

January, 2008 Newsletter

Patience: The Art of Divine Timing

It's not really hip to be patient these days. The fashionable "must-haves" in our spiritual repertoire are such qualities as the ability to attract and manifest. Current wisdom suggests speed is of the essence and creating what you want as quickly as possible is now seen as a virtue in itself. But no matter how hard we try, we have to acknowledge that things can only come to us when we are ready. In the process of our expansion and attraction, there are some vital stages that cannot be skipped – they are nurturing, deepening, aligning and yes, waiting. And all of these mean cultivating patience. So is patience the next big thing?

In their moving new book *The Prayer Chest*, authors August Gold and Joel Fotinos relate the heart-opening fable of a man who endures devastating loss before he receives the answers to his prayers. In his waiting and agonizing, he finally has no option but to develop patience. The reality is that he must nurture his desires, deepen his inner connection, align with his truth and develop his strength through patient waiting before he can receive the fulfillment of his wishes. There is an element of sacrifice involved (definitely *not* a fashionable trait), where he gradually trades his negative beliefs for hope and that most sacred of virtues, grace.

When we practice patience, we allow grace to flow into our lives; we open up to something bigger than ourselves. And it is only through grace that the universal intelligence can provide us with miraculous outcomes much greater than we may have requested. As Oprah Winfrey says, "God can dream a bigger dream for us than we can for ourselves."

I recently heard about a professional musician who for years had needed to play in bars to support himself financially. Gradually he became interested in spirituality and yearned to be able to focus full-time on spiritually based music. His fear was that he wouldn't be able to pay his bills. After nurturing his dream and aligning with its truth inside himself, he eventually attracted an outcome beyond any possibilities he could have imagined. He met the wealthy owner of a recording studio who had a passion for

bluegrass music and wanted to form a band to play it. To make sure the band could tour whenever he wanted, he put each member on a healthy salary ~ an unheard-of practice for most musicians! Through grace this musician reached his dream in a way he could never have personally conceived.

Nurturing Your Dreams

In practicing patience, we first have to learn to nurture our dreams. I view this process as finding out what we want and then holding that truth deep within our hearts, allowing it to guide us from within so we respond to each present moment authentically and in alignment with our desire. It does not mean focusing endlessly on the future so that, as so many people do, we feel such a gap between where we are and where we want to be that we never get started. The secret is to stay focused on the now, because the future never comes: it is always, in fact, just a series of incremental “nows.” If we can bring our present reality into alignment with our hearts’ desires, we will create a “future” that is a reflection and manifestation of our deepest truth.

So what dream could you be nurturing right now? Do you want a relationship, job, good income or just a simple quality of being, such as peace or contentment? And have you actually even stopped to feel what your heart truly desires? If not, a good way to start is to sit or lie quietly, empty your mind by silently saying the word “thinking” every time a thought passes by, place both hands on your heart and connect with your emotional and spiritual truths. What are you really feeling about your current life situation? What do you love and what no longer rings true? What’s missing and how can you become more fulfilled? And most importantly, what is your next frontier of growth? What do you need to experience in your next cycle of evolution?

Once you have a clear sense of your goal, nurture it by holding it deep in your heart and focusing on what you can do in the “now” each day to move toward it.

Deepening Your Inner Connection

When we can attune ourselves to the voice of our higher power, we develop courage, faith and hope. We also learn to pace ourselves and discover the art of divine timing ~

“chilling” and waiting for everything to be in alignment before we can fulfill our dreams. Then we find we’re in the right place at the right time.

So what can you do to strengthen your inner connection? You start by developing a robust relationship with your higher power. This means communication with it as if it’s your best friend – which in fact it is – a being or presence constantly with you everywhere, in every situation. Are you giving yourself enough space and time to spend in the sole company of this presence? Do you make time to listen or watch for your prayers to be answered instead of constantly making requests? And are you aware that your higher power will usually respond to you through people and situations? A ‘burning bush’ is pretty rare these days! Look out for the signs, messages, kindness, love and truth being offered to you by those around you and also start to pay attention to new ideas, insights and intuitions that come to you.

It’s also good to have a regular spiritual practice, such as daily meditation, yoga or time in nature. But remember spiritual practice is actually just that – practice. It’s only when we have the discipline to maintain our connection and centeredness throughout our everyday lives that it has any real benefit. Just as going to the gym is a great way to exercise your body (with the real purpose of creating a core state of physical well-being to support your life), spiritual practice is really meant to center and balance you so you maintain a core state of emotional and spiritual well-being.

Aligning With Your Truth

The next step to reaching your dream is to align with who you need to become to achieve it. As statistics show, around 90 percent of lottery winners have blown their winnings within five years. This is because their manifestation was too quick, too unprepared for; they didn’t have time to think of themselves as rich or contend with any negative beliefs they had about wealth. If we don’t prepare ourselves for success it can very easily make us uncomfortable and we will sabotage it to return to our small, familiar selves.

How can you constructively spend your time waiting for your dream? What beliefs do you have that might prevent you from being able to hold and enjoy the experience? You can start to dissolve them by tracing them back to their source, to the first time

you ever took them on. Take a soul-level look at that time and ask yourself, what were the lessons and gifts in that situation? Which of your strengths was it meant to develop and how would you deal with it differently now? Then you can practice forgiveness, by seeing through and beyond what happened to its highest truth and letting the “earth level” experience go.

And what will it take for you to become more aligned with your imminent success? Do you have a peer group or mentor who holds a vision of your highest potential? As the saying goes, “No one can rise to low expectations!”

Waiting and Gratitude

An essential quality of the art of patience is gratitude. While you’re waiting for your desired outcome, focus on the gifts of life which you currently have. If you don’t have riches, do you have health? If you don’t have a relationship, do you have family? If you don’t have peace or fulfillment, do you have hope? This not only helps you feel less incomplete but it also prepares you to hold on to your dreams when they materialize. Sometimes we can feel overwhelmed by our blessings. We reach an incredulous stage where our surprise at our good fortune is about to turn into panic because we feel unworthy or fear that our circumstances will change. Because our beliefs create our reality, saying “I can’t believe how lucky I am,” is a surefire way to stop your luck from flowing! At these moments I’ve learned to just keep saying “thank you.” This way I affirm the reality of all the goodness and good fortune around me and strengthen and perpetuate it.

What can you give thanks for today? Look for the little blessing as well as the big one – a stranger’s smile, a touch from a friend, an uplifting phone call or an inspiring book or movie. In practicing the art of gratitude, you will develop a much greater capacity to appreciate your dreams when they come true.

In waiting we allow a greater truth to emerge from within us and all around us. If we stay conscious and have patience, we begin to see the bigger picture of our desires, we hear our inner voice telling us a deeper truth and we experience life more keenly. Waiting deepens and enriches us. In fact, patience may very well be the next big thing.