

# Ordinary People ~ Extraordinary Times

## *A Hopi Elder Speaks . . .*

*. . . he clasped his hands together, smiled, and said,  
"This could be a good time! There is a river flowing  
now very fast.*

*It is so great and swift that there are those who will  
be afraid.*

*They will try to hold on to the shore.*

*They will feel they are being torn apart and will  
suffer greatly.*

*Know the river has its destination.*

*The elders say we must let go of the shore, push off  
into the middle of the river, keep our eyes open, and  
our heads above water.*

*And I say, see who is in there with you and  
celebrate.*

*At this time in history, we are to take nothing  
personally. Least of all, ourselves. For the moment  
that we do, our spiritual growth and journey comes  
to a halt.*

*The time of the lone wolf is over.*

*Gather yourselves!*

*Banish the word struggle from your attitude and  
your vocabulary.*

*All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner  
and in celebration.*

*We are the ones we've been waiting for."*

Oraibi, Arizona - Hopi Nation

*There is a light in this world,  
a healing spirit more powerful  
than any darkness we may encounter.  
We sometimes lose sight of this force  
when there is suffering, too much pain.  
Then suddenly, the spirit will emerge  
through the lives of ordinary people  
who hear a call and answer  
in extraordinary ways.*

~ Mother Teresa

The trip to China was very freeing for the spirit of Shobi Dobi, the COAI, WCA clown. It was wonderful to be so spontaneous in the "streets," to just go for it, to walk into a restaurant, right into the kitchen, and hug the cook. It is this group of clowns that went to China last year with Patch Adams that organized the trip to New York, and who continue to go to lower Manhattan, even today.

Feelings of helplessness are ever present in the recovery process of tragedy. For the clowns who went down to Ground 0 in New York City, this is a way of healing their own hearts as well as others. Because I couldn't go, I still felt I wanted to do something. I, too, wanted to be part of the *Clown National Guard*.

One day I went to visit a friend in ICU at a local hospital that did not know Shobi. I was a little nervous about being in "full" costume, so I decided to just do my light hospital face and wear "street clothes" and my clown pig tails and red hat. I took a look in the mirror and what did I see? A clown anyway! Maybe it's my bright shiny pink nose, but there was no doubt about it --there she was -- Shobi Dobi the clown!

At the hospital my friend was asleep so the nurses said "Can you come back in a couple of hours?" So, I went shopping. "Oh look, a clown!" greeted me with smiles everywhere I went. "Going to a party?" I was asked. "No, just shopping" I'd answer. Then someone continued, "Oh, I see you're doing your civic duty cheering everyone up." There I was doing the National Guard Civic Duty right in my own community!

When Patch was asked. "Can you name a situation in a country you've been in ... where you've seen others come out of their disadvantaged situations and become more healed?"

Patch answered: "Whoever is universally friendly in life, sees it everyday, all day long . . . in the grocery store, with the check-out person - you see their name tag right on their chest. You can call them by their name, and you can see how just calling them by their name they look at you in the eye and something happens. If you just do even rudimentary communication with them, you're building a relationship. . . and you start to build community. There's no place where loving, compassion, fun, creativity, understanding, generosity are not needed in the world. It can benefit every single environment, from churches and prisons, to hospitals and legislative halls, to city streets and elevators."

Sometimes it takes a tragedy to get people to realize how much they need each other, even on the home front. We don't have to wait for the next trip to Russia, China, or Africa or for the Red Cross to call us. Right there in our home towns, everyday, there is a need for the fun, loving, joyful clown.

So the next time you go shopping, put on a happy face! The next time you feel a little heavy, blue, lethargic or scared, put on your face and go out the door. It's amazing, everyone will smile at you. Now when else can this happen?

-- Shobi Dobi