

Essential Energy

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Arriving

We took long and relatively horrible summer trips when I was a child. Always in our tan station wagon - eagerly announced by my mother who believed in "showing us the country" - and silently planned by my father, who in the weeks before we departed could be frequently found frowning over the bank statements at his desk. We three girls learned not to say what we thought, even to each other.

Instead we readied ourselves as if for war.

There is something catastrophic about inserting three sisters in the backseat of a car with nothing but seat belts and an inch of space between them. That phenomenally insignificant territorial difference might as well have been the Gaza Strip in duplicate, the sister in the middle doomed by the fact of being surrounded by near-terrorists.

Whether we were driving the ten hours it took to get to Watford City, North Dakota, my mother's family's farm community or the exotic shores of Corpus Christi, Texas, the protocol was the same. We started with my mother putting on "her face" with the contents of her grey make-up case and the three of us jockeying for the most surface area, a task that spurred us into arguing the entire journey.

My parents had their own counterattacks. It is hard to count how many times they threatened we would be left at the next

rest stop or that they would skip our lunch. Sometimes my dad would paste masking tape between us. (I think he really wanted to use it on our mouths.) These techniques did little but force us into silent belligerence—for a while. It is amazing how furtive you can become with your feet and elbows, how insistent a girl can be that she was not the one who hit the other, even though there is no one else around.

No matter how frustrated we became, the fullness of our frustration could always be encompassed in the much-touted question:

"Are we almost there, yet?"

In that question, we sought an end to the misery we were causing each other, as well as, the beginning of the fun we could be having. The only problem in asking the question was that we were hardly ever "almost there."

I wonder how many times, as an energy healer, I have wished to be "almost there." I especially ask the question with a new client, for I know that they might not have the time, money, or inclination to ever return. Therefore, within a 55-minute hour, I have to "get us there," or—or what?

I will have failed my job - let the client down - taken a left instead of right turn - gone into the wrong profession - caused disaster, death, or ruin - or worse.

Come to think of it, I am quite incessant with this issue of "arrival" in many areas of my life. Will I have "gotten there" when my youngest graduates getting B's instead of C's in Communication - or when he actually reads a book instead of the Cliff Notes? When my oldest produces a grandson? When I move out of the suburbs and into a beach hut? When I have written 25 books, rather than 17? When some brilliant scientist invents a pillow that presses out wrinkles, and I do not mean those in the pillowcase?

In terms of energy work, we cannot help but want to arrive at a productive and joyful conclusion. After all, we would not be in the business of healing if we did not want to help people feel better. We want that depressed teenage girl to set down the razor blades and concentrate instead on a dress for Prom. We want the fourth stage cancer patient, the mom of three little ones, to receive the miracle for which she is asking. We want that businessman who has been out of work - is caring for his elderly parents and autistic son - to be hired for a job.



We want, we want, we want—and yet, the setting of these goals does not always get us closer to their accomplishment.

It has been said in many ways and many cultures, it is often best to concentrate on the journey, not (only) the destination. Years ago, John Steinbeck wrote a book, *Travels with Charley*, featuring a trip he took across country with his dog, Charley. Most likely, this journey was a good-bye to life, for Steinbeck had been diagnosed with a terminal heart condition. Contained within this book is a lesson for each of us, one we might squeeze like sunshine from an orange.

Steinbeck applies the Spanish verb *vacilar*, “to wander,” to his meanderings, and describes himself as a *vacilando*, or “wanderer.” It is this attitude he asks us to adopt in our own lives, the sense of caring more about the journey than the destination.

Certainly, Steinbeck had a final goal, a point on a map he vacillated toward. He acknowledged, however, that this destination was nothing more than it appeared, a symbol on a piece of paper. The wealth of the journey -- the colored sunsets, weepy rains, greasy French fries, satisfactory nights spent sleeping under the stars, parenthetical thoughts, and paragraphs of emotions -- were the treasures gathered on the way. These were the experiences that taught him about how to become even more “John Steinbeckian” than he was. That allowed him to know Charlie for what he really was—a fellow life companion disguised as a dog, incognito only because he had a tail.

It is good and it is comforting to help our clients feel better. We want our training to create miracles and our hopes to assure well-being. Even when the selected objectives can be checked off the list, however, the honest heart says that we have not really “arrived.” There will be another bend in the road or curve ball thrown sideways, if not for us as a healer, most assuredly for our client, who is, after all, a living being and therefore, subject to constant change.

Perhaps the wisest attitude to adopt, as a healer, or a person, for that matter, is that proposed by Steinbeck. We know where we are going. We long to get there - and - we just might. Because of our assistance, a client might rise from their palette whole-limbed or finally release the long-night sufferings of childhood. The chances of an accomplished mission, however, are greatly increased by our ability, as a healer and a person, to remain in the present and seek to add benefit in the moment. This indeed, is the best that medicine can offer.

This is, in fact, the path to increased connection and joy, healing antidotes within themselves.

I often wonder how different all those family vacations might have been if I had decided to enjoy the trip along the way, instead of always waiting for our arrival.

Although I cannot turn back the clock and tell my younger self to complain less and care more, it is not too late to do so now. Who knows what might happen if more of us stopped being so concerned about widening the inch between us and closed the gap with more love? ☺



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