

# *Exquisite Caution* ~ From Shobi Dobi

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This is caution without fear, caution imbedded in deep silence. It is the exquisite caution of the nun, the confident caution of the priest, monk, and rabbi and the delightful caution of a timid clown. You can all imagine Charlie Chaplin making his way through an earth quake area. Just innocently finding things to pick up and investigate. He finds a small child playing with a torn doll and sits down next to her and begins to play in the child's fantasy world -- just being his vulnerable self. No big clown gesture, no hoopla. We may not laugh out loud, but our hearts would recognize the humanity and maybe brings us back to a spark of hope – the small opening that reminds us of the joy we all have inside of us. This is hoping humor.

I remember asking Arina Iscaason, my clown teacher, what if I begin to cry when a child cries. She responded “Then you will cry together” It is the together part that the caring clown brings. The “we are not alone in this tragedy.”

It is this quietude that surrounds you that will invite trust -- being present, observing without judgement, continually opening to the moment, moment to moment as only the innocence of the clown can do.

And it is the exquisite caution of Charlie Caplin picking up an ordinary object from a pile of debris from a disaster and

examining it with the wonder of an innocent child. It is this sense of freshness and wonder that lurks in every moment seeking to connect us heart to heart.

Use this stillness to rest in the moment. Rest the fear of your reactive mind. Taking a deep breath to clear the mind, soften your belly and ask for the grace to open to higher wisdom. It is my experience that you will get a great deal of help.

When preceding in a risky situation with caution, trusting that Inner Wisdom, you may not see all the levels of your influence. Pride in your results can engage your ego, and flood your mind with reactive fear. Knowing you are not the doer liberates you from results. “Oh, “Thank you, thank you, thank you,” can be greeted with a knowing smile -- knowing you are only the worldly vehicle of something higher. But keeping this to yourself is the practice of non-doership. This does not mean you are not responsible for your actions, it means you don't take all the credit. The power that flows though you will, in itself, engender such inner awe that another's gratitude is not necessary. This is what renews the clown in his/her moment to moment travel. It is this quietude, trust and openness that will allow us to enter the traumatic space of disaster.

The child who has lost her family her home and her legs, lies in the hospital in shock. She will not even see the clown enter the room – the first time. But the second time there will be a slight hint of recognition, and the third time, a small wave of the hand and the fourth time maybe even a little smile. Time is what it is all about. Everyone needs a different amount of time to adjust.

Whether you are a clown on stilts next to a tank in Bosnia, or the gentle clown ready to lend a soft shoulder during a flood. Just look around the disaster. Who is there to hug? Who is there to lend that physical shoulder? The doctor “Oh, he's doing good work. Can't bother him” It's the same with the rescue worker, the fireman, the policeman. But there you stand in your foolishness with commiserating sadness on your face. Kicking at the rubble like the small children around you. You turn and offer open arms. I would fall into them - how about you?