

Interesting Times

by Rev. Lauren Skye

It is an amazing time of great growth on our planet. It's a time of cleansing and of tremendous transition. Although we are surrounded by news of economic challenge and fear for our safety, spiritually it is a time of opportunity. What has been hidden in the dark is being illuminated with awareness as we become more spiritually conscious and capable. In this time of change, secrets are harder to keep and feelings are harder to hide.

Opportunities to learn and grow abound. One of most important lessons of this time is noticing how our actions (or inactions) and attitudes affect others and our own experience. As a country we are seeing our decisions ripple across the globe with greater and greater intensity. We're becoming acutely aware that ours isn't the only house on the block, and our neighbors have some important things to say. We are a powerful presence on this planet, and we are being called upon to use our presence wisely. We can receive this lesson on a personal level as well. As individuals, our actions and outlooks ripple around us, creating our experience of the world and having a tremendous effect on those around us. It's a great time to notice our own powerful presence and the ripples we create.

Where are you in relationship to those around you? Not just your immediate family and friends, but your world community; the nameless, faceless ones you encounter throughout the day. Do you see others as the enemy, standing between you and where you need to be or what you need to get done? Are they simply obstructions in other cars or mannequins standing in line? Are you unconscious to those around you, and maybe even to the planet you stand on? While driving on the highway just last week, I watched someone roll down their window and throw litter onto the shoulder of the road. I was amazed to notice that in that person's reality the trash no longer existed once it was out of his immediate sight.

Maybe you are in judgement of others (as I must admit I was toward the littering driver!). Do you make conclusions about the people around you based on little or no real information? Perhaps someone you have judged to

be aloof is really afraid. Maybe someone who expresses anger is really quite hurt inside.

We can take a step in our relationship with the world by taking a look at ourselves first. Many times, intolerance of others starts with frustration about unmet needs within ourselves. Are you feeling over-stressed, over-tired, or unfulfilled? Have you lost touch with what's important to you? Are you enjoying being alive, or is it work-work-work?

As we heal our own space, we can also notice how we approach the world around us. We can make a choice to vibrate with acceptance and love rather than resistance and fear towards others. And, we can start to notice our powerful presence as a part of the whole. We can approach others with an open heart and events with curiosity, letting go of inflexible agendas. That change in mind-set can completely shift our experience. We can participate in the world with enthusiasm, protecting ourselves with healthy boundaries instead of impermeable barriers.

Your bright smile or helping hand could change someone's day. Your listening ears could change someone's life. You can be a vehicle for healing and love, rather than a vehicle of fear. Choosing light makes space for spirit in our own lives and the lives of those around us.

As a species, we're in a period of tremendous growth. As anyone who's ever been through a period of tremendous personal growth can attest, it's not without challenges. And, old behaviors don't work. Growth is about letting go of the old and bringing forth greater light from within us.

In this time of apparent fear, let's not retract into old ways of being and build small but strong forts around ourselves. We can open up rather than shut down, and cultivate a new way of being. We can consciously create ripples of love in our world pond, and we can have a great time being alive in the process.