

The Power of Joy

Last spring I received an early morning phone call from my friend Jackie. "I have an extra a ticket to the Dalai Lama's last talk at the University of Washington. If you can be ready and at my house in 15 minutes, it's yours."

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama was in Seattle to participate in a five-day event sponsored by Seeds of Compassion. Although I had seen him three days earlier, along with 50,000 other people at Qwest Field, I leapt at the chance to hear him speaking with Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Sitting at the kitchen table in my pajamas, I eagerly said,

"I'll be there." Within minutes, I cleared my calendar, dressed, and hopped in my car. The clock was ticking.

Although Jackie lives within seven miles of my home, my efforts to reach her house were thwarted by red lights and slow drivers. I chanted "change, change, change,"



Everyday Spirituality

by Colleen Foye Bollen

to signals and "move, move, move," to drivers. But as I watched the minutes tick by on the dashboard clock, my agitation grew into a ball of tension in my stomach.

Then I remembered a concept I heard the Dalai Lama speak about several years earlier in Portland, Oregon. He said that if we wanted peace in the world, we needed to bring the essence of peace into our daily interactions with others. The Dalai Lama called it "personal disarmament." He said it is not enough to work toward world disarmament, we also must focus on our personal behavior. Through thoughts and actions we need to make our slice of the world a more peaceful place. Putting "world peace" bumper stickers on our cars, then raging at red lights and slow drivers is not the answer.

Taking a deep breath, I realized the absurdity of getting frustrated by other drivers while on my way to see a man whose life goal is to spread peace. Ironically, right after I shifted my attitude, I got a series of green lights and made it to Jackie's just a few minutes late.

The talk at the University of Washington included speakers from a variety of religious traditions. But my focus was on the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Tutu.

We sat in the bleachers, across a basketball court, but directly in front of the Dalai Lama and the Archbishop Tutu. The Dalai Lama wore crimson and saffron robes; Archbishop Tutu sported a hot pink zuchetto on his head and a matching floor-length vestment. Their vibrant attire lit up the stage.

Sitting side-by-side, these two holy men brought a mischievous element to their serious discussion about caring for the children of the world and global peace. The importance and weight of the day's topics didn't stop them from kidding each other and sharing gales of laughter.

As I watched them joking around, I thought, if anyone had just cause to lose themselves to despair, it was these two holy men. The Dalai Lama has lived in exile from his homeland of Tibet since 1959. After he escaped, China's Red Guard destroyed most of Tibet's temples and persecuted many lamas and nuns. In South Africa, Archbishop Tutu lived through the atrocities perpetrated during apartheid and now chairs the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a court-like body where victims of violent repression relate their experiences.

Yet, these two men, who have witnessed people behaving at their worst, acted like two young kids, poking and teasing each other. Instead of focusing on the negative, the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Tutu manifested the best qualities of humanity: forgiveness, compassion, and happiness. Joy bubbled up from within them.

Since seeing these two holy men speak, I have been working to bring their peace and joy into my life. When I read tragic newspaper articles, sit in traffic, or hear stories about how the current economy is affecting people around the world, I picture them on stage in

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Archangel Michael - Doreen Virtue

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Doreen: There is a chapter in the book about life purpose because Michael knows what our soul contracts are so he can help us with a career that is aligned with our passion. He can take that to other levels and he will light the fire of your creativity and with his fiery energy motivate to get things done and open doors of opportunity. He is wonderful to work with in any creative job but it has to be specifically what your true life purpose is. If you are doing your true life purpose, it will

bring you great joy and passion to be involved in it.

The most profound message given to the world by Michael is that fear is a choice. We don't have to succumb to feeling fear of the future, fear about the world, or fear about our personal lives.

For years I've been working with people to combat what I call the bag lady syndrome. This is when people are afraid they are going to be destitute in the future and they're imagining themselves begging and living impoverished lives. It's really disempowering. Michael is here to

help us all to rise above that. There is absolutely no need for fear.

I love working with him because I truly find that by being in that space of feeling peaceful and protected then you attract that experience. Michael is about empowering each and every person.

Doreen's new book can be found at most area bookstores.

Judith Campanaro is an art therapist and she can be reached through her website, www.judithcampanaro.com.

NORTH SOUND RESOURCES



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