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## SHADOWS

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We don't talk about them. We tiptoe past anything negative lest we be accused of judgmentalism or giving in to our ego. We ignore our shadows, or pretend nothing such exists so we can remain "spiritually" unscathed. Gotta watch that karma, you know. So we turn the other cheek, swallow hard, kick the trash can, smile pretty, and affirm perfection. Ours, of course.

And there is nothing wrong with this behavior. Nothing at all. But sooner or later you have to wash dirty laundry or the stuff stinks. Maybe it is time to focus some light on our shadows, not to offend but to illumine. Maybe it is time to be more honest about what we think we know and what we say we do.

In case you've been an ostrich lately, here are a few examples of the kind of negativity alive and well and growing in today's spiritual movement:

\*\*\* An "enlightened" couple spent several days interviewing the owner of a very successful metaphysical bookstore to learn all the ins and outs of such an operation. The owner freely shared both time and details. Then the couple opened an exact duplicate of the store several blocks away, cut all prices; and, in the name of "love" and "we were guided to do this," set about to force the original owner out of business.

Patrons were shocked and dismayed to discover that "New Agers" can be just as cutthroat and greedy as anyone else.

\*\*\* An individual, who for years cheated and stole and bankrupted and virtually "smashed" anyone who dared get in the way, is now revered as an innovative authority on states of consciousness and the process of mind. Audiences flock to each address this individual gives, heaping money and praise. No mention is made of the past, however, nor does anyone bother to check the individual's credentials.

\*\*\* A "holy" prophet of the New Age, one who plagiarized the work of another early-on, now regularly duplicates the channeling of yet another channeler, almost word-for-word, never admitting where any of it comes from or giving any form of credit.

\*\*\* A young woman, obviously frightened, went into a large metaphysical bookstore to ask for information about channeling. She was assured by the owner that "anyone can do it, there's nothing to it, just plug in to any entity you want." Fortunately, an experienced individual overheard the conversation and asked a few questions. Come to find out the young woman desperately needed medical care, not the pile of books being foisted upon her. When needed information was given, the book store owner became abusive - for a potential sale had been lost.

\*\*\* A highly successful advocate of human potential and spirituality has a long record of abusing and overworking staff members, jabbing at every perceived rival, convinced all the while that anyone who offers help is really trying to steal precious ideas. As with all self-fulfilling prophesies, what this individual feared most finally happened.

\*\*\* One of the most inspired and dramatic of all the metaphysical/spiritual speakers active today - takes drugs before giving a talk. Hard stuff. So what does the audience hear? The individual? The higher self? Or, the drugs?

What do we do about this? About ourselves? About the fact that our holy gurus aren't very holy, nor is the spiritual side of ourselves quite what we think. And understand I am including myself here, for I have made a perfect ass of myself more times than I care to admit.

So the psychics say, "For \$5,000 I'll exorcise your demons and set you free." The fortune tellers say, "For \$30 I'll light a candle for you and pray." The Bible beltters hollar, "God said everyone of you has to give me \$100 by Friday or else." Then a Baptist minister hires a pilot to fly over a large open football stadium where Supreme Court Justice Brennan was delivering a speech, trailing behind the plane a huge banner which read, "Kill Brennan the Baby-Killer;" and that same minister later admonished his entire congregation during Sunday church services to pray in mass for Brennan's immediate death. Also, one of the better known meditation groups meeting at the behest of a well-known channeler prayed as a group to have a hated tower felled (supposedly because it caused people to have cancer, even though the tower tested out incapable of producing the type of current necessary to do that). This same group then went on to pray that the owner of the tower die from cancer.

You know, I've seen some free-wheeling black witches and satanists in my day, but I've never run across the kind of trash being dished out in volumes like we have today. It's almost enough to make an evil eye, cry.

The Harmonic Convergence was no different. After all that out-pouring of love and joy, my phone nearly rang off the wall from people calling to say that they had suddenly lost their job, or their car broke down, or they were shot for no reason by a person they never saw, or they were robbed, or pipes blew up, babies died, and their house burned down. "How could this be?" they would ask. "There was so much love and caring, and now this?" They could understand the public at large being critical of the Convergence but having their personal environment suddenly threatened, well, that was too much.

I know you are tired of this haranguing, and I don't blame you, but bear with me. This subject needs to be faced. It needs to be talked about.

No, I am not advocating witch hunts or screaming rampages to unveil "evil doers" or "ego maniacs." Pointing fingers directly at anyone makes little sense when you consider that three of your other fingers always wind up pointing directly back at you. What I hope to achieve with this article is to focus on behavior patterns, not names. I want to shine a great big light on a lot of shadows and ring a bell, a warning, if you will, to suggest that those of us in the field of spiritual development are fast becoming a bunch of two-faced-know-it-alls who haven't integrated what we claim we know. We don't practice what we preach.

Since I can only speak for myself (after all, I'm the one who brought up this messy subject to begin with), I'd like now to share a few thoughts and ideas which have helped me keep things in perspective. This is done with the belief that what helps one may help another. There are no real answers to the question of shadows, only different ways of dealing with what seems to sabotage our best efforts. We mean well, I really think we do. But, since when does the end justify the means? Why can't we be held accountable for our actions like anyone else?

