

Presencing Issue 7 - Discovery of Presencing

" Harmonic Convergence - Orcas Island Washington, August 16, 1987"

It started out as a normal *vipassana* meditation at 5AM, scanning inside of my body, backlit by windows that were already admitting light into the room. The scanning was automatic, feeling into each body part - moving my awareness from place to place. About five minutes into this and I heard and felt the word "Now." The word seemed to travel instantly through all parts of my body. The "now" voice seemed familiar, as if my friend, Jessie Loo, was speaking inside me. She was in the hospital; we had spoken about 12 hours before.



I went on with my scanning but became increasingly aware of the visual light behind my eyelids. I heard "now" again; once again it pulsed through my body. What was this? It seemed as if my friend was trying to get my attention and convey some sort of message. The "nows" continued and gradually I realized that the "nows" were the message. Each one had a profound effect on my body and my mind. I realized I was being given a practice tool. I started saying "now" silently to myself; I realized that not only could I feel a pulse move through my body, but the light I perceived behind my eyelids would pulse as well. As I continued, my body became lighter and lighter; more and more relaxed. As this was happening I could feel sunlight filling the room - light within and light without! Finally it was time to end the meditation. I felt very grateful for the "nows". When I opened my eyes I was very surprised, not only had the sun risen, but the clock said 8AM. I had been sitting for three hours!



While still feeling the "nows" inside, I picked up my copy of A Course in Miracles (ACIM) and read some of the words of the Course. All of a sudden it was as if the words caught fire! I could

understand the words in a totally different way. Every word, every sentence was written to be read "now." My body and my reading practice came together! This was an overwhelming experience. For months I'd been trying to make sense of passages in ACIM, much of which had seemed to be written in some kind of code. I had received the cipher; the riddle was being solved. "Now" was the key to understanding.



I was full of the joy of discovery and I wanted to share it with friends who were also ACIM students. I drove to my friend Catherine's house. I spent some time explaining to her what had occurred. Then I realized that the "now" was also the way to understand what in ACIM is called the "holy instant," which I now call "presence." I asked Catherine if she would like to share the "holy instant" with me. I suggested that we both practice the "nows." We tried for a while - I felt totally at peace and very present. Catherine however started to shift in her chair and look away with her eyes. Finally she said: "This is very intense." I got the feeling that she was afraid of being taken over by the experience. We talked about it over tea and then I left for my next stop. I was wondering what had happened - why was the experience difficult for Catherine?



Next I drove up the mountain to visit my friends, Dave and Sherry. It was 9AM. They were both sitting at the kitchen table; we greeted one another with hugs. D and S were earnest spiritual seekers, also world travelers. Dave and I were hiking buddies. Although retired, they were very energetic and highly curious. We had had many conversations about spiritual matters. We were not churchgoers. The three of us had been pondering the meaning of the "holy instant" for some time. I told them about my experience and then Dave and I started to practice "nows" together. As we looked at one another I said: "Say and feel the present moment 'now' in your body as I do the same." All of a sudden Dave and I were recognizing one another for the first time! We were experiencing the bond of many lifetimes together. "Welcome back brother," our eyes and hearts

seemed to say. The mirroring of our eyes became a strangely familiar feeling in our bodies. With curiosity we talked with one another about what we were experiencing. Sherry, who was witnessing, said: "This is very profound for both of you." As we talked from this sharing of presence, the strangely familiar feelings kept coming over us. I left Dave and Sherry's, with the knowledge that the "now" was real and could be shared.



I then met my friend Lynn who had arranged that we climb Mt Constitution in celebration of the *Harmonic Convergence*. There was great expectation among non-churched spiritual seekers that the so-called Harmonic Convergence would open us up to a state of higher consciousness. She has a healthy skepticism, a joyous inner spirit, and a strong curiosity. We had both done a summer-long intensive, practicing *vipassana*. I carried our lunch: sandwiches, oranges, and cookies. As we climbed up the mountain, I told Lynn about my experience. The hike was strenuous but pleasant as sunlight dappled the shadows. We came to twin lakes. Cerulean blue dragonflies were lazily skimming the lake surfaces as we ate. Then we climbed to False Summit, a promontory that overlooks most of the Eastern half of Orcas Island. We sat on the cliff top, next to a medicine wheel and meditated.



Later I attended an outside gathering at the Grange Hall. Jessie Loo had been had been in my thoughts all day. I had said nothing to others about her presence in my meditation... but I knew that, in some way, I was sharing this day with her. I would call her in the hospital and tell her about my day. I found a seat in the front row of the gathering to view a locally produced play called "Once in a Blue Moon."



Next to me sat Ruth and Hubert Kidder, both in their nineties - Quakers since World War II. I was so happy to see them. Ruth leaned over to me and said: "Did you hear about Jessie?" Instantly I realized what Ruth was going to tell me. Jessie had passed away on the eve of the Harmonic Convergence. I replied that I had not heard but that I had felt Jessie's presence all day and a now I felt a relief that Jessie was free. For almost two years Jessie and I had spent seven hours a day, three days a week together, while I performed her kidney dialysis. Jessie too had a keen spiritual curiosity. A few days after Jessie's death, Jim, her husband, showed me the last entry in her journal on the HC eve: "Going into the light... "



I felt very grateful for the gift I had been given, which I still attribute to Jessie Loo. She had known me as fellow seeker. She had passed on a powerful gift. At the time the "nows" just seemed to help me to better understand A Course in Miracles. Little did I realize that the gift I had received would transform my whole life; becoming the main source of my inner teaching and outer actions. I am telling this story because I believe that many of you are experiencing your own versions of this transformation. By revealing more of my inner life, I hope that each of you can start to affirm and live out your own experiences of presencing. I want to pass on the gifts of presencing that were passed on to me. One of these gifts is the realization that "there is nothing to fear." Please pass it on.

Blessings.
Jack