



Living in the Balance

July and August 2019

This piece first appeared in the May 2011 Living in the Balance....

“Lionel Helps Bertie Find His Voice” sounds like the title for a children’s tale, doesn’t it? But *The King’s Speech* is no fairy tale. Bertie, as the Duke of York is called by his family, is thrust into his role as King George VI, monarch of the British Empire, at the brink of World War II. The Duke has been raised “in court” and watched the role of king carried out by his eloquently spoken father. When his father dies, Bertie watches with disbelief as his older brother turns away from the duties of the throne and the obligations to country to marry a commoner. Yes, Bertie observed his father as the King, so Bertie has a clear idea of the qualities needed for a monarch to carry out his duties. But Bertie cannot imagine that those same qualities as sovereign exist in him. A lifelong stutter, growing up as a berated child, the Duke is stuck in this small child view of himself making the idea of him as king seem preposterous. Yet, both his wife, the Duchess of York, and his unlikely speech coach, Lionel Logue, can clearly see the King George VI qualities inside Bertie waiting to find voice.

Jungian analysts give the name bright shadow.....inner gold.....unlived life.....golden shadow.....to those gifts, talents, creative pieces, and aptitudes that we see in others, but don’t see in ourselves. Bertie had yet to discover the King George VI in himself. Lionel creates a safe container for both the King’s painfully difficult speech therapy and the rebuilding of his self confidence. Lionel saw King George VI in Bertie. And slowly, King George VI uncovers his inner gold and assumes the mantle of monarch.

But isn’t it egotistical to think we’ve got some big talent or ability hidden in us? The truth is that inner gold is *not* about the ego, but the soul. The soul calls us to pay attention to our deepest yearnings rather than the yapping of our personas. And our soul longings may at first arise in the disquieting feeling of being boxed in or like we are walking down a path that isn’t ours. Theologian Howard Thurmond tells us, “Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you...your soul..... come alive and go do it! The world needs people who have come alive!” Listen to your spirit when she says, “I love to....” “I feel awake and alive when I....” “I know that deep down, I’m meant to....” or “I’ve always wanted to.....but I’m afraid.”

One of my friends said, “I’ve been a complete chicken about my own gifts. For more than 20 years, I’ve done the ego’s bidding in hopes of some outer world reward....plaques or praise.” “All this time, I’ve denied and ignored my soul’s inner gold, my soul’s call. I’ve been afraid to consciously claim that in my core, ‘I’m a writer’ because then I’d have to admit that I’ve gone down a seemingly endless bunny trail in service to my personas du jour rather than the soul’s desires.”

And at my core and at yours....the question....what calls? What brightness do we run from? Deny? My friend, like Bertie, has awakened and discovered her soul’s bright shadow. To do the same, we have to wake up, set aside fear, and embrace own inner gifts. Marianne Williamson tells us, “Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that frightens us. You are a child of God....your playing small does not serve the world. We were born to manifest the glory of God within us. It is not just in some, it is in everyone.” The Muse, the Spirit, the Soul calls and asks “What is my inner gold?” “What is yours?”



Calendar considerations.....

Silent Retreat Weekends

August 30 – September 1
Order of Saint Helena, North Augusta, South Carolina
<https://www.osh.org/events.html>

Valle Crucis Conference Center

Centering Prayer Retreat, December 1 – 8, 2019

<https://vcconferences.org/programs>

Information is also available now for registering for one of the hermitages for personal retreat.

Southern Dharma Center

Seeing Clearly, Opening Up: The Heart of Vipassana Practice, July 11 – 14

Awakening Together: An Insight Dialogue Retreat, July 23 – July 28

Relaxing the Mind and Opening the Heart, August 2 – 9

Zen Mind...Body Mind, September 12 – 18

Meditation through the art of Movement, September 28 – October 1

These retreats fill quickly. Check the website for wait list.

www.southerndharma.org

Lake Junaluska

Festival of Wisdom and Grace, August 5 – 8

Interfaith Peace Conference, November 21 – 24

Lake Junaluska, North Carolina

<http://www.firstlightproductions.org/new-events/>

The Anchorage

Offering local “desert days” and retreats
<http://www.theanchorage.org/events.htm>

Kanuga Conference Center

Art and Soul Retreat, August 18 – 23

Enneagram, October 31 – November 3

Icon Writing, November 16 – 22

www.kanuga.org

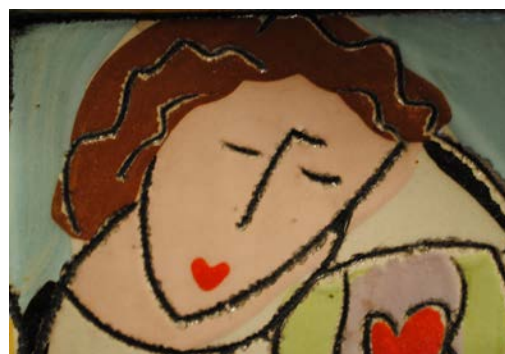
Awakening Soul

Barbara Brown Taylor, Jacqui Lewis, and Larry Maze

November 7 – 10

Lutheridge Conference Center, Asheville, NC

<https://www.awakeningsoulpresents.org/>





Calendar considerations.....

The Sophia Institute, Charleston, SC

Mirabai Starr: A Fierce and Tender Wisdom, May 3 –4

The Gift of Deepening and the Radiance in All Things, Mark Nepo, May 17 – 19

A View from your Soul, Caroline Myss, October 18 – 19

Walking Each Other Home: Love and Resilience in Difficulty Times, Mirabai Starr

November 1 – 2

See the website for these and other one day events.

www.thesophiainstitute.org

St. Mary's Sewanee

Icon Writing, July 26 – 28

Creativity and Spirituality, Mixed Media, August 2 – 4

One River Wisdom: Road Side Assistance for the Spiritual Traveler with Rabbi Rami and Rev. Peerman

September 6 – September 8

Eight-Day Centering Prayer Retreat, August 4 – August 11

Clear and Calm Meditation, September 13 -- 17

Celtic Christianity, November 8 – 10

Eight-Day Centering Prayer Retreat, January 5 – 12, 2020

St. Mary's Retreat Center, Sewanee, TN

<http://www.stmaryssewanee.org/about/events>

Anderson Forum for Progressive Theology

Dr. Riffat Hassan

August 24 – 27

Anderson, SC

www.afptonline.org

Montreat

Colnspire, A conference addressing systemic racism in the church

October 7 –10

Montreat Retreat Center, Montreat, NC

<https://montreat.org/events/mic1-2019>

Online courses....

Spirituality and Practice

<https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/>





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
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The photos are my work. Art shows up everywhere even in the mostly unlikely places. The photo on the opening page is a piece painted behind a section of the Berlin wall.