To understand light, it might be wise to first understand darkness for they are two halves of the same whole.

As a near-death survivor, one of the things I learned from dying is that when faced with a problem, the cause, most likely, is the person I see when I look in a mirror; and, the solution of the problem, like it or not, begins where the problem began - with me. Somewhere along the line, somehow, I either forgot or misinterpreted something, or I was a participant in whatever allowed the problem to exist and/or be ongoing.

The two most important tools anyone has at their disposal, at least to my way of thinking, are meditation and prayer. I haven't found anything yet which can top them, so that's what I do first and where I go - for release, for direction, for guidance, for understanding, for wisdom, for stimulation, for energy. Neither modality can change the situation I find myself in, but both modalities can and do change me. When I "clean house" in this manner, I strip down to bare essentials and use lots of "soap," the soap of honesty and detachment. After meditation and prayer, I add elbow grease. That means I get to work. What's soap if you don't scrub? Love without action is incomplete.

The experiences I lived through at death enabled me to regard the earthplane with a type of clarity and discernment I was not aware of before. I faced the fact that here we deal with gravity, cause and effect, and the ever-present potential for pain or injury or illness. It takes discipline and effort to secure and expand our needs and pleasures as we contend with what appears as "limits" - beginnings and endings, birth and death. Gravity keeps us in place as a separated mass, a distinct and solitary unit, because it is here on the earthplane where we develop "muscle," that strength and confidence which comes from practice, perseverance, and accomplishment. To make a choice requires decision making skills of some sort, and every choice leads to a consequence (hence the idea of "paying a price"). Life is sequential here, based on what appears to be time and space. What we find on the earthplane polarizes of its own accord, automatically, and ever seeks equilibrium - the harmony of its own balance.

Further, earth has always been referred to as a school where each of us is enrolled in a given class at a given grade level to learn what we can and progress. Since there is no real up or down, left or right, backward or forward, the concept of "progress" is subject to challenge. What you believe depends a lot on what you want to believe. That means nothing is better or best, and no one is ahead or behind anyone else. We're here to learn, period. And we learn whatever is appropriate for our highest good and the highest good of all concerned. In other words, we're in this together. Argue if you will, but I rather suspect no one will transcend this stage of our development faster than anyone else; it just seems that way.

Literally, we are all participating in each other's drama, with paradox the only valid reality. Life is incredible theater - but if you take it too seriously, you'll miss the punch line.

So how does knowing this help when you get caught between corporate raiders who pillaged your job and a young punk who pilfered your pocket? And - how does all this explain the divisiveness which invariably follows good intent?

I know it's not proper to answer a question with a question, but here goes anyway. Have you seen the movie "DARK CRYSTAL?"

This creation of puppet wizardry for children contains one of the most profound truths I have ever seen portrayed on film. Through themes of good and evil, sacrifice and greed, the story line emphasizes how neither good nor evil is the answer. To find The Glory of God (true enlightenment), one must encompass and include all aspects of self before wholeness can be achieved. The fullness of Universal Light-- comes from the unification of the whole with its many parts.

If you haven't seen the movie, rent the video. The climax is what "gets ya," when good and evil merge into

THE ONE LIGHT they always were.

I've written a lot of articles about the Perelandra Garden, a place that I believe offers the next step beyond the concept of spirituality and communication with devas and nature spirits developed in Findhorn, Scotland. Although Perelandra is a spot of land in northern Virginia which flourishes in a county once officially declared a drought disaster and regularly defies almost every known rule of gardening, the process of creating a "Perelandra" no matter where you live, be it an apartment highrise or an Australian sheep ranch, is readily available through two books written by Machaelle Small Wright, the Garden's originator (i.e. "BEHAVING AS IF THE GOD IN ALL LIFE MATTERED" and "THE PERELANDRA GARDEN WORKBOOK"). Where Findhorn is a place people visit to be transformed, Perelandra is a process you can use to transform yourself no matter where you are.

In camping out on the property to do my initial research, I connected with the forces at work behind the magic so visibly striking. That magic, that presence behind the Perelandra miracles, is the same as the underlying premise of "DARK CRYSTAL." And that is: include, don't exclude, for "enemies" are denied aspects of the self; yet be discerning for appropriateness is your best measuring stick.

Think about that.

Organic gardening isn't the answer any more than commercial overkill. A dead bug is a dead bug regardless of how it happened. When you include in your "garden," understanding the truth underlying that inclusion, bugs and pests (problems) regulate themselves.

To say it another way, the spiritual path isn't the answer to enlightenment any more than the limited path of dogmatic religion. A denied aspect of self is just as harmful no matter where it hides or what it is called. But, once you affirm wholeness, realizing what that means, you become more fully responsible and more disciplined in your responses. You regulate yourself.

**EVERYTHING ON THE EARTHPLANE IS FOREVER SEEKING THE HARMONY OF ITS OWN BALANCE!**

How does this shed light on shadows? Well, it indicates that if I can't use what I know to be true, then it isn't worth knowing. If I can't practice what I preach, then I need to keep my mouth shut.

