and teachings, and look into your own heart, what is it that you already know that is so certain that even if Jesus and Buddha were to be sitting together here in the same room saying, "No it's not!" you could look them straight in the eye and say, "Yes it is." She thought a moment and replied: "I know that everything changes, and not much more than that. Everything that is born dies, and everything in life is in the process of change."

"Can you start from that? " Kornfield asked her.

All the maps and guidebooks of the inner life will be of no use unless you can figure out what you know for sure, and start from there. I think that is what Jesus did. I think that is what Buddha did. This is the inner compass which will be the greatest use to us as we explore the geography of our inner lives.

So what have you learned along the roads and trails you have travelled about the geography of your inner life? Are there a few simple truths that you have come to out of your encounter with the teachers who walk the high trails? If you feel like it's difficult to summarize those teachings, then try this instead: ask yourself what basic things you have learned about living with compassion and wisdom in this world out of your own experience?

Can you articulate a single basic truth that you have learned that helps you live with compassion and wisdom in this world? Take some time to reflect on that right now, and in a minute, I'll ask you to turn to a person sitting near you and offer that truth.

After you've done that, let me ask in conclusion: how do you know that you are making progress on the path? How do you know landmarks? How do you recognize whether you are growing spiritually? These are the questions I ask myself. Am I living more mindfully, paying attention to more than the passing parade of my emotional and physical states? Are my thoughts and actions directed at others' needs at least as much as they are towards my own? Am I finding ways and places in my life to express love, and be in relationship with others? Am I sustaining special places or disciplines that help me stay in touch with my spiritual path? Does my suffering defeat me by its infinite persistence, or does the persistent infinity that comes to me in other moments help me sustain my trust in the world

despite it? Am I finding other people with whom I can talk about my deepest emotions and feelings? Am I in touch with companions and teachers on my spiritual path who help me find greater understanding and appreciation of why I am here?

Finally, I hope that in my spiritual growth I am able to sustain two affirmations that Martin Buber once described. They are affirmations that speak both to the humility that should be a part of any Unitarian Universalist spirituality, and the celebration of life that is a part of our faith. Buber once wrote that our spirituality has two pockets. In one pocket we should carry the words, "I am dust and ashes." And in the other pocket we should carry the words, "for me the universe was created." This is how the geography of spirituality looks for me. May the journey over your geography be a good one.

Rev. Wayne Arnason

IN PRAISE OF SLEEP: TOWARD A THEOLOGY OF SLEEP

by James Luther Adams

From *Kairos Quarterly*, Summer, 1977

Paul must have been a saint. While he was preaching late into the evening a young man Eutychus, sitting in a window, sank into a deep sleep, fell from the third story, and was "taken up dead." Despite his chagrin as a marathon preacher, Paul hastened immediately to the side of Eutychus, and revived him (*Acts* 20:6-12).

I am reminded of an incident of milder pattern in the early eighteenth century when Dr. Robert South, the eminent court preacher in London, interrupted his sermon to awaken the Prime Minister and warn him that if he did not moderate his snoring he might awaken His Majesty, the King.

By way of contrast we recall that in ancient times sleeping in church was a hallowed practice. For a long stretch of Pagan history sleeping in church, so to speak, was viewed as an act of piety; indeed, as a form of dream therapy it was given a technical name—"incubation." This word denotes the practice among the Greeks and Romans of sleeping within the precincts of a temple for the purpose of receiving a vision, a portent of the future, or relief from disease or pain. Ancient inscriptions record priestly prayers giving thanks to God (under countless names) for revealing himself during the sleep of the worshipper.

Refreshment-and terror

Sleep (with its dreams) has been interpreted under countless names—from a supernatural source of revelation and healing to the work of a demon to a biological-psychological fountain of refreshment—and also of terror. The Psalmist does not offer a theology of sleep when he utters his prayer, "God's gifts come to his loved ones, as they sleep," but he acknowledges that sleep is worthy of praise and thanks to God. Verily, a pasture spring!

Sleep occupies a substantial portion of our lives. Out of the four score years and ten of an ample life, more than a score is spent in sleep. Is it possible perhaps to find a religious interpretation, a theological understanding, of sleep, and even of dreams? Perhaps we should with Robert Frost go out and try "to clean the pasture spring, rake the leaves away, and wait to watch the water clear."

One of the leaves that must be raked away is the notion that the praise of

sleep is the praise of sloth. To be sure, sleep can become slothful. In a conversation years ago in Strasbourg Albert Schweitzer said when I asked him about his ascetic sleeping habits, that many people tire themselves out by indulging too much sleep; some of them, he said, are drunk with sleep. So said the man who in his early manhood worked all day studying medicine and then most of the night practicing the organ in preparation for his lesson in the morning. But sleep has its rights, and in its own right it is not sloth.

The study of sleep

In the present century more scientific research has been devoted to the study of sleep than ever before. We read of the activity of the left hemisphere of the brain in the waking hours, and of the activity of the right hemisphere in the sleeping and dreaming hours, of rapid eye movement (REM) in dreams, and of four or five stages in sleep, many of these findings being disclosed by the electroencephalograph (EEG). We learn that dreams punctuate our sleep four or five times each night, that we cannot in health get along without them, indeed that we must eventually make up in dreams for any continued interruption of them. The literature has become enormous. In proceeding from Roscher to Freud and Jung and Fromm to Kleitman and others the studies have led from the couch to the laboratory.

In the midst of these findings and theories we can only suggest in a preliminary fashion one possible way of achieving a religious interpretation of sleep and dreams. First, then, we must ask, What constitutes a religious interpretation?

Sleeping and waking

One of the most striking things about dreams is "the similarity between the products of our creativeness during sleep and the oldest creations of man—the myths" (Erich Fromm). The myths are concerned even with the difference between waking and sleeping. One of the most familiar is what turns out to be the alternation between attachment and detachment. This dialectic is to be observed in the interpretation of meditation and prayer, and also of mystical experience. For Buddhism, deep sleep is a path to detachment, a symbol and anticipation of Nirvana. A similar dialectic between sleeping and waking appears in the notion of return from the tensions of the day mind to a lost unity latent in the night mind. Concerning sleep itself the myth of Oedipus has been the stock in trade of the Freudians. The dimensions of the lost unity, the cleavage in the psyche, and the overcoming of the cleavage, are emphasized in the oldest myth generally familiar to us, the Biblical myth of *creation, fall, and redemption*; a myth that can refer to elements of sleep as well as to our waking life.

A new and richer unity

Let me be extremely brief as I recapitulate these elements by saying that they point to the basic supports and threats of meaningful human existence. "Creation" refers not only to the initial creation of the world in six days but also to the original innocence and balance of perfect mutuality, the covenant of being, in nature and the human person (Eden)—primordial creativity or "original virtue" in contrast to "original sin." The "Fall" is the fateful disturbance of "creation" and of mutuality, the separation from the original unity, the breaking of the covenant of being, through the use and abuse of freedom. The psyche turns against itself and others, and surrenders to a destructive, demonic aggressiveness (or despair) violating mutuality. "Redemption" is not return to the innocence of "creation" but rather the overcoming of cleavage in a new and richer unity. This threefold pattern appears in the Bible, in early Christianity, in the Middle Ages, in the Reformation, and even in Marxism. In some instances it becomes the basis of a philosophy or theology of history.

Underlying the whole enterprise of being human are support and threat.

But the support is primary, the indispensable dynamic of creative mutuality. Where this element of "creation" is completely absent, where the "Fall" is complete and absolute, existence is no longer possible. Here, then, we find the religious interpretation of the human enterprise. The support is ultimately a "gift" (grace), the threat is a lurking temptation and insinuation. The sustaining, creative, commanding, judging, transforming, integrating power is a divine power, ultimately not of human making. The merely aggressive, self-serving, idolatrous perverter of freedom and mutuality, is a demonic power that through excess can cause people and even whole communities to become "possessed." Yet, even this power depends in its way upon the support of being.

In the space remaining I want to speak of three forms of sleep or dreaming. The reader will readily discern a lot of omissions in our movement toward a theology of sleep, of this "second course of the cosmos."

Dreams of simplicity

In the first category, "creation," one must recognize considerable variety. We think first of the idyllic dreams of innocent simplicity, the Edenic dreams of the lost unity of "original creation" when the morning stars sang together, airy sanguine scenes of childhood or of previous enjoyment of family or friendship—seen as perfect mutuality filtrated through the gold dust of memory. A note of sadness can invade these dreams. We think of Milton's sonnet on dreaming of his deceased wife.

But O, as to embrace me she inclined,
I waked; she fled; and day brought

back my night.

Among the dreams of "creation" are the dreams that bring us momentarily before the wonders of creation, also the dreams of sheer delight in play. Coleridge is the master of those who put into music these playful phantoms.

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw;
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.

All of these types of dreaming innocence may be compensatory, serving as a relief from "the briers of the working-day world"—release from the jangling, tiring daytime experience of tension within the person or group in face of other persons or groups and of nature.

In contrast to these intimations of original creation are the dreams of conflict, of frustration, of fear and terror. At the simplest level we dream of hunting for an object that cannot be found, or we go on a journey whose destination eludes us. A dream that I have had recurrently is that of finding myself in the pulpit before a congregation, without a manuscript or notes, an agonizing dream. Recalling Franz Kafka's K (in *The Castle*) plodding laboriously in a snowbank and completely without success, one might suggest that this kind of dream is a token of the yearning and self-seeking worship of the bitch goddess Success—striving for imperious status. This appetite is a universal wolf.

A compensatory dream

But what of nightmares that elicit pain, fear, and even terror? One may not ignore the possible reflection here of something pathological in the person or the group, something requiring disciplined daytime therapies. The theories of nightmare are legion. One possibility of interpretation has often occurred to me, an observation regarding the uses of adversity.

Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

A nightmare may be a compensatory dream, a fleeting awareness of dangers and even of forthcoming catastrophe, the sort of thing we like to ignore or gloss over in our daytime mind-tragedy, fatal illness, or death; world war, holocaust, ecological crises. Dreams under the category of the "Fall" bespeak the unresolved or even unresolvable conflicts within the psyche or the society, the loss of creativity and mutuality issuing in pain or fear or even terror. This kind of sleep

is exhausting, enervating. It may be that the slings and arrows of fortune in our depersonalizing technological mass society are placing an unprecedented and even insupportable burden upon our sleep as well as upon our waking life.

Redemptive sleep

One of the characteristic features of dreams is what may be called their diachronic character (if we may draw an analogy from the vocabulary of structuralism). They appear in a narrow, purely linear, one-track series of "events" (entertained by the right brain); their intensity can be in part the consequence of the exclusion of the context that belongs to daytime life, also the consequence of the absence of comparison and contrast, and of critical reflection. Mature human experience is synchronic (promoted by the left brain); it is multidimensional and contextual, it seeks integration or synthesis of contrasting elements.

"Redemptive" sleep seems to approach this quality of integrating movement. It is a parallel subterranean process. Repose enables us to digest what we have taken in our hunting. Facing a difficult decision, we want to "sleep on it." Carlyle once said of Tennyson, "Alfred always carries a piece of chaos in his waistcoat pocket, turning it into cosmos." This is a process that takes place in redemptive sleep. For this reason the specialist Friedrich Kekul has said, "Let us learn how to dream, and then perhaps we will discover the truth."

Preparing for grace

Most of the dreams studied, however, seem to be unpleasant. Sleep and dreams may remain primarily under the rubric of the "Fall," denoting a touch of nature that makes the whole world kin. Yet, through a leap in the conscience they can remind us of the sleeplessness and bad dreams of others—for example, of the deprived who know not where they shall find food and clothing for the children, of the deprived who remain at the bottom of the pecking orders of "normal" daytime existence. This sense of judgment upon us is already in the prophetic vestibule of redemption, a harbinger of a new demand for human mutuality—for justice and love.

Recognizing these dimensions of sleep and of theological reflection on sleep, we become aware of the necessity of preparing for grace through meditation and prayer (including prophetic prayer), in order that sleep may become one of nature's chief nourishers at life's feast. For even though the whole person is not active in sleep, or at least not in the fashion of the daytime, a sort of work can go on in sleep, a providential, divinely therapeutic work that is not of our own doing or deliberate intention and which lures us on toward integrity and authentic mutuality. From this therapy of redemptive sleep we may sense anew what Job affirmed in the face of pain and loss: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Dr. James Luther Adams

A SERMON ON SLEEP

by Rev. Richard M. Fewkes

Someone has said that sleep "must be sacred...just look how much of it is done in holy places." The subject of sleep is without doubt a risky one for a person of the cloth to tackle in a sermon. Think of how many people have been put to sleep by boring sermons over the centuries, and then when death finally came, just to make sure the deceased would not awake, the minister would preach an hour and a half funeral oration. It is somewhat sobering to recall that 19th century New England preachers would think nothing of preaching an hour twice on Sundays, and that pastoral prayers would sometimes be as long as the average contemporary sermon, 15 to 20 minutes. One cannot but wonder if God was not sometimes put to sleep by all this panoply of preaching and praying. The Psalmist assures us, however, that the One who keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Harried contemporary preachers may take some comfort in recalling that even the apostle Paul, as related in the book of Acts, lost an occasional listener to the mysterious powers of sleep. The poor young lad, Eutychus, was not only put to sleep by Paul's preaching, he was nearly bored to death as he fell three stories from a window ledge and almost lost his life. One Biblical commentator suggested that the stuffiness caused by the lamps in the windows accounted for the young man's drowsiness. More likely the stuffiness of Paul's talking on and on into the middle of the night did the trick. What is even more interesting is that even after the incident, when Paul assured the crowd of the lad's life, he ate a little and then continued to talk until daybreak and, at last, departed. The text concludes that the people were not a little comforted that the boy had survived, but perhaps they were also not a little relieved that the preacher had finally ceased talking and left them in peace.

Dr. James Luther Adams reports that Dr. Robert South, eminent court preacher in London some time ago, interrupted his sermon to awaken the Prime Minister and warn him that if he did not cease his snoring, he might awaken His Majesty the King. I am reminded of the story of a Baptist preacher who was perturbed by one of his parishioners, an old man, who sat in the front pew every Sunday and proceeded to fall asleep ere the minister began his sermon. One Sunday the preacher determined a plan to wake the old man out of his slumber. In the middle of his sermon, he asked all those who wanted to go to heaven to stand. Everyone stood up except the old man. Then, after the congregation had seated, the minister exclaimed, "And now, all those who want to go to hell, STAND UP!" he shouted at the top of his lungs. The old man woke with a start and stood up. He looked around the congregation and then up at the minister.

"Reverend," he suddenly replied, "I don't know what this here congregation is votin' on, but it looks like you and me's the only ones willing to stand up and be counted."

Well, so much for sleeping in holy places, other than to mention the ancient pagan practice of sleeping in the precincts of a temple for purposes of receiving a healing dream or revelatory vision of guidance. "God speaks in slumberings upon the bed," said one of Job's comforters in the Old Testament drama. The belief that the unconscious mind is a vehicle for the inbreaking of the divine into the human is an ancient one and not without its potential contemporary understanding and application.

"We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep." (Shakespeare) One third of our lives is spent in what we call sleep, and by age 70, if we live that long, we will have slept over 20 years, Rip Van Winkles in the flesh. What is sleep? We still don't know what it is, but we know a great deal about what happens to us physically and mentally when we do sleep, more than Freud or Jung ever dreamed was possible. The mystery of sleep and dreams has moved from the psychoanalytic couch into the laboratory, where its cycles and rhythms have been chartered and deciphered; the chemical changes in the body measured and analyzed along with variations in temperature, heart beat and pulse rate; and the door to the workings of the brain and mind opened a bit more as we discover that everyone dreams every night, whether they remember their dreams or not. We have discovered that dreaming is a natural process, a biological necessity, and there are no exceptions.

Even those who don't remember their dreams do remember them when awakened in a sleep/dream laboratory at the right moment. And when is that moment? It comes near the completion of the alpha brain wave rhythm or 7 to 14 cycles per second on the electroencephalograph, which coincides with retinal eye movements (R.E.M.s) while asleep. But we don't dream all the time while asleep. We dream on the average of four to five times a night every ninety minutes, the longest segment of dreaming coming just before we awaken in the morning. In between dream cycles we are in a state of dreamless sleep, the delta rhythm—1 to 4 cycles per second on the electroencephalograph.

To maintain both physical and mental harmony of being, we need to have both delta and alpha levels of sleep. When deprived of either level of sleep, our physical and mental functioning will be impaired. I remember staying up all night in seminary, typing an Old Testament Syllabus for Dr. Gottwald. I got a B from Gottwald, but got tired and run down and out of sorts with myself for days afterwards. Why can't we stay up all night, night after night, and not have it affect us? We don't really know why, except that the circadian rhythm of the body in its 24-hour cycle of changes in body temperature, blood sugar and sodium, calcium and potassium levels, cannot be drastically altered without adverse effects. That's the way it is, and there are few exceptions.

It is true that there are morning people (larks) and night people (owls), but

the circadian rhythm is not broken—it merely manifests in a slightly altered pattern in different people. We each have our own signature and pattern of sleeping and waking behavior, but it is a pattern within the overall pattern of the rhythms and cycles of nature. We do not know why, but sleep we must, and dream we must, if our waking consciousness is to function with clarity and effectiveness.

There is only One who neither slumbers nor sleeps, according to the Bible, and it isn't humanity. Sleep is emblematic and a reminder of human mortality. Remember the old children's prayer:

*Now I lay me down to sleep;
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.*

Not a particularly inspiring thought for a child to contemplate, but one with a note of realism. Children, too, are mortal like their parents and sometimes die by disease or accident. Our little life is rounded with a sleep.

Orthodox Jewish ritual gives expression to the ancient view of sleep as a kind of temporary death and severing of body and soul. "In your hands I entrust my spirit" is a ritual prayer before retiring. Upon awakening one prays, "I thank you for the soul you have returned to me." Ancient rabbis reflected that the angels had mistaken human beings for gods until they slept. When God put humans to sleep, the angels realized we were mortal.

Why do children so often devise diabolical strategies to postpone sleep? Why do they fight it so? Is it instinctive resistance to the loss of consciousness? Fear of dreams and nightmares? Unconscious association of sleep with dying, loss of ego, separation from the world of waking consciousness? Some people have an abnormal fear of anesthesia for similar reasons and prefer enduring pain to loss of consciousness. Acupuncture would be a Godsend for such people.

Though sleep is emblematic of human mortality, it is nonetheless considered a divine gift in the Biblical tradition. The Psalmist reflects, "I lie down and sleep; I wake again, for the Lord sustains me." (Ps. 3); "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He restoreth my soul." (Ps. 23); "It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil, for he gives to his beloved sleep." Sleep is a divine gift for the renewal of both body and soul. In the lingo of the sleep lab, we would say that delta sleep is for the renewal of the body, alpha sleep for the renewal of the mind. And so we move from delta to alpha to Yahweh, from nature to humanity to God, or as the Hindu Upanishads express it, "Mind is sleeping in rocks and stones, dreaming in plants and animals, and awakening in the human." The human form embraces all three levels in the power of awakening consciousness—animal, vegetable, mineral. The fully awake man or woman returns the evolution of consciousness to the divine source, and becomes one again with the All.

Sleep may thus be looked upon as a divine gift and/or natural process for the renewal of body and mind. Winston Churchill, who used to nap every afternoon for at least an hour, said that "nature had not intended mankind to work from eight in the morning to midnight without the refreshment of blessed oblivion which, even if it lasts only twenty minutes, is sufficient to renew all vital forces."

