

FRACTURE AND HEALING

by Rev. SeiFu Anil Singh-Molares

In this seemingly never ending season of calamities and disasters, it is tempting to want to throw in the proverbial towel. To give up, and give in to our worst impulses. To let our

id run unrestrained, and allow our anger and despair to get the upper hand. It does indeed feel like we, and the world, are going out of control, particularly as we witness powerful and dangerous emotions run wild: on the world stage, behind the wheels on our highways, in encounters with strangers who for some reason we hold (or who hold us) accountable for our collective despair, and in far too many other ways to count. Many end up picking scapegoats, and tribalizing, i.e. looking to refuge within ethnic, religious, and many other kinds of cadres. In short, it appears we have given in to rage and frustration, and are girded for battle at any and all moments, with yells and screams everywhere.

But it doesn't stop there, as our external outbursts are very much preceded and then mirrored by our internal turmoil, those now too frequent moments of quiet loneliness and sadness, tears and heartbreak. Where we find ourselves bemoaning the seeming lack of ultimate meaning, and can't easily find it somehow. Our hearts shatter, and our longing and melancholy increase.

So we holler to the sky, to the Universe, and to God. What are we to do?

And laments follow: I need help. Please. I need help.

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“When we are fracturing, we are also healing. *In fact, our very fractures are the first step in our healing.*”

As counterintuitive as this may seem, however, all is not lost. We might start by remembering that breakdowns are mere centimeters away from breakthroughs. When we find ourselves on the edge of the abyss, we are also on the brink of insight and revelation.

And paradoxically, the multiple medical, psychological and spiritual pandemics the world is undergoing provide the perfect fertilizer for our long festering wounds and traumas to burst and release all of their toxicity, so that we are ready to be sanitized and healed. Of course, releasing toxicity and surfacing our wounds is just as messy, painful and unpleasant as it sounds!

With that said, when we are fracturing, we are also healing. In fact, our very fractures are the first step in our healing. The difficult, challenging side of healing, as we fall into sicknesses and despair of various kinds and wrestle with our wounds directly.

In this maelstrom, it is a tall order indeed to be told to tend to our breakdowns as sacred gifts, to look upon them with kindness and understanding, even as we feel ourselves being torn asunder.

Thankfully, we are not alone. These are the times when we need to reach out. And it is when spiritual directors, guides and companions can truly help, as they work continuously with fracture and healing. So we look to these intimacy workers, our doctors and healers, to assist us.

Needless to say, because this is our own internal journey, they can't "fix" us, as only we can ultimately heal ourselves. Each and everyone of us is responsible for our own spiritual growth after all. But our companions can help point the way, particularly by alerting us to the pitfalls, ravines and crevasses on the journey which we should look out for, to avoid compounding our existing wounds.

And as we travel the road together, may we find ourselves listened into our own awakening. And mirrored as we remember ourselves, and our True Nature. And particularly so, as we deal with stress and fracture, and use those as the mortar and bricks for the foundation of our reemergence and our spiritual flowering.



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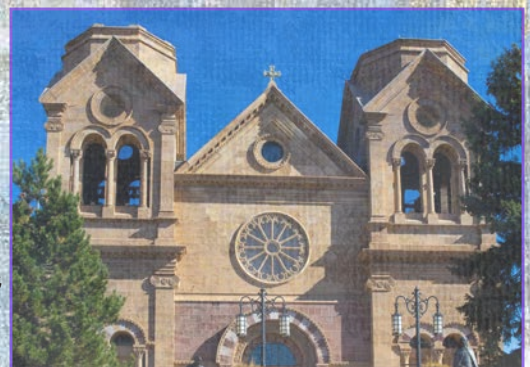


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A large, leafless tree with a complex network of branches is silhouetted against a warm, orange-hued sky, likely at sunset or sunrise. The tree's branches spread out in all directions, creating a dense, intricate pattern. The background sky transitions from a deep orange near the horizon to a lighter, hazy blue at the top.

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AN ANGEL WAKES THE SLEEPING MAGI
(BASED ON A SCULPTURE BY GISLEBERTUS AT THE
CATHEDRAL OF ST. LAARE AT AUTUN)

the perception of quiet —
but everywhere, everything is wakening:
the grace of bird flight
among plum-colored skies.

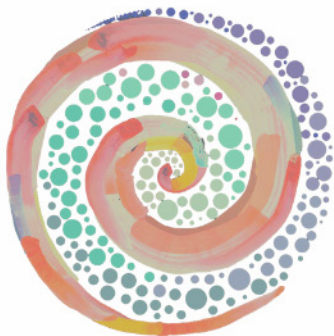
I do not know where I came from,
but I head with resolve
towards a humane belief, a light.

I don't know where you came from,
but light is wrapped around you —
a Japanese kimono.

All I know is before you arrived,
I was asleep. I felt you
like a child feels a parent entering a room,
covering me
with a blue woolen blanket to my chin
I feel your glow, a wing-breath kiss,
a murmur, a message,
a tilt in the clouds and earth.

You point to a direction. My eyes follow
up invisible spires
to a menagerie of stars
where the spiral of galaxies
are God's eyes.

Martin Willitts Jr, a Quaker poet, edits the Comstock Review. His 25 chapbooks include the Turtle Island Quarterly Award, "The Wire Fence Holding Back the World" (Flowstone Press, 2017), plus 21 full-length collections includes "Unfolding of Love" (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2020) and 2020 Blue Light Award "The Temporary World".



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NO ARK THIS TIME

God told me to include joy.
And to tuck in hope
And faith, of course.
And, yes, bring along love.

Bring memories, she said.
The slant of early light.
That first cup of tea in the morning.
The way it feels to slide into a bed made with
sheets fresh off the line.
The green of new leaves on the maple tree outside
the bedroom window.

Remember childbirth and the feel of your first-
born in your arms.
Remember the delight of a second daughter
And the hard blessings of those childrearing
years.
Remember the pride and ache when your girls
grew up and away.

Remember pets, and the birds who sang you
awake in the morning.
Remember loneliness and sorrow and illness
And the wonder of returning to happiness or
health.

Leave behind trophies, she said.
B.A.s and J.D.s.
Also envy
And grudges
Resentment
And fear.

Bring only what you can carry in your heart.
Etch there a picture of your garden.
The perfume of lilacs.
The blue of forget-me-nots.
Remember the feel and smell of earth in your
hands.
The warmth of sun on your face.

Name each person you have loved.
Name those who have loved you.
Remember all who ever did you a kindness

Or guided you on your way.

Picture your naked self
Entwined with your lover,
Naked as well.

Bring your poems and stories.
Bring song.
Remember to dance.
Bring laughter
And courage

Now,
Step forward.
Feel the light shining through you.
Do not look back.

Marjorie A. Speirs is a retired attorney, a hospice volunteer, spiritual director, gardener, and writer. Marjorie holds a master's in applied theology from Marylhurst University and loves to explore the opportunities for spiritual awakening in the midst of our daily lives.

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“All that I have written seems like straw to me”
 (“Mihi videtur ut palea”).

*St Thomas Aquinas,
1273, upon having a mystical experience
so overwhelming that he refused to continue writing.*





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