

The Vision and Power of the Hero

The Pulse of Spirit
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A Time for Heroes

*It's not an ordinary time,
Not an ordinary time at all.
It's a time for heroes
Those who can face facts
Though they sear like a red-hot iron
From the heart of a Pittsburgh furnace.
Come close you who dare but unless
there are some who do come close
What hope, oh world? What hope, ye
lands and seas and inhabitants thereof?
All will disintegrate,
All will be gone.
"Business as usual!" is the cry of most,
As they draw the blinkers more tightly
Around their eyes,
Shielding themselves as best they may
From the heat of the flame,
Clinging desperately to whatever
remains*

Of the familiar world

*Of yesteryear
Of yesterday.*

*Others see the doom that is at hand—
You don't really have to be a
detective—
But they pour out their life force in
protest
And protest is a deceitful god
That sucks dry the blood of the people
And at the end of the day
Is silent
And helpless
As Baal was silent and helpless.
The infamy has already been wrought
The damage has already been done
The evils already are here
Hunger and inflation and plutonium
and a thousand more*

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*Spawn of human arrogance and
selfishness and fear...
The world as we know it cannot survive
them
And will not survive them.*

*All this the hero sees
But he sees something else also
A way
A way through the inferno
A way through the desert
A way through famine and pestilence,
war and earthquakes
A hero's way
Not a way of survival
But a way of life
A way of strength and effectiveness
A way of assurance
A way of calm
Born of his unwavering love for the
One who still
Even in these turbulent times
Is Lord of Heaven and Earth.*

*The hero goes quietly to work
Needing no chariot
No spear
No audience
No praise
No reward.
His arena is the circumstance where he
is
And into that arena he pours himself
And his own indomitable spirit
The building block of a new order
A true order*

*A spiritual order.
The old world crumbles under the
pressure of what he brings
And out of the confusion and darkness
A new world appears
Filled with magic and light.*

Christopher Foster

I am interested in recapturing the truth of the word *hero*. That word is often related to war activities or saving someone's life. I believe one of the greatest heroic acts is to save a person's life by reminding them of who they are, letting them know they are important and have gifts to give. It requires sharing your vision and bringing your power passionately. It requires being yourself in these inordinary times.

I think we have thought of the word *power* as being the opposite of kindness and tenderness. Some of the most powerful experiences I have had happened when I felt safe in the presence of love. When I was surrounded by the love of someone I could trust. It is a powerful experience to know a person who is humble in their power. I went back and listened to Pope Francis' TED Talk about the revolution of tenderness. He said that people with great power also need to have great humility, because they are the ones with the most influence and the greatest possibility of saving another person's life. He also said, "The future is made of you, it is made of encounters, because life flows through our

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relations with others.” That is the English translation, as he spoke in Italian.

Our lives and our power move through our encounters. As the poem said, we are on the leading edge of changing the world, bringing a hero’s vision, if we so choose. We are seeing that there is something possible when most around are only seeing the desolation and the violation in the world. Most of you know that I am a chiropractor. I went to chiropractic school primarily because of the philosophy of chiropractic being that the power that made the body heals the body. There was respect for the design and beauty of the human body. Chiropractic removes the interference and allows the body to heal itself. There is a vision that if you get the things out of the way that are causing the symptoms, wholeness and health can return. It is not about fixing the body—it is about allowing the body to come back into wholeness. I have great respect for Western medicine and its ability to save people’s lives, but the farther we go into that territory, the farther we get from understanding the vision that it is possible that things are designed to work. That is the hero’s vision. A hero chooses to stand in the place of knowing this is all working out, in the midst of the current factors. It is very different from going after the factors to make things go a certain way. A hero brings the power of love and vision to the circumstance to assist in the unfolding

process. You are designed to be able to bring a powerful blessing into the world, uniquely as yourself.

I received this lovely book from Heather Ryan and Atom Terpening: *The Illuminated Rumi*. Atom wrote these words following Rumi’s poem “Only Breath”:

*So that being said, in the breath that
proves our being lies the joy of our
belonging.
Belonging to the visible, vibrant, and
ever evolving body of the world.
Belonging to that invisible, sustaining,
miraculous spirit of the universe.
Belonging to the transformative spark
of
Let me hold your hand in mine
Be us Angels, Be us dust
Let me cradle your care in the bosom of
silver light
Dropping all pretense of what should
be done
Together let us invent and rediscover
what can be done*

His words amplify the ability to see what can be done.

These last number of weeks I’ve been talking about our lineage, our inheritance, the way we are built, the way we have been culturally influenced by the factors that have been in our lives. And I think most of us have done the best we could to

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be conscious and get ourselves into the present moment, using the things that have been given to us as gifts. We know we may still have work to do to transform some things into gifts instead of limitations; opportunities and adventures, instead of challenges. I have friends who have been repeating the same story to me over and over and over again as a means of explaining their challenges. I pray for them, that they might know the freedom of letting those things pass away or be used for their powerful gifts.

Human beings have an interesting relationship with power, their own and others'. I had someone say to me many years ago, within minutes of being elected to a position of responsibility, "We need to have a facilitated conversation." I hadn't even had the power of the position for more than twenty minutes, and I thought *Wh-what?* I realized later that this person had issues with their relationship with power more than with me. It had very little to do with me because I hadn't even used my position to accomplish anything. It had been twenty minutes! I believe they thought they had lost their power because I now had this position. Our most essential power comes from the heart of the hero, not from any position we may acquire.