And channeling provides no excuse for abdicating personal responsibility for what you channel.

The bottom line never was profit. The real bottom line, now and always, is service plus long-term investment in the education and the upliftment of others. As I see it, when one gains we all gain. When one stumbles, we all suffer.

So I'm including. And I'm learning how to recognize what is appropriate in realization of the greater whole - and that means all around me, all which extends beyond the electro-magnetic-carbon-based-body I wear - for everything around me is a reflection of myself and what I am currently projecting. It's like falling in love with your own mirror. But there is more.

When I died, I was able to see that EVERYTHING IS OF GOD, that manure and pus and filth and crime and terror and crap and vomit, as well as roses and healing and cleanliness and responsibility and love and joy and beauty are equal polarizations from the same Source. I came to realize that when I say I am a Divine Being made in The Image of God, what I am really saying is I am part of ALL THAT IS. In reality, I never left the God I thought I lost because I never left the heaven I thought I found. Form and construct are meaningless in the sense that mind motivates what Source creates, with all comings and goings based on the flow of everything turning in on itself through the torus "doughnut," the only form of light which is capable

of self-organizing as it flushes and purifies and recycles the endless movement of that which never really moves.

Sounds like double-talk, doesn't it?

In simpler terms, resist something and you bind it to you, seek to hold on and you push it away, fear and you draw to you that which you fear. Forgiveness is not smart, it's necessary - because you become whatever it is you cannot forgive.

So how do I deal with my shadow? Accept, love, include, bless, forgive, and see my shadow for what it really is as I turn around to face it. But still more.

The spiritual movement is often devoid of the devout.

In learning to be detached and open, we've lost our sense of reverence and respect, our sense of ritual and sacredness. Inner checks and balances have been discarded in favor of an over-emphasis on "self" without understanding what "Self" is. As we probed ever deeper into our own psyches, spreading throughout far-reaching dimensions of awareness and sensitivity, we have lost sight of our humanness. We have forgotten that we are in the earthplane for a reason, a purpose. Earth is not the bottom rung on some kind of cosmic ladder, regardless of what people claim. Rather, where we are is an integral part of our experience as evolving souls moving steadily into clear consciousness. There is value here and joy, and there is much laughter. There is every reason for thankfulness.

And I speak from personal experience.

My first book, "COMING BACK TO LIFE: THE AFTER-EFFECTS OF THE NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE" sold out nationally in less than five months back in 1988 and was ready for its third printing, when Dodd, Mead & Company (the publisher) was taken over in a hostile takeover by a venture capitalist. I lost all my royalties and the book died. That wouldn't have been quite so bad except that my husband and I had taken out two major loans to help promote the book. We had to get a third one to buy back my world rights to the book plus three subsidiary contracts the Company had negotiated. Ballantine Books resurrected the book in paperback the next year (literally, the book about the near-death experience HAD A NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE!), but it will take the sale of another 90,000 copies before I ever see one penny.

Add to that the fact that my second agent (the one I had at the time) stole two-thirds of my advance money, and the fact that other persons in the near-death field opposed the book and went out of the way to make me appear irresponsible and my research of the aftereffects unfounded, even to the extent of diverting media opportunities away from me when Ballantine refused to advertise, and you get some idea of why my husband and I almost went bankrupt in 1989, and wound up borrowing money from neighbors just to buy gasoline and food.

I forgave and I forgave yet nothing happened. Finally, I gave up and gave it all to God. In my powerlessness to affect any meaningful change, I turned to The One Power. One week later, the very people who once damned the book labeled it a classic, and my research was validated and vindicated by another researcher in the field. People like Saddam and events like the Middle East war echo our collective fears about Hitler and the early days of World War II. So what did we do about it? We took action, instead of pretending the situation away like we did during the first few years of World War II. Now we need to rethink the situation, for we helped to create Saddam and we gave him the power he took. Saddam represents the universal archetype for our worst nightmares He is the sum of everything we deny about ourselves, our culture, and our lifestyle. We cannot progress as a global community until we are brutally honest about ourselves and what motivates us, then make some stark changes. Marching for peace and screaming about love doesn't cut it, not any more,

nor does turning to the nearest psychic channeler for the latest from our so-called "space brothers." We must speak truth and be truth, each of us.

But we must also be fair, for our greatest problem and our biggest fear are the very opportunities we need to learn, grow, and transform.

Not my will, but Thy Will.

While rummaging around in my science file yesterday, I came across an interesting tidbit: the singular intensity of a laser ray emerges from the combined power of molecules oscillating at thousands of different frequencies within it. The principle behind this phenomenon comes from a division of physics called chaotic math, which states - true coherence only comes from the chaos of diversity!

There's room for all of us in this world.

And we all have the same opportunity to look past appearances to the truth of who we are and what we are here to learn, if we will.

As light increases, so do shadows. . . until both merge into the radiance of All That Is.

Truly, life is God made manifest.

Isn't it time we acted accordingly?

For more information about Perelandra, write:

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