Sleep may, however, degenerate into escape from the demands and responsibilities of love and justice. Albert Schweitzer, who was gifted by nature with prodigious energy, said that many people tire themselves out by indulging too much sleep; some, he said, are drunk with sleep. Thomas Edison, who rarely slept more than four or five hours a day—although he was an inveterate five minute cat napper throughout the day—considered sleep a waste of time, a sign of weak will and stupidity. "Most people," he wrote, "overeat one hundred percent and oversleep one hundred percent because they like it. That extra hundred percent makes them unhealthy and inefficient." What Edison failed to note was that those who do not get sufficient sleep also become unhealthy and inefficient.

Edison and Schweitzer might well concur with the wisdom of Proverbs:

*How long will you lie there O sluggard?
When will you arise from your sleep? A little
sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the
hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you
like a vagabond, and want like an armed man.*

More important than the Puritan work ethic, which is not inherently concerned with the needs of others, is the prophetic imperative of Jesus' injunction to his disciples who could not watch with him one hour as he agonized over his impending death and sacrifice. "Why do you sleep?" he asked them. "Could you not watch with me one hour?" Matthew records that three times Jesus returned from prayer and "found them sleeping for their eyes were heavy." Human beings find it ever so easy to remain asleep to the injustices and inequities in the world, and to remain content with their own lot until directly affected. Self interest is the way of the world, concern for others is the ethical imperative of the Gospel and prophetic tradition. To love one's neighbor as oneself is to make self interest and concern for others one and the same in the mutuality of respect for the being and person of self and others.

Sleep is a divine gift for the renewing of body and mind, so that we may perform the work of waking consciousness with wisdom and love, respond to the call of compassion in our own hearts and in the heart of the world, and give back to the Oversoul of our souls, the Universal Mind of our minds, the Source of all being and consciousness, a self that is whole and loving and free.

Renew our minds by the inspiration of thy Spirit, that we might perfectly love thee and worthily magnify thy holy name. Amen.

COYOTE WANTS TO KNOW IF THE CELESTINE PROPHECY IS TRUE

by Rev. Webster Kitchell

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Unitarian Church of Santa Fe

I was busy stretched out on the couch with a book when I was aware of another aura materializing in the room. I was somewhat annoyed; when my aura gets comfortable on the couch, I don't like having its energy messed with. The aura that was not mine fully materialized. It was Coyote.

"I'm busy," I said.

"No, you're not," he said. "You're lying there when there's work to do."

"Which is why I am lying here," I said. "Because there is work to do."

"You mean you are willfully avoiding work?" He pretended to be shocked, but his aura gave him away.

"I find work depletes my energy. Lying on a couch with a good book increases my energy. And you are stealing some of my energy by your presence."

"Is that anything new?" he asked, "that work depletes your energy and rest restores it? We so-called lesser animals have known that instinctively."

"Ah, yes," I said, "but it is a new spiritual rediscovery which humans have to move to Santa Fe or Sedona to experience."

"Good news for realtors," he said, getting comfortable on the end of the couch. "I am fully materialized," he said, "and I am hungry. Aren't you going to offer me something?"

"Get it yourself," I said. "Your aura could use a little depletion."

So by gosh he did...Went in the kitchen, made some coffee and came back with a new loaf of bread I'd just made, all sliced and toasted and slathered with what must have been a full jar of marmalade. I decided I liked him after all, and we lit into the toast and marmalade and coffee.

"So what are we reading?" he said as our auras merged in happy enjoyment of the small graces of a beneficent Universe.

The Celestine Prophecy by James Redfield," I said.

"A best seller? I am shocked," he rejoined. "I thought you only read obscure theological journals."

"A coincidental occurrence led me to it. I am learning from it that coincidental occurrences are further evidence of a beneficent Universe."

"It sounds like you are deviating from your commitment to reasonable demonstrable cynical existential nihilism."

"Well," I said, "don't tell anyone at the Unitarian Church of I will be up on heresy charges."

"You think they are not as open-minded as their principles state?"

"Let's just say there are invisible boundaries beyond which it is not advisable to wander."

"And *The Celestine Prophecy* is past those bounds?" he asked.

"Hard to say," I said. "I suppose we might try it on them and see what reaction we get."

"Would you care to summarize for those of us who cannot spare a dime?"

"It is a novel, which gets it past the uneasy question of whether it is true. If a rationalist were to be caught with it in her or his possession, one could always deny that one believed it by saying it's just a novel!"

"OK!" he said. "That covers our tail in case of heresy charges!" Coyote is very fond of his own tail.

"The novel is the account of James Redfield going to Peru on the quest of finding an ancient document left by the ancient Mayans which predicted certain evolutionary happenings at the beginning of the 21st century...our time!"

"Why, what a fascinating coincidence," smiled Coyote.

"It is a coincidence that is often encountered in religious writing...an ancient prediction about what people should do in our time which happens to be discovered...in our time. and of course the proof that it is true is that it predicted so much stuff which happened between then and now."

"So, prophecy aside, what does *The Celestine Prophecy* say we should be doing religiously?"

"Evolving consciously."

"Evolving consciously?" he asked, raising his eyebrows.

"Humans now know enough about how culture evolves and how spiritual energy works that it should be possible to evolve consciously. In fact Mr. Redfield thinks that is our moral duty."

"Does he say anything about Coyotes evolving?"

"I don't believe he does."

I could see from his aura that he was angry.

"Only humans could be so conceited that they think they're the ones who are meant to evolve spiritually," he said.

I nodded. "I agree that it smacks heavily of the Fallacy of Central Position of which most human religions are inordinately fond."

"OK, OK," he said, "I'll just ask that my objection be part of the record. What is the religious message of *The Celestine Prophecy*?"

"Fairly sensible," I said. "It consists of a series of insights which seem at first, if you haven't ever thought about it, to be quite revolutionary and profound, but which if you have already accepted them seem more or less common sense."

"Think I'm ready?" he asked. "Or do I need the whole experience?"

"I think you are fully realized enough to be able to handle the whole thing."

I am still cursed with reasonableness."

"I know," he said sympathetically. "I wish we could do something about that."

"First insight! We sense that there is more to life than getting and spending. We search for fulfillment. We sense something else is going on under ordinary life."

"That's new?" he asked.

"That's always been the core of religion," I said. "That something else is happening under life's surface, and the something else under the surface is more real than what's obvious. What the book claims is difference is that great numbers of humans are suddenly realizing this. That will make for a paradigm shift for the culture. It is no longer just you and I who know this, but everyone will know this."

"I'm not sure I like that," he said. "I prefer feeling superior to people."

"The Second Insight is a certain historical perspective which contends that the past 400 years, the so-called modern age in which we got all our scientific knowledge and the technology that makes us so comfortable, has been a diversion from humanity's spiritual quest. The last 400 years have been fun, but we must get back to the purpose of it all, which is spiritual."

"And which just happens to be coming into its fulfillment in our time?" he asked clairvoyantly.

"Why of course," I said. "You wouldn't have wanted it to happen in some other era, would you?"

"Of course not," he said. "Our old friend the fallacy of Central Position again."

"If you are going to ruin these insights with a skeptical attitude, I may just not reveal any more insights to you," I said.

"I am your devoted servant," he said piously.

"Now the Third Insight is that the stuff of the Universe is energy...this from the new physics. Therefore, people being part of said Universe, people are energy."

"I believe. No problem," he said.

"The Fourth Insight is that people compete for energy. I steal your energy to fill my energy needs. I get depleted if you steal my energy. Human history has been the competition for energy. There are winners and losers."

"Ah," he said, "that's why Dona Coyote said to get out of the den this morning. Said 'You wear me down, Coyote. Go see that Minister fellow.' And I feel refreshed. But I thought it was the marmalade. I didn't know it was my aura sucking your aura."

"The fifth Insight is that there is boundless energy available from the Universe through mystic union with the beauty of the natural world and the Universe."

"So we don't have to steal energy from other people?"

"Right! There is an infinite source of energy just from connecting to the

beauty of the Universe...with love, of course."

"That's nice!" he said. "But it's not new. Coyotes have been doing it for thousands of years."

"Maybe you've evolved to a higher awareness than humans."

"I've been trying to tell you that," he said.

"We'll catch up with you yet," I muttered. I continued with my synopsis. "The Sixth Insight has to do with the psychological mechanisms in our personal relationships that keeps us from being aware of all this evolutionary progress. We have to get rid of our neuroses and control dramas and live a real life energized by our love for beauty."

"Sound doctrine!" he said. "Been true through the ages according to all the sages and teachers."

I responded, "Behold the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin...yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these!"

"A scriptural quote to live by," he said joyously.

"Redfield thinks all humanity will evolve to this state."

"I'm not sure I like the idea of everyone being a lily of the field," he said. "Who will provide us philosophers with toast and marmalade?"

"Machines," I said. "But when we really get with it, we won't need toast and marmalade. We'll make do with spiritual energy bars."

"Seventh Insight, please," he said.

"The Seventh Insight is going to be a hard one for the reasonable people at the Unitarian Church to accept. It is that good information comes to us from dreams, intuitions, and coincidences."

"Why wouldn't they like that?" he asked.

"Because they are suspicious of dreams, intuitions, and coincidences. They much prefer to rely on reason, probabilities, expert advice. They feel safer making important decisions rationally."

"Are they happy being that way?" he asked.

"In their personal lives, yes. But in their relationship to the Universe, they feel left out and lonely."

"Back to the First Insight, eh?"

"Right," I said. "They suspect there might be more to life than being reasonable, but, being reasonable they don't have a means of accessing it. They are victims of the cultural denial that there is anything deeper than the surface of life."

"Be careful! They sound ripe for New Age."

"I know! But New Age stole Ralph Waldo Emerson from us!"

