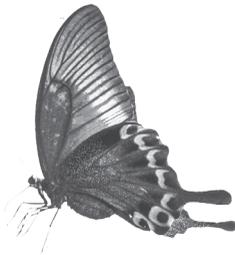


TO SHOW ANOTHER WAY

*How to Learn, Heal, and Serve
at a Time of Crisis on Planet Earth*



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Radiating Light to All That Is

*At times our own light goes out
and is rekindled by a spark from another person.
Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude
of those who have lighted the flame within us.*

~ ALBERT SCHWEITZER

Many years ago I had a friend who was a physician. I noticed a remarkable phenomenon whenever I was in his presence. Whether we were walking in the neighborhood, taking a trip (whether by land, sea, or air), or informally visiting friends or relatives, we repeatedly encountered people in the midst of a life-threatening crisis or accident. These events didn't occur when I was by myself or with other people, and they stopped happening in my life when my friend moved on. What struck me about these synchronistic events was the feeling I had while watching him tend to those who were seriously injured or emotionally traumatized. He seemed to *give himself into* what he was doing with love, care, compassion, and competence. He was present in the moment as he **showed another way**, radiating Self-Light to those he served.

Self-Light

As human beings, we each have the capacity to generate and radiate Light. Spiritual philosopher and self-described “practical mystic” David Spangler refers to the genera-

tive source of Light and its spiritual presence within us as “Self-Light.” He writes that this Light is naturally within us—it is not Light that we bring down from the higher realms. Although we can also bring Light down from above and extend it into the world, it is essential that we acknowledge the Self-Light we are born with and allow it to radiate forth into the world from within us.

Research shows that the eyes are the most sincere part of our face. When we see a person’s eyes glisten, it is highly possible that we are witnessing that person’s Self-Light. This may be why the eyes are often referred to as the windows of the soul.

How paltry is our awareness and understanding of the power of our Self-Light! Spangler notes that we too often disown or do not recognize our Self-Light:

What we forget is that we are that Light...the sun that burns away the fog. The Light is in all of us, but it can be dimmed. If this were not true [if our Light could not be dimmed], we would be living in a very different world, one in which nature is honored and partnered with care and love, one in which the stranger is simply a friend we have yet to meet, one in which each individual represents a potential for discovery and growth, one in which community and collaboration, as well as the honoring of each person’s uniqueness, are the hallmarks of life. We want such a world. We pray for such a world ... the Light fuels our hope for such a world.

Our Self-Light exists within us as an expression of the will of our Soul—our Higher Self—and can increase or decrease. It increases when we accept the presence and purpose of this Light, when we view Earth as a school in which we learn, heal, and serve, and when we are compassionate, loving, and caring. When our Light is dimmed by doubts, angers, prejudices, hatreds, or apathy, or we turn to outer temptations, distractions, addictions, or self-neglect, ***it is crucial that we ask the Light to illuminate the darkness and show us another way.***

Generating and Radiating Light

We radiate our Self-Light in many ways—in the Light of understanding and wisdom, in the Light of beauty and truth, in the Light of meaning and purpose, in the Light of compassion and love, in the Light of prayer, and in the Light of service to ourselves, others, and Planet Earth. When we infuse our life—its activities, its relationships—with Light, we simultaneously bring heaven and earth into closer proximity. In other words, when we radiate Light, we bring heaven and earth closer together in *every* activity we engage in—walking down the street, driving our car, caring for nature, relating to wildlife and pets, conversing with a stranger, caring for our family, writing letters, speaking on the phone, sharing our feelings, taking a class, working at our job, talking with our boss, interacting with the clerk who checks out our groceries, and so forth. Imagine how uplifting and meaningful our life would be if we radiated Light every day in this way!

The Light of Compassion

Radiating the Light of Compassion—our heart’s tender opening to the pain and suffering of others—is critical at this time on Planet Earth. When we hear the call of compassion in action, we recognize *this call begins with ourselves*. We nurture our spiritual growth and cultivate compassion for others when we are first and foremost kind and caring toward ourselves.

Self-inquiry questions help us explore the role of compassion in action in our daily life. We can ask, “What is this for? What is the purpose for my doing this (or not doing this)? What is my intention for this action? My motivation? How can I **show another way** by saying or doing the right thing in the right way at the right time and for the right reason?” Many spiritual teachings suggest that we examine our thoughts and actions with the intent to *do no harm*. This extraordinary principle can be applied in our personal, interpersonal, and work life. We can apply it to all that exists on our planet. In the words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, “Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive. With them, we make a joint effort to solve the problems of the whole of humankind.”

The Light of Heaven

An awareness of how to respond purposefully to the ongoing crises of our world emerges when we invite the Light of Heaven to infuse ourselves and others through prayer. Prayer enables us to stand strong when we are buffeted by outer extremes of weather; by cultural, social, and political change; and by inner tensions of fear and distress. Prayer is a powerful response to humanity's cry for help.

Before praying, we pause and connect our heart with the Light of Heaven. The Light of Heaven, also referred to as God's Light, is prayer's sacred power. Prayer manifests as a point of Light shaped like a star. Those who accept a prayer's point of Light within their heart will "wake up" to their spirituality and welcome knowledge, wisdom, conscious knowing, and sacred service into their life.

Years ago, I discovered a Buddhist prayer that radiates Light to others with purity and integrity. The prayer consists of this simple sentence: **"I pray for _____'s highest possible evolution."** The prayer does not focus on what we think the person needs, such as relief from his or her suffering, or a change in the person's behavior, attitude, health, or circumstances. Rather, **the prayer invites the Light to support and guide the person's highest possible evolution at this time in his or her life.**

A New Reality

We stand on the threshold of a new reality that is emerging on our planet. In this new reality, we recognize that all is energy. We welcome Light as the energy of Spirit, the energy of the Soul, the energy of life. We awaken to our spiritual origins. We know that our world is destined to radiate with Light in its many forms—understanding, wisdom, beauty, truth, meaning, purpose, compassion, and love. In this new reality, we literally stand in a waterfall of Light. As we radiate our Self-Light, we rekindle the spark and join with the Light in all we encounter—**showing another way** to ourselves, to others, and to our precious Planet Earth.

*If you light a lamp for someone else
It will also brighten your path.*

~ BUDDHA

To Show Another Way: Applications

Respond to two or more of the following suggestions:

1. Describe a time when your Light dimmed or went out and was rekindled by a spark from another person. What did you learn from this experience?
 2. Describe a time when someone shared that you had rekindled their spark. What specifically happened and what insights did you gain from this experience?
 3. Ask yourself: “How might I daily radiate Self-Light as I walk on the sacred path of harmlessness, especially during challenging situations and interactions throughout the day?”
 4. Describe an event in which you
 - ♦ witnessed someone extending the Light of Compassion to another.
 - ♦ extended the Light of Compassion to another.
 - ♦ received the Light of Compassion from another.
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