

I had such a beautiful experience tonight at the meditation – shared leadership. Tonight I convened a group with the intention that it be a group-led meditation practice to benefit the land, people, and situation in Japan: 108 repetitions out loud of a mantra prayer called the Maha Mrityanjaya Mantra, followed by silent meditation. There were approximately 18 people present. I'm not sure, because I did not invite people to sign in. Most of the people who came were on my emailing list, and some heard about it from friends, or just happened to call me today and heard about the event. People came who have this particular mantra practice as their regular practice, as I do, and people came who have never chanted out loud, and who have other spiritual practices. This diversity was particularly meaningful for me, because I so appreciate when people have a sense of openness, acceptance, and appreciation for spiritual approaches other than their own. I experience a sense of dignity, love, and respect when that kind of openness is present. I think it is important today for people to gather together with a like-hearted intent, without having to necessarily have the same exact beliefs and spiritual practices. And the group who gathered tonight had a sense of commonality – as I understand it, each person present in the group shared a belief that prayer, meditation, and healing does make a difference, and that doing it in a group magnifies the power, energy, and love.

This was a group led practice, which felt important to me. Traditionally when this mantra is practiced, it is led by one person. I appreciate this approach very much. And for this gathering, I felt drawn to creating and inviting a sense of shared leadership among the people present who have a regular practice of this particular mantra. Those of us with this experience chatted for a few minutes before we started to coordinate how we would co-lead. We landed on an approach where we would rotate leadership in a particular order – counterclockwise around the circle; that I would begin and after a time drop my voice back and the next person would lead for a time and drop their voice back, and so on. We knew that it might feel disjointed to do it this way, and we embraced that possibility to welcome and invoke the leadership of more of us, and the beautiful quilt to include each of our particular essence styles of leadership.

I am in awe at what occurred. I began as planned. At first it was clear to me who was leading, and at a certain point, that knowing dropped away. Concerned at first, I breathed, refocused my practice, and surrendered. At times it seemed the whole group was leading, and at times it was clear to me who specifically was leading. Then in a moment, I felt an energy come through me and I was leading again. Seamlessly, my leadership completed, and someone else was leading. The order was not how we planned it, and both leading and following was natural and arose for me as a state of surrender, flow, ease, and grace. What a blessing this experience was for me. Kriya shakti. Doing and Nondoing. Bliss.

It got me to thinking...

Perhaps each person on a spiritual path, or a path of seeking and fulfilling our life purpose, has had the experience of feeling lonely at times. I've heard one of my mentors, Katie Hendricks, speak of the loneliness of leadership. Leadership *does* involve being out front at times – having a vision that perhaps no one around you has; not knowing how it's going to come out; not knowing if anyone will follow you; doubting yourself. And yet if, to paraphrase a quote by Martha Graham: "If you don't fulfill your unique purpose, no one will." is true, then what we leave undone remains undone. How tragic.

I believe that today, perhaps more than ever, it is vitally important that you, I, we step into leadership -- that we surrender ourselves to being, and understand and welcome that we are called to leadership, each in our own way. It is vital that we step into leading ourselves to essence, to source; that we step into organizing our lives in such a way that we dip into that place regularly; step into being an example of the love that we are to the people around us; and step into living in love, flow, and fulfillment – all signals that we are connected with our essence and dharma – with increasing regularity. Now is the time to lead, and to be an invitation for leadership, essence, and creativity in those around us.

In this paradigm of leadership, competition does not exist. If we experience a sense of competition, that is a signal that we have touched something in ourselves which needs healing: we have stepped out of essence. In this case, we

can lead ourselves by turning toward the hurt place inside with unconditional love.

The world needs you, me, us. The world needs us all, now.

It is so crucial that we connect with our own inner light, and that we connect with like-hearted others to nurture, inspire, and grow all our lights. It is vital that we invite and have the experience of being invited to be more of who we are every single day. We can claim for ourselves as our intention and our commitment that we will expand in love, harmony, and creativity with our thoughts, our speech, our actions, and our evolution every single day, and surround ourselves with others with the same intention and commitment.

The impact that each of us makes is more than we may know.

When you get really quiet, you might be able to feel it, though. Move toward others who know their value, and invite you to know and be yours. When you are singing your song, the song of essence, you become even more attuned to the essence song of others, of the planet, and of our whole, big, magnificent Self.

With love,

Rhonda