"Aha! Professional jealousy!"

"No, actually we abandoned Emerson, and the New Age picked him up."

"On to the Eighth Insight. What's that?"

"Oh, it's about avoiding co-dependent relationships. Our hero, James Redfield, accesses love and abundant energy and then finds a young woman who is accessing it, too. He feels a certain excitement about the possibilities of merging

auras, which she also feels. Their gurus tell them NO! They are trying to feel complete by merging with another person or the opposite sexual energy, and that is a downer...co-dependent. What he has to do is complete his masculinity by discovering his feminine, and she has to complete her feminine by discovering her masculine. They can't cheat and merge with each other."

Coyote rolled his eyes, and muttered: "The old religious choice between sex and God. Why can't we have both sex and God?"

I nodded in agreement. "If I can trust my experience, God has nothing against sex and sex has nothing against God."

"I am glad to hear you are so spiritually evolved," he said.

"The other part of the Eight Insight is that groups can be synergistic of spiritual energy."

He pondered that, and said, "You mean the individual must allow the group to allay any doubts the individual might have?"

"Coyote, you are indulging in doubt yourself. I can tell by the condition of your aura."

"No," he said, "it is not that I doubt. It is just that you have not told me anything new. This is all classic Western religious doctrine propounded for centuries. There is more to life than meets the eye. We get bogged down in interpersonal relationships. There is energy from a mystic appreciation of the Universe. Religion has to deal with doubt. So what else is new?"

"The Ninth Insight," I said.

"Let's have it!"

"The Ninth Insight is that humans will evolve so that they start vibrating at higher and higher energy frequencies, and they will eventually just disappear and go to heaven."

He looked at me with genuine amazement. "You really mean it?" he asked. "Humans will just evolve right off the planet?"

"That's the end-game," I said.

He jumped up off the sofa and started bounding around the room screaming with glee.

"Oh, joy! Oh, ecstasy! Oh, there is a God and she is good! Oh, we are going to be rid of you! Oh, wonder! Oh, divine justice! We will have this beautiful planet to ourselves to enjoy and love, all us highly evolved animals, and will no longer be cursed by the human presence. Oh, thank you, God, thank you, thank you!"

And with that he went skipping out the patio door, cleared the fence in one bound and when I last saw him he was sharing the good news of the Ninth Insight with a group of eager robins. They were very excited.

Rev. Webster Kitchell

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If you would like to read more conversations with Rev. Kitchell and Coyote, you may purchase *God's Dog: Conversations with Coyote*. Address inquiries to Unitarian Church, PO Box 4637, Santa Fe, NM 87502.

A Brief Visit to the Land of Snows: A UU Encounter with Tibet: Her Religion and Her People

by Rev. Dr. Cynthia Edson

In October 1991 I spent two weeks commuting from suburban New Jersey into Manhattan to study with five Tibetan lamas, who provided an intensive exploration of their Buddhist tradition, in preparation for a major initiation from the Dalai Lama.

The Dalai Lama is the spiritual and political head of the Tibetans living under Chinese rule and in exile throughout the world. The Nobel Peace Prize winner is a politician. The week prior to this conference in New York City, he announced that he intended to return to Tibet, a very risky proposition. The Dalai Lama has lived in exile since 1959, the year that China invaded his country.

Since then the occupying Chinese have killed over a million Tibetans; have insisted on rationed births to control growth of the indigenous population; encouraged intermarriage with Chinese immigrants to eliminate the native ethnic people; have changed the agricultural and settlement patterns that for centuries have protected the high mountains from erosion. The Chinese have attempted to dump their nuclear waste in the high plateaus which feed the five major river systems of the Asian subcontinent. While the world's attention was focused on Tiananmen Square, an entire culture and religion was being extinguished in Tibet.

The picture is not encouraging for Tibetan religious traditions. Hundreds of monasteries have been destroyed, their texts burned, and their art removed or destroyed in place by invading troops. Some are to be found in museums around the world, but much has been lost permanently, burned to cinders.

Yet the Reagan and Bush administrations insisted on a favored nation status for Chinese trade, seldom protesting the treatment of Tibet. It was not until the current administration that the Dalai Lama was received officially in Washington, and then with much protest from the Chinese. Funny how things change; our CIA once gave the Tibetan freedom-fighters arms.

President Clinton has continued MFN (most favored nation) status for China. Our country seems to value the billions in trade from China more than the image of defending freedom of religion for this remote mountain nation.

How important is religion and race for Unitarian Universalists? We seek our ties to Romanian Unitarianism, visiting rural villages in central Europe, feeling nostalgic for our roots. Think about that as I speak of thousands of years of Buddhist tradition in the land of snows. These traditions are part of the treasure of culture that we assume is available to us on our own spiritual journey.

Is it strange that an American Unitarian Universalist would be attracted to Tibetan Buddhism? Probably. This religion has many threads. The varieties of understandings of Tibetan Buddhism were explained by the different lamas. For one, the religion had magical implications, which arose from the older pre-Buddhist national traditions. For a different speaker, this religion was a system of theological debates and arguments. For yet another, the paradigm was a vast and supportive matrix of family which would provide stability in all worlds and a "mother/father" deity which would allow full emotional presence or absence. My perspective was also affected by my traveling companion, as I went to this summer program with a former Roman Catholic turned western magician.

For the rational mind facing a religious quest, it may seem a strange choice for religious study. For the meditative mind looking toward emptiness, a tradition of so much ceremony may seem overdone.

The summer program included the concept of energy transmission, a startling change from the Western lecture/sermon tradition.

Yet as a combined exercise in both encountering a foreign culture and experiencing the varied elements of another's way of being in the world, to commute through ten blocks of one of America's most frenetic cities to enter an ancient and wondrous space was both a challenge and a blessing. What really happened to me as I listened to the lamas through the translators voice?

It was safer and less costly than trying to go to India and the Himalayas. No altitude adjustments need be made. No visa need be obtained from China. And, most importantly, the continuity here at home need not be interrupted. Yet this summer experience raised the risk that never again will my view of my faith family be the same. Three years later, my own concern for "right livelihood" finds me returning to graduate school to do something other than UU ministry with my life.

Translation made the lessons long. The delivery of the teachers was no doubt vastly different than it might have been had they been instructing their native speaking students. Sometimes gestures would begin to accumulate and feed each other, only to be cut short by the need to pause so the translator could work. They were working in antiphony, rather than in the United Nations style of simultaneous translation. The stress of trying that with so much specifically theological language was great.

When the first fluent English speakers among the teachers took the stand it was both a relief and a challenge, for one had not the time to watch the crowd reactions or assimilate material between the delivery points.

Laying aside the differences in history to be found in the fact that each speaker comes from a different lineage within the overall family of Buddhism, I reviewed some long forgotten history lessons: Buddhism, having been "born" with enlightenment of Shakyamuni Buddha in India in the fifth century B.C., traveled into the high mountains in the north with Padmasambhava to be combined with native magic elements by the eighth century. In the small mountain valleys there sprung up many traditions among the indigenous peoples who had practiced a

much more shamanic tradition called BonPo until that time. I had at times to remind myself, as I listened to the English translation, that the Pali and Sanskrit from which the texts are taken, to say nothing of the Tibetan subfamily of languages, is vastly older than the Latin, Greek, and Aramaic in which the major western religious texts were originally worked.

Keep in mind that there was some travel through the high passes even in the early days. Novels have been written about the possibilities of Jesus' missing years having been in India rather than with the Essenes. Greek concepts in art are known to have appeared in the Gandharan kingdoms of northern India even in the days before Christ.

You may be familiar with the fact that in western sacred traditions there are basic texts and, as the Hebrews put it, "all the rest is commentary." So too in Buddhism. There are basic sutras and then there are the commentaries on the sutras. Over time there have been generations of scholars who have studied these and entered into debate over them, the Ph.D. of Buddhist scholars being awarded not after an examination by a panel of scholars but in debate with one or more already having received the degree. In a sense the speakers who preceded the Dalai Lama were the commentary, for each represented one of the five major traditions which have survived to this day: One in direct family inheritance, if not in the reincarnational theory of the plateau from which emerges the Dalai Lama's own Galug tradition. At the death of a high lama it is recognized that, having resolved to remain incarnate until all sentient beings are freed from the wheel of rebirth in samsarrah, he will come back in another physical body to help others.

A search is made throughout the realm for the ruler. For lesser teachers, the monastery may simply await the arrival of a later student who comes forward and is recognized by others as the spirit of a former teacher. (This new/old teacher is called a "Tulku.") A glimpse into this process was provided by the Bertolucci film, "Little Buddha."

To summarize the content of five days of teaching: the nature of mind is emptiness. To reach this conclusion for oneself there are a variety of meditative techniques which may be used, from eye focus and object veneration to the chanting of mantras (sacred syllables) and the use of specific body postures in meditation (such as hand formations or mudras which align the physical energies in various ways).

The purpose of this intense introduction to Tibetan Buddhist tradition was to understand the Kalachakra Initiation. Since the current incarnation of this Dalai Lama, this was only the fifteenth time this ceremony had been performed.

There were others in my meditative group who were unable to attend the initial teachings, yet did come to the three-day Kalachakra Initiation. How open were they to the energy transmission? Only time will tell. Time too will have to be the judge of what effect it has had on my own emotional and meditative life.

There is a part of the tradition I find valuable. There may be a way to integrate it here. At the end of the period of meditation, when the room is focused

and the individual ego is less in the way of the process, the energy which has resulted from the being together in sacred space is "dedicated" to a specific use (or uses)—rather like taking a special collection! Whether it be the freeing of Tibet from Chinese occupation, the health of the planet, or the liberation of all sentient beings, this step of taking what one has done and literally offering it outward is a crucial one. That was brought home in one particular teaching. This was for me the high point from the early teachings.

