



Living in the Balance

March 2017

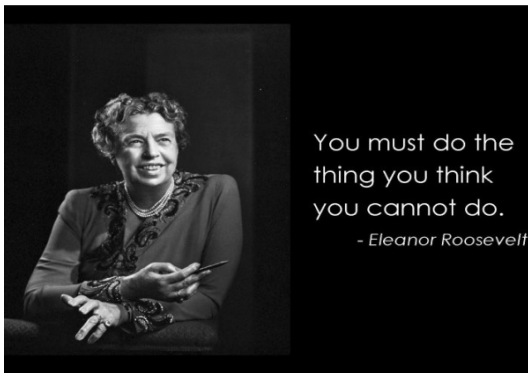
We are the ones we have been waiting for wrote June Jordan and also the title of the book by Alice Walker from which the following excerpt is taken.....written in 2006.

It is the worst of times. It is the best of times. Try as I might I cannot find a more appropriate opening for this volume....It helps tremendously that these words have been spoken before and, thanks to Charles Dickens, written at the beginning of *A Tale of Two Cities*. Perhaps they have been spoken, written, thought, an endless number of times throughout human history. It is the worst of times because it feels as though the very Earth is being stolen from us, *by us*... the land and air poisoned, the water polluted, the animals disappeared, humans degraded and misguided. War is everywhere. It is the best of times because we have entered a period, if we can bring ourselves to pay attention, of great clarity as to cause and effect. A blessing when we consider how much suffering human beings have endured, in previous millennia, without a clue to its cause. Gods and Goddesses were no doubt created to fill this gap. Because we can now see into every crevice of the globe and because we are free to explore previously unexplored crevices in our own hearts and minds, it is inevitable that everything we have needed to comprehend in order to survive, everything we have needed to understand in the most basic of ways, will be illuminated now. We have only to open our eyes, and awaken to our predicament. We see that we are, alas, a huge part of our problem. However: *We live in a time of global enlightenment*. This alone should make us shout for joy.

June Jordan and I were not friends who saw each other often...not the kind of friends who discussed unpublished work. In fact, we sometimes disagreed profoundly with each other. We were the kind of friends, instead, who understood that we were forever on the same side.... the side of the poor, the economically, spiritually and politically oppressed, "the wretched of the earth." And on the side, too, of the revolutionaries, teachers and spiritual leaders who seek transformation of the world. That any argument arising between us would be silenced as we turned our combined energy to scrutinize an oncoming foe. I took great comfort in this reality. It seems a model of what can help us rebalance the world. Friendship with others.....populations, peoples, countries, that is, in a sense, impersonal.

The happiness that imbues this kind of friendship, whether for an individual or a country, or an act, is like an inner light, a compass we might steer by as we set out across the lengthening darkness. It comes from the simple belief and understanding that what one is feeling and doing is right. That it is right to protect rather than terrorize others.... right to feed people rather than withhold food and medicine....right to want the freedom and joyful existence of all humankind. Right to want this freedom and joy for all creatures that exist already, or that might come into existence. *Existence, we are now learning, is not finished!* It is a happiness that comes from honoring the peace or the possibility of peace that lives within one's own heart. A deep knowing that we are the Earth—our separation from Earth (and from each other) is perhaps our greatest illusion—and that we stand, with gratitude and love, by our planetary Self.

Alice Walker, We are the ones we have been waiting for: Inner Light in a Time of Darkness



Calendar considerations.....

Amy-Jill Levine

March 12, 2017

Anderson School of Theology for Laypersons

<http://astlonline.org/>

Southern Dreaming Regional Conference

Sponsored by the International Association for the Study of Dreams

April 28 and 29, 2017

To be held at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Greenville, SC

For more information: <http://www.asdreams.org/regionals/southcarolina2017/>

Silent Retreat Weekends

March 3 - 5, June 2 - 4, October 6 - 8 and December 1 - 3, 2017

Order of Saint Helena, North Augusta, South Carolina

<https://www.osh.org/events.html>

The Anchorage in Greenville, SC

Four Day Praying Scripture Retreat

Mepkin Abbey, Moncks Corner, SC, March 27 - March 31

The Grace of Our Mortality: Opening to the Fullness of Life with Bill Dietrich, May 5 - 7

