

2008



# Spiritual Directions

“The spiritual life is about becoming more at home in your own skin “

Parker Palmer

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# March Newsletter

## A Sacred Season

It is quite interesting how a culture can hijack a sacred season and nobody seems to care. In fact, most people embrace the change and allow the trivializing to go on as if it were not important. I am referring to the season of Easter which is a story about the path to transformation for humankind. Christianity talks about

this process as death and resurrection, of dying to one’s old self and rising to a new level of consciousness. I understand this as a teaching about the way human beings develop and grow. Whether it is in the realm of the mental, material or spiritual, transformation happens when there is awareness, letting go, and then waiting for the new possibilities to emerge. Easter is not just about bunnies, coloured eggs, days off and chocolate.

Transformation involves a spiritual awakening - a mystical epiphany, and is the deepening that takes place when we connect with Spirit. The transformative moment happens when we decide our identity is not wrapped up in old patterns and are ready to search for and embrace the new. To quote Jean Houston in *Search for the Beloved*, “It is the closing of the heart far more than the closing of the mind that keeps folk from transforming and deepening.” Mark Nepo puts it differently, “One quiet and powerful thing I’ve learned is that letting go is not just about putting things down. On a deeper plane, letting go is about letting your heart crumble, about letting yourself be rearranged by the journey of being alive. For the more we tense and harden ourselves, the more painful and bumpy our ride through existence...So to soften and crumble is not to die. It simply allows us to change. Too often, we equate change with death, when it is only a call to enter the unknown.”

Some of us may experience the shadow side of transformation: the need for reckless or constant change without reflection or spiritual awareness. There is a natural urge in us toward transformation. However, when this urge remains unconscious we are tempted to react to outside stimuli without getting all the necessary information to make a good decision; or we may choose to change our circumstances rather than making internal changes that take us deeper into our life experience.

Whether we embrace the Christian path or not, Easter as a sacred season gives all of us an opportunity to reflect upon one of the most important aspects of our humanity: our path to wholeness. What decisions or practices keep you centered and open to transformation or sacred possibilities? What is keeping you from connecting with the spiritual path that leads to fulfillment and satisfaction? Why not embrace the Easter season as an invitation and opportunity to sit down and do some honest reflection on your relationship to the Spirit, your partner on your life journey.

Some of the ideas in this article have come from Spiritual Literacy material. More information can be found at

[www.spiritualityandpractice.com/spiritualliteracy](http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/spiritualliteracy)

John Griffith

## March Events at Spiritual Directions

We have several exceptional workshops in March that still have spaces available. We now take credit cards as a convenient way of reserving a place for yourself or your friends. Just call 210-2802 to register or for more information

### Stepping Stones

with Straja Linder King. Experience healing, centering, living your memories and soul restoration. Each session addresses a key task of grief and is complete in itself. Tanguis, a therapy dog, will be present. Every Monday, 1:30 to 3:30 pm, \$25 includes all materials.

### Drumming Circle

with Kathryn Doherty. Energizing, spontaneous, fun and creative for mind, body and spirit. All drums and percussions are included or bring your own. Every Tuesday, 7 to 9 pm. \$15

### Personalizing Your Practice of Meditation

with June Churchill. Each session includes teaching and practice of different types of meditation and spiritual practices. Wednesdays, begins March 5, 7 to 9 pm, \$15.

### Befriending the Masks We Wear

with Brenda Gibbs. Through the processes of meditation and physically constructing a mask, you will honour the purpose and intent of each aspect of your personality. Saturday, March 8, 10 am to 3 pm, \$40 includes all materials.

### Contemplative Waiting: Introduction & Workshop

with Margot Van Sluytman. This writer's workshop focuses on waiting as a gift of trust and hope and is steeped in much possibility. Introductory evening, March 10, 7 to 9 pm, \$15. Workshop, Saturday, March 29, 10 am to 4 pm, \$65

### The Exquisiteness of Being Human

with Margot McKinnon. Learn about Body, Mind, Spirit or Soul dominant people, and how differently they each perceive the human experience. **Being Spirit Dominant**, Saturday, March 15, 9 am to noon, \$40.

