

Living in the Balance

March 2016

"You cannot stand any push back!!" he snarls in his message to me when I tell him that his political posts make me weary. "Take care. I am done," I reply. I hit unfriend and delete the message conversation. The simple truth is that I can "stand" push back. What I cannot stand is repeatedly peeling your shadow projections off of me. And I've told him that for the last two years. I've hung in there hoping we could find some common ground and we did agree that dogs are the most noble of creatures. But push back does not include intentionally shooting demeaning and mean spirited arrows aimed to prick my soul. That ain't a debate or a conversation and frankly, I let this go on for too long. My bad. I tried explaining, personal messaging, and finally unfriending. And I have my own shadow work to do on this. Why do I hang in there with people who don't respect me as a person in spite of countless examples of that very fact? I *know*, but I do not *see*.

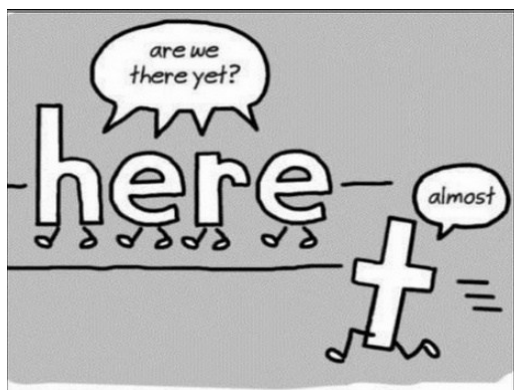
Someone posted "I am not what you think I am....you are what you think I am" and that captures the essence of projection about as well as any I've read. I see projection all the time on Facebook and the internet. And dark shadow may be the crux of our dread of events like holiday meals or neighborhood meetings. They show up everywhere. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Archie Bunker and Michael. Shadowing boxing. Everyone pointing out everyone else's tail and failing to see their own.

I know when I'm caught in dark shadow. I feel my blood pressure rise. My heart beat accelerate. My stomach knot. My mind starts plotting your demise. I spend time creating a smart ass zinger in reply to your Facebook post. I will get you!!! The rocket ship has lift off and I am lost in a fury of revenge! If I am lucky, I come to my senses before my dark shadow completely undoes my soul which I hope to God is still firmly on the ground looking up at completely untethered me; perplexed and blinking her disbelieving eyes. Carried away by my lizard brain, my soul reminds me that I have become what I think you are. Stupid. Unglued. Ignorant.

Perhaps what I see in you is true. Maybe you are a racist or a misogynist who spews hatred. How to respond to that? One of my high school friends has a true gift for being direct and authentic with people. In a recent message between us, he recounted a Facebook message he received from someone we both went to high school with. "I got a note from so and so a few weeks ago. He said, 'It looks like you unfriended me; if I did anything to offend you then I sincerely apologize.' I told him that I did unfriend him, and it was because he showed no respect for the opinions of others, that his comments were mean-spirited, and I didn't want him in my news feed." No ugliness. No name calling. Just... you asked and I'm answering.

Before I respond to you, I first have to get clear about my own tail. If I can do that and hold my shadow in check, I am a better at speaking my own core truth to you. Simply. Here's my perspective... my viewpoint. How or if you respond to me is not my task. My piece continues in tending and taming my own Archies, Michaels, Hydes and Jekylls. My own, "Mirror, Mirror on the wall, may I see me in my all."

©Wanda Meade



Calendar considerations.....

Diana Butler Bass

Grounded: Finding God in the World

Friday evening, March 4, 6:30 until 7:30

Saturday, March 5, 9:00 until noon and 1:00 until 3:00

Central Presbyterian Church, Anderson, SC

Offered by Anderson School of Theology for Laypersons, astlonline.org

The Sophia Institute, Charleston, SC

A Day with David Whyte, March 19, 2016

The Art of Living the Contemplative Life, Kathleen Norris, April 1, 2016

Journey with No End – Writing and Spiritual Growth, Mark Nepo, May 13 – 15, 2016

www.thesophiainstitute.org

Greenville Friends of Jung

An Evening with Asheville analyst Anita Chapman.

The Symbolism of Water: A Jungian Perspective,

with an emphasis on healing, the Mother, and the Unconscious.

