
Why

WHY

by Kathleen Gage

Over the last few weeks many people have been contemplating the tragic events that have taken place. One question many of us are asking is “Why?” We will never know all the answers and yet, as we go about our lives we do know there has been a shift in perception.

Many of the beliefs that seem to be our guiding force in life can be stripped away in a moment. How often do we take life experiences for granted? The reality has always been, and always will be, that life spins on a dime. It can change in an instant. Nothing is forever, little is for sure.

People are wondering what their life path will bring and what their purpose is. The path we are on is a process — a lifelong process. It never ends. It just gets different at times. Who we are today and what we are doing will most likely change as we have new experiences, learn new information and have more choices. For example, in what you are reading at this moment you will form certain opinions and make choices around those opinions. And out of those experiences we will often learn lessons.

The ultimate lesson we are here to learn in both our personal and professional life is how to love and be loved. Love is an ongoing process. One of the keys to receive love is to be willing to give it. Daily we have the opportunity to do this. Often though, we may pass the opportunity by. It could be something as simple as being at the supermarket and an elderly person asks for help. It could be from a team member who needs help and rather than be there to lend a helping hand

we get frustrated with their request. What many people will do is invalidate these type of experiences as a burden on their time. The reality is that every moment is the opportunity to express compassion, care and understanding which equates to love.

Think of different opportunities you have every day to express kindness and do a good deed. When is the last time you passed someone on the street and they were asking for what you assumed to be a handout? For many people their initial response is that the person is beneath them, rude and has no right to be doing what they are doing because they are imposing on us. Who’s to say that the person is actually not someone who is teaching us the lesson of patience, kindness, tolerance and love? Who is to say our only job at that moment is to at least give them a smile and wish them a good day? Who is to say that they are not there to teach us a very important lesson?

In the unfolding of our life we can look at our moment by moment choices and determine if our actions are tied to the type of person we wish to be. What is the message we want to share with others? Often, within a private setting people will profess certain beliefs with great conviction. Perhaps at a family gathering or when they are in the company of close friends they say how important it is for each of us to do something to make things better. However, when they leave that environment they will hide who they are as if it is not okay to share those feelings beyond the small gathering environment or they get caught up in the day-to-day grind. The most congruent people are those who will be true to their beliefs regardless of where they are or who they are with and they will act on those beliefs daily.

What you will also find is that people are hungry for information that will help them make sense of life. Information that can help them to have balance and hope in life. The healing of life begins when one person is willing to share with another about their experiences which makes life more hopeful and less complicated. It is about sharing our experience, strength and hope with others in order that they too may find the courage to help others.

My belief is that when all is said and done, what life is really about is our ability to impact others in a positive way. Now, in viewing the news we may not always believe this to be true due to the amount of turmoil we read or hear about. And yet, that is the very reason those of us who are clear, or getting clear, on the direction of our life have a responsibility to be more loving and kind to all we come in contact with. It is through the willingness and courage of each of us sharing our hope with others that makes the world a better place one person at a time.

A very powerful question to ask is, "If, in fact, there is so much misery and hopelessness in the world today, what can I do, in my own way, to make the world a better and safer place?" For most of us this does not mean we will be doing things on a grand scale. What this means is that we will actually be able to do a little bit each day. It could be something as simple as helping a neighbor. Or volunteering time at the homeless shelter. Or being kind to everyone we encounter. The temptation for many people may be that unless they are getting some direct payoff they won't do something., And that is exactly where the hopelessness for most people comes from. It comes from not being willing to just be with what is with no plan for the outcome other than to make the experience a memorable one. And pleasantly memorable at that.

What if each of us, through our individual actions, could change the world? Well, we can. We can each do our part to make it more loving and joyous. It is like the ripple effect of a pebble being tossed into a pond. It starts small and yet spreads to great distanced. We have no way of knowing how our actions today will impact someone tomorrow.

Some of the most amazing and powerful people in the world are those we will never even hear about or know. And yet, we can know that the world is a better place because of them. What are you doing to contribute to making the world a better place?

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