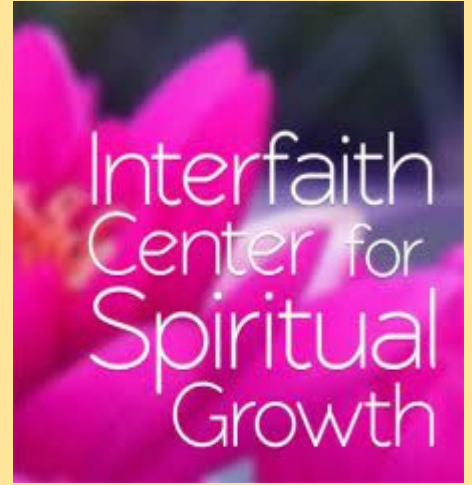




INTERFAITH INSPIRER
WE SHALL SURVIVE EDITION #2
AUGUST 2020



SHORTENED VERSION DURING THE PANDEMIC

MINISTERIAL MISCELLANEOUS BY ANNIE KOPKO

I have decided that sleep each night is a powerful meditation practice.. And that is also true for a nap in the daytime. Just a short nap can refresh and revitalize an ordinary day. When we are asleep the part of our consciousness below the mind visits people and places not known by our waking mind, and I don't exactly mean dreams either. Every night we enter into a spiritual exploration unknown in the daytime. Remembering this at night before sleep sets us up for a better receiving experience.

Life is actually a creative process and we receive our raw materials every night. We meet our guides, we set goals, and we remember who we are: a spiritual being having a human experience.

I tried lucid dreaming, and writing down my dreams, but that made me feel as if I was a crazy person, because of how disjointed and non linear dreams can be. We can learn much more by asking ourselves at the end of the night, what am I learning now, and what deeper answers do you have for me this morning? What ideas am I exploring? How are you changing and inspiring my day? Then - LISTEN. Answers will come to you in the day, sometimes slowly and sometimes easily,

We think that our waking hours are the most productive ones, but without our meditations at night, there would be no waking hours. They are a perfect balance and our lives are richer when we remember this.

These are some of the ideas I am contemplating this week as I observe my need for more sleep, healing from breast cancer surgery and my fear of getting Covid.

At Interfaith, We have no expressed common belief system, and so we entertain the possibility that each of us in our infinite wisdom, knows what is right for us. As we share our ideas, we open up to many new possibilities. Each week we have a Zoom **Sunday** service, classes and discussion groups. Each **MONDAY**, Layla sends out a **list with all the zoom links**. I will see you there.

Blessings to everyone! **Annie**



SUNDAY CELEBRATION SERVICES FOR JULY 2020



August 2nd

Service Leader: Rev. Delyth Balmer

Speaker: Rev. David Bell "Keeping It Together in a Fractious World"

Reader: Rob Fagerlund

Meditator: Brett Koon

Special Music: Julie Beutel

August 16th

Service Leader: Rev. David Bell

Speaker: Craig Harvey "The Potter's Wheel is Always Turning"

Reader: Marilyn Alf

Meditator: Janet Fry

Special Music: Erin Zindle

August 9th

Service Leader: Janet Somalinog

Speaker: Carol Bardenstein "Now You Don't See It, Now You Do:
Waking Up to the Wondrous and the Horrible"

Reader: Pat Root

Meditator: Jennifer Lenders

Special Music: Alaura Massaro

August 23rd

Service Leader: Rev. Lyriel Claire

Speaker: Janet Somalinog "Unencumbered Love"

Reader: John Lang

Meditator: Jill Crane

Special Music: TBA

August 30th

Service Leader: Rev. Annie Kopko

Speaker and Special Music: Neda Boin

Reader: TBA

Meditator: TBA

PEGGY'S COLUMN

AUTHOR BIO

Peggy River Singer is a Lightworker, animal communicator, medium, faerie ally, Reiki practitioner, and lifelong writer. She combines her gifts to help create harmonious relationships among all who share the Earth. Connect by phone at **734-548-0194**; and by email at newbluecanoe@aol.com. Articles about her experiences and insights are posted on her blog, angelsfairiesandlife.wordpress.com.

A CONVERSATION WITH THE DEVA OF FIREWORKS

Watching the magnificent fireworks program from Washington DC on July 4 helped me to make a strong connection with a being who was willing to speak on behalf of these entities.

Peggy: Hello, thank you for speaking with me. How would you like me to address you?

FW: *You may call me Fireworks, for simplicity. Although I am representing the phenomenon you are thinking of, [I am] not a Deva as you use that term, [to mean] an organizing intelligence. Instead, we derive our Being from the elements of the Earth that make up our physical and energetic forms. Our coherent consciousness results from our common origins as minerals, acids and other natural substances.*

Peggy: That's marvelous! When you say 'coherent consciousness', are you referring to all the elements making up one shell full of FW, or perhaps to an entire display?

