

The Caring Clown - Living a Little Deeper in our Souls

One moonlit morning while surfing the Net, I came across a website www.InsightMeditation.com. They had a section of Buddhist dharma audio talks by Gil Fronsdal. I clicked on one entitled "Five Hindrances / Restlessness" as I was having so much trouble finishing this newsletter. The talk came across cyber waves into my house as I worked. I was quite focused on getting the TideWell photos in this newsletter to stay put on the page and not so much on the talk when I heard:

"Buddha sat under a Banyan Tree experiencing his childhood openness . . . he continued to sit with his child-like openness but also with his adult-like stability. It was these two elements that allowed the Buddha to become enlightened." I replayed the broadcast "Wow, child-like openness and adult stability – that describes caring clowning!" We walk into a hospital with our child-like openness to every possibility, yet we are aware of everything that is going on around us - like an adult-like stability. We stride along a track with two big feet -- one in the child, and one in the adult.

I went back to trying to squeeze everything into this newsletter hoping at last it would get finished. But days later I received a book in the mail from Neil Goldberg (caring clown and psychologist and subscriber from New York). [Heal Thy Self](#) by Saki Santorelli, University of Massachusetts Medical School. As I held the book, it fell open to a chapter entitled "Heart" and I read:

"In our time we are seeing before us in ten thousand ways the starvation and deprivation of the human heart. By heart I mean that part of us that feels deeply, that experiences connection beyond the confines of time, space, and linear thinking. That part of us that is moved – before thought – by beauty. That companion that aches in the loneliness of separation so often felt in our daily lives. That sweetness that longs for, and understands completely, wordless stillness and silence. That aliveness that spontaneously responds in the universal language we call love.

"The human heart has two poles. It is an enormous, extremely sensitive receptacle – a listening device far more perceptive than the ear. And, as well, a forge of unlimited radiance, capable of converting and transmitting everything felt into warm tears, sunlight and laughter.

"For too long we have been exiled from the truth of this. The interior elders have been dismissed. The linear discursive mind had come loose from its moorings – its proper place. We have built a boat and mistaken it for the sea. Yet behind the labels of patient or practitioner, we are all in the same boat. Thirsting for the same living water. Maybe our real work is to consciously cultivate this awakening within ourselves. If so, this work will cost us everything. It is fierce and uncompromising. Certainly this does not come by our forcing anything on anybody – including our selves – but rather by allowing ourselves to be touched so deeply that our hearts are broken open, altering us beyond recognition.

The small ruby everyone wants has fallen out on the road. Some think it is east of us, others west of us.

Some say, "among primitive earth rocks," others, "in the deep waters."

Kabir's instinct told him it was inside, and what it was worth, and he wrapped it up carefully in his heart cloth.

Kabir in [The Kabir Book](#)"

[Heal Thy Self](#) by Saki Santorelli pp 42, 43, Bell Tower, New York

What a wonderful world we live in to be able to find so much inspiration just sitting at home at our computers. It is words like these that make me so grateful to be a caring clown. All clowning is truly a good part of my spiritual path – to trust enough to go to the corners of my soul, not being afraid to feel my deepest love and to give from the place of that love in a child-like open way.

The words came to me this way one day.

The Vulnerable

When grief is not denied,
and
the ragged edges
of anger and fear
have tired

And
You surrender
and rest
your vulnerable heart
In grief's soft arms,

You find
you are seated
in a place
deep in your heart -
A place only grief
can take you

You learn
That
It is a silent place
With soft walls of
deep fragrant rose petals.

And
you find
you are sitting in a
wellspring of love
Ever flowing

Then
You leave that canal
to your heart open,
And
You go there often
Unafraid.

As
You have learned
That
The Pain of Separation
Is really
A Song of Longing

A Song of Remembrance
Which is so Profound
That
It can be heard
In other
Celestial Worlds

And
Then you know
Why you leave
The door
To your heart
Open and vulnerable

- Shobi