The translator for the day, himself a high lama, was so struck by the energy of the moment that he could not continue. The focus of the room stayed quiet. The teacher, who was equally affected but more in control of the emotions triggered than the younger translator, sat immobile on his throne. The three other persons on stage and most of those in the front rows were obviously "getting" more of the impact than most of the assembled 600 in the hotel ballroom. We were feeling the very difference in the air about us.

The lama's tradition had lost its major teacher just a few weeks before. The funeral had been postponed, so that the teacher in New York could come here and yet not miss performing the important rites of his teacher's last ceremonies. The "easy" explanation for the energy being encountered is a more "spiritualist" one than your rational mind may wish to accept for it involves that deceased consciousness' still being within the 40 days of the land of the Bardo after death, entering and uplifting the people in New York. An alternative explanation might well be that the energy generated in the room itself by all those quiet folk acted like a giant beacon of what Quaker George Fox called the "inner light" and focused it to the center of attention on the stage.

My days in Manhattan with the Kalachakra Initiation and its preceding teachings numbered only fourteen. It was two weeks of working with other practices from (and for) other times and places: High Mountains rather than Ocean Shores: though Ocean of Wisdom is part of the name translation for the Dalai Lama.

The great Kalachakra Mandala is gone now, its grains of brightly colored sand scattered in the waters surrounding the Island of Manhattan, as a healing for that place and time. It was but a temporary one-dimensional rendering of a multiple-layered space in which the ritual took place. I was really impressed with one company's design to present the art work as a walk-in environment on a Computer Assisted Design Program. With the chanting of the ceremony in the background, it really brought home the doors opening and the world changing. Perhaps they will get it finished this century. It has been around a long time.

Can we be validly interested in such magical mysterious realms without violating our own rationality? Many Tibetans, I discovered, work in several of the lineages and yet are also attracted to and at home with the 20th century technology (no greater, or lesser, magic than BonPo, certainly). Should it be so surprising then that some of us trained in the technological/rational ways of the West should also find ourselves attracted to and at home in the ways of a remote Eastern "Land of

snows?"

Let us commit ourselves to keeping open the option for dialogue, as this year of Tibet draws to a close in March. Let us know that we do have a responsibility here—to keep open all faith options so that the world may be a place of varied wonder.

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IDEAS FOR DOING CREATIVE THINKING AND MENTAL HEALING WORK

by Rev. Edgar Peara

Creative thinking which produces improved conditions in life, including physical healing, is possible because we live in a universe whose form and development is determined by some invisible, powerful, intelligent creative Cause or Power. It includes a causative, healing law which is influenced by, and responds to, the good health-creating thinking of you who understand that law and fulfill its requirements. Underlying Reality has created what we sense in our world. The changes in the world brought about by persons has stemmed from human thinking. What we think influences and can improve life.

As knowledge advances we increasingly see how much our thinking determines what we experience. The healings brought about by placebos suggest that our bodies and health improve as we change our thinking. What we think, under certain conditions, influences and eventually produces healthier bodies and better, happier lives.

Thinking that heals sick, undesirable conditions is based on the realization that there is a basic, underlying ideal Reality which intends health, progress, integrity, sensitivity, intelligence, order, industry, renewal, power, love, generosity, etc. to prevail in lives and the universe. Why? Because our basic abiding instincts to survive, be happy and grow are intrinsic to our nature as it is created by what caused us. Therefore those good qualities (health, love, progress, etc.) must be Its intention for us. Those wonderful inclinations (survival, happiness, healing) are all encouraged and assisted by those qualities (love, courage, sensitivity...). Thinking and feeling in harmony with this ultimate Reality and the qualities and values it encourages, promotes the power to neutralize and erase the thinking underlying sickness and disharmony (ignorance, hostility, anxiety, etc.) just as light has the power to displace darkness, not by struggling with it, but by being light, which automatically and effortlessly dispels darkness.

The mental process which heals, seeks to realize that the ideal truth of health and normalcy is the fundamental, present, underlying condition of your patient regardless of the appearances to the contrary. The reason for entertaining the ideal as the reality is that the fundamental, underlying Cause of being is always maintaining and sustaining the idealness of health and harmony of its creation (your patient) in its basic mental being regardless of any sickness or disharmony that testifies otherwise. In the same sense the fundamental, correct reality of any mathematical problem always exists in the ideal reality of mathematics, waiting to be discovered so it can correct a mistaken, wrong answer that appears on the paper of a careless or ignorant pupil.

When you want to treat yourself, or someone who needs healing and

would welcome your healing efforts for them, you simply say the name of the patient to identify the person in your mind. You don't dwell on their problem or why they are sick or troubled.

Then you focus and contemplate the nature of ideal, underlying Reality. Why is there a universe with so much of wonder in it? Because it has some cause that has vast intelligence that creates life in you and all creatures. It has given us a marvelous metabolism that sustains, heals, and renews our bodies. It is constantly active in making survival our basic instinct. It enables us to adjust to varied conditions and has given us reproductive powers. Even though whatever caused us all is invisible, it is real and powerful and operates according to laws that we have the ability to discover and obey so that we prosper, heal and survive. Thus it has integrity and is reliable and principled. It has created sensitivity in us so we can see and hear the wonders of the world and the life that surrounds us. Its life-supporting, forbearing nature shows that it is concerned about and cares for us and our welfare.

Think about these marvels of supreme, underlying Reality and add what you have discovered about its complexity, wonders, and life-enhancing nature. Thinking about the wonders of creation in all of its intricacy, variety, and love helps elevate your consciousness to the idealness of the Creator and charges your mind with Its power.

Realize that at the basic, mental level that underlies fundamental Cause, all is a good expression of its goodness, marvels, health, and normalcy. This idealness is not touched or affected by the problems and sicknesses in the world any more than the flawless laws of mathematics are influenced or made invalid by the mistakes on an ignorant or careless pupil's paper.

Focus then on the truth that there is a marvelous, varied creation in nearly infinite forms that issue forth from this incredible Cause. Different forms express and reflect Its powers and qualities in different ways. Its order and structure is seen in inorganic, or lifeless matter. Its growth and sensitivity is evident in all of the forms of life, from one-celled creatures to whales, sequoias and elephants. In humans we see Its higher intelligence expressed as cooperation in society, appreciation and creative love.

In this part of the mental healing effort you are thinking about the general, diverse, ideal effects of the supreme, incredible, causative Reality. In a similar way this would be like going from the general principle of addition that " $a + b = c$ " to specific instances that " $2 + 2 = 4$," and " $79 + 21 = 100$."

Your thought is working to realize that there is not just a general principle of life, health, goodness and intelligence, but that the principle is creative and has brought into being innumerable examples of its wisdom, sensitivity, integrity and love. You are approaching the concept that the marvels of the Creator are expressed in the wonders of its creation. You are finding instances that illustrate that the Creator's normal intention for its creatures is that they be well, protected and provided with all that is good and necessary for a complete, wonderful life.

Endeavor to discover real examples of its goodness and gracious powers in natural life: the development of our bodies from a single cell, the successful migration of monarch butterflies from New England to Mexico, the skill with which beavers build their dams and dens, the body's healing and reconstructive powers. Discover concepts which fill you with awe and wonder.

Then you begin to think of you or your patient's need for healing. As you think of what the person needs—healing, love, home, employment, whatever—you begin to reason about why a healing answer already exists and is provided for in the vast Mind and resources of the Creator. Think of specific qualities of underlying Cause that are pertinent to the actual need of your patient. The need for healing is met by Creativity's power to renew, restore, stimulate organ function, etc. The need for love is fulfilled by Its caring, concerned desire for Its creatures to be fulfilled and find affection.

In the same sense, if an arithmetic pupil needed an answer to a multiplication problem so he could pass a test, the exact, correct, problem-solving answer already exists in the principle of mathematics. He, or someone helping him would have to reason to discover the right, or correcting answer, that already exists in mathematical law. It could be found, applied to his need and solve his problem.

The healing process of thought includes awareness that there is an underlying, incredibly intelligent Cause whose intrinsic nature includes health and healing, as well as life, sensitivity, love and goodness. All of these desirable elements of the Creator are the norms or standards for its creation. The Creator's healing, answers, solutions and the creative power that brings them into being in individual lives is available to those who entertain (mirror) its ideas, attitudes and values. As you think in harmony with the Ideal thinking of basic Cause, Its creative law causes them to appear in your life and body.

Then you need to understand that health and healing are natural, normal conditions and tendencies in, and for persons, creatures and plants. Sickness is the aberration, the abnormal condition which goes against the norm and is contrary to the obvious will of the Creator.

Therefore you, or your patient are creations of Nature, of which the underlying Cause dictates that health and healing is the norm for all.

The mental treatment is an act of reasoning which goes from first thinking about the idealness of fundamental cause, to its general improving effect in life generally, and finally seeing the patient as a specific creation of the ideal creative Reality and thus a beneficiary of its correcting, healing power.

In that rational process, realize that the law of healing is fundamental and therefore able to enforce its sovereign power over the conditions in the patient's life. Thus you have reason always to expect the best. Enthusiastically remind yourself that you do trust good to appear. When you mentally entertain and expect the ideal, you help its reality appear in you or your patient, for healing is the effect of the conviction state of consciousness.

Your treatment, or reasoning, is an endeavor to bring into your life the

ideal goodness, or health, that already exists in the fundamental Cause and in you as its creation. Remind yourself that you want to be totally open to its healing, blessing, directing influence. This means turning thought away from the illness or bad condition to the norm of health and harmony.

Your exalted consciousness, entertaining the ideal model of whole health, is what brings about healing. Endeavor to mentally embody the high wholeness of normal, robust vigor and health by recognizing that health is the natural flowing forth of ideal Cause as your Parent or Creator in its direct relationship with you. Your treatment will be as effective as the radiance of ideal, fundamental good which fills your thought. The more exalted and wonder-filled is your thought, the better and more powerful will be your effort.