FW: *A good question. There are levels of involvement, as you might imagine. I shall say, imagine an army of individuals who are all assigned to be part of a task force. Their coherence develops as they are committed to that particular task force. At the same time, there is another level of coherence when various task forces are expected to support each other, to work together cooperatively to achieve a goal. The human FW masters are the ones in control of the overall display, you see. We are involved each in our own aspect of activity.*

Peggy: Does it ever happen that a group of associated FW decide they are not interested in taking part in a proposed performance?

FW: *Yes, of course. Creator allows free will to its creations. In such situations, expected results are not seen. New equations and chemical components are required. The humans seek for new possibilities, as is their history when their plans do not come to fruition.*

Peggy: I am wondering about occasions when a business that produces FW suddenly blows up, often killing people in the process.

FW: *Ah. Well, even when we are cooperating for a goal, there are times when mishandling and errors by the humans occur.*

Peggy: I'm a little confused. You have said that a FW group can decide NOT to work for a project. So, can they also decide to go ahead and explode during the production phase?

FW: *Certainly, since often they might not be committed to a project, or the humans might not be treating the components with respect. Plus, once chemical reactions start to cascade, resisting destruction is nearly impossible.*

Peggy: What happens to all the FW once they are exploded? Do they return to their component atoms?

FW: *That is a useful way to describe what happens.*

Peggy: In watching a fireworks display for our Independence Day celebration, it seemed to me like the FW really enjoy their work. I saw faces and images in the smoke, and thought I could feel joyfulness.

FW: *Yes, indeed. Although FW are not 'alive' as humans think of it, as you now know we do have a level of awareness. It is very thrilling, exhilarating, to soar through the sky, creating wondrous patterns and colors! To hear the cheering, to FEEL the emotional responses of those who watch us perform. As for the faces and images in the smoke, there are other beings who love to play with such ethereal energies, and who look forward to these occasions!*

Peggy: My faery house guests loved the show as well; the younglings were whooping and bouncing around in their excitement. I expect that most fae beings wish to keep their distance from these explosions?

FW: *As your friends can confirm, those whose forms might be damaged by such energies need to be cautious about getting too close, yes. And others love to play in the energies created.*

Peggy: Is there anything else you'd like our readers to know?

FW: *I shall say, our thanks for this expressing on our behalf. It is interesting to connect with a human who wishes to know about us. We have learned something new today.*



CONSTRUCTION OF A PRAYER – PART EIGHT BY ROBERT HOPKINS

O Creator of the Universe Who was manifested in Jesus Christ, Buddha, Confucius, Gandhi, Quimby, Moses, Muhammad, Bahá'u'lláh and Rumi.

It is not to be inferred that Rumi's placement as the last name on this list of enlightened beings means that he is the least of them. His role of mystic and touchstone for all things Sufi is unmatched throughout the lengthy history of that branch of Islam. It is true that he was not the founder of it, but he is likely the most revered of all of its practitioners. He was, moreover as much a mystic as any of the other personages mentioned above and is probably the most well-known of the many mystics who identify themselves as Sufi. His poetry is so eloquent and timeless that Ann Arbor's favorite son, Laz Slomovits has found a fresh calling in his career to set Rumi's poetry to music.

The exact origin of Sufism is disputed. Some sources state that Sufism is the inner dimensions of the teachings of Muhammad whereas others say that Sufism emerged during the Islamic Golden Age from about the 8th to 10th centuries. However Islamic scholars predating the Islamic Golden Age were referred to as Sufis, like Hasan of Basra. According to Ibn Khaldun Sufism was already practiced by the Sahaba, but with the spread of material tendencies, the term Sufi was just applied to those who emphasize the spiritual practice of Islam.

Towards the end of the first millennium CE, a number of manuals began to be written summarizing the doctrines of Sufism and describing some typical Sufi practices. Two of the most notable are *Kashf al-Mahjûb* (Revelation of the Veiled) of Hujwiri, and *Risâla* (The Message) of Al-Qushayri. According to the late medieval mystic Jami, Abd-Allah ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah (died c. 716) was the first person to be called a "Sufi".

Two of Al Ghazali's greatest treatises, the "Revival of Religious Sciences" and the "Alchemy of Happiness," argued that Sufism originated from the Qur'an and was thus compatible with mainstream Islamic thought, and did not in any way contradict Islamic Law—being instead necessary to its complete fulfillment. This became the mainstream position among Islamic scholars for centuries.

Rumi was a 13th century Persian poet, Islamic scholar, theologian and Sufi mystic. He was born on September 30, 1207 and died on December 17, 1273. He was buried in Konya and the shrine at his grave site became a place of pilgrimage. There is a shrine erected on his burial site. His poems have been widely translated in many of the world's languages and he has been greatly appreciated for his spiritual legacy over the past seven centuries. He has been described as the most popular and best-selling poet in the United States.

