

**Newsletter from Dr. Iyer
May, 2014**

What Is Our Responsibility

From a beloved reader:

“I have no trouble loving and feeling compassion for and ONE with those who are victims or activists or even clue less where I get stuck is attempting to even think about sexually abusing and making sex slaves of little children/girls, raping, torturing, murdering WAR etc. If I am ONE with that too how do I sleep at night or even think about the horrible suffering being caused etc. ???”



I’ve noticed that if I accept at base that there are those on the planet who, thrashing around in their own roiling pain inflict pain on others, it allows me a different space of understanding and possibility. Sometimes the heart of man gets confused. Some reach out in violence in an attempt to connect. They have become so angry, they lash out in venomous spite from their own hurt. When I fully accept that this simply is something that does exist here, I open to what is possible for ME, in it all.

We do not have to “feel” at one with such things to open our heart in compassion. There is a deeper responsibility in matters of the heart than sentiments can possibly evoke. The compassion of which we speak here is of stronger stuff than that. Our responsibility in these things goes far beyond feelings. In fact, when we get caught in the dynamic of that which is happening, we are lost in the suffering, itself. When we, instead, drop into a deeper matrix – that space from which we have all originated before we began to get confused – we can find the sustenance we need to effect change that is more kind.

Our true responsibility is to attend to the sacred heart of kindness, which does not have sentiment as part of either its evocation or its delivery. The responsibility of kindness is firm, steadfast and solid and ever looks within for the guidance and the strength to follow through on its path.

Maintaining our own intention to do no harm, and to allow for the healing possible to, for and through us in any given moment happens here – in this moment. In this. No matter what this “this” is. And no matter how the pain of the moment is being expressed or inflicted. Sometimes the compassionate expression of our heart in the moment of need is a forceful directive for change. To love those who are hurting is not to condone or support hurtful behavior, but rather to seek the skillful means by which EACH person in that dynamic is set free from the knot of recurring pain.

Since the details of this dynamic will vary according to the circumstance, we remain open to approach each specific situation simply with this intention: that we be available to the action needed in THIS moment for what we find – here. Reconfiguring what compassion looks like (or feels like) gives us greater bandwidth to do what is really needed. Skillful means sometimes looks tough on the outside; but if our intention remains clear to reduce suffering; to do no harm, we will be cutting away the chaff to address the heart of that which needs attention.

So, the point of all this is to focus less on “feeling at one” with a hurtful dynamic, and to utter the prayer of “what is needed here?” when we meet it. Then, to act courageously in the way we are called.

Snippets of Information:

- I, at times, include in these newsletters responses that I have offered to queries posted to my blog or to me directly. Sometimes it seems it may be applicable to more than the original sender.
- **Upcoming workshops:**
- **Healthy Lifestyle Retreat: Mindful Eating.** Date: May 16th through May 18th.* Time: registration: 4 pm (Fri). Where: OM Sanctuary, 87 Richmond Hill Drive, Asheville, NC 28806.
 - These lovely retreats at OM Sanctuary in Asheville, NC are designed as a deep immersion into relaxation and self-reflection. There is a wonderful balance of movement, meditation, and class-time. You have the option to sign up for the full retreat (4 pm Friday to 3 pm Sunday); or *just take the featured topic classes (7:30 pm to 9:30 pm Friday; 2 pm to 5 pm Saturday). Contact OM Sanctuary directly at: 828-252-7313 for more information or to register.
<http://www.omsanctuary.org/events/mindful-eating-mindful-life/>
 - Tuition Package: Commuter \$94 (includes lunch on Saturday)
 - Residential: \$178 (includes all meals Friday dinner – Sunday lunch)
 - Accommodations booked & charged separately.
- **An Integrative Approach to Pain Management: CME Grand Rounds.** Date: June 20th. Time: 7 am. Where: St. Charles Hospital, Bend, OR, 97701.
 - The many faces of pain include societal, physical and psychological components. By giving attention to the surrounding issue that exacerbate or ameliorate pain, the clinician will expedite the desired end result of relief and increased function for the patient. ***This activity is CME approved for physicians.*** Please contact St. Charles hospital directly for more information: Tracy Parmele, Manager, Continuing Medical Education (541) 706-2605.
- **Meditative Journaling Workshop.** Date: June 21st. Time: 2 pm to 4 pm. Where: Corvallis-Benton Co. Public Library, 645 NW Monroe Ave, Corvallis, OR 97330.
 - This popular workshop is back by public demand. We share our two hours together by deeply immersing into meditation with seed-questions that help open up an inner marvelous depth of wisdom. Answers emerge during this time -- to those questions that float around in our minds. Anchoring the experience through journaling is an extraordinarily powerful tool. These workshops tend to fill up early, so please, please do call the library to sign up if you are interested. Phone: 541-766-6965 (no cost to participants)
- **Opening to Your Joyful Self.** Date: June 22nd. Time: 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Where: Encore Physical Therapy, 2609 NW 9th St., Corvallis, OR.
 - I'm teaming up with friend and teacher Beeara Edmonds, LMT in this co-created day of delightful self-exploration. You are invited to deepen in your awareness of yourself through the dynamic combination of Meditative Journaling and Authentic Movement. Join us – to foster and anchor your ability to open into your Joy -- and then maintain your wisdom in your daily life by the powerful anchoring techniques of embodiment and journaling. Please let me know if you'd like a flier with more information on this workshop, and Contact: Beeara Edmonds directly at beeara@beeara.com or 541-752-1997 to register. (Space is limited; so registration is required.)

- Find *The Heart of Healing* or *Mindful Eating: Mindful Life* [author name: Mary Ann Wallace, MD] in book or eKindle format at www.amazon.com/author/mawallace, www.maryanniyer.com, or any bookstore on request. *Mindful Eating: Mindful Life* can also be found in German from Herold Verlagsauslieferung at: p.zerzawetzky@herold-va.de.
- Numerous meditation CDs are available at <http://www.maryanniyer.com/bookscds-2.html>. Please consider these for a friend whom you'd like to introduce to meditation, or for yourself if you'd like the extra support. Any bookstore can order these CDs from New Leaf Distributors. I also make available, at no charge, meditations on my web page at: <http://www.maryanniyer.com/meditations.html>.

Joy to you! ~ Mary Ann Iyer, MD

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