

## **Energy, Meaning and Messages**

Friday, an early morning in February, 2005...the day had dawned clear and cold with one of those azure blue skies that often follows a snowfall. In fact a dusting of snow had fallen the night before and left the ground white, crunchy and slippery!

As I worked my way from the parking lot to my office, my mind was busy recalling a recent conversation I had had with a friend. My mental gears were in full swing visualizing how to implement the great ideas she had shared.

Quite unexpectedly I was swept off my feet courtesy of a patch of ice hidden under that lovely white stuff. I was briefly aware of being parallel to the ground just before my body slammed to the pavement below. Coffee, papers and a now empty briefcase surrounded me.

It certainly was not obvious at that point but over the days and weeks that followed this incident brought knowledge and awareness to me on so many levels.

To begin, there was that moment in midair when there was nothing but sheer awareness. No thoughts, no feelings, no usual me, just awareness, an observer looking out through my eyes. That moment did not last overly long! Shocked, I lay on the ground and wondered what would be possible in terms of movement; what were the ramifications of this unexpected flight? I decided the best thing to do would be to turn to my side and assess the situation. As I did I saw clearly the mirror like ice patch that had lurked beneath the surface of the snow until I disrupted it. I still did not have thoughts or feelings that I generally would have had.

Before I fell I had seen a woman approaching from the opposite end of the parking lot. As I turned on my side she was passing in front of me--- about six feet away. She kept

her eyes forward and just kept walking. It occurred to me that she had to have seen the whole event, never mind that a woman sprawled on the ground surrounded by papers etc. was clearly a reality in that moment!. Even as shock, confusion and early signals from my back that all was not well began to swirl around me, I was astounded that she acted as if nothing unusual had happened. My thought was “How can she do that?” As stunned and unsure as I was at that moment, her behavior had an almost equally strong impact on me as the fall did.

I was hurt badly, but was able to move, to walk and get to the office. Nothing appeared to be broken. I quickly retrieved ice from the fridge and set about making appointments with my body- worker, acupuncturist and chiropractor. Past experience had taught me that the sooner one is treated the less damage and the more rapid the healing.

I also knew from experience that my efficiency in dealing with an incident such as this was the tip of the iceberg....and for me an iceberg that can keep me preoccupied and distracted from what I really need to know. At the time though, the most powerful motivator to being open to deeper meaning was the knowledge that physical healing is not as rapid or complete without a deeper understanding of the meaning an event holds.

It was very clear almost immediately that the issue of being centered grounded and in the moment was part of the equation. My energy had been all focused in my head, thinking, planning and imagining when this happened. Okay, but there was more I felt. I did not want to keep turning this episode over in my mind, but I had a nagging feeling that all was not complete with it. **And** the image of the woman walking past me was haunting, emblazoned in my brain. I knew that unless I had a deeper understanding that it would not be released.

The next obvious question was “Did I need rest, time off my feet”? Probably, I tried the thought on and it did not hold any relief. On to, “Was I looking for outside help and angry that I did not get it?” No, that didn’t seem to fit. The thought that was there was, “How can she do that? How can she just walk on, and ignore a human being who had been hurt, act as if the whole moment in time did not exist?” It was her indifference that both fascinated and deeply troubled me not that I felt a helpless victim and had not received help.

The inner nagging around the “meaning” of this event continued off and on as I got back to normal life and dealt with the limitations the injury placed on me. There was a lesson! I do hate to be slowed down.

Past experience has taught me that once I “get” the message meant for me about a situation it feels complete. There is a thought, a conversation or information that comes and acts as a catalyst, something clicks into place, there’s an AHA, a sense of recognition and rightness. I am then able to do what is needed, move forward and **let go**. So far with this event, that was not happening!

I continued to be haunted by this woman’s response. Was it just frozen in my awareness because I observed her passing at a moment of trauma? Was this a mirror showing me that I lacked compassion, or was unresponsive to others’ needs? Not likely given the evidence of my life and who I knew myself to be.

So, I could not completely understand this incident in any larger context, but I knew there was one. Usually I am quite careful in bad weather, wearing appropriate footwear, knew this walkway well etc...and yet I had one of the worst falls of my life...one that put me in a compromised position for weeks to come.

Some time after the fall I was meeting with a couple of friends and shared with them how I could not get the image of this woman out of my mind. I mentioned to them that it continued to feel as though there was some deeper meaning that I just could not grasp. Since I know these things haunt me until I get it, I was extremely frustrated and feeling stuck.

And then it happened...with one question one of my friends clarified the situation! She asked me how this woman might represent my attitude toward myself....how or where did I ignore myself? Eureka, the spell was broken. I got it immediately. There was that familiar click. I had a pattern of ignoring or minimizing my inner voice and needs!

This incident did a lot for me. It forced me to pay attention to my smallest needs in a big way. The notion of compassionate self care emerged into my consciousness—not without resistance however!

How I felt was determined by what I could expect from myself on any given day and in any particular situation. All daily functions required a careful, attentive approach in order to execute them. My usual tempo and rhythm were not available to me. I had to ask for help. I had to accept people doing things for me. Time on my back brought me face to face with some long standing patterns that were not the most kind for me.

More subtly there were inner promptings that I was pushing off into the future and just pushing on ahead until I had time to listen. Amazingly (or not) that time never seems to arrive. Even more amazing (again NOT) this is something I teach others all the time---to take time to listen and attend to your inner voice and its promptings!

It has been said that you teach best what you most need to learn. In spite of working on facets of this issue for quite some time, I had to admit that there were deeper levels of it that I needed to address.

Another comment made that day was that the universe had given me an adjustment. That was equally profound as I found energetically a new space had opened up within. The couch time spent with my hot water bottle offered me time to become acquainted with that. Over the previous months I had been aware of this space beckoning. It was connected to other experiences of pure awareness in my life ...that moment where there was nothing but an observer peering out through my eyes... no thoughts, no judgments, no analyzing. I had been having times where I was exquisitely aware of the layers of consciousness and of the shifting nature of my own consciousness, but not taking the time to nurture the process.

The couch time provided an opportunity to explore this more deeply and come into deeper familiarity with it. And there was one more thing...I needed to give myself time, time to unfold gracefully without pushing....this is a lifelong theme it seems!



I do not think that we should live our lives under the burden of analyzing and inspecting every moment for deeper meaning. However, my experience has taught me that there is a great deal to be gained by listening deeply and being open to the broader perspectives that life is always inviting us toward.

Do you think symbolically about the events of your life?  
How does the universe speak to you?  
How has your life been enriched by deeper listening and clearer seeing/vision?  
I would love to hear about your experience!