Kanuga, Hendersonville, NC

<http://theanchorage.org/events.htm>

Lake Junaluska Retreat Center

Listening for the Heartbeat of God, John Philip Newell,

June 30 - July 2

Interfaith Peace Conference, November 16 - 19

http://www.lakejunaluska.com/events/spiritual_enrichment/

Southern Dharma Center

Guided Meditation on the Elements, March 25 - 30

In Nature, Our True Nature, April 4 - 9

Know Thyself, April 18 - 23

See retreat schedule

<https://www.southerndharma.org/pdf/2017RetreatTable.pdf>

www.southerndharma.org



AZ QUOTES

We must always
take sides.
Neutrality
helps the
oppressor, never
the victim.
Silence
encourages the
tormentor,
never the
tormented.

- Elie Wiesel

Calendar considerations.....

Haden Summer Dream and Spirituality Conference

May 28 – June 2, 2017

Kanuga Conference Center, Hendersonville, NC

<http://www.hadeninstitute.com/summer-dream-conference>

Centering Prayer Retreats

Five Day Lenten Centering Prayer Retreat, March 17 – 22, 2017

Eight Day Silent Retreat, June 4 – June 11, 2017

St. Mary's Retreat Center, Sewanee, TN

<http://www.stmaryssewanee.org/about/events/2017/06/04/eight-day-centering-prayer-retreat.2268432>

Advanced Centering Prayer Retreat

Valle Crucis Retreat Center, Valley Crucis, NC

November 26 – December 2, 2017

Contact Becky Hannah for more information (828) 702-3518

Center for Action and Contemplation with Richard Rohr

Trinity: The Soul of Creation, April 6 –8, on-line option available

CONSPIRE 2017, July 7–9

Albuquerque New Mexico

<https://cac.org/events/conferences/>

Spirituality and Practice e-courses

Offering a variety of e-courses on demand in many different traditions

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

The Sophia Institute, Charleston, SC

Returning to Joy, Andrew Harvey and Carolyn Baker, March 17 – 18

The Way Under the Way: The Place of True Meeting, Mark Nepo, May 19 – 21

See the website for these and other one day events. www.thesophiainstitute.org

Kanuga Conference Center

Faith, Art and Creative Expression: A Liturgical Arts Conference,

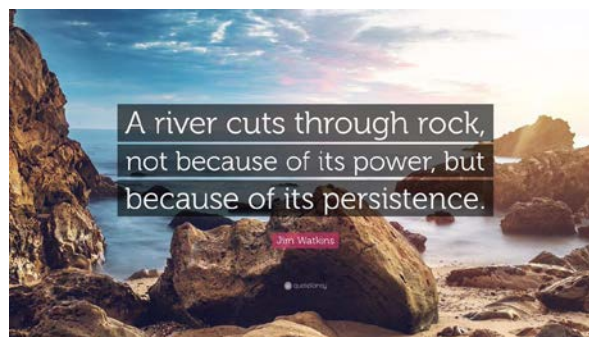
August 20 – 24

Lansing Lee Conference, October 22 – 29

Enneagram, October 26 – 29

Icon Writing with Teresa Harrison, November 13 – 18

www.kanuga.org





About Spiritual Direction —

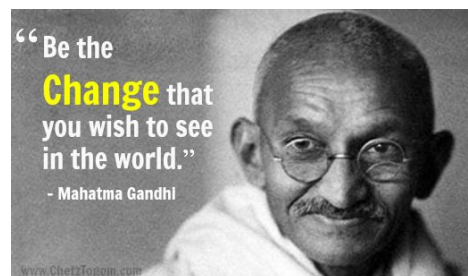
- Offers a space and time for you to explore, reflect upon, and deepen your relationship with God.
- Provides a haven from the daily busyness of the outer world and opens a time to be still and to reflect on your inner journey.
- Is a companioning relationship grounded in dialogue and discernment.
- 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 in this month's journal are my work. I chose to use other people's illustrations for words I found helpful on my own journey.