



This is How it Goes: Care of the Self and the Creative Process

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This morning I wake - sinuses congested, bags under my eyes, headache - even though I have slept quite well. No dreams are present in consciousness. I drink strong, black coffee, sitting in easy pose on the floor of my studio in front of my altar, thinking about how to spend my day. *Should I paint? I need to pay bills. Look at the dust on this floor—my mind, wandering. I feel tired, low.*

Yesterday, I saw clients at Haven for Hope, a local transformational center that helps people experiencing homelessness recreate their lives and where I volunteer once a month, doing Healing Touch with staff and members. It seems a full day's rest is essential after this day's work. A few settling breaths later, I receive this thought: *Spend time with us first!*—my guides prompting. That's fun! Realization: *Spirit is a WE!*—this is a delightful affirmation of my theology. And so my day begins—me attuning to and then following these kinds of ever so exquisitely subtle, intuitive messages — absolute, right-on, pure, directives from my Higher Self and Guides.

I drop into a meditative state, breathing, using the "The Hara Alignment Meditation—a technique that connects all four dimensions of your energetic being to the higher source of healing energy." (Hutchison, Cynthia. Sounds True, 2011).

I notice my breath. It does not come easily. There seems to be congestion around my high-heart chakra. I have been working to clear this symptom for many years, alone and with help from other practitioners. I understand it to be a symptom of deep-seated, unresolved grief and a result of environmental allergies. (*Note to self - follow through with receiving Nambudripad's Allergy Elimination Techniques SOON!*)

I cough, expelling mucous in my throat. More struggling breath. Gagging. Opening. Holding my heart and high-heart chakras.

Finally, I release a huge pocket of air from my gut. I think I might vomit. I go to the bathroom and sit on the edge of the bathtub until my body-mind settles and agrees to return to balance, my breath, coming more easily now, and shed tears.

These are adjustments I recognize as clearing, not only my own systems, but also residual energies from the energy fields within which I have been working and therefore must consciously clear from my own systems. Though I do clear as I work with each individual, I find that I must further clear after a full day's practice. After all, radical self-care is a requirement of those who do this work.

This thought comes - Neti Pot. This is the second



prompt of the morning to perform this cleansing. So I get up and run the warm sea-salted water through each nostril. There are so many mold spores due to the recent rains in Texas to which I apparently experience systemic resistance. Until I can eliminate this apparent resistance energetically, the Neti Pot will physically rinse unwanted pollens and spores from my nostrils and sinuses.

Intent now to do some yogic inversion postures (a good idea after using the Neti Pot), I am led to search my library shelves to find my yoga book, *Reaching Me in Me: Kundalini Yoga As Taught by Yogi Bajan*

hand will write. Here is the dream: *I am in a group—some healing class with mostly men healers. I am receiving. The healer, a male, places his finger (either air or fire, I am not sure which) on my left buttock. As he works, he increases the depth of pressure to penetrate my body at that point, directly adjacent to the ischial tuberosity. I judge this technique might be an inappropriate, invasive touch, but I have come for healing, so I watch his actions carefully, ready to withdraw my participation. I sense no sexuality or inappropriateness. On the contrary, I begin going under completely, barely aware he is there. Others are watching his techniques. He holds the point for a long time. I know he is healing*

I allow divine interplay in my art, in my life. Not only do I allow this interplay, but I invite it and welcome all of its surprising.

(Khalsa, K.H., 2002). This book contains instructions for certain Kriyas or practices that address specific states of experience. Looking at the index, running my finger down its list, discerning which practice might serve me well today, I receive a nudge at “Releasing Childhood Anger.” Hmm. Considering my recent visits with a Jungian trained psychotherapist, working to heal pre-birth trauma, this guidance is right on. Of course!

Notes are tucked within the pages of the book. I pull them out. The first page: “Chakra Awareness Guide.” I have read this document and many other books and articles about the chakras many times, but I am guided to read again. My fingers rest on the section explaining the root chakra. I read:

Coccyx, red or black [these two colors have frequented my recent dreams], *earth, vitality, life force, survival, self-preservation* - and - BOOM! Last night’s dream becomes fully conscious.