As human beings, we have abused and cursed power. We don't like others to have it and we don't handle ours very

well. I went to see a movie the other day, *The Darkest Hour*. It is a story about Winston Churchill and his appointment as the Prime Minister of England at the time when Hitler was invading Europe. There were people encouraging him to sign a treaty instead of go to war. They did not want to meet Hitler's power with force. Churchill goes through quite a process to make his decision to fight. He has an "encounter," as Pope Francis names it, with the common people. He gathers the passion of the people and powerfully moves things forward. He has found the power of his words. It is said in the movie that he was successful because he "mastered the English language." This is a reference to the fact that previously he was a mumbler and a poor communicator, but it also represents him finding his power and using it to achieve something great. As a result, there is no swastika flying over Windsor Castle.

Churchill brought the hero's vision of what is possible into the picture. He saw there was more than one way to go—that there was victory available. There are circumstances that require the power of the people, the hearts of the people, the surrendered willingness to put your life on the line for what you value. You have to face the fact that your life will probably not be the same, because you are going to say *yes* to the hero's vision and bring your power into the situation.

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More than once it has been said to me, “You’re really a powerful person.” I can tell you, I haven’t seen myself that way. I haven’t experienced having more power than anyone else. I know that I probably am a powerful person, but I didn’t like seeing myself that way because I thought of powerful people as being manipulative. So when someone has told me that I am powerful, I have backed off and thought, *I don’t want to be that way*. I’ve had people say, “When you walk into the room, you’re a powerful presence.” That statement concerned me. As a powerful person I could do damage and be seen as someone manipulating people, demanding they agree with me and what I teach. I didn’t want to look pushy or arrogant.

I have had to shift that reaction. I want to bring my power because I *do* know what I’m talking about. I *know* that life works. I know that love is important. I know that kindness and humility are essential if this world is to come back to balance. I also know that you are powerful. I know that you are kind; I know that you are smart; I know that you are important. I know that you are the revelation of the power of love through the human flesh that you inherited from the genes of your parents. And for some of you, you inherited these physical bodies and then were raised by other parents, so you got a double blessing. The power to be a valuable human being has to be taught by adults who know they

are valuable human beings. We can assist children to know they are valuable by letting them participate and give their gifts. We need to do that with our friends as well, because many haven’t had that experience. You are smart; you are important. You are needed. We get to be the hero who has the vision of what is possible. We see the glory in the eyes of our friends. We see the angel and the passion wanting to be born. We are interested and invested in creating with our friends. There is so much more that I am looking forward to seeing because I am staying on the hero’s journey. I am staying with the vision of what is possible.

I was out walking early today. It was ten after six this morning; it was snowing and dark and the streetlights were on. We’ve all had the experience of the snow looking like diamonds. That was true this morning. It was gorgeous. There were the footprints of a rabbit crossing the street. There were footsteps coming from the middle of the street, going to the sidewalk, and then back to the middle of the street. And I stood there, just trying to figure out what happened, like in an episode of *CSI*—crime scene investigation. Did they get out in front of the wrong house? Did they retrieve the newspaper? I couldn’t figure that one out. I still don’t have the answer.

But as I was standing there, it was the first

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time I ever had the experience of the snow diamonds dropping out of the sky. I could see the sparkling diamonds passing my eyeballs. It made me wonder what else is in the mystery of snow. What else is in the mystery of this life? What else is possible as I keep my eye on the way through this current reality? As the poem says, this inferno, this famine, this war that is happening on Planet Earth. Will I get to see more things because I am on the hero's journey? Will I live to see a powerful body of humanity treating each other with kindness? Will I be able to be in a container of people where tenderness and thoughtfulness measure higher on the scale than accumulation of wealth and position? Will I live long enough to be with people who see every circumstance as the potential for the greatest creation that we can do together, and pause in the unknown if we don't quite know yet what it is or what to do? What more is there for us to see, for us to do?

I invite you to have a hero's vision, to be on a hero's journey.

As the poem says:

*All this the hero sees
But he sees something else also
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*A way through famine and pestilence,
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A hero's way
Not a way of survival
But a way of life
A way of strength and effectiveness
A way of assurance
A way of calm
Born of his unwavering love for the
One who still
Even in these turbulent times
Is Lord of Heaven and Earth.*

There is a calm place in yourself that knows this reality, that sees a way through. In the darkest of times, in the most troubling heart times, find the centering place that sees a way through. And oftentimes you only see the very next step. I am a person who *loves* an outline of where I am going. I love tick boxes; I really like a plan; I *really* like to know how it's going to work out. I would love to know that I am financially secure. I would love to know that no one is ever going to leave me.

One step at a time. Be thankful for the people you are with; deliver the goods that are yours to deliver; bring your power with humility and gentleness, compassion, understanding and vision. Because at the center of that, your vision grows. And the more you do it, the more you understand, the more you see, and the more possibilities present themselves. There is

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more than one possibility. As Atom said in his poem:

*Dropping all pretense of what should
be done*

*Together let us invent and rediscover
what can be done*

It is a time for heroes. There is much that can be done, born of unwavering love for the One, in that calm centered place where we know we are the right one for the job.

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