As you think about the idealness, power and love of underlying Cause you are better able to imagine that a consistently healthy, harmonious, prosperous, totally loving life might be. The more your thought dwells and is based on that goodness, the better your life and health. Always realize that the answer you seek is already an accomplished fact in the Reality of the law of ideal goodness. The sooner you realize that your good thinking is a powerful law that fulfills itself in your life, and the more you discipline your thinking to be in harmony with it, the better will be the healing results in your life.

Work to realize and feel with conviction the truths of the law of Cause as they relate to health and life and they will become actual in your present experience. In your treatment work, arguments for the law of healing goodness are declarations of Reality and thus have power and healing efficacy.

Every effort you make in treatment has some effect. The law, correctly, lovingly, reasonably applied is the healer, just as the law of mathematics correctly applied is the problem-solver. Thus you need to think and apply the law with confidence in its power, not your will. All the power in the universe is supporting your treatment when you think in harmony with the fundamental laws of basic Cause and living Love. Regularly remind yourself of the power of the laws of ideal Reality and of your intelligent ability to apply them to heal yourself and others. Expect the best. Remind yourself to be calmly confident in the magnificent, mighty power of the mental law of healing and your ability to apply it. The healing, improving, liberating power is in the basic Cause that made you and your patient and that desires your total health and well being. You can trust it.

* * * *

If you distrust your ability to do effective healing work and want this type of treatment, feel free to call Edgar Pears. 128 Berry Street, Park Forest, Illinois 60466-1212. Telephone 708-481-5055 and he will extend help regardless of ability to pay.

LOOKING AT LIFE FROM THE INSIDE OUT

by Suzanne M. Adams

Sermon Delivered at North Parish Church, North Andover, MA

February 6, 1994

A month ago, I innocently told David [Blanchard, North Parish's minister] that I had an idea for a brief talk—mind you, I did not say sermon. He said he needed someone for a whole service, and before I knew what was out of my mouth, I said I would do it. I thought it would be fairly easy, because several years ago I did a talk on my spiritual beliefs for the women in my mother's church circle in my hometown. I thought I could just dust it off, shorten it, and read it again. Piece of cake, right? Wrong.

A few sentences, a synthesis of ideas and quite a few quotes, long time favorites, made it through to this morning unscathed, but most of the talk was left behind in the archives of my computer disks. I've spent the last several weeks trying on sermon themes like clothes from my closet, sewing and altering them on the computer screen, walking around in them for a few days, then owning what fit and discarding what was too loose, the wrong color, out of season or too tight. Last Saturday there was finally one piece of sermon clothing that stuck with me, thank goodness. A few more rewrites and here it is.

As I thought of all the ebbs and flows of beliefs that I've swirled around me the last 15 years or so, there's an aggregate of tools or spiritual practices that has remained steadfastly powerful and faithfully constant, yet full of surprises and new information. My life, spiritual and otherwise, took on new meaning and purpose when I began to look for answers, validation and emotional support in an inner, deep place within myself. The doorway and pathway to that place for me is meditation, although I consider prayer, dreams and journal writing contributing side roads.

The inward journey, of course, is not a new one nor unique to me. Yet it seems that just in the last several years it has gained a new legitimacy. Even medicine, so long the bastion of the "show me, I'm from Missouri" school of thought, has had to admit begrudgingly that quiet inward time, whether in meditation or just retreating through music, art, or movement from the outer world, can contribute to the maintenance of wellness and bring people back into harmony from the imbalance of disease. And what wonderful side effects—lowered blood pressure, reduced stress, a strengthened immune system, a positive outlook on life—just to mention a few!

I've given some thought as to why it seems that more and more seemingly

pragmatic and outwardly ambitious people are clearing away time for meditation. Artisan and poet M.C. Richards in her book, *The Crossing Point*, felt that "People are hungering and thirsting after experience that feels true to them on the inside after so much hard work mapping the outer spaces of the physical world."

I think this is true. I believed that a well-organized, tightly scheduled daily routine would pile up an impressive list of accomplishments, bound to earn me the admiration of family, friends, co-workers and bosses. I should have been basking in my success; however, somewhere along the way, a little voice began to bubble up in me that asked, like the song, "Is this all there is?" I knew what I was doing, but who was the being who did those things, where did she come from, and perhaps most importantly, where was she going?

I'd read enough books over the years to be convinced that the truest, most supportive, accessible and immutable path to self-knowing was within me. There I would find the blueprint for my life, the improvisational play written just for me, and I would command the full attention of whatever consciousness existed there. When I opened the doorway to that inner sanctum through meditation, it lived up to and surpassed all my expectations.

Michael Thoms, a radio talk show host in the San Francisco area, said it this way. "In the harried, hurried world of modern contemporary life, in an age of so-called progress, at a time when living the good life seems limited to material abundance, there are precious few moments available for most people to reflect on what's important, to still the ever active mind and allow the voice from deep within to emerge into consciousness. There is a power, an energy reservoir each of us has to draw from, but most of us rarely do, except in times of trauma, which is what it usually takes to get us to slow down and wake up, ever so slightly. Changing our minds about how life works is not a superficial endeavor, nor is it merely a matter of positive thinking. It involves commitment and courage, plus the willingness to go within."

I was fortunate at this point in my life to be able to give myself the gift of a year and half off from working outside the home. I consider this time, meditating, writing, sharing with friends and family, to be the pivotal point in my spiritual life. There were and will be other critical times for me, but this self-directed, spiritual retreat helped me understand what had gone before and is my foundation of faith for what has come since and will come.

I filled notebooks with beliefs to be developed, and beliefs to be left behind, and lengthy descriptions of dreams and meditative journeys, many of which I still consider profoundly transformative and poetically and deeply moving. Out of the tilling and planting of that garden grew the Merrimack Valley Psi Symposium. Looking for fellow pilgrims in my quest for a spiritual identity and point of origin also led me to the North Parish Church. For years I'd felt that I was the only one haunted by these questions and now I'd found companionship and support on the path.

When research scientist Marilyn Ferguson wrote of the philosophical,

religious and lifestyle changes she saw happening across the country as others like me have begun changing from the inside out, she called us "Aquarian Conspirators," a leaderless but powerful and benign movement quietly if not secretly developing a new human agenda. Though there were few outward signs of our common thought processes, she said we are "linked, made kindred by our inner discoveries and earthquakes."

If I felt that I was unique, I would probably not be standing here this morning. My initial journey may have been personal and solitary while I found my footing and began the lifelong pursuit of knowing myself better, but because of the nature of our life here on earth, this inner life, which I feel is equally important as our more visible construction, will not have meaning unless I share it. And what better or more relevant place than here among my fellow North Parish pilgrims.

I find it hard to describe how turning inward has helped and changed me. It is this struggle to put into words what is a wordless experience and the very private and personal nature of the knowing that comes out of meditation that hold you back from shouting what you have learned. Instead you are more likely to whisper it to only a few close family and friends.

To quote Ferguson again, "They struggle to convey what has happened to them. They have no tidy rationale, and they may feel somewhat foolish or pretentious in talking about their experiences. They try to describe a sense of awakening after years of being asleep, the coming together of broken parts of themselves, a healing and a homecoming."

I can remember feeling alone, not for lack of physical companionship and closeness, but alone in a more cosmic sense, as if when pushing through the birth canal into physical life, I'd left something safe and intelligent behind. In meditation and in dreams, I can return to that place and be nurtured. When I need to, I can turn inside from the physical world where I may feel torn and fragmented, filled with doubt and self-recrimination, and enter a world where I am cradled and cherished, not because I have acted perfectly but because I am me. After I drink in this unconditional love, the consciousness in this world, whoever or whatever it is, stands me straight, dusts me off and sends me back to try again.

When I return to consciousness, I not only feel powerful, smarter, and healed, but the world looks sunnier and clearer, and these feelings stay with me for days.

It's a curious process, a melding of feeling the power of the freedom to choose and at the same time being content, even eager, to surrender to greater wisdom, guidance, intuitive knowing and going with the flow. Former astronaut Edgar Mitchell, who now heads an organization that explores states of consciousness, said to a friend, "I feel almost as if I'm operating under orders. Just when I think all is lost, I put my foot down over an abyss—and something comes up to hit it, just in time."

At one point when I was trying on sermon themes, I asked myself if I could only take one thing that I've learned thus far with me into tomorrow, what

would it be? And the answer was this opened door to inner consciousness.

Edward Carpenter wrote in the late nineteenth century, "If you inhabit thought (and persevere) you come at length to a region of consciousness below or behind thought... and a realization of an altogether vaster self than that to which we are accustomed. And since the ordinary life is before all things founded on the little local self... it follows that to pass out of that is to die to the ordinary self and the ordinary world.

It is to die in the ordinary sense, but in another, it is to wake up and find that the 'I,' one's real, most intimate self, pervades the universe and all other things.

So great, so splendid, is this experience, that it may be said that all minor questions and doubts fall away in the face of it; and certain it is that in thousands and thousands of cases, the fact of its having come even once to an individual has completely revolutionized his subsequent life and outlook on the world."

Again to quote Ferguson, "The transformative process, however alien it may seem at first, soon feels irrevocably right. Whatever the initial misgivings, there is no question of commitment once we have touched something we thought lost forever—our way home. Once this journey has begun in earnest, there is nothing that can dissuade. No political movement, no organized religion commands greater loyalty. This is an engagement with life itself, a second chance at meaning."

And now that I have found my way home, where is that?

Thanks to meditation, there is no doubt in my mind that the home I'm returning to is home to God. I've had a glimpse of that place of fluid light and overwhelming love. I could not even come close to explaining this to you rationally. My certainty comes from a much deeper, emotionally wrenching place of knowing, one where words are woefully inadequate. If I gained nothing more from learning to meditate than this remembrance and certainty, then it would be worth it.