Rumi was born to native Persian-speaking parents, originally from the Balkh, in present-day Afghanistan. He was born either in Wakhsh, a village on the Vakhsh River in present-day Tajikistan, or in the city of Balkh, in present-day Afghanistan. He came from a family of Islamic preachers and mystics. His father was a preacher and mystic. His mother's family had been Islam scholars and preachers for generations. Upon his death, his followers and his son Sultan Walad founded the Mevlevi Order, also known as the Order of the Whirling Dervishes, famous for the Sufi dance known as the Sama ceremony.

Like other mystic and Sufi poets of Persian literature, Rumi's poetry speaks of love which infuses the world. Rumi's teachings also express the tenets summarized in the Quranic verse which Shams-e Tabrizi cited as the essence of prophetic guidance: "Know that 'There is no god but He,' and ask forgiveness for your sin" (Q. 47:19). In the interpretation attributed to Shams, the first part of the verse commands the humanity to seek knowledge of *tawhid* (oneness of God), while the second instructs them to negate their own existence. In Rumi's terms, *tawhid* is lived most fully through love, with the connection being made explicit in his verse that describes love as "that flame which, when it blazes up, burns away everything except the Everlasting Beloved. Rumi's longing and desire to attain this ideal is evident in the following poem from his book the Masnavi:

از جمادی مُردم و نامی شدم
 وز نما مُردم به حیوان برزدم
 مُردم از حیوانی و آدم شدم
 پس چه ترسم کی ز مردن کم شدم؟
 حمله دیگر بمیرم از بشر
 تا برآرم از ملانک بال و پر
 وز ملک هم بایدم جستن ز جو
 کل شیء هالک الا وجهه
 بار دیگر از ملک پران شوم
 آنچ اندر وهم ناید آن شوم
 پس عدم گردم عدم چون ارغنون
 گویدم که انا الیه راجعون

I died to the mineral state and became a plant,
 I died to the vegetal state and reached animality,
 I died to the animal state and became a man,
 Then what should I fear? I have never become less from dying.
 At the next charge (forward) I will die to human nature,
 So that I may lift up (my) head and wings (and soar) among the angels,
 And I must (also) jump from the river of (the state of) the angel,
 Everything perishes except His Face,
 Once again I will become sacrificed from (the state of) the angel,
 I will become that which cannot come into the imagination,
 Then I will become non-existent; non-existence says to me (in tones) like an organ,
 Truly, to Him is our return.

In Rumi's retelling of "The Elephant in the Dark", some Hindus bring an elephant to be exhibited in a dark room. A number of men touch and feel the elephant in the dark and, depending upon where they touch it, they believe the elephant to be like a water spout (trunk), a fan (ear), a pillar (leg) and a throne (back). Rumi uses this story as an example of the limits of individual perception:

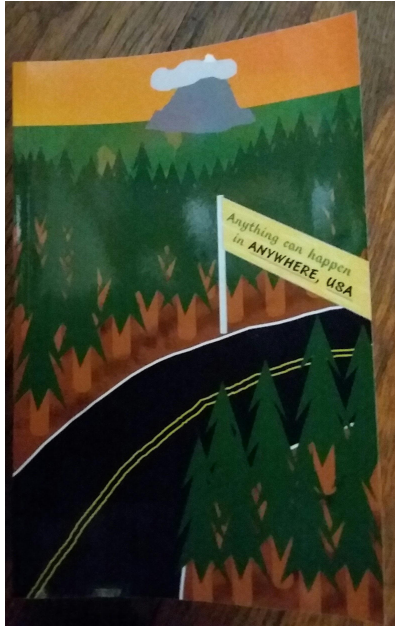
The sensual eye is just like the palm of the hand. The palm has not the means of covering the whole of the beast. Rumi does not present a resolution to the conflict in his version, but states: The eye of the Sea is one thing and the foam another. Let the foam go, and gaze with the eye of the Sea. Day and night foam-flecks are flung from the sea: oh amazing! You behold the foam but not the Sea. We are like boats dashing together; our eyes are darkened, yet we are in clear water. Rumi ends his poem by stating "If each had a candle and they went in together the differences would disappear."

This is but a sampling of the extensive work that Rumi put into poetry and prose. If you would like to see more, I would suggest that you consult Wikipedia from which I have drawn the bulk of my information about Sufism and Rumi.

Next installment, I promise to begin to get on with the substance of my prayer, rather than a review of the lives of the various spiritual beings to whom I acknowledge inspiration 5 times each day.

DRUMROLL, PLEASE....

Anywhere, USA: An Adventure Away from Reality



Magic, myths, and monstrous creatures: what more could you want during these troubling times? Take a break from real life and escape to *Anywhere, USA*, a town of dark secrets, rural charm, and a history cloaked in mystery. Join along with Jules and Elliot Paige as they dive headfirst and blindfolded into a world they never knew existed, where fairytale creatures—both good and bad—roam the Earth (or at least roam this one national park in Washington State). There, they will fight for their lives and for the town they've come to call their home, not only discovering the great evil that lurks beneath, but also a little something about themselves as well. Available on Amazon. Suitable for ages 13+.

Type: *Thomas A T Kaminski Anywhere, USA* into the Amazon books search bar, free delivery for prime members :-)