Garden Room at Furman University Chapel at 7:00 PM

www.greenvillefriendsofjung.org

Kanuga Conference Center

2016 Christian Formation Conference, June 13 – 17, 2016

www.kanuga.org

Southern Dharma Center

Heart Treasure of the Awakened Ones, March 17 – 20

Focus on Feeling, Marcy 26 – 31

In Nature, Our True Nature, April 5 – 10

Loving Ourselves, At Long Last, April 20 – 24

Spiritual Bypassing, Sand Traps along the Way, May 5 – 8

For more information www.southerndharma.org

Eight Day Intensive and Post Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat

May 29 – June 5

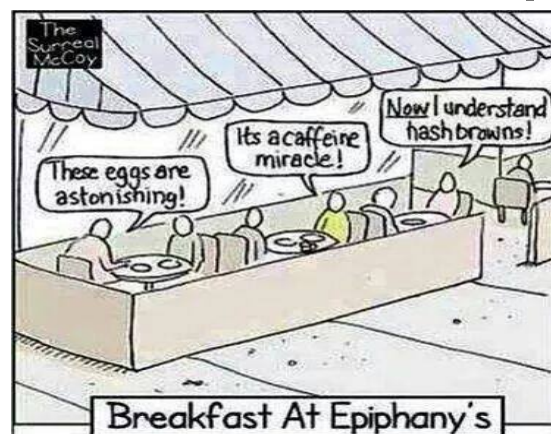
St. Mary's Retreat Center, Sewanee, TN

www.stmaryssewanee.org/about/events

Harvard offering free online course about world religions

[http://www.christiantoday.com/article/harvard.to.combat.religious.](http://www.christiantoday.com/article/harvard.to.combat.religious.illiteracy.with.free.online.course/80412.htm)

[illiteracy.with.free.online.course/80412.htm](http://www.christiantoday.com/article/harvard.to.combat.religious.illiteracy.with.free.online.course/80412.htm)





Calendar considerations.....

Valle Crucis Conference Center

Women Writers Workshop Session 1, May 26 – 29
Women Writer Workshop Session 2, September 2 – 4
Advanced Centering Prayer Retreat, November 27 – December 4
<http://www.vcconferences.org/programs>

Summer Dream and Spirituality Conference

May 29 – June 3
Kanuga Conference Center, Hendersonville, NC
Offered by the Haden Institute
<http://www.hadeninstitute.com/summer-dream-conference>

The Anchorage

Praying Scriptures at Mepkin Abbey
June 13 – June 20 flexible times available
October 3 – 7
<http://www.theanchorage.org/events.htm#Event5>

Many offerings for on-line retreats

Spirituality and Practice

<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/ecourses>

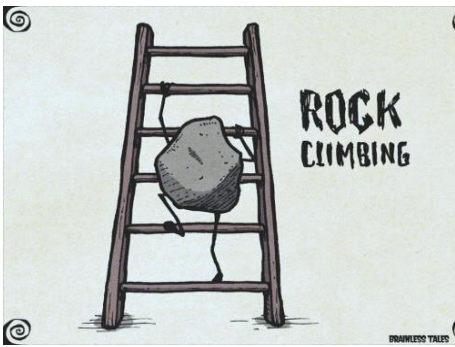
Abbey of the Arts

<http://abbeyofthearts.com/programs/self-study-online-classes>

Sounds True

Many recorded programs for purchase from all traditions and teachers





About Spiritual Direction —

- Offers a space and time for you to explore, reflect upon, and deepen your relationship with God.
- Provides a haven from the daily busyness of the outer world and opens a time to be still and to reflect on your inner journey.
- Is a companioning relationship grounded in dialogue and discernment.
- Explores ways you may integrate spirituality into your daily life.
- Is not limited to any one spiritual practice or tradition.
- May involve one or two meetings or multiple meetings over time.

You may wish to consider spiritual companioning if you are —

- Longing for a deeper relationship with the Divine
- Looking for a place to dialogue about spiritual questions
- Seeking ways to connect with the Spirit in a more intentional way
- Discerning ways to live in a more integrated and whole way
- Standing at a crossroads in your life
- Exploring new or fresh ways to be in relationship with God

For more information about Spiritual Direction, please feel free to contact me by phone
864-246-3960 or via email at wmeade@meadellc.com

Wanda Meade, M.Ed., Licensed Professional Counselor
Completed Haden Institute in Spiritual Direction Program
PO Box 14940
Greenville, SC 29610



None of the photos this month are my work. They are in honor of my friend, Wayne Jordan who makes me laugh every day with some corny Facebook exchange!