**Living a Magnificently Exquisite Life**, Saturday, March 29, 9 am to 4 pm, \$125

### Life Writing

with Wilma Rubens. Using meditation, storytelling and writing to illuminate our inner landscapes, glean rich insights and find creative inspiration in our life experience. Saturday, March 15, 10 am to 4 pm, \$65

### Celebrate The Artist Within

with Straja Linder King. Guided art experientials help you nurture your intuitive artist. Tanguis, a therapy dog will be present. No art experience necessary. Monday, March 17, 7 to 9 pm. \$20

### Season for Transformation

with John Griffith and Straja Linder King. An evening of meditation and art making to celebrate the coming of Spring. The Vernal Equinox is on Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup> signaling Spring is on its way! Thursday, March 20, 7 to 9 pm. \$25 includes all materials.

### Spiritual Conversations

Discuss one or more of the 10 most important questions for our time. We will be part of a world wide conversation process using the 'Conversation Café' model. There is no charge for this evening but registration is necessary as space is limited. Monday, March 31, 7 to 9 pm

### Coming up...

#### Medicine Wheel Experience

With Dakota Eagle Woman. An introduction to the Medicine Wheel. We will discuss the 4 cardinal directions and their relation to the Medicine Wheel, as well as the animals and other information associated with each direction of the Wheel. The complete workshop will consist of 3 days. Saturday, May 17, will be an in-class teaching day, with Saturday, May 31 a day of walking a Medicine Wheel, and Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> a day for discussing our individual experiences. \$150 includes traveling expenses.

## Books Recommended by John:

*The Integral Vision* by Ken Wilber. Ken Wilber is a leading edge thinker who is developing an integral approach to life that applies to every aspect of it. This book is a short, very readable introduction to his work.

*I will not die an un-lived life: Reclaiming Purpose and Passion* by Dawna Markova. This heartfelt writing about the author's personal wisdom and experience enables readers to reflect on their own lives. Markova's perspective on healing is that we are not broken people needing to be fixed, we are growing people who are still unfinished. She defines 4 areas in which we can gain insight into our own transformation by being open to these questions. What's unfinished for me to learn? What's unfinished for me to heal? What's unfinished for me to give? What's unfinished for me to experience?

*The Transformation of Desire* by Diarmuid Ó'Murchu. Ó'Murchu states, "This book is for all those who want to reclaim their intuitive wisdom and outgrow the propaganda that has controlled our lives and our hearts for far too long." He defines very clearly how religion denigrates desire as the cause of all our problems and how our culture uses desire to manipulate us. Ó'Murchu says we must learn to honour the deepest, spiritual nature of desire because it is the way we connect to the sacredness and purpose of our lives. This is a thorough and inspiring treatment of the need to transform our understanding and approach to "desire".

## Website to view:

[www.conversationweek.org](http://www.conversationweek.org) This web page is sponsored by the "Conversation Café" people. They have surveyed people around the world to find out the ten most important questions for this moment in history. They ask people/groups to sponsor conversations in the last week in July around these questions. Their website has the list of questions which was decided March 3. We will be sponsoring a conversation on Monday, March 31, 7 pm at our office. The conversation is limited to ten people and will use the Conversation Cafe process. Please call 210-2802 to register.

## Other Opportunities:

The movie, **The Moses Code**, will be shown at The Unity Church, 2035 – 26A Street S.W. April 4 and 5 at 7:30 pm. Phone 293-4952 for tickets, \$10. This film focuses on the power of "soul manifestation". The Moses Code takes the law of attraction to the next much more important step. The producers say: "Activate the power of the creative force of God in the world. This code has the power to transform the planet, as well as add the richest blessings to your own life." Well known spiritual teachers offer advice on how to apply the code.

**Dances of Universal Peace Retreat**, at Sylvan Lake, Alberta, Friday, May 30 to Sunday, June 1, \$160 before March 15, \$195 after, includes accommodation and 5 meals. For more information e-mail Susan Susut at [ssusut@shaw.ca](mailto:ssusut@shaw.ca)