I record the dream in my journal, writing as fast as my

me. When he releases from my field, he is sweating. He comments about how much energy this healing required from him. As I come back to full consciousness, I am aware of shame. He says, “No little girl should ever have to experience what you have been through.” I can barely bring myself to look at these men.

Wow! Wow! I am in awe. Four ideas come to mind:

- In 2007 I became aware of and had surgical intervention to remove a Stage Four Pre-cancerous lesion from my perineum (root chakra!). It has been further healed in this dream by this Shaman.
- In my conscious, very recent self-healing day-work, I am working with sleeping-dreams and with a psychotherapist and hypnotist to help heal pre-birth, past-life, and childhood trauma from this incarnation (root chakra) and to integrate and unite my animus and feminine energies. Additionally, for the past few weeks, I have been attending a dream group and have also participated in an Integrative Breath Workshop. (Awesome! Powerful! Do this if you have



the opportunity - but be ready to heal!) In this dream, the Shaman has come to help me heal the wounded unconscious I am ready to heal.

- In my conscious discernment process which is integral to the retreat I created and facilitate - "Care of the Self", and symbiotic as and synonymous to the creative process, listening to Guides has brought me to recall this dream and to this very specific Kriya: "Healing Childhood Trauma." (Yogic Kriyas are cleansing techniques used to purify the body and mind.)
- My masculine energies are working within to help me heal.

Carrying on. Following through. I practice the prescribed 11 minutes of the "Healing Childhood Trauma" Kriya. It is strenuous work involving specific breath patterns, sounds, and postures, but I am determined.

After the practice, I sit, inviting ego to rest - rest (please, rest!) and massage my right, great toe. I work at the point (in reflexology) that reflexes to the heart and to the brain, especially the area of the brain that regulates extreme feelings and behaviors associated with them. This is the joint in my body where I have experienced the most sensation of pain due to (according to medical diagnosis) osteoarthritis. Energetically, I know it may also point to unresolved childhood emotional pain, lodged in the heart and high heart chakras. Suddenly and after several passes, I am blown away as I remember - the healer in the dream called me by my childhood name - Debbie!!

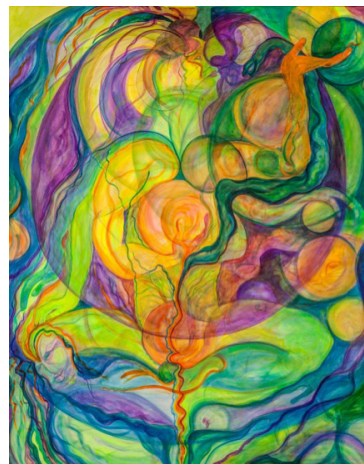
As an artist in the creative-process, *this is how it goes*. This is the way I come to the canvas, to my paper and pen. These days are the bedrock of my Care of the Self. They are essential to the harmonious rhythm of my being, essential to my connectedness to Spirit which is the core-Self.

Most often, a poem or painting manifests as a fluid component of a day like this. The words or urge to be with color comes through circuitous, non-linear routes that I can only describe as floating within the

eternal ooze of being. These creations are fully present and waiting for attention and expression, ideas and teachings waiting to become manifest in form, waiting for a listener.

I am moved to create by my life-experiences, as a way of processing and integrating my inner and outer worlds. To me, there is no duality of experiences. Whether I am working with clients, being with my family or engaged in my studio - I am healing. No matter what the tenor of each life experience - be it conflictual or blissful - I am healing. As the Healing Touch Program teaches us, "all healing is self-healing." In addition, I say - all experiences heal as long as I am willing to bring each and every moment to the Light in the act of radical self-care (paraphrased concept from *A Course in Miracles*).

As long as I am willing to care for my Highest-Self, my Highest-Self will take care of me. €



"beyond boundaries: this is how it goes" acrylic on canvas painting, 60X60" © d. ellis phelps, 2000.



"beyond boundaries: message one" acrylic on canvas painting, 60X36" © d. ellis phelps, 2000.

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