Rather than diminishing the importance of my waking life, realizing the destination has added the sense of relevancy and purpose for which I was searching when I began my inner journeying. I have a lot to do still, adventures to go on, truths to discover, friends to make and love to feel before I leave physical life this time. This is not so that I measure up to some heavenly scorecard but to be sure that I bring back the full experience of being Suzanne here in North Andover in the changeover from the twentieth to the twenty-first century.

I'd like to close with a last quote from Marilyn Ferguson's book, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. "We find our individual freedom by choosing, not a destination but a direction. You do not choose the transformative journey because you know where it will take you, but because it is the only journey that makes sense.

This is the homecoming so long envisioned. "Condemn me and not the path," Tolstoy said. "If I know the road home, and if I go along it drunk and staggering, does that prove that the road is not the right one? If I stagger and

wander, come to my help... You are also human beings, and you are also going home."

Suzanne Adams

CELEBRATING UNIVERSAL LIFE ACCORDING TO VYWAMUS

by Rev. Dr. Glen Snowden

Two years ago I began my study of channeling with Jim and Clarice Thompson of the Tibetan Foundation in Youngstown, Arizona. I have completed a brief manuscript entitled *Star Games and Star Players*. The Vywamus materials printed here are parts of that manuscript and are liturgical expressions of humanity's new interplanetary consciousness. For me the activity of channeling is a spiritual discipline. It requires centering, communion, and communication. It returns insight and inspiration. I sit at my typewriter and telepathically receive the information from the energy field known as Vywamus, commonly referred to by the New Age community as an Ascended Master. I offer the Vywamus material for the reader's discernment and stimulation.

I wish to speak of the love and the joy of the universe's evolutionary plan. Up to now the clash of love and joy with all that was nonlove and nonjoy were the ingredients of your earth history. But that earth history is now to be perceived as a collective past life of humanity. There was inevitability involved in humanity's ethical evolution, just as there was inevitability involved in your past life as a deposed Bishop. That was a necessary event in your learning curve. In the learning curve of humanity as a whole, this "bad dream" of nonlove and nonjoy had to be experienced.

But the time is now for humanity to benefit from these tragic learning circumstances. The time is now for humanity to be free of these memories and energetic deposits. Humanity and the earth planet have labored long enough under these conditions to want now to break free of their conditioning influence. The time is now for humanity—in personal, individual ways and in societal, intercultural ways—to release its practice of nonlove and nonjoy and to go for love and joy.

In humanity's global history there has been plenty of evidence of the clash of love and nonlove, of joy and nonjoy. There is much pain in humanity as a whole regarding the scar tissue that is so evident. All the while there have been prophets of love and joy whose appearance has dramatized the difference between these realities.

The human population as a whole is groping for a life of love and joy. This we see in significant ways in the various peace accords that have happened most recently in your earth history. Now is the time for the earth populations to free themselves from their nonlove and nonjoy. There is pushing within the earth populations an energy for love and joy, and it is time for humanity to let go of its conditioned fears.

I want to reinforce the efforts of humanity in their quantum leap for an existence of higher ethical and existential vibrations.

Some Elements of a Universal Liturgy

Receiving a request for liturgical materials to celebrate the cosmos excites my emotions! It comes as a pleasing request, for we too hunger and thirst for a joyful celebration commemorating the arrival of planetary happiness. Of course, your celebration is in no way limited to the sphere of earth, for your celebration is inclusive of the larger, cosmic sphere as well.

Singing is a wonderful way to express the ecstatic meanings of interplanetary awareness and intergalactic community. But my capacity to sing at this time is of a lesser ability than my ability to give you words for a song.

UNIVERSAL JOY AND UNIVERSAL PRAISE

Rejoice, O ye peoples of all planets.
Rejoice, for your time has come.
The day of your gathering ignites the flame of hope,
A hope of universal joyousness.
For this gathering knows no boundaries, knows no limitations.
The people of the planets rise up in one accord.
Their lives are filled with streams of light
and movements of love.
Their lives make known the mysterious oneness
of the universe.
Let no discordant voice detract from this pageant of praise,
For the time of universal community is upon us.
Together we praise the grandeur of God/Goddess;
Together we declare our Divine connection.
Let our music resound throughout all galaxies.
Let our worship reverence the cosmic drama.
The music of the spheres is sung by all beings,
radiated by all energies,
For this song is one of universal praise, universal sharing.
Sing, then, with the stars of the heavens.
Praise, then, with the peoples of all planets.
Worship, then, with all beings,
For the radiant lightfulness of love creates all!

This musical text can be recited as an affirmation by those who are without the music. Its fullest, musical expression, however, will carry even more transformational vibrations. It is a liturgical meditation which will transform the resistances and parochialism which may still linger on the planet. Let the

musicalization of consciousness perform its divinely appointed purpose: to create ecstasy, an ecstasy that refashions the very soul of those who experience it.

The text of my song carries the message that is carried in my heart. I have been wanting to give expression to my sentiment for a long time now. Your request for liturgical materials gave me a welcomed opportunity to transfer my heartfelt meaning to my colleagues on the earth planet. In so doing I have given my message to the peoples of the other planetary systems as well, for they will eventually come to share in this joyful declaration. I see a vision of an intergalactic choir intoning these marvelous words and chords and melodies.

I would like to dictate another affirmation that could be used in the Liturgy of Universal Life. It goes like this:

AN AFFIRMATION OF JOY AND ONENESS

We sing of the joys and raptures of this thing called life.
Its mystery, its responsiveness, excites our wonder.
We enter into its joyous stream, singing praises.
Sing out of the bounty of your being;
Sing out of the unlimited Source.
Every expression of Source sounds its joyousness;
Every part of creation lives in oneness.
Let our praise of all creation swirl outward;
Our devotion to creation's Creator spirals upward.
The song of the universe entrains the tonalities of life,
And throughout the galaxies its harmonies are heard.
Let all species everywhere join the mighty chorus,
For the music of life is that of oneness.
Let the faith of all, the anthems of all
Resound the universe with praise!

The Liturgy of Universal Life is a very favorite project of mine. You spoke of a Responsive Reading among other things. Let's focus at this time on a Responsive Reading.

THE UNIVERSE IS LOVE

Celebrate, O singers of the starry hosts,
For your songs fill the energy waves with harmony.
Celebrate, O singers of the beloved planet Earth,
For your voices are heard in the far off heavens.
Together, creatures of sound and light,
Energies of joy and love,
We stand.

Our anthems of praise, our voices of affirmation
Declare the unity of stars and galaxies.
May all creatures and creations everywhere
join our heartsong - the universe is love!
The visible and the voiced ones,
the sensed and the sounding ones
Unite their heartfelt song.
The universe of love
vibrates to the sacred harmonies of Source,
Harmonies inspired of love.
Let all beings sing and echo the Divine harmonies,
For this is our joy, This is our essence.
Let all beings in their sacred ways praise love.
PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE.

I also have a Prayer that I would like to include in the Liturgy.

PRAYER

CREATOR of all creators,
SPIRIT of all spirits,
LORD of all lords,
LIGHT of all light
We invoke your joyous presence,
your creative beingness,
your loving energy.
We of earth and of sky affirm the unity of our kinship and purpose.
We embrace each other in gratefulness for the vision of our oneness.
We praise all life everywhere,
And we pray for its beauty.
We respect all life everywhere,
And we pray for its fulfillment.
We love all life everywhere,
And we pray for its joyousness.
We of all the kingdoms of life, visible and invisible,
We of all the galaxies of life,
known and to be known,
unite in prayer:
We pray the healing of all kingdoms, all galaxies.
We pray the abundance of all kingdoms, all galaxies.
We pray the ecstasy of all kingdoms, all galaxies.
This is our prayer of universal acclaim,
our prayer of cosmic commitment,

and our prayer of mutual benediction.

ALLELUIA.

I give you now a hymn text.

HYMN TO UNIVERSAL SOURCE

O Source, O Source of us, all that is.
O Source, O Source, thy love creates us.
Thy heart with music joyous.
Thy mind with purpose clear.
O Source, O Source, so vast thy being.
O Source, O Source, thy being we are.

O Love, O Love, hearts of stars and angels,
O Love, O Love, chant in joyous oneness.
Sound and voice extol Thee.
Prayer and faith know Thee.
O Love, O Love, thy heart inspires us.
O Love, O Love, thy peace instills us.

O Light, O Light, thy way is radiance.
O Light, O Light, unity is thy design.
Kingdoms of earth and sky,
Stardoms of space and time.
O Light, O Light, all are Lightful.
O Light, O Light, in thy care are all.

Regarding your request for a prayer which may close the Liturgy, I suggest the following lines.

BENEDICTION

We love Thee, O Source of all that is.
We bless Thee, O Giver of life and form.
Thy love encares us.
Thy ways enfold us.
Alleluia.

The Universality of Source and Resources

Your earth radiates a spectacular range of energetic displays of beauty. We should call them vibrational exhilarations. Although we do not live on the

surface of your planet, we, nevertheless, get the wonderful opportunity of looking in on its ethereal radiance. Its ethereal radiance is something we see not only at or during the changes of the seasons although it certainly is highly evident to all during these times, it is something we experience on a continuous basis. We never tire of its every expressive color and sound.

Yes, your earth emits sound! It is a sound which expresses the heart song of the planet. This heart song is filled with ever swelling melodies and chords that trail their ways out into the universe. It declares to the universe that planet Earth is achieving its grand, evolutionary purpose.

There is also heard a second sound or song, and this one is emitted by the races of people of your planet. This sound of the human species, however, does not carry with it the same exquisite radiance of feeling that earth's song carries. Its sound is of a different vibration. Its song is filled with the agonies and cries and shrieks of a planetary population suffering from a miscarriage of its galactic purpose.

