

Encouragement OF THE DAY



We asked ourselves: how can we give to our community? How can we spread an uplifting voice during these times of fear and uncertainty. We sincerely hope this Encouragement of the Day connects with you.

*-Tranquility Hospice Care-
Strength ♦ Joy ♦ Family ♦ Comprehensive Health*

Love is our true destiny. We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone – we find it with another.” Thomas Merton, Roman Catholic Trappist monk and mystic, wrote this in his book *Love and Living*. But what do we do in times like these when social distancing, quarantine, “no visitors allowed”, and physical separation are required to keep us safe? How do we fulfill this destiny of love in times when we cannot be with one another?

Thich Nhat Hahn, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, had plenty of time to think of these questions when he was forcibly exiled from his family, religious community, and country. He found his answer using his spiritual imagination to help remember deeper truths. He writes, “If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper. Without a cloud, there will be no rain; without rain, the trees cannot grow, and without trees, we cannot make paper. The cloud is essential for the paper to exist. If the cloud is not here, the sheet of paper cannot be here either.” Hahn realized everything remained connected, even when apart.

You and I are connected to a million beautiful things. Think about an action you do a thousand times every day- breathing. Our air is constantly recycled. This breath that you breathe right now has been on a great journey. Perhaps, three weeks ago, that breath made its way in and out of the lungs of a baby elephant in Africa. She exhaled, and that breath traveled across the ocean to you.

And you, Dear One, get to hold onto that breath for a moment, and then send it on to the next being. We are all connected. We cannot escape it. *There is a cloud in this paper, and your breath just might carry the story of an elephant.*

If you are scared about the state of the world around you, if you feel separated from your destiny to love and be loved, then I encourage you, with the next breath you take, to think about the important people in your life. Who are the people who nurtured you, loved you, believed in you? Who are the spiritual or religious heroes in your life? Jesus? The Beatles? Your mother? Your dog? Breathe in and imagine that you are sharing the same air that they breathed. Imagine that some of the qualities you admire in them are filling your lungs even now. Tell them thank you. And then, send that breath on with a prayer for the next person who needs help, hope, and encouragement. If you thought about someone, contact them and tell them you love them. In times like these, I encourage you to use your spiritual imagination for things that remind you that you are deeply loved. Using our imagination to think about all the disaster that awaits us is easy. Consider the narrower path. Consider remembering all the love and courage that surround you and fill you – with every breath.

Peace to you, always,
Rev. Nicole



Matter

by Eric Hanson

You may not believe in magic,
But don't you think it strange,
The amount of matter in our universe,
Has never slightly changed.

That all which makes your body,
Was one part of something more,
And every breath you ever breathed,
Has seen it all before.

There are countless scores of beauty,
In all the things that you despise,
It could once have been a shooting star,
That now makes up your thighs.

And atoms of forgotten life,
Who've long since ceased to roam,
May now have the great honour,
To call your crooked smile their home.

You may not believe in magic,
But I thought that you should know,
The makings of your heart were born,
Fourteen billion years ago.

So next time you feel lonely,
When this world makes you feel small,
Just remember that it's part of you,
And you're part of it all.

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