These two songs, dialogically discordant at this time, are heard throughout the universe, and they have brought delight and despair to the ears of the universe. Those of us who have listened have been brought closer to the ecstasies of your planet and the agonies of the human species. We celestials and extraterrestrials have listened to your splendiferous and discordant songs. We are entranced by earth's song of loveliness and radiant hopefulness. We are aggrieved by the discordant sounds of the human species.

The extraterrestrials have come because they have listened, and they wish to assist in any ways that they are able. Their assistance has to do with encouragement, with information and with cooperation. Humanity's songs of agony and despair have touched their heart center, and they wish to share that information. By their arrival at this time they declare to the earth population that their help is near.

We celestials as well have a heartfelt desire to love you and your planet. For this reason we make ourselves available. We encourage all humans who wish to rise above the cries of agony and despair to call upon us and to call upon your "Christ figures" for help. By this expression "Christ figures" I refer to all of your sainted and savior figures of your respective cultures and religions. Call upon these sources of SOURCE! If your cultural conditioning in any way has interfered with your making contact with your "Christ figure," you may call upon me or other celestial helpers.

You do not offend the Source of All if and when you reach out beyond the culturally approved list of divine helpers. You may offend some representatives of the earthly religions when you do this, that is so. But it is not an offense against or a disrespect of Source of All should you decide to seek the help of the celestials. In an exploding world of human consciousness in which the human consciousness finds its inherent interconnectedness with all that is, it is only natural to become acquainted with the multiplicity of divine or celestial facilitators. The fact that

many of the celestial helpers have not actually lived on the surface of your planet does not invalidate their credentials as spiritual facilitators or cosmic counselors. The explosion of human consciousness is matched by an explosion of spiritual helpers, and I might add, it is also matched by an implosion of extraterrestrials.

It is all happening simultaneously and synchronistically. That's the dynamite of it, one might say. Its purpose, however, is not to confuse the peoples of earth. No, no! Its purpose is to offer a full menu of nourishment. Source is offering a full menu of helpers whatever your culinary tastes, whatever your religious preferences, whatever your theological or philosophical convictions. There exists a plenitude of spiritual helpers, an abundance of cosmic facilitators. So if you do not find your way with Christ or Buddha or Mohammed, you are not abandoned by Source. There exists an entire panoply of helpers who are tuned to your vibration and to that of Source.

The intent here is that no one shall be left out! Regardless of your belief system you are not left out of the acceleration of consciousness. No one is purposefully left out of the incoming of Divine Selfness. Whatever your persuasion, the universe is providing a channel of access for you. If, however, by your self-choosing you wish to separate from this incoming of Divine Self-Awareness, that is your choice and it is fully respected. Source does not operate through coercion nor by way of removing your right to chose your identity. It does, however, extend itself in every ethical and appropriately conceivable way to make contact with every person. It is universal in intent and activity.

Its universality may come as a surprise or even a shock to those who have placed limits on the intent and activity of Source. Such a parochial view does not, however, detract from the actuality of Source's motivation and implementation. Earth persons may squabble over territorial rights in regard to religious matters, but these cultural squabbles are of no consequence at this time in cosmic history. Humanity's religions have both contributed and dyscontributed to the formation of humanity's spiritual consciousness. Institutional religion has performed its evolutionary role. Now the time is here for individual persons to complete that cycle and to celebrate the individuality of their connection to Source. Let all those who would bind the soul of humanity to territorial disputes and planetary prejudice dissolve their resistance in the ever increasing flow of universal love.

It is time that the earth song now come into full harmony with its more universal score. It is also time that the sounds of earth peoples be elevated into a more sacred key. The hope of the planetary future contains the unification of these two melodies. They shall be ONE—one in grandeur, one in harmonics. The arrival of the extraterrestrials and the presence of the celestials of many varieties signal and send a message of Universal Love. We are here as emissaries of transformation. Prepare your minds and hearts for transformation. Prepare also your minds and hearts for us, your cosmic friends, for we too are part of that transformation.

I give you now some words of joy and celebration that articulate your heartfelt feeling of universal support.

THE AGELESS TIME OF LOVE

O joy, O rapture, the song of ages can now be sung.
O joy, O rapture, thy time is come.
The time of universal love is now.
The time of oneness breaks forth.
Our song of unity encircles the stars.
Our hymn of praise knows no boundaries.
We of planet earth join with beings everywhere
To welcome the ageless time of love.
We of earth with all beings
Welcome the age of joy and peace.
May the music of earth, the sound of galaxies
Declare this universal theme:
Love is of Source.
We are of Source.
All is of Source.
Praise Source!

You Are Loved and Your Earth is Loved

The universe swings lyrically and gently within its grand design of cosmic motion, and you on planet earth share in this gentle, rocking effect. Some of you may be able to experience this subtle motion of the universe as you wake in the middle of the night. Open your consciousness to the most subtle vibrations that you are capable of receiving. Then wait for a few moments and open yourself again; push open the envelope of your consciousness to its current outer most edges, and then listen and feel. At your most intimate and subtle levels of feeling you will experience the gentle rocking motion of your infinite universe.

You might say that this is Mother's milk for baby earthlings. This is Mother's hand gently rocking baby's cradle. This subtle motion of the universe is deeply gratifying. Try to receive it the next time you are awake in the night. You need not reserve this experience for the night, however. You can certainly enjoy it during daylight hours as well. It is purely a practical matter, for during the day hours you are often occupied with action oriented behavior.

Now this subtle mothering, caressing motion of the universe is directly connected to the health of your planet and your physical bodies. Both receive and experience the positive reinforcement which is inherent in this motion of the universe. You are not alone in "your struggle for life," as you call it. For indeed, the very phrase "struggle for life" is a dangerous misperception on your part. You

need not struggle for life. Your planet does not need to fight to survive. You and your planet are both carried in the caring arms of the universe. The more you get in touch with this subtle motion of love, as we wish to call it, the more your "struggle for life" will dissolve. Your struggle will be replaced with a feeling of universal support, a feeling of positive connection to all that is.

A RESPONSIVE READING — EARTH'S FULFILLMENT

Hear, O universe, we declare now thy grandeur, the magnitude of thine infinite design.

Planet Earth, we salute you in the celebration of your unfoldment. Thy rotations and thy pulsations mirror the universe's grand design.

Earth, you are coming into the paradise of your perfection, the garden of your abundance. Your time is now to bear the fruit of the tree of life, to give birth to your song of triumph.

Your preparation has been long and arduous; your expectations and dreams have sustained you for ages and ages. Now your time of prophecy is come. You are entering into the plenitude of your beauty and love, the magnitude of your light.

As you, Earth, do these wondrous things, a joyous reverberation resounds through the universe. Your songs of triumph echo through the Milky Way.

Earth, your rainbow skies fill with universal laughter.

Your signs of planetary festival are everywhere.

The infinite universe is designed toward its own fulfillment. The Earth, including its dwellers, share in the splendor of this universal encodement.

We of Earth celebrate now with all beings everywhere the time of Earth's perfection, the time of Earth's fulfillment.

ALLELUIA.

A SONG OF PRAISE FOR CREATION

Creation, thou art spectacular in thy design,
infinite in thy variations.

Angel light and star dust co-mingle,
micro and macro systems
magically pulsating.

Creation, thou art utterly mysterious in essence,
supremely wonderful in manifestation.

Thou dost disclose a tapestry of unity,
a time and space of oneness.

Consciousness and concreteness intermingle,
universality and uniqueness coexist.
Creation, thy vibrations fill your skies with joy,
frequencies of rapture exalt all being.
Thou dost display a canopy of light,
everywhere thy light is shining.
Love unites all myriad things,
its energy inspires thy evolutionary ways.
Creation, thy beauty ignites universal adoration,
thy being, universal worship.
All thy life forms rise up in celebration
PRAISE,
PRAISE,
PRAISE!

PRAYER OF UNIVERSAL LIFE

O joyful Spirit, Thou dost bring creation into visible being;
Thou dost sing the melodies of star systems into existence.
We and all creatures, we and all creation share in thy joy.
All beings celebrate their source in Thee.
We pray to make manifest thy joy in all we are,
to make evident thy love in all our being.
We pray that thy purpose shall radiate at all times,
that thy design shall be revealed in all places.
We pray that consciousness everywhere seek its divine right,
that consciousness in everything know its origin in light.
We pray that goodness and truth ever be ours,
that loveliness and beauty be everywhere.
We pray that our vision be universal in sound and sight,
that our commitment be united in heart and mind.
We feel the joy of our beingness, and we are thankful.
We know the love of our oneness, and we are grateful.
Source of all, continue now in thy ways of benediction,
as we, all of Source, continue in our ways of co-creation.
This be our prayer.

A Postscript

In regard to myself, Vywamus, I am a great mystery even to my self. This may come as a bit of a shock to hear me say this. I don't wish to create shock waves although it is necessary for me to make this initial comment. My initial

comment, however, is not my last comment. There is mystery at the center of my self-perception but there is also acknowledgment of my energetic identity. My energetic identity originated from Source as does yours. In that manner we participate in the same energetic field and derive from the same point of origin.

Your energetic field has taken you into a visible and tangible expression of Source. Mine has placed me in a nonvisible and nontangible manifestation. Nevertheless, I too exist as a manifestation. My social life, if I may speak in those terms, is not at all like yours on planet earth. My celestial social life consists of interrelating energy fields, all of them nonvisible and nontangible. In spite of my different circumstances I feel very much integrated and interconnected to all that is. And then I have the bonus of interacting with earth persons who are visible and tangible. So you see, I have a very good life!

My own mystery is a very positive experience and is held in balance with the knownness of my circumstances. My service, or you could say, my mission or purpose, is to assist "other energy fields" with their evolution. So my role relative to your life is occurring within this very context. I wish to fulfill my purpose to the highest possible degree just as you also seek to fulfill your purpose to the highest possible degree. I rejoice that my existence and purpose are manifesting.

Vywamus through
Rev. Dr. Glen Snowden

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